

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE leading article in the second number of *The International Review of Missions* has been written by Professor David S. CAIRNS, D.D. Its subject is stated, very harmlessly, as 'Christian Missions and International Peace.' In reality it is a direct discussion of a single issue—What would be the effect on missionary enterprise if Britain and Germany were to go to war?

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Why does Professor CAIRNS discuss such an issue? Evidently because, just before writing, he was staggered, as we were all staggered, by the appalling news that 'through the pleasant summer days of 1911,' these two European nations 'had been walking through the valley of the shadow of death.' He is not a breeder of alarms. 'The tales of deliberate aggression on either side may be dismissed as mischievous fables.' But he sees clearly that these two nations were very nearly approaching a situation which, without their consent or knowledge, would have made war inevitable.

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And if Britain and Germany had gone to war? It is hardly conceivable that the war would have been confined to Britain and Germany. 'The whole history of the last fifty years and the unstable equilibrium of Europe to-day make such limitation practically inconceivable. The greater and the lesser powers of the larger part of Europe

would have been grouped together in two mighty alliances, each bent on crippling and even destroying the other.

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Now Dr. CAIRNS is not writing to show what would be the national results of such a war. 'Happily,' he says, 'there are many who are engaged on this task. The real brain and heart of Germany and Britain are not with the Chauvinist press, but with those who are demonstrating the madness and sin of war, who are showing the financial ruin which it would entail on the victors as well as the vanquished, the political and social retrogression, the unthinkable measure of human anguish, the brutalization of character which would follow. There is no need here to add to what is being so well said by the graver and deeper minds among our statesmen and public teachers, as to how a European war would affect our civilization.'

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What he recognizes, and would have us all recognize, is the effect which such a war would have on the progress of the Kingdom of God. At the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 it was borne home to him that the Kingdom of God is an ideal that can be realized. He could have seen that, no doubt, without a Conference. For the practicability of the Kingdom is involved in the fact that God has been revealed as the Almighty Father, that Christianity is the final and uni-

versal religion, and that to faith all things are possible.

The impression made upon him by the Edinburgh Conference was that the Kingdom of God may be made actual *now*. He does not deny the possibility of an over-emphasis being put on the limit of opportunity. But he saw that the opportunity was really offered. It was offered by the spirit of unity which ran through the Conference. Heart to heart, hand in hand, men and women were ready to go forward in every part of the earth and by means of every diversity of operation. The hour had come for an advance in force, and let God do the rest.

But now, 'right into this nascent world of aspiration and effort and prayer there has come the danger of a deeper national cleavage than modern history has known for nearly a hundred years. We cannot but ask what bearing such an event would have upon these ideals. While others are asking what such an event would mean for civilization and for the happiness and political progress of the European nations, we must take a wider view, which includes but transcends these, and ask what a European war would mean for the Kingdom of God.'

It would mean, first of all, that an enormous financial strain would be thrown upon the countries involved. The necessary resources would be withdrawn from the world mission at the very moment when great expansion is required. There is no aggressive project, says Professor CAIRNS, that would not at once feel the effect. Plans for increasing the evangelizing forces in the field, for building and equipping Christian schools and universities, for developing industrial schemes and technical training institutes, would all be arrested. Everywhere throughout Asia and Africa men would be compelled to wait idly and see the great flood tide that might have carried them into harbour sweep past them and turn again to the fatal ebb.

But that is only to touch the circumference. Far more disastrous would be the moral and spiritual effect upon the Church if the great powers of Europe were to turn their mighty energies on the maiming and destruction of one another. Neither Britain nor Germany could emerge from that struggle, whether victor or vanquished, without enormous losses. Can the cause of human progress, can the Kingdom of God go forward without both of them? With all their weaknesses and sins these two nations stand for progress and liberty as well as order, and their latent capacity for the service of the Kingdom is past measuring. Why should their noble energies of heart and brain, that might be turned to such splendid profit in the constructive labour of the Kingdom of God, be squandered in sanguinary struggle for predominance? There cannot be such a misuse of noble gifts without disaster to the higher life of both lands.

