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JOHN KNOX AS STATESMAN.

It was unfortunate that the recent celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Knox should have taken place in the midst of a discussion as to the accuracy of the hitherto accepted date of that event. There is no longer much room for doubt that the challenge of Dr. Hay Fleming was well founded, and that the Reformer was born, not in 1505, but in 1515, and died at the age of fifty-seven. The commemoration, nevertheless, was highly successful, and revived the impression of Knox's great personality and his unique services. It called forth also some excellent additions to the literature of the subject, among which Professor Cowan's contribution to an American series of admirable monographs on the *Heroes of the Reformation* is one of the best. Mr. Andrew Lang's extraordinary outburst has affected no reputation but his own.

We propose in the present paper to consider Knox in one aspect only—that of statesman. That a man, who was simply parish minister of Edinburgh, and who never but for a few months in an emergency undertook any political function, should nevertheless be classed as a statesman, and one of the most capable and successful statesmen of his time, will seem strange to no one who really knows the history of Scotland during Queen Mary's reign.

religion throughout all humanity"—what warrant remains for calling this universal, natural religion by the specific name of "Christianity"—a name which, up to to-day, has been reserved not for universal natural religion, but for a very specific form of revealed religion indeed? We used to speak of this universal natural religion as the "higher heathenism". Is its character altered by the modern insistence that it should rather be called "Christianity"? "Christianity as Old as Creation" is the title of an old Deistic volume. "Christianity as broad as the universe"—the affinity is express. Perhaps Christianity is no longer tenable: but we shall gain nothing by calling what we think tenable "Christianity".

Princeton, Midsummer, 1906.

B. B. WARFIELD.

JESUS. By W. BOUSSET, Professor of Theology at the University of Göttingen. Translated by Janet Penrose Trevelyan; edited by Rev. W. D. Morrison, LL.D. London: Williams & Norgate; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1906. Crown 8vo.; pp. vi., 211.

Professor Bousset's *Jesus* and his *Was wissen wir von Jesus* ought, of course, to be read together. The latter booklet stands related to the former something like prolegomena to performance: in it Professor Bousset vindicates his right to attempt a portrait of Jesus and indicates the basis upon which he attempts it. The occasion of this vindication was supplied by two of Kalthoff's astonishing books, the *Das Christusproblem* and the *Die Entstehung des Christentums*. In these Kalthoff contended that modern criticism of the origins of Christianity not only had bankrupted itself, and left itself no materials for forming a residual conception of Jesus—a position which is frankly taken to-day by many highly esteemed critics such, *e. g.*, as Pfeleiderer—but had actually obliterated the figure of Jesus from history and left us without ground for assuming even the existence of such a person,—a position in which he ranges himself with certain Dutch critics of a generation ago (Pierson, Naber, Loman) and is supported only by a free-lance here and there like, for example, our American, W. B. Smith, who, however, while sharing Kalthoff's negative conclusions, vigorously repudiates his "crudities" and especially his positive conception of Jesus as "merely a social-ethical Ideal". It is exceedingly pleasant to a "conservative" or an "apologist", accustomed as such to bear the scorn of the "critics", to see a critic like Professor Bousset sitting in the seat of the "conservative" and standing in the place of the "apologist". And this pleasure is greatly enhanced by the reappearance in Professor Bousset, as "conservative" and "apologist", of all those points of view and methods of argumentation we have been accustomed to see flouted when occupied and employed by other "conservatives" and "apologists". We are greatly inclined to whisper wonderingly to ourselves, Is Professor Bousset also among the prophets? and, sitting at his feet, to learn over again many things we knew perfectly well before, but had no reason to believe Professor Bousset and his fellow-critics had yet learned.

