

Marshall (*Beief and Life*, 3s. 6d.), and in that volume he directly answers it. He says that St. Paul and St. John do not preach the universal Fatherhood of God, but Jesus Christ does.

Mr. Williams says that St. Paul and St. John (he means the New Testament writers generally outside the Gospels) do not preach and do not hold the doctrine that God is the Father of all men. To them the phrase, 'sons of God,' or 'children of God,' describes an acquired character. It denotes something that does not belong to all men as such. St. Paul says that 'as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' He tells the Galatian Christians, 'For ye are all the children of God, *through faith in Christ Jesus.*' To St. Paul even Jesus was not *born* the Son of God. He was 'born of the seed of David according to the flesh,' and 'determined to be the Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness.' With St. Paul's teaching St. John agrees. 'As *many as received Him*, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.' And in his first epistle St. John makes a distinction between 'the children of God' and 'the children of the devil,' saying also that 'whosoever doeth not righteousness' must not be counted among the children of God, nor 'he that loveth not his brother.'

But Mr. Williams holds that Christ teaches that we are all the children of God. He admits the distinction between 'the children of the Kingdom' and 'the children of the wicked one.' He admits that Jesus called one man 'the son of perdition,' and that He once denounced the people before Him as 'the offspring of vipers.' He admits that one passage 'gives Him' these words: 'If God were your Father, ye would love Me; but ye are of your father the devil.' He admits that in the Sermon on the Mount He blessed the peacemakers and said, 'For they shall be called the children of God.' And yet he holds that 'the universal Fatherhood of God is distinct enough in much of His teaching.'

He finds it in two places. The first is the phrase 'that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.' He has already quoted that phrase as proof that a certain *character* is needed if they would be children of God. Now he says that God is spoken of as being *already* their Father, though they are to *become* His children. The other place is the parable of the Prodigal Son. 'In the immortal parable of the Prodigal Son, the fatherhood and sonship continue through all the story of sin.'

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## The Unrest of the Age.

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UNREST like that of our time is not a new thing in history, but one familiar to every student. We see it in the age of Isaiah, when the Assyrian was breaking up the primeval kingdoms of Asia; and again in the times of Pericles, when the old beliefs of Athens were unsettled. We see it on a great scale in our Lord's time, when the ancient world of nations was melting down into the Roman Empire; and not less clearly four hundred years later, when the Empire itself was dissolving into a

new world of nations. The sixteenth century was profoundly stirred by the restoration of learning, the discovery of America, and the reformation of religion; and that again was an age of unrest. There is deep unrest in every age of change; and how shall we escape, on whom revelations of God in history and science have come with such bewildering rapidity?

'His way is in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.' Is it

strange that a mighty tempest should be stirred up round about Him to destroy the spiritual stagnation which is the delight of the natural man? Revelation and revolution are never far apart in history; for nations as well as men must earn their beliefs in the sweat of their brow. It is good that unbelief should be driven out from its hiding-places of respectability and formal orthodoxy to face the eternal questions of life, and vainly seek an answer that is not in Christ. Then it grows blatant in its twin forms of scepticism and superstition. The one cries defiance to God's message; the other may seem to receive it, but only on the authority of some worthless word of men. The two are one in having no genuine and personal belief in it.

Yet let us do them justice. Unrest, indeed, is always unbelief; and thousands who fancy they have scruples are only cherishing some sin that blinds them. Scruples forsooth! which are no more than floating doubts they never have the manliness to examine. Yet unrest often has a nobler element of real bewilderment; for God teaches hard lessons, as when He calls the Gentiles, or the northern nations, or the outcasts of England; and sometimes again men's wrath is kindled by some caricature of things divine, which Christ hates more than they. Unrest is the sinner's answer to some new message from heaven which he cannot or will not understand, yet dares not ignore; and therefore it is a sure sign that, with all our sins and shortcomings, we are still a living nation. The unrest of stirring England is better than the deadly slumber of a Catholic Church of Latin sectarianism. Less havoc is made of spiritual life by the clattering scandals of our noisy sects and parties than by the organized falsehood of an unspiritual unity.

