

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

A LARGE and important volume has been published containing the addresses given at a Conference of Young Public School Masters held at Harrow last year. The general title is *Problems in Modern Education*, and the editor is Dr. E. D. Labôrde, Assistant Master at Harrow School (Cambridge University Press ; 8s. 6d. net). The book is divided into two parts. The second part contains the papers of a more specialized kind, dealing with various aspects of the educational situation. The first part is a background to these particular problems, with addresses of a more general nature, like Dr. W. R. Inge's on 'What is Christianity?' and Professor MacMurray's 'The Christian Movement in Education.'

The most important of these general addresses is that given by Sir Cyril NORWOOD, President of St. John's College, Oxford, on 'The Educational, Social and International Relevance of Christianity in the Modern World.' He begins by defining Christianity. Its essence is this, that God is real, that the spiritual values are real, and that a future existence is real. Further, that at a definite period of historic time God became man, manifested Himself in the life of the human Jesus, to show to mankind the Way of life. This is Christianity, whatever dogmatic form it may assume. What then, Sir Cyril asks, has this to say to the world about us?

It is attacked from two sides to-day. First from the side of the exaltation of the State. In

this system the individual is submerged, the only values recognized are economic, and Power alone is the measure of action. There is no God, but Germany shall be great, Italy shall be great, Russia shall be great. It is foolish to ignore the fact that this does present itself to the young German or Italian or Russian as a release, honour from disgrace, light from darkness, power from weakness. It enlists all the ardours of youth and offers to him the chance of glorious self-sacrifice, and the sublimation of self.

The simplest way to argue with any one who has reached this conclusion is to hit him on the nose, because this is what he will understand. But that way madness lies. And that in a nutshell is the difficulty of the present international situation. If this is not the way, what weapon have we to meet the peril presented by this materialistic attack, or to meet the other attack, which is of course from the side of psychology and need not be elaborated (Sir Cyril gives it only a few words)?

The first, and strongest, is *education*. Its importance is well understood in Totalitarian countries. But there its aim is narrow. The aim is not culture but nationalistic fitness. Our aim must be to produce men and women not less devoted than theirs but more enlightened. This is where the educational relevance of Christianity appears. We must get rid of a conception of education, which still lingers in the schools, that it is intended to fit youth for a career. This is as narrow as the Total-

itarian idea that the purpose of education is to produce the nation-socialist man. We have not yet grasped the fact that education is a preparation for life and the consequences that flow from this truth.

When we do grasp this, it becomes apparent that religion and education are so bound together that they are in their development two sides of one process. Education cannot be a secular activity merely. Nor can the fundamental place of religion in it be ignored, as it so often is. There can be no compromise on this matter. There is a clear-cut issue before us. On the one hand is sheer materialism and the eclipse of spiritual values. On the other is the one clear alternative, God and the Spirit. If this is true can we leave it out of education? It is our duty to prepare youth for life, and, if we prize youth's highest interests, we cannot deny it the highest truth. What is this but to say that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ.

Sir Cyril therefore urges definitely and decisively that national education ought to be frankly based on Christianity. Not so much a dogmatic Christianity, rather a way of life, based on the central truth of God's manifestation of Himself. What he has in mind is that education should be freed from the narrow, materialistic aims that have so long hindered its real idealism, and that we should recognize frankly that to fit a child for living we must base his life on spiritual truth, on that truth which will give him a reason for self-sacrifice and service, and indeed a reason for being honest and decent.

What Sir Cyril has to say about the *social* relevance of Christianity may be indicated in a paragraph. He recognizes that Jesus had no political aims and that He did not try to reform the world by political action of any sort. 'So far as I can tell, He bade those who sought to make the world better to go away and make themselves better.' He relied on gradualness, on the change wrought on many individual hearts, on the change wrought by many individuals following Him. And

what we see in history has been the effect of His teaching awakening a social conscience, at the bidding of which all the great social achievements of Christianity have come about. It is to the working of this Christ-enlightened conscience that we must look for the social reforms that urgently press on us for fulfilment.

When Sir Cyril turns to the *international* relevance of Christianity, he glances at several of the questions that at once leap to the mind. There is the urgent question of the colonies. What are we to say to the German claim? The real difficulty here is the German *view* of colonies. They are not a trust to be developed for the good of the people. They are an estate to be exploited for the good of Germany. This is the real obstacle in the way of giving back the colonies. And Sir Cyril strongly advocates what seems likely to be in the long run the only solution, colonies (all colonies) to be administered under international control, with access for all to the raw materials they need.

Another urgent question is the economic one. It is a crazy idea that you can sell to other nations but need not buy from them. It is even crazier to think that you can be rich and prosperous and other lands can be poor and distressed. But these crazy ideas are widely held, with the result that international trade now runs in a thin and narrow stream. Therefore the next, and logical, and Christian step is that the world will be economically a single community, and all seas open and all roads free. In such a world, to which Christianity points, there would be universal free trade, a high standard of living, and leisure, culture and health. It lies for the present in the land of dreams. The way to it is barred by economic nationalism. But what are we Christians for but to clear the way for it?

