

The Holy Spirit and Christ.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN A. HUTTON, D.D., GLASGOW.

It will be a wise thing for us, for it will always safeguard religious life, defending it from the perils of mere ecstasy, to associate the work of the Holy Spirit directly with the influence of Jesus. There are those who indeed will identify these two. One of our foremost theologians, who only recently passed away, gave it as his own mature and considered opinion that the Holy Spirit of the New Testament is to be conceived simply as the supernatural impression and effluence of Jesus. For myself I do not take that position, although, to be perfectly frank, my mind is not one that quarrels with any one who takes such a position; and I welcome any statement which binds the work of the Holy Spirit to the real personality of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul, dealing, as I imagine he was, with controversies in the Corinthian Church, gave this ruling:

‘For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) yet to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.’

That is to say, men in his day were on one side and another talking of ‘God,’ each claiming to have the support of God. And what St. Paul in effect says is: ‘The word God by itself is indecisive; it is like the algebraic “x”; it is the unknown. Any one can quote “God” as on his side, that is to say, the absolute.’ ‘And now,’ he continues in effect, ‘let us all understand that when a man in our community speaks of God, he means the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Such a man, therefore, when he claims the support of God for any position which he takes up or for any practice which he follows, must be able to show that that position which he takes up and that that practice which he follows are in harmony with the explicit guidance of Jesus Christ.’ That is to say, Christ is the norm and the safeguard for all our thoughts about God; and so, I often say, the real question to-day is not, so to speak, the deity of Christ; it is the Christlikeness of God.

Now I think that point of view is of some

assistance to us and helps us to see the wisdom, to say no more, which led the early Church to its doctrine of the Holy Ghost. It is an easy and cheap thing for enlightened men out in the world to scoff at some of those ancient formularies of the undivided Church, and to dismiss ancient controversies such as the ‘Homoousion’ and the ‘Filioque’ as idle logomachies; and yet when we approach these controversies with sympathy, we see that they were by no means idle. After all, the ancient world was rent in twain from Rome to Scythia over the question of the ‘Homoousion’; and the whole religious world might one day be rent in twain over the doctrine of the ‘Filioque.’

Our Creed declares that the Holy Ghost proceeds ‘from the Father and the Son.’ The phrase ‘and the Son’ I hold to be a safeguard so momentous that I believe it had the imprimatur of God.

Amending St. Paul’s ruling in that Corinthian controversy in which he laid it down as a principle that *the heart of God is Christ*, and that when we of the Church speak of God we are to be understood as meaning the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we want to say to-day that the heart of the Holy Ghost is Christ, and that any one who speaks about the Holy Spirit, about having the Holy Spirit, about manifesting the Holy Spirit, must be understood as meaning a Spirit which is in perfect harmony with the mind and character of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many spirits, as an Apostle once put it, and we are to try them to see what is their essential nature.

I recall, from the lips of one of the most devout as he was one of the ablest ministers of our Church, now at rest with God, the story of an incident at the time of the Irish Revival in 1859, where, in the midst of a genuine outpouring of spiritual power, there were many make-believes and imitations. In a room in Belfast a woman was exhibited who was declared to be in a trance under the influence of the Holy Ghost. In a shaded room—we shall be wise always to suspect a religious influence which requires manipulated lights—she lay and upon her breast appeared

letters in fire, letters forming the word 'Jesus.' But, as he told me from whom I had the incident, which happened under his own eyes, and he himself, I repeat, was one of God's great saints, the word 'Jesus' was spelt wrongly: '*Jeesus*.' This was enough for my old friend, who there and

then denounced the whole business, remarking that the Holy Ghost could surely spell the Name of Jesus correctly.

Now that is not only truth and fact: it is a parable. The sign of the Holy Ghost is that we spell 'Jesus' with ease and accuracy.

The Upsurge of Barbarism.

BY THE REVEREND W. D. NIVEN, M.A., ABERDEEN.

ONE is becoming rather tired of hearing and of saying—we have all said it—that the portentous unrest of our times with all its manifold variety is due to the late War. We are beginning to recollect that there was considerable evidence of most of the strange features of to-day before the War began. It is interesting to raise the question as to whether one cannot guess at some fact which might explain many at least of the characteristics of our present state, and account likewise for what was most unexpected and most appalling in the War itself.

I would suggest the idea that civilization has been for some time, and still is, suffering from an upsurge of barbarism. The barbarism of the War is only one part of the phenomenon, and, while it may have intensified other aspects of it, did not originate them.

Take what at first hearing may sound a ludicrous example, but on consideration may appear not without significance,—the matter of women's dress. In wealthy, 'smart' circles we find what is no doubt an unconscious, but none the less real, reversion towards barbaric fashion.

Take painting. It may be presumptuous for one whose art-education is of the slenderest to speak, but in such movements as Cubism there appears to the lay eye something reminiscent of barbaric ideas of representation. In music, Mr. Dooly's account of the modern orchestra as including buzz-saws and lawn-mowers is an exaggeration, but only an exaggeration of an undoubted tendency of an undoubtedly barbaric order.

In some modern poetry, with its proud defiance of all 'civilized' canons of versification and scansion, and in some of the new dances, we see the same tendency.

Take sexual morality. The War with its heavy emotional strain no doubt did much to cause an upset, but barbaric ideas on the subject were increasingly prevalent before its outbreak. In this field, indeed, civilization never has won a very decisive victory over the 'primitive,' and in recent times the 'primitive' have justified themselves on frankly primitive grounds, while we have also to note the place won for itself in American jurisprudence by the barbaric plea of an 'unwritten law,' which makes killing for infidelity no punishable offence. It is a fact of extraordinary interest that the recrudescence of barbaric morality, or from our view-point immorality, should be accompanied by a re-appearance of barbaric justice. Take our industrial unrest. It may be said that it is largely due to, or expressive of, the adoption of the good old barbaric principle:

They should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

Take Religion. Our day is marked by the strong recrudescence of certain elements highly characteristic of barbarian or savage thought, or the thought of the remote past. Theosophy makes us 'versed in Vedic lore.' Spiritualists of a certain order are finding joy unspeakable in reconstructing their psychic environment to the pattern of that of our far back barbarian ancestors. Sir A. Conan Doyle seriously suggests that in criminal inquiries the Police should be given the assistance of a 'medium'—a dignitary who in savage days was detective, chief witness, and counsel.

I do not mention many minor witnesses to the barbaric movement, the (pre-war) Druids of Paris may be named as a specimen. What has been said may suffice as a basis for my idea that we are passing through a time when by some means or