

with which to replace the Monism which is both out of date and fallacious? The first is *scientific method*. By this I do not mean the theological speculations of scientists such as are embodied in Sir Oliver Lodge's interesting little venture called "The Substance of Faith," but a logical analysis of the principles of thought implied in natural science, such as is given by Professor Karl Pearson in his *Grammar of Science*, or by Professor A. Riehl in his *Philosophischer Kriticismus*. The second is closely allied to this, namely, *the pragmatic method in philosophy*, which is an epistemological instead of a metaphysical method, as exhibited in the writings of Professor James, of Harvard, and, pre-eminently, of Dr. F. G. S. Schiller, of Oxford. Applied with discrimination these two methods will, properly considered, make "an untrammelled return to the Christian sources in the light of *modern thought*" possible, and further continuance in the methods of *The New Theology* impossible.

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FAITH IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

THE interest taken in the many questions which gather round the Fourth Gospel in these days is very great. It is indicated by the large number of books and treatises on this subject which have recently appeared. One of the most remarkable of these is that written by Mr. E. F. Scott. It is entitled *The Fourth Gospel* and is published by Messrs. T. & T. Clark.

In a very suggestive book, which reveals wide reading and great ability, Mr. Scott naturally has much to say on the subject of faith or "believing" as it appears in this Gospel. He says :

The word faith,—the keyword of S. Paul's theology,—is absent from the Gospel. Instead of it we have a continual repetition of the word "believe" in all its various forms. But this believing has little in common with the Pauline faith. Itself it signifies only an intellectual assent, and has to be filled out and supplemented before it can be made to connote the larger meaning.

The Johannine knowledge includes certain spiritual and ethical elements which make it equivalent in some degree to the Pauline "faith." At the same time the fact is significant that John describes the supreme energy of the religious life as an act of knowledge (17. 3). The intellectual idea, combined though it is with the ethical and spiritual, is still present and indeed determinative. A value is thus assigned to knowledge which affects the whole theology of the Gospel. The purely religious view is overlaid and obscured by the conception of Christianity as a speculative system which makes the primary appeal to the logical intelligence. In this respect more clearly than in any other, the evangelist's attitude to Gnosticism appears to be one of sympathy.

Again, "The 'believing' so constantly insisted on by John is something much narrower and poorer than the Pauline Faith. It implies not so much an inward disposition of trust and obedience as the acceptance of a given dogma. To believe is to grant the hypothesis that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Son of God." Mr. Scott recognizes "differentiating elements" in faith which go far to qualify the sweeping statements of other passages, but he goes on to say that "an examination of far the greater number of the passages in which the idea of knowledge is prominent confirms us in the assumption that the intellectual moment is the chief one in his mind."

Again, "True to his Greek prepossessions John regarded the activity of the reason as a chief factor in the attainment of the higher life." "Knowledge is one of the factors which precede and create belief." "Faith as described in the Synoptic teaching is simply the opening of the heart to God, and the humble and the childlike are the most capable of it." "The Johannine belief is the result of knowledge. It presupposes a mind fully enlightened and

equal to high speculations on the nature and Person of Christ.”

Now in all this we have conclusions drawn from the assumption that the Gospel belongs to an age separated from that of Christ by a whole century, and that it is coloured, if not formed, by the Gnosticism of that age. In face of the authorities so lightly set aside by Mr. Scott in his introduction this seems a large assumption. But we are not concerned in this paper directly with the question of authorship. We rather contend that if, as many scholars still hold, the Gospel belongs to an earlier age, we must look for other explanations of the relation of faith and knowledge to life ; and conversely, if other interpretations of these two great terms are forthcoming, a light may be cast back upon the authorship of the most fascinating book of the New Testament Scriptures.

Mr. Scott has compared the idea of faith in this Gospel with that which is presented to us in the Synoptic Gospels and in the writings of St. Paul. This suggests the true line to adopt in discussing the meaning of the word *πίστις* and its cognates ; and while there seems to be some amount of overlapping, it may nevertheless be contended that the three writings referred to indicate three distinct stages in the history of all that the words connote. It will appear, however, that so far from there being no connexion between Paul's use of the words and John's, there is the very closest connexion both in thought and construction, and the common element in the thought of the two writers was not intellectual but distinctly religious.

