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JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
The Victoria Institute  
OR  
Philosophical Society of Great Britain

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VOL. LXXII

1940



LONDON:

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PUBLISHED BY  
THE INSTITUTE, 1, CENTRAL BUILDINGS, WESTMINSTER, W.C.1

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## The Rev. S. Runsie Craig Memorial, 1940.

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In accordance with the terms of the Trust, the Council have selected for the 1940 Memorial the paper on "The Wholesomeness of Christianity as Illustrated by British History," presented to the Society on 19th February, 1940, by the Rev. P. H. Scott, B.D., as affording strong confirmation of the genuineness of the "Faith once delivered to the Saints."

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War conditions having rendered it impracticable to hold an Ordinary Meeting on February 19th, 1940, the Paper appointed to be read on that date was circulated to subscribers and is here published, together with the written discussion elicited.

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### *THE WHOLESOMENESS OF CHRISTIANITY AS ILLUSTRATED BY BRITISH HISTORY.*

By the REV. P. H. SCOTT, B.D.

#### INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE Christian Faith has been one of the most potent forces which have operated upon the history of the human race during the past two millenniums. This Faith is much more than a code of doctrine; it is something which can only express itself in terms of active human life, for, unlike other religions, its vital basis is a living Human Personality—indeed Human Personality in the perfection of likeness to God the Creator. Apart from its historic basis in the Incarnate Christ, there can properly be no Christian Faith.

If the claims which Christianity makes for itself are justified, then the influence which it has exerted upon the life of a nation should prove to be beneficial in the highest degree. Moreover, since the dynamic power of this faith makes itself felt in every department of human life, evidence of its beneficial influence should be found in everything which is an expression of national character, viz., in politics, literature, art, social conditions, as well as in religion. An examination of some of the salient features of British history since Christianity first spread to these islands may therefore be expected to yield ample evidence of the wholesomeness of Christianity.

#### THE CELTIC AND ANGLO-SAXON PERIODS.

The origin of the Early British Church is lost in obscurity, and only occasional glimpses are vouchsafed during the whole of the

period of the Roman occupation, of the spread of Christianity in Britain. Foundations of a Christian basilica dating from the fourth century A.D. were discovered in 1892 at Silchester. Three British bishops attended the Council of Arles in A.D. 314, and three more were present at that of Ariminum in A.D. 359. The fact that the latter were the only ones to accept the Emperor's offer to defray the travelling expenses of episcopal delegates indicates that the British Churches were very poor. Probably the ranks of British Christians were recruited mainly from the slave classes. Howbeit, the British Church produced the heresiarch Pelagius and the great St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland.

After the withdrawal of the Roman legions between A.D. 410 and 450, Britain succumbed to the repeated attacks of the wild sea-rovers from the north-western coasts of Germany. It is not clear whether the Celtic population of the eastern portion of England completely disappeared, or whether, as is more probable, a considerable number of the poorer classes remained as hewers of wood and drawers of water to their Anglo-Saxon conquerors. At all events, the practical observance of Christian rites seems to have utterly perished in the districts conquered by the pagan hordes.

Celtic Christianity of the sixth and seventh centuries was mainly monastic in character and was most active in Ireland where the monasteries were organised on the basis of the clan. From Ireland the Picts of Western Scotland were evangelised by monks who settled at Iona. These Northern missionaries, led by men like Saints Columba, Aidan, Cedd and Chad, journeyed into the Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia, and from centres like the wind-swept Island of Lindisfarne, evangelised the interior of the land. Meanwhile the Roman Mission, dispatched by the missionary-hearted Pope Gregory the Great, converted for a short space the kingdoms of Kent, East Anglia, and Northumbria and laid the foundations of the sees of Canterbury, Rochester and London. Since the results of their work at first depended only upon the conversion of the monarchs of these kingdoms, the succession in each case of a pagan king overthrew all their labour for a time. By the time of the Conference of Whitby, however, in 664, the whole land was at least nominally Christian. Henceforth, the spectacle of the now united Anglo-Saxon Church encouraged the gradual movement towards the political unity of the different kingdoms. Theodore of Tarsus,

the greatest of the early Archbishops of Canterbury, developed the organisation of our parochial system, which has proved one of the most powerful factors in the evangelisation of England.