We learn here afresh, for example, that historical investigation cannot be dominated by theories of orderly development, and that the methods of physical science cannot safely be carried over into this sphere—in fact, that those who shall bury this “new method” have long been standing before the door (p. 10). We learn also here afresh that profane history itself assures us that Christians already existed in the Roman Empire in numbers sufficient to attract the attention of the governing body at a period only some ten or twenty years removed from the traditional date of the death of our Lord, and that this fact by itself renders the assumption that the Person of the Founder is only a figment of the imagination exceedingly difficult (p. 17). We learn here also afresh that the testimony which Paul bears to Jesus, a testimony not to be set aside by a theory of pseudepigraphy more facile than reasonable (p. 20), and not to be weakened by a systematic blindness to the facts (p. 25), puts wholly beyond dispute not only the existence of Jesus, but the main outlines of His life (p. 25: and Weinel, *Saint Paul, the Man and His Work*, could have taught Bousset to go much further here). We learn also here afresh that our Evangelical literature, which is quite independent of Paul and yet presents precisely the same portrait of Jesus which he draws, carries us back well into the first generation after the death of Jesus (pp. 34, 40), and presents to us the testimony of the earliest Palestinian community of Christians. And we also learn here afresh even that it is mere hyper-criticism to decline to derive historical facts even from John’s Gospel (p. 76, note 29). In a word, in his capacity as “conservative” and “apologist” Professor Bousset fairly establishes a firm basis on which a trustworthy portrait of the historical Jesus can be erected. And in this we rejoice; yea, and shall rejoice.

The trouble is that Professor Bousset is unaccustomed to wear the garb of “conservative” and “apologist”, and, flinging it off as soon as his fear of Kalthoff permits him to do so, forthwith proceeds to minimize the gains he has registered when acting “in that capacity”, and to unbuild as far as possible what he had built up. Here we have, for example, the testimony of Paul and of the Evangelical tradition, each taking us back to within a very few years of the death of Jesus, representing between them the witness of the whole Christian community of the first generation after Christ. Their testimony is absolutely consentient. They agree not only in their testimony to the general course of Jesus’ life in the world,—that He was born of the seed of David, that He preached the gospel of the kingdom, that He went about doing good and attested His claims by works of power, that He established a sacrament in His broken body and shed blood, and died on the cross as a ransom for sinners, and that He rose again from the dead, was seen by many and ascended on high the Lord of all, from whence He is to be expected again to consummate His Kingdom—but also in their testimony to who and what Jesus was, what He came to do, what was the significance of His life and death, and what His relation is to those who trust in Him as their Saviour and Lord. Professor Bousset explicitly allows that Paul and the Evangelists

are at one in these things. "Already for Mark Jesus is not only the Messiah of the Jewish people, but the miraculous Son of God whose glory shone in this world; and it has been rightly emphasized that in this respect our three first gospels are distinguished from the Fourth only in degree." "For the faith of the community, which is shared already by our oldest evangelist, Jesus is the miraculous Son of God, on whom faith lays hold, and who is exalted quite to God's side." "For Mark already, as in the Gospel of Paul, the chief thing in Jesus' life is his suffering and death." And yet Professor Bousset refuses to accept this testimony! It was the universal earnest conviction of the entire Christian community at least within ten or twenty years of Jesus' death that this was not only what Jesus was and did, but what He represented Himself as being and doing. This community contained in itself personal attendants of Jesus who had companied with Him throughout His public career. Paul, for example, had associated with the "first disciples" of Jesus and learned of them; he had even developed differences on matters of serious moment with them and had withstood them to the face; but these differences never touched on the matters of Jesus' essential claims and teachings, what He was, and what He came into the world to do, and how He compassed it in His life and death. The combined testimony of Paul and the Evangelists amounts thus to the most remarkable body of first-hand witness to the career and teachings of the founder of a religion the world has ever seen. And yet Professor Bousset, after validating it in his capacity as "conservative" and "apologist" for the fact of Jesus' personal existence, sets it all lightly aside at the precise point where it pleases him no longer to play this rôle! And when we ask after the grounds of this remarkable proceeding we get really nothing but a platitude about "faith being the foe of history",—and the impossibility of one seeing clearly who believes and honors!

