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THE PERSON AND PLACE OF CHRIST

In the preface to *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*,¹ Dr. Forsyth reminds the reader that the book is a series of lectures, not a systematic treatise; that it does not extend "the frontiers of scientific knowledge"; that it is not meant "for scholars, but largely for ministers of the Word."

In the attitude of the lay mind, and the method and work of the religious-historical school, Dr. Forsyth sees two forces which tend mightily to shatter the foundations of Christianity. The former is more interested in "schools, hospitals, temperance, and boys' brigades" than in those "deeper things that dawn upon the experts of the Soul" (p. 17); and it thus champions the ideals of scientific rather than those of evangelical theology. The latter is bent upon making evolution normative in the study and interpretation of the history of religion; and thus threatens the finality of Christ. Both have certain things in common: they treat sin lightly, and accordingly do not stress redemption; they virtually separate the religion of Jesus from the gospel of Christ; they make love rather than holiness central.

But according to the author Christianity emphasizes sin as guilt and proclaims a redemptive message. In a moral act, God in Christ saves man at the Cross; and thus this evangelical experience becomes the key to Christology. Upon reflection the redeemed man observes that every act of Christ is a moral act; and that his person and work ought therefore to be interpreted in terms of ethical, rather than in terms of physical, categories. He observes, furthermore, that there has always been a descending movement of God to man, and an ascending movement of man to God. He accordingly attempts to effect in Christ the necessary union, not of two natures, but of two personal movements. His redemptive insight discerns that, in the unique historic Christ, the Cross characteristically represents the ascending movement and the Incarnation characteristically represents the descending movement. Further reflection makes it evident that an Incarnation demands a personal pre-existent Christ; that pre-existence necessitates a *kenosis*; and that a *kenosis* involves a *plerosis*. Were it not for the doctrine of pre-existence we would have neither a guarantee that the very Godhead became incarnate in the fulness of holy love and thus secured our eternal redemption, nor an objective absolute basis for Christ's heavenly as well as earthly obedience and sacrifice. Were it not for the *kenosis* we could neither adjust the pre-existent Christ to the facts of history, nor the facts of history to that supreme heavenly act in which Christ chose, not to

¹ *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*. The Congregational Union Lecture for 1909. By P. T. Forsyth. Boston and Chicago: The Pilgrim Press. xix + 357 pages. \$2.00 net.

renounce his divine attributes, but to retract "their mode of being from actual to potential" (p. 308). Were it not for the *plerosis* we could neither account for Christ's gradual growth and moral reconquest of his submerged attributes, nor discern the redemptive significance of the various moral acts that lie at the basis of Christology. Thus the redeemed man persuades himself that the world's moral and religious conflict has been resolved in Christ; that God and man meet in action rather than in being; and that the work of Christ is to be appropriated in a moral act of faith.

Dr. Forsyth has introduced the fundamental category of movement into his discussion of the christological problem. The descending movement represents the divine, or the active out-going of God's holy love; the ascending movement represents the human, or man's active reception of God's holy love; and the peaceful and eternal reconciliation of these two personal movements represents Christ, the God-Man, or "perfect revelation and perfect religion perfectly interpenetrating" (p. 348). The category of movement, furthermore, is employed to ground, on the one hand, a prehistoric act of Christ in heaven; and, on the other, various concrete acts of Christ on earth.

In Dr. Forsyth's discussion of the metaphysical act it is clearly evident that his psychology lends no assistance. We may have a psychology of metaphysics, but "metaphysical psychology" (p. 296), at least as far as mortal man is concerned, is a contradiction in terms. In his discussion of the various concrete acts it is very evident that scholastic metaphysics rather than social psychology is regulative; for he definitely conditions the value of the various concrete acts upon the value of the metaphysical act (p. 282). Such a solution, however, is invalidated not only by the facts of history, but also by psychological considerations: all concepts, metaphysical, theological, and christological included, are to be interpreted in terms of their concrete origin, their genetic history, and their practical value. In other words, just as the self and the world grow up together and the one tends to modify the other so the concrete and the metaphysical grow up together and the one tends to modify the other. Dr. Forsyth, in his contention that ethical categories must be substituted for physical categories, has in part recognized this principle of modification; but his failure consistently to work out the logical implications, not only of the category of movement, but also of the implied principle of *mutual* modification, has necessitated his passionate ecclesiastical warnings, his frequent appeals to mysticism, and his unsuccessful attempt to establish an organic relation between the metaphysical and psychological points of view.

Dr. Forsyth's typical reference to the fact incarnate, the fact interpreted, and the fact enthroned (p. 159), inasmuch as this "fact" is characteristically a "superhistoric fact" (p. 3), reveals at once his unquestioned metaphysical interest, his forensic method of argument, and his essentially unscientific approach to the problem. Such an approach will never satisfy the critical mind. Will it satisfy "the ministers of the Word"?

C. A. EXLEY

CHICAGO

THE NATURE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Münsterberg's *Psychotherapy*¹ is one of a series of books in which the author intends to discuss for a wider public the application of modern psychology to practical life. It is to deal primarily with the relation of psychology to medicine, and its aim is not "to stir up interest in this topic but to help in bringing this interest from mere gossip, vague mysticism, and medical amateurishness to a clear understanding of principles" (p. viii).

The author chooses to address a "wider public," not only the physician but *all* those who are interested in practical psychotherapy. This mode of procedure probably accounts for the presence in the volume of much superfluous material. A complex problem is to be solved and is given into the hands of both the experienced and the inexperienced. The inexperienced person will be interested by a mere curiosity of reading about the mysterious and miraculous records of cures, brought about by hypnotism and suggestion, which are stated in the second part of the book, and perhaps by the general discussion, in the third part concerning the application of psychotherapy to various walks in life. This the author himself recognizes when he says in his preface, "To those who seek a discussion of life's facts alone the whole first part will of course be a tedious way around; they may turn directly to the second and third parts." The physician will feel a certain disappointment also on account of the lack of systematic and scientific analysis of facts and principles, and on account of the loose, light, and disconnected treatment of the material in hand. Two separate books, one for the public and one for the physician, would have been more satisfactory.

The first part is entirely given up to principles of psychology. In place of laying down clearly at the beginning the simple facts and principles of psychology and then proceeding to the complex, there is a long rambling discourse on the aim of psychology, mind and brain, psychology

¹ *Psychotherapy*. By H. Münsterberg, M.D., Ph.D., Litt.D., LL.D. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1909. xi + 401 pages. \$2.00.