Πίστις in the Synoptic writings, then, seems in by far the great majority of cases to indicate mere belief in the power of Jesus to work miracles. The phrase *ἔχειν πίστιν* is frequent and appropriate. So slight was the personal religious element that where this belief existed

merely in the friends of the sufferer the response of our Lord was forthcoming.

It is difficult to believe that the woman who touched the hem of the Master's garment had anything more than this confidence in His healing power ; yet that which saved her was her "faith." This same faith appears also in the friends who bore the paralytic into the presence of Christ, and was equally effective. The centurion was confident that Christ had "authority" analogous to that which he possessed, and our Lord responded by declaring that He had not found such "faith" in Israel. So in the very early writing of St. James belief is mostly confidence, and may be shared by devils. In one passage (Luke xviii. 8) the word is used in a sense which approaches one of the many uses to be found in the writings of St. Paul. Here the constancy of the believer, the loyalty that endures in spite of repeated disappointment, is indicated. It was a confidence or loyalty evoked by Christ (*ἡ πίστις, ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ*, Acts iii. 16) ; but for the most part the Synoptists write as we have indicated. In all the passages taken from their writings it is to be observed that the grammatical construction of either verb or noun varies between the absolute use of the word and its use with the dative, the object being either a person or an utterance. In all this the usage of the Septuagint is closely followed. In spite of the construction with a preposition suggested by the Hebrew equivalent, the Seventy preferred to use the word without a preposition. Only in two instances (Matt. xviii. 6, and Luke. xxiv. 25) is this rule departed from by these writers. We shall return presently to the way in which these words are used in the later books of the New Testament, but we pass now to consider the form in which they appear in the Epistles of St. Paul. Here we notice almost immediately that faith seems to be AN ACT, and an act referring to Christ AS A

PERSON. There are many passages which recall the use of the Synoptic Gospels, but there can be only one interpretation of the passage Romans iii. 22. Faith there is that which has Christ for its object. It is neither belief in His message, nor is it the confidence which He inspires, but it is that "enthusiastic personal adhesion" (Sanday and Headlam *in loc.*) by reason of which the believer realises that righteousness which his Master fulfilled, and which is revealed in the Gospel. This phrase in Romans iii. 22 is of special importance for the purpose of the present study because in Galatians ii. 16 the phrase is repeated, and another phrase is used as an alternative expression with it. This phrase is *εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν πιστεύειν*, and it is the very expression which plays so prominent a part in the Fourth Gospel.

So again in Philippians i. 29 Paul uses the Johannine phrase to express the act which brings a man into living union with his Lord, and enables him to "commit himself" to Him.

But if we abandon for a moment the significance which may or may not lie in grammatical construction, we find the element of faith which, as we hold, distinguishes the writings of both Paul and John in that example which plays so prominent a part in the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. The whole significance of the Faith of Abraham, of the act which marked him out as the "Father of the Faithful," lies, not so much in his belief of the message which had come to him from God, as in the crowning act of will in which he broke away from all the traditions of his clan, accepted the uncertainties of the future, and was content to run all risks with God. He made himself one with the Divine will, as he conceived it, and his truer life issued from that sublime act of self-surrender (Rom. i. 17, Gal. iii. 11).

When in after days the great Apostle had before him the still longer journey into the unknown, he too could speak of "Him whom he had believed." It was no body of dogma that he accepted then. With faithful Abraham he took "the risks of faith," and thus made one with his Lord he entered into life. To Paul "faith" was far from being an intellectual assent. In one passage he speaks of it as "sacrifice and service" (Phil. ii. 17). It was the spiritual rapture of the priest, and the unreckoned generosity of the patriot. In each term an act rather than a conviction is before us: each reveals the enthusiasm of a willing self-surrender. The intense personal enthusiasm of St. Paul may be accounted for on the supposition that the faith which ruled his life possessed this element of self-surrender. It cannot be accounted for on any other interpretation of faith.