It is not faith only, however, which can blind the eyes of the historian. Professor Bousset has had occasion to observe that in the case of Kalthoff. It is equally visible in his own case. For his refusal to follow the witness of Paul and the Evangelists in their testimony to the manner of man Jesus was and the nature and bearing of His teaching is every whit as arbitrary as Kalthoff's refusal to follow them in their testimony to His objective existence and influence as a person in this world of ours. Of course, Professor Bousset has his "reasons" for his refusal to follow this witness and exhibits great skill in presenting these reasons. Has not Kalthoff also his reasons? and does not he also know how to set them forth persuasively? And are the one set of reasons any less wire-drawn than the other? Professor Bousset feels sure that he can penetrate beneath the tradition of Jesus embodied in the Gospels to the real Jesus—that to the keen eye of the careful prospector in this field, ever and anon through the soil of tradition the granite of historical truth peeps through. When one addressed Jesus with the title "Good Master", did He not respond that none but God was good? When miracles were demanded of Him

did He not refuse to work them? Did He not in the Parable of the Prodigal Son picture God as forgiving without propitiation? Did He not always point His hearers directly to God and keep Himself always in the background? But does Professor Bousset forget that he owes what knowledge he has of all these incidents to the very Evangelists who teach Him that Jesus was precisely the contrary to what He would fain imagine Him to be? And does it not occur to him that possibly these Evangelists—and the whole Christian community of the first age—may have better interpreted them than he is doing, when he makes them contradict in principle the whole conception of the person and work of the Master to illustrate which they record them? It certainly is a very odd way to write history to proceed from the beginning on the assumption that the whole body of first-hand witnesses are wrong in the essential features of the presentation they give and that only that is trustworthy in their report which can be twisted by skillful manipulation into a contradiction of their point of view.

Halting thus abruptly in his "conservative" career, Professor Bousset rescues from Kalthoff's skepticism a "historical Jesus", but refuses in his own skepticism to accept *the* "historical Jesus". His difference from Kalthoff is, then, at best, only one of degree. Both agree that the "Christianity" which now exists and which has existed since at least the second generation was not the creation of Jesus; and that the Jesus which has been believed in at least since Paul and the Evangelists depicted Him for us is the creation of "Christianity". They differ only as to whether behind the whole movement which we call "Christianity" we need to assume any person called Jesus at all. Kalthoff thinks not: he is sure that to everyone imbued with the principles of modern historical science it will seem absurd to think of Christianity, as a particular culture-phenomenon and a development-form of communal life, as the work of an individual founder of religion and therefore as finding its essence and origin in a historical Jesus. Bousset responds that "Christianity" as it came to be, certainly cannot be traced back to Jesus (p. 16), but that, though it transformed itself so grossly, so rapidly, nevertheless, "the decisive impulse to the whole movement" must be assigned "to a specific point" and must have had its "center in the personalities of Jesus and Paul" (p. 13). If this "historical Jesus" is, however, thus, not the "historical Jesus" of the Christian tradition, the question becomes pressing what kind of a historical Jesus He was. The book now before us is an answer to this question. And its real significance lies precisely in this—that it makes known in detail for us how Professor Bousset and his fellow scholars really conceive of that Jesus whose real existence they wring from the hands of the Kalthoffs and Smiths of our modern world.

It has already become superabundantly clear that the "historical Jesus" which Professor Bousset rescues from the destroying hand is not at all the Divine Jesus, the Redeemer of the World, of our New Testament records. Professor Bousset is modest enough in disclaiming full knowledge of this personality. But one of the things he is quite