The unrest of our time is essentially religious, for political questions depend on social, and social on religious. Thus the reconstruction of society depends on the reconstruction of religion; and that is a work we shall have to do from the foundation, as it was done in the time of Athanasius. No change was made in doctrine then, and none is needed now. For seventy years and more the keenest of intellects have been fighting round our Bible, and sifting every word of it as never book was sifted yet: and their labour has not been thrown away. Though much has come to light, and many of our old ideas are for ever shattered, Christ our Saviour's Person

stands exactly where it stood before, but rooted in history and nature far more deeply than our fathers knew. We see the Son of Man with a vivid clearness never vouchsafed in past ages; yet He is none the less the Son of God adored by them of old. Neither do our Articles and Liturgy need serious revision. So far as doctrine goes, no Church can face the future with a clearer conscience than our own. We have no lying infallibility to recant, no questions of learning decided by councils of ignorance, no Creed of Pope Pius to repent of in sackcloth and ashes. We need no new doctrine to put new vigour into life and thought and character; only a more intelligent and earnest dealing with the old. We need only to realize and fully make our own in something of its world-wide range and meaning the idea of God which illuminates all Christian doctrine. The difference of Athanasius from Arianism is the difference of the Gospel from Mohammedanism; and that difference needs asserting now. Its assertion by Athanasius was the deathblow of despotisms and the raising of nations from the dead, though his work has been obscured for ages by the saint-worship and church-worship which obscured our Lord's true manhood and true divinity in East and West alike. Its assertion in our time will give peace and new life in our restless Churches, for the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation are not conundrums of the dogmatists, but a perpetual witness to the most practical fact of the universe—that God's nature is no inscrutable mystery of arbitrary power and will, but an open secret of holiness which men by truth and purity can in their measure truly see and understand. There is a great deal yet to be done to root out the Mohammedan conception of God, which Calvin took over (with some other unamiable teachings) from the Latin Church. That idea of God as a despot in heaven fosters despotism, lawlessness, and superstition on earth, and brutalizes government, society, and religion together. Now, however, a nobler doctrine shines on us with a light which neither the Fathers nor the Reformers ever fully caught; and in this is the answer to our questionings, and the cure for the hatreds of race and the hatreds of class which threaten to wreck the whole structure of civilization.

Now, what can we do as Christ's ministers to quiet the unrest around us? We can do a great deal, for we are listened to quite as much as we

deserve; though I fear that many of us are not worth listening to—men who take up what they are pleased to call beliefs on mere authority—beliefs for which they never laboured, and for which they do not even care to render a reason. We can at least point men steadily away from the trifles to the decisive question. Of those who say that religion is all reason, some reject the gospel because it is not all reason, while others who seem to receive it evaporate it into formalism and orthodoxy; and the two extremes are one in unbelief. Of those who make religion all feeling, some stumble because the gospel is not all feeling,

while others who seem to receive it evaporate it into sentimentalism and excitement; and the two extremes are one in unbelief. We can show our people that faith is neither reason nor feeling, but includes both in a personal relation to Christ which calls for all the powers of the whole man. Those powers need not be great, but we must use them for ourselves and not by deputy, and in the fullest range of heart and soul and mind. So shall we find rest in the midst of unrest, as we have truth and purity to look through the revolution around us to the revelation of our Father's love which guides its course.

## The Expository Times Guild of Bible Study.

As already intimated, the subjects of study for the session 1898-99 are the First Book of Psalms (Psalms i.-xli.) and the First Epistle of St. Peter.

Those who desire to study one or both of these portions of Scripture between November 1898 and June 1899 are invited to send their name and address to the Editor of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. There is no fee or other obligation. The purpose of the Guild is to encourage systematic study of Holy Scripture as distinguished from the mere reading of it, and the conditions are made as simple as possible. The best commentary available should be used. There are excellent editions of both books in the 'Cambridge Bible for Colleges.' And if the member can study the Hebrew and Greek, he will know that Delitzsch's (Hodder & Stoughton) or Cheyne's *Psalms* (Kegan Paul) are scholarly and suggestive, while an edition of a portion of St. Peter by the late Professor Hort has just been published by Messrs. Macmillan.

Students are invited to send short papers as the result of their study, and the best of these papers will be published, one at least every month if found suitable. And the writers will be asked at the end of the year to select a volume out of a list which Messrs. T. & T. Clark will furnish.

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