When we come to examine "faith" as it is put before us in the Fourth Gospel we are met at once with the very remarkable fact that the noun *πίστις* is not used once throughout the Gospel. It is the only book in the New Testament of which this can be said, and the omission cannot be other than significant. In the First Epistle of John the word appears, but only once, and then it is used to denote a conquering power, a "victory which overcometh the world" (1 John v. 4). In the Apocalypse the word appears four times; and, if the Johannine authorship is allowed, it is significant that in what must have been the earliest work of John the word is used as we have seen it used in the Synoptic Gospels to indicate rather the fidelity of the believer, the constancy of trust. But in the Fourth Gospel the noun is not used in a single passage. Mr. Scott appears to think that the writer preferred the word for knowledge as coming nearer to that Gnostic element which he finds throughout the Gospel. But this not only presupposes

that there is a Gnostic element in the Gospel, but also it takes for granted an interpretation of the word *γινώσκειν* which we are far from accepting. But to return to the use of *πιστεύειν* in our Gospel. It occurs in a variety of constructions. It is used absolutely thirty times, and the meaning of the verb in each of these passages must be sought in its context. The word is used with *ὅτι*, as indicating the credence to be given to a message, nine times. With the simple Dative (the Septuagint construction) it is used eighteen times ; and with the preposition *εἰς* it is used no less than thirty-four times. The constructions with *ἐν* and *ἐπί*, as indicating the sphere and the basis of trust, do not seem to be needed by the writer. The construction with *εἰς* is the more remarkable because it is not found in either the Septuagint or Classical Greek. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that John must have adopted it of set purpose, and the question which follows inevitably will be, What was that purpose ? Now it is possible to prove that the preposition in question had lost so much of its proper meaning as to stand in Hellenistic Greek for little more than what is connoted by the preposition *ἐν*. But against this we must set the fact that there are fewer cases of *εἰς* with the meaning of *ἐν* in John than in any other book of the New Testament (Blass, p. 122), and that if *εἰς* is so weakened, yet in New Testament times *ἐν* had greatly "enlarged its sphere of influence" (Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 62), and might therefore be expected to be used along with *εἰς*. We are not therefore straining a point when we give to the preposition its proper value, and take the Apostle to indicate by this marked and frequent use the idea of intimate union, of spiritual incorporation with Christ, as the condition of life eternal (John iii. 36). In John i. 12 we have the expression used as synonymous with *ἔλαβον αὐτόν*, and it is clear that the one expression

and the other bring before us a closer, more mystical union than could ever be implied by mere intellectual assent. After all this use of the verb with the preposition is strictly parallel with that of *παραδίδομι* (Matt. x. 17, 2 Cor. iv 11, Rom. i. 24).

In all of these we have the complete abandonment of one person to another, or of an individual to some power or principle. We must also compare the use of *γενέσθαι εἰς*, Luke, xiii. 9, and the even better known example given us in the Baptismal formula, *βαπτίζεσθαι εἰς τὸ ὄνομα* (Matt. xxviii. 19).

The preposition indicates movement; the movement of the individual from the position in which self is everything to that in which he finds everything, even life itself, in Christ. It is clear that in all this we come very near to the Pauline view of faith as "an enthusiastic personal adhesion" to Christ. It is the first step in that spiritual movement which results in the life described by Paul as one that is lived in Christ, and by means of faith (Gal. ii. 2).

The Fourth Gospel gives us, then, not only a remarkable construction of this word, but a frequency of use which is even more remarkable. Dr. Abbott, in his complete and most scholarly analysis of this word (*Johannine Vocabulary*, pp. 19-82), says: "The writer exhibits 'believing' in so many different phases, attributes it in many different places to so many persons and classes, assigns so many sayings about it to our Lord Himself, and makes so many evangelistic comments about it in his own person, that a summary of the Johannine dicta about 'believing,' amounting almost to a summary of the Gospel itself, may give a clue to its scheme and motive."