sure of is that He was in no sense a heavenly being, as Paul and the Evangelists depict Him. He not only never claimed preëxistence; He expressly distinguished Himself from God and consistently presented Himself as but God's servant. True, He called Himself the "Son of Man"—though, of course, not with the persistency with which He is represented in the Gospels as doing this, and only late in His life and only in moments of deepest emotion,—and only (shall we not say it?) in a somewhat Pickwickian sense! The reason of His employment of this Messianic title of Himself was that, though feeling Himself to be the Messiah, he shrank from the most current Messianic title of Son of David, because of its popular implications of a temporal rule at Jerusalem. Therefore He adopted this one instead,—although it bore, from its origin in Daniel's great vision, the implication of heavenly origin and preëxistence—which He by no means meant to adopt with it,—the truth being that "to Him the idea of the Son of Man meant only one thing—His return in glory" (p. 194)! He permitted Himself, then, to use a title of Himself, the implications of which He repudiated, as we must believe—because "it is inconceivable that Jesus who stamped the fear of that almighty God who had power to damn body and soul together, upon the hearts of his disciples with such marvelous energy, and who could speak of that fear because he shared it to the bottom of his soul, should now have arrogated to himself the Judgeship of the world in the place of God" (p. 203). Which, being interpreted, seems to us to mean merely that Professor Bousset is in straits here. He cannot deny that Jesus used the title of "Son of Man" of Himself; he cannot deny that this carried with it an assertion of heavenly preëxistence and of Divine prerogatives: and yet he cannot bring himself to allow that Jesus made these assertions of Himself. Hence he is in straits and (like Biographers, who impute themselves to their victims) he extricates himself by putting Jesus in straits instead. The Evangelists' way is better: they represent Jesus as calling Himself the Son of Man because He wished to claim for Himself all that name imports.

This instance may stand as a sample. The Jesus whom Professor Bousset presents to us as the real "historical Jesus", is a sadly lowered Jesus from that which the entire body of the testimony gives us: a Jesus who was a mere man and merely a man of His times, imbued with the points of view of His day and race and situation,—filled no doubt with a pure vision of God and of His Fatherly goodness to man and with a burning compassion for man, but limited also by His training or lack of training, by His opportunities or lack of opportunities, and by His one-sided enthusiasms. He did no miracles, but only wrought such wonders as might be psychologically mediated. He foresaw no future, but only walked steadfastly along the road that lay before him, learning much as He went—or else, when a rush of enthusiasm seized Him, predicting an establishment of a kingdom and a coming back in glory to do it, which never happened! He taught no new moral system—nor indeed any moral system at all: and the separate items of morality He taught

were onesided and dictated by His peculiar situation and outlook, and often cannot be accepted by us. Also he wrought no redemption. He did not even conceive a redemption necessary. His message to us is summed up in the parable of the Lost Son, which means that God needs no propitiating. He simply lived and died, and in living and dying left a deep impression on His followers, which is not yet obliterated. Like the great artists of the past, whose lives and works are the inspiration of all time, so this great man of religion works still on the hearts of men. He belongs thus not to the past but to the present. When we turn our contemplation to Him we feel ourselves in the stream of life. We do not know much about Him—but we know all that is necessary for us to know; and we claim Him as the leader of our souls and cry to Him—"Thou art the way, the truth, and the life."

This is all eloquently said. But what is thus eloquently said is just the baldest Socinianism; and we must not permit ourselves to be blinded by its eloquent saying to that sad fact. The simple fact is that the modern critical reconstruction of the Gospels has led straightforwardly to the destruction of the Gospel. On the assumption that the Christian tradition—in Paul and the Evangelists—cannot be trusted, it offers us another tradition; and in the nature of the case a contradictory tradition. Faith is the foe of history, we are told; therefore no more faith. Let us answer that unbelief is much more the foe of history. If it is *à priori* conceivable that the Evangelists writing in the first generation of Christians and in the presence of men who had known our Lord, may have transformed the true tradition to meet the demands of their glowing faith; it is *à posteriori* certain that our modern critics, writing two thousand years later, and in the presence of prevailing unbelief—unbelief in the supernatural and all that the supernatural stands for—and out of an ignorance created by the rejection of all authentic records,—have transformed the true tradition to meet the demands of modern scepticism. Take the Gospel of Mark and place by the side of it the Gospel of Bousset, and even on internal grounds we shall not hesitate to chose the former and reject the latter. And if we ask for external evidence it is merely a conflict between abounding testimony and pure subjectivity.

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The demand for commentaries on the New Testament is not diminishing. A circular of the publishers accompanying the second edition