'Here,' he believes, 'we touch the heart of the whole matter. The real springs of life are in God, and they break forth in great rivers of power and blessing whenever He finds those through whom He can work His will. But such men, when all is said, arise out of the common life of the Church and the nation in which they are born and which mould or mar them in their early and plastic years. Hence the problem of the winning of the world for the Kingdom is a problem in large measure of the corporate life. When that is depressed or brutalized, the Spirit of God is withheld. When it rises and becomes more spiritual, the channels between Eternity and Time are opened, and prayer wins a new power and freedom. All men who have given serious thought to the problem realize that the Kingdom of God in our day can only draw nearer if the Church as a whole becomes more imbued with faith in God and love to man and hope for the future, that here lie the very springs of all else. Fundamentally the whole problem is one of depth and quality of life. Now can any one suppose that the concentration of the energies of Europe on warfare

can have anything but a disastrous effect on the life of society and the Church? In such a medium who can doubt that it will be harder to pray, harder to believe in God and man, harder to live for humanity? The veil which to some to-day seems growing thinner and more transparent will fall heavy and black between man and God.'

Professor CAIRNS does not deny the element of nobility that emerges in a great war. To speak of war as 'organized murder' he calls unjust and untrue. But this is a by-product of war, and he counts it absurd to treat it as anything else. The tribal feuds of savage races have their deeds of heroism and even their habits of endurance; and yet, he says, no one thinks of the general condition of civilization which produced them as anything but barbarous. And then he gives an example.

'If war had broken out last summer between Britain and Germany, there would in all probability have been a sea fight on the waters of Lake Nyasa in full view of the wild tribes who have just been redeemed from a condition of incessant warfare. No man has ever suggested a doubt that the turning of the energies of the Angoni into the manifold peaceful industries and arts taught at Livingstonia, the Iona of tropical Africa, marks a great rise in civilization. What is even more to our purpose in this connexion is that to-day it is easier for an Angoni to believe in God, to pray to Him, to receive His Spirit, and to love his fellow-men than it was a few years ago. But we cannot have it both ways. If these things are true, a European war would be due to the resurgence of the savage in the civilized state, and would, broadly regarded, brutalize the whole life of Christendom just as the Thirty Years' War did in its day.'

*What is Wrong with the Churches?* This is the popular title of a book, popular also in size and price, which has been written by the Rev. David

BARRAN (James Clarke & Co.; 6d. net). Mr. BARRAN finds the churches more empty than they ought to be. When a census is taken, not more than ten or fifteen per cent. of the population are present. And he sets himself seriously to discover the cause.

He discovers the cause after a very few paragraphs. It is 'the want of a definite message.' He believes that if you enter a church and listen to the sermon, you will quite likely depart without any distinct impression, emotional or intellectual. Preachers do not seem to know what the Christian religion is, or, if they know it themselves, they cannot make it known to the average hearer. If one preacher is intelligible, he is contradicted by the next intelligible preacher. It is a house divided against itself, how then can it stand?

This may be true although it is not new. But Mr. BARRAN will not admit that it is not new. Attacks have been made on Christianity and the Christian Churches from the very beginning. Mr. BARRAN finds traces of them in the New Testament itself. But the attacks were from without. Never before did the Church set herself to show how unstable were her own foundations and how near she was to utter and irretrievable ruin. The novelty of Mr. BARRAN'S discovery is here. 'Some who occupy influential places in the Churches maintain that historical Christianity is being undermined, and is in imminent danger of falling to pieces. These declarations reach the ears of the man in the street, and they do not dispose him to enter the Church or to take any kind of interest in it.'

In former days, says Mr. BARRAN, every Church had its creed and every preacher had to respect it. 'The early Methodists believed in the infallibility of the Scriptures, in the ruin of man, and in a hell of physical tortures.' The Presbyterians accepted 'The Westminster Confession of Faith' as their standard of authority. Even Congregationalists, he says, were bound by their trust deeds; and these

trust deeds declared what doctrines were to be preached and upheld. He gives the following excerpt from a trust deed by way of illustration: 'That the said ground and chapel shall be held by the said Trustees . . . for such as shall in all time hereafter maintain the exclusive authority and entire sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures in all matters of belief and duty: the doctrine of salvation by free grace through faith in the obedience and atonement of Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh.'

These trust deeds and confessions are now ignored. They are regarded, not as supports, but as stumbling-blocks. For the time came when Scripture had to be squared with science. The 'Word' was read as it perhaps had never been read before, but it was not read for the purpose of establishing doctrine or even for the purpose of establishing itself. It was read in order that men might see whether, after all the demands of physical science had been met, there was anything left in it that could really be said to be profitable for instruction, in any department whatever of life or of doctrine. The result was that the old doctrines of Election, Atonement, Future Punishment, and the rest were declared to be obsolete and incredible; the confessions were either modified or neglected; the trust deeds were consigned to the lumber-room.

