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CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE AND DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

I. When we speak of "Christian Experience" certain problems at once suggest themselves—problems of importance for Dogmatic Theology. What is experience? Can we speak of "experience" in regard to the objects of religious faith and knowledge? What do we mean by "Christian experience"? How is its normal character to be determined? What is its value for Christian Apologetics? What is its importance in Dogmatic Theology and in regard to the knowledge of Christian truth? In the limits of this article we cannot hope to touch upon all of these problems. We wish, however, to indicate the nature of Christian experience, and from the point of view thus gained to point out its significance for religious knowledge and Dogmatic Theology.

Since the Erlangen theology reached its culmination in Frank, there have appeared a number of monographs on "religious experience" and "Christian experience" or "experience of salvation" (*Heilserfahrung*), as the Germans call it. In none of these monographs, however, is there any full or adequate treatment accorded to the place of Christian experience in Dogmatic Theology. In 1894 E. Haack¹ published an Address on the *Nature and Significance of*

¹ E. Haack, *Ueber Wesen und Bedeutung der christlichen Erfahrung*, 1894.

gives us a splendid idea of the doctrinal position of Pastor and his wing of the Anabaptist sect, in fact one is constantly reminded of the doctrinal dissension in the great Baptist Church at the present time in our country. Were it not that it is a physical impossibility, one might be led to believe that Pastors' tract had been in the hands of at least some of the professors of the University of Chicago. Pastor utterly rejected the dogma of the Trinity, the virgin-birth and the divinity of Christ, and this, of course, affects his entire Soteriology. The copy of this tract here reprinted was the only remaining one and was accidentally found in the Mennonite archives at Amsterdam.

It certainly is a document of the utmost importance. In conjunction with the other documents of the volume it seems to make clear two things. First, that the Socinian and later Arminian currents of thought are far more closely associated with the earlier Anabaptist movement than has generally been supposed. Secondly, that the early Dutch Anabaptists knew nothing of immersion, on which the English and American Baptists later on laid such dogmatic stress. At least, we find no trace of it in these discussions, not even in the ninth chapter of A P's "*Underscheit*", where more than fifty pages are devoted to the "*rechte und valsche doepe*". Inasmuch as the English Baptists originated in the main from the Dutch migration into England during the reign of Elizabeth and James, it seems to prove quite conclusively the contention of a prominent Southern Baptist professor, who was forced to leave his position for holding that the dogma of immersion was unknown to the early English Baptists. It was evidently a later conception of Baptism, which originated most likely, as far as the English Baptists are concerned, with the Arminian Rhynsburgers or Collegiants, as these in turn had received it from the Silezian Socinians.

All these "Anabaptistica" should be translated by the Baptist scholars of the country; it appears to us they owe it to themselves. We owe to Drs. Cramer and Pyper our warmest thanks for this magnificent contribution to the "*Quellenforschung*" of ecclesiastical history.

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JUBILÉ DE L'ÉGLISE DE GENÈVE. 400e Anniversaire de la Naissance de Calvin. CALVIN LE PRÉDICATEUR DE GENÈVE. Conférence faite dans la Cathédrale de Saint-Pierre, à Genève, par M. le Professeur E. DOUMERGUE, Doyen de la Faculté de Théologie de Montauban. Edition Atar, Corraterie, 12. Genève. [1909.] 16mo. Pp. 29.

The address which Professor Doumergue delivered in the Cathedral of St. Peter on the 2nd of July last, in inaugurating the celebration by the Genevan Church of the four-hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth, was recognized by all who heard it as one of the most notable events of that very notable week. It would have been a notable address on any occasion and before any audience. In it Professor Doumergue

summarizes the results of his long and close study of Calvin, and draws the portrait of the great Reformer with careful and brilliant touches. The aspect in which he presents Calvin, as best throwing into relief his fundamental traits as man and reformer, is that of preacher. He was no doubt a man of action and a man of thought, taking his rank high among men of action and men of thought. But above everything he was a man of speech, speaking steadily for twenty-four years, in the pulpit and the professor's chair, sometimes every day for months at a time, sometime twice a day for weeks. And this is, according to Professor Doumergue, the true and authentic Calvin, which explains all the others: Calvin the preacher of Geneva, moulding by his word the Reformed soul of the sixteenth century.