But behind and beneath all other questions is the issue between two ways of life. We may say it is between democracy and authoritarianism, between freedom and compulsion, between liberty and despotism. But the basic fact is that democracy is capable of being made a Christian conception, and along its roads Christian ideas and ideals can

work themselves out harmoniously, but in the Totalitarian State they cannot.

At bottom it depends on the conception which you have of human personality. Is the human personality of value in itself? Am I a child of God and an heir to eternal life? That is the fundamental question. That is the great issue for the future of humanity which has to be fought out in this century. Education and religion can alone help the world at this crisis. And if what has here been written is right, they can no longer be separated. The schoolmaster pursues a high vocation. He works in the service of a great hope. If democracy is not ennobled by religion it will not survive, and if the Christian values cease to have honour among men, then will perish with them not only the reality of progress, but the possibility of hope.

St. Paul's declaration, 'He that is spiritual judgeth all things,' comes to mind as one reads the Rev. V. A. DEMANT'S new book, *The Religious Prospect* (Muller; 7s. 6d. net). With an easy mastery and penetration the author handles the movements of the age—Liberalism, Marxism, and Fascism—evaluating and judging the ideas that underlie them by the insight given in Christian dogma. The Christian is aware that this world of Becoming has the root of its existence in an eternal world of Being, which is God; and that awareness enables him to interpret what is happening in the world to-day.

While concerned about the Totalitarian attack on the rights of personality, the author is clear that Totalitarianism cannot be understood as a mere exhibition of human naughtiness. In its fundamental outlook it is all too similar to the Liberalism against which it is a reaction. Modern man has tried to understand his existence in terms of the world-process of Becoming alone. Liberalism, stressing the freedom of the individual and the conceptions of progress and social evolution, has looked for the perfection of man within that process. Totalitarianism, stressing the collective rather than the individual and giving political

expression to vitalistic and irrationalist theories, is only a more robust embodiment of the same this-worldly philosophy. Respect for the status of persons, which is the valuable part of the liberal or democratic tradition, cannot in fact be sustained by a philosophy which denies any reality transcending the cosmic process, but only by the religious dogma that man's being is derived from an eternal world beyond the flux of Becoming.

Yet, though modern man has ceased to acknowledge the Transcendent God, his being is still upheld by God, and God moves him away from a false position by the pain of the frustration experienced in it. So long, however, as he remains ignorant of God and his own relation to God, he merely goes over to another false position until it, too, fails him. Such oscillations suggest that there is some central position which man has overlooked; and that position is revealed in the Incarnation, which not only speaks of a penetration into the historic process of the God who is beyond history as well as in it, but also gives significance to all events in history because it is a particular event with an absolute meaning. Thus the Incarnation provides a basis both for the liberal truth of the status and dignity of man in general, and also for the Totalitarian truth that man is a concrete being in a particular setting, of soil and blood, race and nation.

What, then, of the Christian message for these times? The presentation of the Christian faith, which alone is adequate to enable men to control events as well as to understand them, is one which is neither aloof from actual affairs nor merely another name for a secular hope. It must be a renewed affirmation of the link-in-contradiction between God and the world, which is discerned by the Christian through his knowledge of God given in salvation. Liberal Christianity, stressing God's immanent activity and tending to regard Christ as merely 'the high water mark of the cosmic tide out of which He emerged,' denies the contradiction. Neo-Calvinist transcendentalism, insisting that fallen man, even when redeemed, knows only God's saving grace to the saved and His judgment on a world order which is so fallen that His gracious

hand cannot be discerned in history, denies the link. The gospel for to-day must declare the Eternal Word from God beyond the cosmic process ; and it must maintain that the Saviour is also the Sustainer and Restorer of the creation. Salvation is not a change of heart and a change of nothing else, but such a redemption of the world by God as is also a restoration of fallen existence to its essential nature or truly natural order.

Neither must God be thought of as so immanent in the world that it hardly needs redemption, nor must redemption be understood as the rescue of man out of a cosmic mess, so that his life in this world is without guidance from beyond. The right ordering of this world is not to be seen in the world, but in the light of Christ and from the supernatural standpoint of redemption there is discernible a true order of values for the varied spheres of man's interest—biological, political, social, and economic. Here again the spiritual man is able to judge all things. So Mr. DEMANT concludes this stimulating 'essay in theological prophecy' by calling for a new synthesis of Grace and Natural Law such as the mediæval philosophers attempted, a synthesis, however, that will take account of aspects of human existence which were outside their view and will also give due force to the distorting fact of sin and the need for redemption from beyond Nature.

The latest addition to the Religious Book Club to come to our hands is *Religion for Living*, by the Rev. Bernard Iddings BELL, who was Professor of Religion in Columbia University, 1930-35, and since 1933 has been Canon of St. John's Cathedral, Providence.