But the Church is not built on doctrines, it is built on facts. Cannot the Church remain after the doctrines have been discredited? Mr. BARRAN has not found it so. For no sooner were the doctrines discredited than the facts began to be assailed, and now it has come to pass that within the very walls of the Churches themselves, men are preaching the possibility that no such person as Jesus of Nazareth ever existed, and freely declaring that if He did exist, He existed only as a man among men, with a man's weaknesses and even with a man's shortcomings and sins.

What is Mr. BARRAN'S remedy? His remedy is

simply to return to Scripture and study it over again. But we must return to it with open minds. If physical science tells us that miracle is impossible, and if Scripture tells us that miracles have taken place, we must not believe physical science and disbelieve Scripture. More than that, we must know that there are more things both in heaven and in earth than physical science can ever attain to. Mr. BARRAN does not say we shall recover all our trust deeds and confessions. He does not say that we shall ever again hold all the doctrines of Christianity in the very form in which our fathers held them. He does say that an unprejudiced study of the Bible will authenticate it to any man's mind as true, in respect both of the facts and the doctrines of redemption. He says that it will restore to the Churches the true God and eternal life.

The time has come for an inquiry into the practical value of mysticism. For the interest in mysticism is more widespread now than ever it was before. And philosophy has at last abandoned its opposition; there is no longer anything standing in the way. Such an investigation has accordingly been made by the Rev. O. C. QUICK. It has become a habit with the *Journal of Theological Studies* to publish one long article in theology, and for the rest to offer documents and discussions. This article always occupies the first place. In the number for January of this year the first place is occupied by Mr. QUICK'S article on 'The Value of Mysticism in Faith and Practice.'

Those who have desired to investigate the phenomena of mysticism have hitherto been met at the outset by a very serious obstacle. Mysticism claims to transcend the intellect. It does not claim to be opposed to the intellect, but to be independent of it. Now it has hitherto been held that the intellect is the only faculty by which knowledge can be obtained. So that the very possibility of mystical knowledge was excluded beforehand.

But the absolute supremacy of the intellect in all matters of knowledge has now been challenged. The pragmatist movement has drawn attention to the part played by the will and the emotions, both in the obtaining and in the testing of knowledge, and has created a widespread doubt as to the possibility of a merely intellectual criterion. And so, for the first time, religious mysticism has now an opportunity of vindicating its claim to make a real contribution to the sum of human knowledge and experience.

But, first of all, do we understand what mysticism is? Mr. QUICK apparently does not think that we do; for he begins with a definition. Giving the term its widest sense, he thinks he may safely assert that 'the claim of all mystical experience is to tell us of some wider reality beyond ourselves which is not directly apprehensible by or through the senses.' If that definition is true, it is evident enough that we did not know what mysticism is. For it has always been taken for granted that mysticism had something to do with religion. Mr. QUICK would not confine its operation to the sphere of religion. Nevertheless, he admits that this 'wider reality beyond ourselves' is usually understood to be God. Or if it is not immediately apprehended as God, it has at any rate an effect upon the mind's idea about God. He therefore concludes that after all and 'in a sense' all mysticism has a bearing upon religion; and if we were to express our investigation into the practical value of mysticism in the form of the question, 'What does it tell us of God?' we should not exclude much mysticism from our inquiry.

Now when we ask the question, What does mysticism tell us about God? we receive a bewildering variety of answers. In the first place, there are many mystics whose direct experiences of the presence of God or of Christ can easily be brought within the doctrine of the Catholic Church. They may even make us feel the beauty and truth of orthodox Christianity as we never felt it before.

St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Catherine of Genoa, our own Juliana of Norwich, and occasionally perhaps St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa—all these and others, as long as we are under their spell, do undoubtedly seem to guarantee to our minds the Church's revelation. And even beyond those who may be called the classical school of mysticism there are spiritual lives, such as those of Bunyan, John Wesley, William Law, and a host of others in various Christian communities, whose writings have a similar effect in confirming our faith. Even the revivalistic phenomena, so entertainingly described by Professor William JAMES, in his Gifford Lectures on 'Varieties of Religious Experience,' though occasionally a little behindhand in spiritual dignity, do also, in the judgment of Mr. QUICK, remain true to broadly Christian teaching. Last of all, there are the experiences of religious individuals like Tolstoy, who belong to no Church or denomination; they also show no vital discrepancy with the central doctrines of Christianity, even where they do not yield them direct support.