First, Professor Doumergue describes for us how Calvin preached. It was in the simplest and most unadorned fashion. There was no pretension, no redundancy; everything was with a view to the application, to edification, to substantial results. He spoke in the language of the people, making use of the phrases of everyday life, and illustrating what he said with the homeliest similes. It is remarkable how his pages bristle with the popular proverbs of the day: how dramatically he tells his story. A preacher like this was sure to be listened to,—and that is the first point for an orator. But Calvin spoke not only familiarly, he spoke also with authority. And it is this rare combination of qualities which makes the peculiarity of his preaching. "Such is the familiarity and the authority with which the preacher of Geneva dealt day by day for twenty-five years with the most living subjects of theology, ethics, politics and political economy, for to him all subjects were religious. . . . There was not a man, simple citizen or member of the Little Council, from the Marquis of Vico or the Syndics to the humblest workman, not a woman from Madam Budé to her chambermaids, who had not heard enumerated and expounded all his or her duties, the conduct, shall I say? which according to the Word of God was incumbent on the head, or the conscience, or the heart, in all the circumstances of life. There was not an atom of these personalities which had not been moulded and remodeled by this wonderful moulder: Calvin the preacher of Geneva, moulding by his word the Reformed soul of the sixteenth century" (p. 19).

Then Professor Doumergue turns to describe the matter of Calvin's preaching as through all these years he sought single-heartedly to instill in the mass of humanity the leaven of the Gospel. And here he lays stress particularly on the humanity of Calvin's preaching, and above all, on its heart; on his deep sympathy with all human needs, bodily and mental, as well as spiritual, and his profound sense, above all, of the needs of the heart. "The true doctrine, he reiterates from this pulpit, is a 'doctrine of practice'. The criterion of a doctrine is the edification it produces. Every doctrine,—no matter how holy, how profound it appears—if it is of no value for the edification of all, great and small, is a 'useless speculation', a 'frivolous curiosity', 'rubbish', 'a stork's

tale', a 'folly', a 'sacrilege'. And the true doctrine is not taught by any reasoning or any teacher. It is not merely the authority of the Bible that is truly proved only by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, but 'all our wisdom and all our knowledge remains folly and ignorance', all our salvation, all our religion remains uncertain, . . . so long as we proceed by human or philosophical reasoning, by demonstration of reason, by didactic or even historical proofs. We must have for our master, the sole master of theology, the Holy Spirit. And where is this mastery exercised? In the heart. 'The consent of faith is rather of the heart than of the head, rather of the affections than of the understanding'" (pp. 52-26).

Such, according to Professor Doumergue was Calvin the preacher, standing in the pulpit in bodily weakness, speaking with the slow enunciation, with the short respiration, that tells of the ravages of phthisis, "but with all his faith, all his energy, all his passion pouring from that noble head from which no eyes wander, from that feeble breath so distinctly heard", kneading—for this is Professor Doumergue's figure—the souls of the men of his age, and as he kneaded, working into them a leaven which could not fail to rise, and rising to raise them to hitherto unknown heights. "The dough had been kneaded. The kneader gone, it rises with an irresistible expansion. It rises here, there, in Europe, through years, through centuries; and then it will rise in the New World. And now the preacher of Geneva has demonstrated that, as he never ceased to declare, his work was not his work, his word was not his word. What is the kneader in the life of the yeast that he has hidden in the dough? Now, the preacher of Geneva, justified and satisfied, may lie down in an unknown grave, which no stone is ever to point out to human eye. From every side, there shall shine upon his work the only epitaph which he had ever desired, the humble and triumphant epitaph, *Soli Deo gloria!*" (p. 291).

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ICONOGRAPHIE CALVINIENNE. Ouvrage dédié à l'Université de Genève par E. DOUMERGUE, Doyen de la Faculté Libre de Théologie Protestante de Montauban. Et suivi de deux Appendices: *Catalogue des Portraits gravés de Calvin*, par le Dr. H. Maillart-Gosse; et *Inventaire des Médailles concernant Calvin*, par Eug. Demole, Dr. phil. Avec 76 gravures dans le text et 26 planches en phototypie. Lausanne: Georges Bridel et Cie., Editeur. 1909. 4to. Pp. viii, 280.

Of the numerous books called out by the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Calvin—which was also the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Academy of Geneva and of the publication of the definitive edition of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*—it is safe to say that this beautiful volume of Professor Doumergue's is the most sumptuous. It consists of two very separable