Anglo-Saxon Christianity, as in all lands at that time, was largely monastic. The monasteries formed oases of peace, education and culture in a turbulent and barbarous age. In them was cultivated a love of art and literature, both sacred and secular. Evidence of this is provided by the Lindisfarne Gospels, a bilingual version in Latin and Anglo-Saxon, written c. A.D. 700; the Codex Amiatinum, a beautiful MS. of the Vulgate, written at Jarrow or Wearmouth, and presented to Pope Gregory in A.D. 716; the Ecclesiastical History of the Venerable Bede; and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

The influence of Christianity on jurisprudence is shown by the laws of King Alfred, which were headed by the Ten Commandments and the negative version of the Golden Rule. Christianity was effective in softening many of the harsh judicial practices of the Anglo-Saxons, replacing Teutonic custom by moral right, and identifying crime with sin. Men like St. Cuthbert and St. Aidan were often effective in checking and disciplining the harshness and licence of their sovereigns, and in inculcating charity, clemency and righteousness.

The bonds that united England with the Universal Church also brought her once again into the stream of European culture and civilisation, from which she had been cut off at the break-up of the Roman Empire. English missionaries, such as Wilfrid, Willibrod, Boniface and many others, were henceforth to play a great part for the next four centuries in evangelising the Northern lands of Europe. The Frisians, Germans, Swedes and Finns, were all won for Christ by the self-sacrificing labours of Englishmen, while the great Alcuin became one of the most trusted councillors of the Emperor Charlemagne. The practice of the later Anglo-Saxon kings in appointing ecclesiastics as their chief ministers, while often disadvantageous to the spiritual work of the Church, brought a certain amount of Christian influence to bear upon political affairs, and in general made for righteous government.

#### THE NORMAN PERIOD.

In the Norman Period there were three main orders of monks: the older Benedictines, who emphasised the sanctity of learning; the Cluniacs, whose original idea was to stress the supremacy

of Christ over the lawlessness of men ; and the Cistercians, who emphasised the sanctity of labour. To the Benedictines we owe the development of literature and history ; to the Cluniacs the development of jurisprudence and legal practice, through the Church courts and Canon Law ; to the Cistercians, with their great Yorkshire abbeys, owning in the case of Fountains Abbey over 1,000,000 acres, the development of the English wool trade, and to a lesser extent the working of iron and lead. The earlier Cistercian monks cleared forests, drained swamps, and utilised the barren Yorkshire dales for sheep farming, thus becoming largely responsible for constituting the English wool trade the staple of her commerce and taxation during the Middle Ages. The monasteries also acted as places of education, as hostels where travellers could find lodging, especially in lonely districts, as dispensers of rather indiscriminate charity, and as banks and places of safe custody for money and valuables.

In the reign of King John, the national liberties, customs and privileges were menaced, first by the tyranny and autocracy of the king and then by the rapacity of the Pope. The nation then turned for leadership very largely to men of Christian character and upbringing. Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the saintly Hugh of Lincoln boldly supported the claims of justice and righteousness against the lustful rapacity of John. To Stephen Langton was due the first clause of Magna Carta, which enunciates the principle of the freedom of the Church, and of all free men, from the tyranny of the Crown. Although the importance of Magna Carta has at times been greatly exaggerated, and although its terms have sometimes been wrongly interpreted in the light of subsequent developments, yet it does enshrine principles which have proved capable of progressive development. In laying this foundation of English liberties Christian influence played an important part.

In the next reign the danger to English liberty lay in the oppression and exaction of the Papal See, which shamelessly exploited the English Church to finance its warlike ambitions in Europe. Against these practices the saintly and scholarly Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosseteste, raised a noble and undaunted protest. He also laid a much-needed emphasis on the need for the clergy to devote time and thought to the study of the Scriptures and to education.

## THE RISE OF THE FRIARS.

In the thirteenth century the older monastic orders had already, to some extent, exhausted the high level of usefulness to which they had risen during the previous century, and were being overtaken by the desire for wealth, comfort, and luxury which was always the bane of monastic life. They were largely detached from the national life, particularly from the growth of the towns, and they did little or nothing to evangelise the people. To supply this lack of contact between the religious and secular life of the day arose the friars. The Dominicans sought to safeguard the Catholic Faith against the heresies derived from a study of Greek philosophy and Eastern mysticism, which had been imported into Europe via the Moors of Spain. Later they became the watchdogs of the Inquisition. The Franciscans laid stress on the voluntary poverty, the humanity and the preaching of Jesus Christ. Both orders introduced the idea of popular preaching, and sought to reach the masses of the city dwellers who were almost completely untouched by the parish priests. They were by no means backward in learning, as the great names of Friar Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham testify. Bacon was the pioneer of experimental philosophy, while Duns Scotus and William of Ockham were pioneers of systematic theology and of the appeal to Scripture as against tradition, for which Oxford soon became famous.