But while all this is true, there is much more than this that is called mysticism. What are we to say of the vast and organized system of Eastern mysticism, which teaches the absorption of the soul in a universal, characterless, and impersonal Unity? Does not Plotinus, the father of European mysticism, occasionally use language that is very like that of the Eastern mystics? And can we not trace the course of a similar non-Christian experience and doctrine as it passes through pseudo-Dionysius into the heart of the Catholic Church, where with inconvenient persistency they leave their mark on the writings of some of her most distinguished children? Can we hope, says Mr. QUICK, to Christianize wholly the teaching of the *via negativa* even as understood by so devout a Churchman as Meister Eckhart, with its theological denial of attributes to God and its practical consequence of withdrawal from the society of men?

Even in the modern and Western world we meet with movements which seem to be mystical, but are at least unchristian if not anti-christian. Such a movement is mental healing in America, at the very centre of which there exists a strong touch of mystical experience. More than all that, there are records in our day of experiences of the Infinite which are definitely evil in character, and which leave on the mind an impression of horror such as no words can ever represent. And it is not enough to say that these experiences belong to persons of unsound mind. Lunatic asylums, says Mr. QUICK, could no doubt furnish innumerable instances of a similar nature; but they are not all found in lunatic asylums, and could not possibly be all sent there.

Now, however these experiences differ the one from the other, they are alike in this, that they claim to be objective and that they claim to be undeniable. Objectivity and certainty—these two things are claimed by mystics of every kind and of every country. And Mr. QUICK agrees with Professor William JAMES, that such mystical experiences can be used to support any kind of religious or irreligious belief whatsoever. The inference, therefore, he considers inevitable, that mystical knowledge carries with it no internal criterion of its own validity. In his own words: 'It is manifestly impossible even to draw a rigid and immediate distinction between the results of divine and valid and those of diabolic and illusory inspiration; the shades of the experiences are too varied and pass too subtly into one another.'

Has it come to this, then, that we had better sweep away the whole claim to mystical knowledge as a snare and a delusion? Mr. QUICK does not think so. The internal criterion has broken down. But that only drives us to seek some means external to the experiences themselves of discriminating between their truth and falsehood. Is there any standpoint by which they can be judged? There are three such standpoints, and they are of

the more value that they can be made to apply independently.

There is first of all our Lord's great spiritual criterion, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' This standpoint of value, says Mr. QUICK, is as applicable to mystical states as it is to individual lives. It is a mere truism, but it is a truism that we must never be tired of repeating, that the oldest, surest, and most universal witness of God in the world is a good life. Not every one has mystical experiences, not every one has learning in theology, or belongs to a Church. But every one has some notion of the difference between a good and a bad life. If, therefore, a man comes forward claiming to have obtained a higher revelation than that already known to us, his claim will at once be made subject to the test whether this higher revelation gives the man himself a deeper conviction of sin and a keener desire for righteousness than he had before.

This test enables us at once to set aside some mystical experiences as morbid, harmful, or illusory. They do not tend to make life better; they do not stimulate the moral faculty or encourage any other healthy branch of human activity. They tend rather to undermine character, to weaken vitality, and to diminish the forces that are at war with evil in the world.

Of course we must be careful not to apply too narrow a test. We are to investigate the value of mysticism in faith and practice. But what do we mean by practice? Do we mean that the mystic by means of his mysticism must be able to do things he could not do before? We have no right to make that demand. The mind of the mystic may be more contemplative than active; it is enough if his mysticism enables him to *be* something more and better than he was able to be without it.

It is, however, at the same time a striking circumstance that some of the most distinguished

of the Christian mystics were as distinguished for practical energy and ability as for contemplative devotion. The instances which at once spring to the mind are those of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Catherine of Siena. The movement of reform which St. Francis instituted, even if its immediate effects were short-lived, is still felt as an inspiration to lives of self-sacrifice in the service of God and man. St. Catherine of Siena was the inspirer of the papal policy during a critical period in its history. Her judgment was no doubt sometimes warped, either by the partizanship of the doctrinaire or by the simple-mindedness of the child of light. Yet in the main her counsel was as sound and statesmanlike as it was undoubtedly the fruit of her inward communing with the Unseen.