His American nationality, education and sphere of service explain some features of his publications which have been interesting and arresting—his best-known up to now being 'Beyond Agnosticism.' They explain not only his literary style which sometimes verges on the flippant, or even the 'slangy,' but his semi-detached personal ecclesiastical characteristics. He is a 'catholic,' but lays

no stress on the term ; he is an Anglican, but evinces a large truly 'catholic' charity towards Christians outside that Communion. So pleasant is that that non-Anglicans will readily pardon his—to them—rather unconvincing insistence on the importance of the Apostolic succession of Bishops.

This book of his is full of meat, and full of challenge. It must be read as a whole, otherwise misunderstanding might arise. Thus his statements as to the value of sacramental worship must be balanced by what he has to say elsewhere in the volume, and he says it well—as to the fatal enmity of 'magic' to true spiritual religion.

The reader directly addressed throughout is the 'post-modernist.' By that Canon BELL means the large class of intelligent and more or less morally earnest people who have seen the collapse of irreligious 'humanism.' 'Humanists' or 'liberals' appear to be 'blind to the facts of human life, dreamers in a romantic and unreal world.' In the real world men are not by nature good and trustworthy, nor is 'everything sure to get better and better by mere lapse of time.' Man needs God, and he needs above all the grace of God if goodness is to be maintained and advanced.

The book aims at convincing the 'post-modernist' that the situation is not hopeless nor without precedent ; that the truth of things especially of human life and destiny is knowable and that man need not go round and round in fruitless circles.

The way out is offered in the Christian religion with its great fundamental doctrines of God in Christ, forgiveness and grace. That leads to consideration of the Church and the Kingdom of God. All this is very well expounded and will be read with profit not only by the 'post-modernist' himself but by the minister of religion whose task it is to present Christianity acceptably to this bewildered age.

We may consider in more detail the third section which deals with the promotion of Christianity. How is the truth to be spread abroad ? First there

is the way of religious education. Now this is a difficult topic, and our author is fully alive to the difficulty. What is the most satisfactory plan for real religious education? The Sunday school has its weaknesses. In this country it may not be so 'obsolescent' as Canon BELL holds it to be, but we all know the difficulties.

The worst difficulty is that one brief hour a week seems far too little. Some prefer a Children's Service to a Sunday school, but this difficulty remains. A daily religious lesson in the parochial school seems at first view to be preferable, but here the difficulty is that a 'Bible story' is so often taken to be all that can be done, plus a certain amount of 'catechism,' and to get a really good catechism seems unattainable. The Canon concludes that only in the home can real religious education be hopefully carried on, although well-managed Sunday schools or day school religious lessons are far from valueless.

Next, if children can be best educated only in the home, how are parents to be fitted to impart spiritual truth? Canon BELL lays great stress on preaching and on a certain kind of preaching. He has some hard things to say of much present-day preaching. It is so unsystematic. It consists so often of bright little essays on topics the inter-relationship of which is never revealed and certainly could never be guessed. There is immeasurable need of teaching from the pulpit. The ordinary listener has next to no knowledge of what the

essential Christian doctrines are. Our author's own experience has been that if real teaching is given, there are many who receive it gladly. In his own phrase, they 'lap it up.' Whether or not that would be the fortune of all ministers who gave themselves to systematic teaching is difficult to say. Beyond all doubt, as has been emphasized in our columns before now, Canon BELL says what needs to be said about preaching.

Thirdly, the Christian preacher must inculcate the vital relationship between religion and social service. 'Men and women who matter are not likely to turn to God unless and until they perceive in Christians a social pertinency of creed and cult and code.' Christians are tempted to cease to face social difficulties and become 'other-worldly,' and that only leads the man in the street to regard religion as but an escape-mechanism. No, we must not run away from the problems, we must face up to them. Not that the Church is called to solve them. But it is the Christian's task to uphold certain ideals and strive towards them; ideals such as peace, righteousness, co-operation among men. And as the outsider sees us bearing witness to the social derivatives of the Christian doctrine of man, he will be more willing than now he is to 'turn to Him who alone can make men really men and women really women.' He will 'much more easily learn to believe in God if he sees us willing to contend for God—at whatever cost—in the economic and political complications of our difficult day.'

Recent Biblical Archaeology.

BY THE REVEREND J. W. JACK, D.D., GLENFARG, PERTSHIRE.

SURPRISE has sometimes been expressed that in a country like Palestine, where there is abundance of stone, the great majority of buildings in ancient times—the superstructures at least—should have been of brick. It must be remembered, however, that the quarrying and dressing of stone necessi-

tated the use of metal tools, and these, if they could be secured at all, were scarce and costly, whereas the Palestinian soil was rich in excellent clay which could easily be moulded into brick squares (לְבִנִים, Gn 11⁸). Consequently, whenever a settled population abandoned their semi-nomad huts (generally