Wycliffe is the link between the mediæval Schoolmen, whose systematic theology was a blend of Christianity and Aristotelian philosophy, and the return to experimental Christianity, based upon the direct study of the Bible. His age was one of transition, when the inadequacy of the Mediæval Church to meet the moral, intellectual and social needs of the people was becoming patent to all. Men were demanding something new and more satisfying.

Wycliffe began by attacking, from a scholastic standpoint, the wealth, privileges and corruption of the Church, and in so doing he was supported by political leaders like John of Gaunt. Later, however, he attacked the very foundations of priestly authority, the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and sought to provide for humble men a new basis of authority in matters of faith—the Holy Scriptures translated into the vernacular. From his teaching, and from the ministry of his Poor Priests sprang the Lollard movement, which spread rapidly among all classes in the reign of Richard II. In fact, if it had not been for the accession of the House of Lancaster, who gained the throne by

the help of the Church, the Reformation might have broken out in England in the fourteenth instead of the sixteenth century.

As it was, however, the movement was partly crushed, and driven underground by bitter persecution, of which that blot on our Statute Book, the Act "De Heretico Comburendo," is ample evidence. At first multitudes recanted, but many were burned, often for possessing a copy of the New Testament, for which the huge sum of 14 marks 40 pence was then paid. The movement, however, was never wholly stamped out, as the records of martyrdoms in the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII prove. In London, the Eastern counties and in the West, it provided a new religious basis for the forces of revolt against the corruption of the Mediæval Church. Because of the preparation of the ground afforded by the Lollards, the doctrines of Martin Luther found a ready entrance into England, and English universities, in the fifteenth century.

#### THE REFORMATION AND THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD.

In an old Bohemian psalter, dated 1572, is a representation of Wycliffe striking the spark, John Huss kindling the coals, and Martin Luther brandishing the flaming torch. This represents the truth that all that Europe owes to the great religious awakening known as the Reformation found its ultimate source in England through Wycliffe's return to the Bible as the main authority in matters of faith.

This increasing study of the Bible was that which proved the mainspring of the English Reformation, and that which ultimately rooted it deeply in the character of the nation. This new-found belief in the Bible as the Revelation of the Will of God was strengthened during the Marian persecution by the spectacle of men and women, whose lives were known by their neighbours to be simple, honest and sincere, dying with courage and fortitude for their faith. Their heroic deaths revealed at once the power of their faith and the tyranny and malice of the Roman Church.

This knowledge of the Bible began with the influence of the printed Greek New Testament of Erasmus upon the scholars at Cambridge and Oxford in the reign of Henry VIII, was continued clandestinely by the spread of Tyndale's English translation, and found at last official expression in the Injunctions of 1538 directing a copy of the English Bible to be set up in every church. The smaller Geneva Bible of 1558, and the Bishops' Bible of

1568, being handy in size, found their way into many humble homes, and held for a century the place which the Authorised Version has held since the middle of the seventeenth century. Worship, guided by the Holy Scriptures, became intelligent, and intelligible to all through the stately language of the Book of Common Prayer. As the historian Green so ably said of this period, "England became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible. It was as yet the one English book which was familiar to every Englishman: it was read in churches, and it was read at home; and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened, kindled a startling enthusiasm."

These factors brought with them an ever-increasing measure of political freedom, and independence from Continental interference, which manifested itself in growing sea-power, improved coinage, and greater respect in European counsels. It also effected eventual union with Scotland, in place of the continual bickering and spasmodic warfare of centuries.

In internal economy, the Elizabethan poor law administration solved the problem of the hordes of "sturdy beggars" who had menaced the safety of the countryside for many years, and enunciated the principle of the responsibility of the nation for the relief and care of its poorest citizens. This principle was almost certainly learned from the Holy Scriptures.

In literature, the translation of the Bible into English, and particularly into the stately and rhythmic phraseology of Tyndale's English, which still remains the basis of our New Testament, inaugurated a new era of English literature. Leaving behind the somewhat slavish imitation of classicism, which pertained to the earlier Renaissance, the poets, dramatists, and prose writers of Elizabethan literature raised the use of their mother tongue to a level hitherto undreamt of. In their phraseology and in the background of their themes, Spenser, Shakespeare, Bacon and others were greatly indebted to the Bible.