There are few more interesting studies in the New Testament than that of "faith" as it is set before us in this Gospel, but it would demand more space than we have at

our disposal to examine the different illustrations of faith which St. John gives us. Nor indeed could we do more than go over ground already completely covered by Dr. Abbott. We may, however, refer here to two passages. In chapter viii. 30, 31 we read that many believed in Him. Here the construction with *εἰς* is used, but in the very next verse the construction is altered, and we have the Dative, followed by the word *Ἰουδαίους* in such a position that it would seem as though the thought in the mind of the writer might be rendered "those who had believed Him yet remained Jews," and this is followed by a description of these last as men who sought to kill Him and who, Christ said, "were of their father the devil." There seem, then, to be two classes of adherents represented here : those who had entered into true fellowship with Christ, and those who had believed in the truth of what He said while they retained the most violent personal antagonism to Him. The latter was the intellectual acceptance ; the former suggests a spiritual fellowship. In the twentieth chapter we have what was in all probability the close and culmination of this presentation of faith as John conceived it. For while we may believe that the author of the twenty-first chapter was the writer of the preceding chapters, it is obvious that that chapter was written as a postscript. In the story of Thomas, then, we have the climax of different phases of faith. Surely here we have the sharpest antagonism between the religious and the intellectual acceptance of faith. We cannot believe that Thomas accepted the intellectual evidence conceded by his gracious Lord. No one can imagine him proceeding to examine the pierced feet and hands, or drawing aside the Saviour's garments to examine the wounded side. The sympathy and condescension of his Lord were enough ; with one bound he reached the highest ascription of trust that is recorded in the Gospels in the cry, "My Lord and

my God." Yet even thus there had been a partial concession to the demand of the intellect; and as though He would remove it entirely, the Saviour proceeds to declare the higher blessing of those who had not seen and yet had believed. Then follows the purpose of the writer in the familiar conclusion, "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in His name."

It is quite true, as Mr. Scott says, that John uses *γινώσκειν* and *πιστεύειν* almost as alternatives. In vi. 69 and x. 38 the two verbs are thrown together in a very suggestive collocation. Mr. Scott concludes from this that the true content of *πιστεύειν* is knowledge, but it is at least equally demonstrable that faith is the true content of *γινώσκειν*. In such passages as Galatians iv. 9 and 1 Corinthians ii. 11 and John i. 24, and others too numerous to mention, *γινώσκειν* "includes the ideas of thoroughness, familiarity, and approbation" (Lightfoot). It is used to indicate "knowledge of the inner nature of a thing" (Edwards). It is "the result of an insight which comes from a perfect spiritual sympathy" (Westcott). In this light the great definition of "eternal life" given by our Lord (xvii. 2) wears a very different appearance from that given by Mr. Scott. It is not the "knowledge" of a second century Gnosticism, but rather that intimate knowledge which is born of spiritual sympathy and which more than anything else indicates the perfect fellowship in which the heart of one lies open to the enraptured gaze of another. It is a conception which belongs to the Hebrew much more than to the Greek. It tells us that the author was steeped in Jewish ideas, not that he was phrasing the ideas common in the Platonic School of Alexandria. The "knowledge of the Lord" in the Old Testament spells love and communion far more than intellectual apprehension. The Psalms are full of the idea that

there is a knowledge as between God and man which stands for oneness of thought and purpose and love. Could there be any more inspiring or inspired description of "eternal life" than this!

Even the doctrine of the Logos, upon which so much turns in this Gospel, has far more of a Hebrew connotation than a Greek. It is akin to the whole conception of "Wisdom" as the Jew conceived it, and carries far more of the idea of personality than that of intellectuality. That such terms as this should appear in the Gospel need not indicate a sympathetic presentation of Gnosticism. No one will hold that because Gnostic expressions appear in the Epistle to the Colossians Paul must be considered to be introducing Gnostic ideas in a Christian garb. The motive of the Fourth Gospel, as we conceive it, is neither doctrinal nor ecclesiastical. It has to do with neither the establishing of a creed, nor the enforcing of hierarchical authority. Its aim is distinctly religious. It is such a presentation of faith as was needed in an age in which the word was beginning to be used for a "creed" (Jude 3), an age in which Greek thinkers "considered that it came to them through syllogism or induction" (Abbott), and when in the Christian Church it might seem as though some restatement was necessary in view of the seemingly opposed views of Paul and James. That restatement John comes to offer. Faith, he says, is no creed, no mental conviction. It is an act. It is found in that determination of the will which surrenders the individual to Him who is his Lord and his God. It is

The submission of Man's nothing-perfect to God's all-complete,
As by each new obeisance of spirit I climb to His feet.

We climb to reach even His *feet*. But He does not leave us there. He lifts us up; opens His heart to us, until in the perfect knowledge of God man finds "the life which is life indeed."

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