But we must not apply the test of practice so as to exclude from the realm of true mysticism experiences against which we have nothing to say except that they are abnormal, provided they are verifiable in the world at large and stand the test of application to human life. There are, it is true, certain experiences derived from the use of drugs, and some hallucinations of the mentally unsound, which claim a complete objectivity and inspire an intense conviction. But they do not stand the test of verification or of application to life. They are therefore not only to be avoided, but to be denied the right of authority even over those to whom they come. On the other hand, there is a strong vein of mysticism in the profoundly ethical genius of Socrates, who constantly felt the guidance of his *dæmon*, and was apparently subject to a peculiar form of trance. It was some kind of abnormal experience that inspired the fervour of the Hebrew prophet; and Mr. QUICK thinks that it is perhaps worth while to remark that Ezekiel, whose peculiar psycho-physical constitution seems to resemble most nearly that of the mystic saints, was at the same time the first Hebrew to receive and formulate the fundamental postulate of ethics, that the individual is responsible for what he himself has done.

But the test of a good life is only one of the tests which may be applied to mysticism in order to ascertain its value for faith and practice. Another is to lay its results alongside of the doctrines of theology and see how they agree together. Professor William JAMES denies the right of theology to estimate the value of mysticism. Saints, he says, are saints whether their theology is Buddhist, Christian, or Stoic. But Mr. QUICK holds that you can always distinguish a Buddhist from a Christian saint, and that the difference is due to their theology. In the Christian Church, he says, we have a magnificent succession of more or less mystical personalities, who not only instituted religious orders, but also exercised a most important influence in practical fields, such as politics, education, and the care of the sick. On the other hand, Oriental mystics, while leading pure and noble lives, tend to cut themselves off from men, and to survey the world with a superior though kindly pity, which can only withdraw itself from the evil it knows to be invincible. The difference lies really in the whole spiritual power breathing through these two types of life: the active power of the love of God on the one side, and the passive stability of union with the All on the other. In other words, the Christian mystic is inspired by a better theology than the Oriental; the Incarnation is a more fruitful principle than Pantheism.

Now, when we apply the test of theology, we not only find that in general the better theology gives the better mystic, we also find that in particular cases mysticism has failed to produce good results because of the necessity of keeping in touch with a theology that was itself impure and unprogressive. Why did Greek divination remain on the lower level of magic, and never rise, as Hebrew did, to the height of prophecy? It was because that power to whose action the wonders of divination were attributed by the Greeks was not one God, personal and holy, but a mixed crowd of gods and goddesses of all ranks, grades, and characters. The theology was debased; and it

was the debased theology that rendered the Greek religion incapable of producing from among its seers any one worthy of the title of prophet.

It may be a surprising but it is no longer an unaccountable thing, that the Church of Rome, in which the influence of orthodoxy has been strongest, has also been richest in mystics. Mystical saints often emphasize their need of external guidance. Saint John of the Cross, Saint Teresa, Saint Catherine of Siena, and Saint Catherine of Genoa, all feel intense dread of deception and delusion in raptures and visions, and look upon mysticism apart from ecclesiastical authority as dangerous in the extreme. All this tends to show that the mystic state, having no specific intellectual content of its own, needs the support of some external theological system, and recognizes the fairness of being judged by the standard of that system.

This is the defect which Mr. QUICK discovers in the Modern Mind-Cure Movement. Its leaders, he says, have indeed grasped a general and permanent aspect of mystical truth, and they have applied it in a way which the Church has ignored, to her cost. But he thinks it difficult to imagine that exhortations 'to realize one's own Divinity' and 'feel oneself a conscious part of the Deity' will either meet with a wide response or inspire the noblest form of saintliness. And he asks, Might not the influence of an orthodox theology have preserved the practical efficiency of this teaching, while preventing its expression in terms which are not only intellectually absurd, in the sense that they utterly fail to support the inferences drawn from them, but also jar most harshly on the sense of reverence inseparable from the highest type of religious mind?

The third test is the test of science. It is not theology nor philosophy, it is science that has been the persistent opponent of mysticism; and yet Mr. Quick believes that it is in relation to

science that mysticism possesses its special religious value at the present time.