#### THE PURITANS.

The term "Puritan" covers a very wide difference of viewpoint on the matter of Church government. Many Puritans did not differ greatly from the average orthodox English Churchman of the period, while others were harsh and intolerant Presbyterians, or broadminded Independents, such as Cromwell

himself. Whatever their views on Church government, the Puritans as a whole set great store upon the practical side of Christian life. They yearned to see the principles of the Christian faith manifested in a life which was a direct witness against the open luxuriousness, licence, debauchery and pleasure-seeking which characterised contemporary society.

While the Protestant faith had gained a firm hold of the towns and seaports of the land by the close of the Elizabethan era, the country districts, particularly in the wilder, and more remote northern and western areas, were still sunk in ignorance and semi-Roman superstition. The Puritan yeomen, squires and clergy, by their continual insistence upon family prayer and the reading of the Bible at home, gradually laid in these rural areas the foundations of true religion, which remained unshaken for many a long year. Moreover, the Puritan emphasis upon rest from labour on Sundays, and their stern opposition to the rowdy pleasures and sports practised on that day, laid the foundation of the traditions of the English Sunday, which, in spite of all that has been said against it, was to prove such an inestimable boon to the workers when England became an industrial nation.

It has become the fashion to sneer at the Puritans as hypocritical psalm-singing kill-joys, and many of the arguments brought against them by contemporaries whose vices they sternly rebuked, have been quoted in support of this statement. It is often forgotten that the standards they set up frequently differed but little from those which to-day form the criterion of the average honest and decent gentleman, whether he be religiously minded or not. In spite of the fact that some of them may have carried their war against vices and pleasures to extreme lengths, and manifested insincerity in their attitude, music, art and literature flourished among them. We owe to them much of the strength, the probity, and the seriousness of the English character, and to them is due the fact that the Reformed Faith struck its roots so deeply into the nation that three centuries of change have not seriously disturbed its innate Protestantism.

In politics they were fearless upholders of principles of liberty and justice, and became the founders of English democracy, both in the Homeland and in America. "The history of the leadership of the Commons from 1600-1640 presents, in an era when public life was specially corrupt and unprincipled, the spectacle of prolonged, heroic, unselfish and well-advised action by the representatives of the English country gentleman, such as is

rare in the politics of any age . . . But Eliot, Hampden, Pym, and their colleagues were Puritans." (Trevelyan, *England in the Age of the Stuarts*.)

Cromwell, the greatest of the Puritans, was one of the first leaders of England to advocate and to practise toleration in matters of faith and conscience. Amongst other examples of this, he swept away disabilities attaching to the residence of Jews in this country.

### THE METHODIST REVIVAL.

After the Stuart epoch, anything in the nature of religious enthusiasm was frowned upon as dangerous. It was the age of cold logic, and the worship of "Reason"; an age of infidelity and place-seeking. "Let sleeping dogs lie" was the cynical motto of Sir Robert Walpole, who held the premiership for twenty years during the reigns of George I and II by reducing political corruption to a fine art. All Church life, Anglican and Nonconformist, was at a lower ebb than at any time since the Reformation. But God raised up new witnesses to the power of the Christian Gospel. John Wesley, the young clergyman who tried to regulate his life by a methodical rule while at Oxford, "felt strangely warmed" as he listened to the discourse of a Moravian preacher at a meeting-place in Aldersgate Street, and went forth with his brother Charles, and George Whitefield, to take "the world as his parish." Journeying up and down the land, they preached in churches, churchyards, and on the open heaths and commons, to crowds of miners, and the poorest of the people, and stirred England to its depths. Vicars like Fletcher of Madeley, Grimshaw, Toplady, Henry Venn, and John Newton spread the fire in their own parishes. The eighteenth century saw the re-birth of living Christianity in the land, and saved England from the Revolution which overtook a corrupt society in France.

### THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

In the nineteenth century the movement of revival began to touch in a wider and more profound manner the Church of England. By degrees the pulpits of many of the churches were filled with men like Charles Simeon, the younger Venn, and others, who, by word and deed, preached the Gospel of God's grace to

rich and poor alike in spite of bitter opposition. The attention of the laity to whom they ministered was turned to the shepherdless multitudes crowding into the ever-expanding cities as the industrial revolution spread over the North and the Midlands. The horrors of the old-established slave trade, and of the new slavery in mill, and mine, and factory gripped the hearts of men like Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury. The Suppression of the Slave Trade, the Factory Acts, and the Reform Bills were all expressions of this new vision of the worth of human life, and of human liberty, which men had gained from the New Testament. The founding of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Church Missionary Society, and the Religious Tract Society expressed the desire that all men should come to know the uplifting power of the Gospel.

The nineteenth century brought forth great Christians to whom we owe much :—Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing ; Faraday and Lord Kelvin, who had time for God amid all their discoveries ; great statesmen, such as W. E. Gladstone ; great colonial administrators, who regarded themselves as humble servants of God, as did General Gordon ; great explorers and missionaries, such as David Livingstone ; soldiers of true nobility and courage, such as General Havelock ; and a host of others. The poets and novelists of this period were also imbued with a reverence for the things of God and a love for their fellow men, as were Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Louis Stevenson, Charles Kingsley, Tennyson and Browning.

#### THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

Our own age is more difficult to assess. We stand, perhaps, too close to the actors on the stage of its history to see them in their true perspective, and we live in an age of tumult and testing, when all the old foundations of society are being uprooted, or passed through the furnace of testing. Some nations have flung away the Christian standards altogether, as being too feeble for an age of iron and steel, of blood and treachery. Many in our own land enjoy the blessings of liberty, security and human kindness, which have been won for them by generations of Christian men and women, without realising or acknowledging the Source from which they have come. There has been a great falling away from outward observance of Christianity. Yet we are still blessed with a Royal Family that loves and honours God,

and with statesmen who are prepared to stand for Liberty, Truth and Justice, and to seek peace and ensue it. There yet remain a multitude whose hearts are right with God, and whose lives maintain that silent but effective witness for Him that keeps the heart of the nation true to Christian ideals.

### CONCLUSION.

This brief survey of British history may serve to bring out in some measure the tremendous debt which we, as a nation, owe to Christianity. All that is best and noblest in that history may be traced to its influence. We have entered upon a goodly heritage, but the blessings which we enjoy to-day in comparison with other nations have their corresponding responsibilities. In 1940 we stand once again at the cross-roads of history. The crisis of the moment becomes a challenge to return to the God of our fathers, that in consecrating ourselves once again to His service we may be used by Him to be a means of blessing to all the nations of the world.

### WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

The Rev. Principal H. S. CURR wrote: The story of Christianity in Britain illustrates as vividly as that of its growth in any other land its amazing powers of recuperation. Mr. Scott has concentrated attention on those aspects of British Church History which demonstrate its unspeakable beneficence, and he has proved his point. The case might have been strengthened by greater insistence on the evil which followed in the train of its periodical phases of degeneration. Of these and their effects on our national life there can be no other verdict than the old Latin proverb that the corruption of the best is the worst. Despite, however, these unhappy lapses, the Christian faith has again and again revived in England in greater power and purity than ever before. That is all the more remarkable because the reforming and reviving impulse came from within itself. The change was not due to the introduction of new elements but rather by a return to its first love. Bishop Butler was disposed to regard the Bible as the supreme means whereby Christianity regains what it may have lost awhile in spiritual vision and vigour. Mr. W. E. H. Lecky really

makes the same claim when he declares that the Church of Christ has always found in the unveiling of the Person of its Founder "an enduring principle of regeneration".

There are two outstanding instances in the history of British Christianity. One is associated with the abuse of ritual, and the other with the misuse of reason. It will be seen at once that these are the two enemies which have ever dogged the course of the Christian Church in these islands, and in other lands as well. The earlier is connected with the Reformation. The general trend of religion in England had sunk to a deplorable level in the Dark Ages, as the protests of Wycliffe reveal. In some of his historical essays, James Anthony Froude gives details of the daily life in monasteries and other ecclesiastical institutions, and the picture is a painful one, when it is realised that the leading figures claimed to be ministers of Christ. That makes the recovery of our faith all the more wonderful, for not only was the lost ground regained but wonderful progress was made as soon as the Bible entered Englishmen's hearts and minds to bring light and sweetness where darkness, spiritual and intellectual, had reigned.