In the first place, during recent years psychology has made a considerable advance towards furnishing an explanation of the form of mystical experience by referring it through the hypothesis of the sub-conscious self to the process known as automatism or auto-suggestion. And it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance which such an explanation may have for religion. For in proportion as any experience is inexplicable, it remains, from the human point of view, not only miraculous, but fortuitous, since we can know nothing of the conditions under which it arises, or the principle on which it is bestowed. Take conversion. As long as conversion remains *merely* a miracle, we cannot help the sinner to attain it. Therefore all scientific explanation is to be welcomed.

But, after all, it is only the form, the method of transmission, or the conditions of the experience that psychology explains. One important thing in the experience, that is, its spiritual value, remains outside the province of psychology, and beyond the reach of science. The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and science may hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth.

The result is that science has hitherto ignored mysticism, and mysticism, as a rule, has been ignorant of science. That attitude will no longer be maintained. Mysticism and science are found to represent two opposite sides of truth. The pronouncements of the one must not be made the test of the value of the other. But just because the one is the supplement of the other, they furnish a corrective of one another. In the words of Baron von Hügel, science supplies to the mystic 'a manly and bracing humiliation'; it softens that note of appropriation of the Almighty which seems to sound through some of the extravagances of mystical literature. It forces also upon his atten-

tion the supreme need of practical method and the reality of intellectual difficulty and doubt, aspects of life which all but the greatest mystics tend to ignore.

What, then, after all these corrections, is the

value of mysticism for faith and practice? Its value is that it keeps the eternal ever before us in this our earthly and temporal life. Mr. QUICK does not claim that it has added anything to the knowledge that we have of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He claims only that it keeps God very near.

## Wesley's Doctrine of Assurance.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK BALCH, MONTROSE.

THE steps of that pilgrimage which led Wesley at last into possession of the full assurance of faith were all taken Godward. Wesley's conversion has been variously placed, but, taking the word to mean a turning from evil to God, we can see that Wesley from his youth up had set his face to seek God. The final step of that search was taken on the memorable 24th of May 1738. His early training laid the foundation, says Canon Overton, 'of that simplicity, guilelessness, and unworldliness, which were his strongly marked characteristics all through his life.' His father admitted him to the Lord's table when he was only eight years of age. He was eleven when he entered the Charterhouse School. Tyerman says, 'Wesley, while at this seat of learning, lost the religion which had marked his character from the days of infancy . . . John Wesley entered the Charterhouse a saint, and left it a sinner.'<sup>1</sup> It was not so bad as that. 'I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by, was (1) not being so bad as other people; (2) having still a kindness for religion; and (3) reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers.'<sup>2</sup> His life at Oxford followed the same lines. 'Being removed to the University for five years, I still said my prayers both in public and private, and read with the Scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and, for the most part, very contentedly, in some or other known sin—indeed, with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was

obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot tell what I hoped to be saved by now when I was continually sinning against the little light I had; unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call repentance.'<sup>2</sup>

We follow him to find him greatly influenced by three books, *The Imitation of Christ*, *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, and *The Serious Call*. *The Imitation*, with its keynote of devotion, flashed its search-light on one point only—that of personal communion with God. It is not concerned with the results of spiritual communion. It never sees humanity's needs. It helped to centre Wesley's thoughts on Christ, and to give a form of spiritual selfishness to the early struggle. (He went to Georgia in 1735, 'to save his soul.') Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying* led him to make the decision. 'I resolved to dedicate all my life to God.' He got much of his High Church bent from this work. Law's *Serious Call*, with its central teaching, 'nothing godly can be alive in us, but what has all its life from the Spirit of God, living and breathing in us,' gave him a new view of spiritual life and intensified its purpose.

With opened eyes Wesley searches the Bible as the one, the only standard of truth. His quest was for 'a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master.'

The formation of the 'Holy Club' helped Wesley and the Oxford Methodists, by self-discipline, service, and study, to reach a fairly complete knowledge of what a Christian ought to be and do, but the way of attainment was not yet clear to him.

Wesley is now a Fellow of Lincoln College, and has taken Holy Orders. He preaches before the University on January 1, 1733, and defines 'faith' as

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Times of Wesley*, vol. i. pp. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Journals*, May 24, 1738.