The other occasion was the Wesleyan Revival, to which Mr. Scott makes appreciative reference. Its real significance may be tested in this way. The gravity of a disease can be estimated not only by the havoc which it works but also by the nature of the remedies used for its removal. If surgical treatment be indispensable, the trouble must be very serious. Pursuing the same method of reasoning, it may be recalled that John Richard Green, the historian, has said that the Wesleyan Revival saved England from the horrors of the French Revolution. Such a statement shows almost better than anything the greatness of the Methodist movement. It meant as much to England as the Revolution to France, and a great deal more. The Wesleyan Revival was the Divine cure of the dry rot which had spread so extensively in English Christianity during the preceding century owing to the popularity of rationalism, and its baleful consequences on national life. It had paralysed the Church until by the mouths of Wesley and Whitefield its divine Head commanded it to take up its bed and walk.

Such things will happen again for Christianity, British and otherwise, is indestructible even as the truth which endureth for ever.

The conditions of its continuance will be ever these resurgences of spiritual life, these spring-tides of grace. It matters not how low the Church may sink in its influence, or how far it may wander in its teaching, it always possesses the possibility of rejuvenation through the Holy Spirit and the Holy Scripture to which it owes everything.

Dr. J. BARCROFT ANDERSON wrote: I am one of those, and they are not a few, who understand the end of Christianity to have been recorded in the Apocalypse, chapter xvii, verse 16. Ended to make way for something worse. The end of Judaism is recorded in Matthew xxiii, verses 33 and 35.

We read in Romans ii, 14, "When races (ethne), those not having law (*i.e.*, the Creator's written instructions), naturally the things of the Law do, these not having law, unto themselves are law. These show the works of the Law, written in their own hearts".

In Matthew xxi, 43, we read the words addressed to the Chief Priests and Elders of the Jews, by the Christ, in His Temple, on Palm Monday, April 7th, A.D. 32. The only day upon which He is recorded as having spoken of Himself as the Christ (Matt. xxiii, 10). (*See* Matt. xvi, 20.) He said "For this (verses 39 and 41), the Kingdom of the God will be taken from you and it will be given to a race (ethnei), doing (*i.e.*, then doing) the fruits of it".

Now if we consider that race, amongst whom the first gentile church was formed, and within two years of Pentecost (as stated by Cardinal Baronius), and, with a government land grant. That race from whose royal house was appointed the first gentile Bishop of Rome. The first race to decree the Scriptures to be of divine authority over itself. The same race that later, about A.D. 306, permanently sent away its armed forces to conquer the then as always heathen Roman Empire, in the hope of imparting its beliefs and its morals to that empire when conquered, and to which it naturally gave a new centre of government.

If we consider all that is known of the facts of the history of that race since that world conquest, and compare them with the known facts of its history from Pentecost back to the reign of its King Brutus, I think we must decide that during this earlier period its social life was more wholesome than it was in that latter period.

Decide that in the pre-Pentecost period there was more liberty for those "who by patient continuance in well-doing sought for glory and honour and immortality", and to whom, in consequence, as stated in Romans ii, 6, "God will give away eternal life".

[For the history of the pre-Pentecost period, see Sir Winstone Churchill's *de divi Britannici*; and R. W. Morgan's *British Kymry*. For post Pentecost, also see Michael Alford's *Fides Regia Britannica*; and relevant parts of Cardinal Baronius' *Annales Ecclesiastici*.]

#### THE AUTHOR'S REPLY.

I am exceedingly grateful to the Rev. Principal H. S. Curr for his helpful remarks, and alternative line of evidence in support of the thesis. In writing the paper, I was certainly not unmindful of the corruptions with which Christianity has been assailed in the course of our national history.

I have, however, endeavoured to point out the positive Christian influences at work in successive periods of our history, which succeeded in making themselves felt in spite of many shortcomings and much corruption.

I have borne in mind that, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon and mediæval periods, the general conception of the Christian faith and of Christian life was often imperfect and inadequate when judged in the light of our fuller knowledge of Holy Scripture, yet even so it exercised a profound influence upon contemporary history.

I am also grateful to the Rev. Principal T. W. Gilbert, D.D., who has read the proofs and has pointed out several necessary corrections which have been embodied in the paper.

I am afraid I find it very difficult to follow the remarks of Dr. J. Barcroft Anderson, particularly in the statements which he makes with regard to early British history. It is impossible to reconcile British Israelite theories, based as they are on such romances as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*, with sober historical facts. Admittedly the period in question is necessarily obscure because of the dearth of contemporary evidence; but monastic legends and re-interpreted folk-lore do not help us very much.