

Professor Drasche treated Sadullah, who had the reputation abroad of being an unusually talented diplomat and had represented Turkey with marked success at the Berlin Congress; and his interesting head appears in the famous picture of that Congress by Werner. He was a reformist who broke with Turkish traditions, wore a silk hat instead of a fez, and a morning coat or a dress coat instead of a *stambouline*. He had represented his country at Vienna for eight years, and was highly esteemed by his fellow diplomats. Naturally, therefore, his act caused a tremendous sensation, and all sorts of conjectures were made as to his motive. Medical treatment proved of no avail. Professor Nothnagel, who was called

into consultation, declared his only chance of life lay in blood-transfusion. But this suggestion was rejected by the ambassador's staff on religious grounds.

Finally the motive for the suicide came out. Sadullah Pasha likewise had received no salary from Constantinople for five years. He had spent his private fortune, incurred debts, and, when all his petitions to Constantinople remained unanswered, finally resorted to suicide to escape his creditors. Just as he was drawing his last breath, a telegram came from Sultan Abdul Hamid to the secretary of the Embassy: 'Employ the best physicians. If you can save Sadullah I shall regard it as a personal service to myself.' But it was too late.

LORD CHARNWOOD ON SAINT JOHN¹

BY ALFRED NOYES

[THE following article is based on Lord Charnwood's recent critical study, *According to Saint John*.]

IN this volume the author of the biography of Abraham Lincoln explores a subject of profounder significance; yet it may be said that the subject implies, not so much a difference, as what the author himself would call 'an extension of the process of apprehending reality.' The process itself — in the course of which a finely tempered intellect, keen-edged and perfectly balanced, advances to greater distances in that realm — is the same as in the earlier

work; and the great qualities of restraint, scrupulous care in the sifting of evidence, impartial summing-up, and decisive statement when judgment can be delivered, are even more notably characteristic of the present volume.

The book attributed to the 'Beloved Disciple,' with its incomparable strains of intellectual music, soaring above the highest reaches of Plato, even while they strike to the hearts of the simplest and most unsophisticated, has always exercised a more potent spell over the philosophic mind than any other religious book.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

¹ From the *Bookman* (London literary monthly), February

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Goethe brooded over those opening harmonies when he set the symbolical figure of Faust against a dark background of defeated philosophies. Simple folk can understand them; and yet, 'by an extension of the process of apprehending reality,' they are found to be in what may be called perfect logical — or musical — accord with some of the profoundest results of the reasoning of the greatest of metaphysicians, arrived at after the most elaborate examination of all our sources of knowledge and methods of acquiring it. For the Fourth Gospel says, at times, in a single image, what Hegel says, less lucidly, in a whole chapter of abstractions. Indeed there are sentences in the Fourth Gospel which, as consummate statements of the deepest and widest results ever attained by the human intellect with regard to the Ultimate Reality on which the universe and ourselves depend, have never been equaled. That they come to us as the utterances of a Personal Power speaking to us as individual personalities — in short, that they are couched in terms of the highest that we know or can imagine, and of the only reality that we know directly, rather than in the abstractions of science, of whose external world, directly, we know nothing — cleaves them a way into the very core of what is most real in our own being, the self that has power to say, 'Thou art thou; I am I,' and is akin to the reality it apprehends in that Voice from without:—

'Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. . . .'

'I am the vine, ye are the branches. . . .'

Or again, if we consider that marvelous answer to the doubter who affirmed his readiness to follow, if only he knew

the way: 'I am the way.' It is an answer that points, on the one hand, to the world's pragmatical method of resolving its doubts — *solvitur ambulando*; and on the other hand it opens up all those profound regions of reality, 'the abysmal depths of personality,' in which the greatest of modern metaphysicians discovered a law (overwhelming in its majesty as the order of the starry heavens above him), the moral law within him, postulating eternal values, and bearing its own supreme witness to the realities of God, freedom, and immortality. The way of the world's development has been a stern one. Its rocks are stained with blood and salt with tears. But the very bitterness of the struggle is miraculously turned to an embrace of infinite compassion and infinite tenderness when the Voice is heard with its stupendous assurance: 'Fear nothing. Follow Me. I am the Way.'

'Have the long controversies about the Gospel of Saint John led to any real results?' This brief question at the opening of Lord Charnwood's first chapter indicates the clear-cut character and purpose of his masterly essay. The reader is conscious throughout that real results are being earnestly sought in its extraordinarily able and lucid analysis — both of the contributions of modern research and of the incomparable work attributed to the Beloved Disciple himself. This analysis is enthralling in its interest, because a judicial intellect, widely experienced in the world's affairs, and yet finely sensitive to subtle shades of thought and feeling that are often obscured in the world, is here attempting to arrive at a definite conclusion on a matter of supreme importance, involving issues of far more than bodily life or death to the whole of humanity.

The results at which he does arrive are more than interesting. They are

almost startling in their simplicity, as in fact the verdicts of the great judges in another sphere of life almost always are. You get the evidence marshaled in a logical order that has the gripping effect of great narrative; you get every side of the case stated — not always in complete detail, but always in what may be called justly representative and significant detail; and then you find that the result can be stated in one or two sentences, perhaps of overwhelming import to those concerned, but nearly always quite simple and direct.

Lord Charnwood sets out with no 'orthodox' prejudice; and — as he tells us — when he began his exploration of this subject he had no theological preconceptions. If he errs at all, he certainly errs on the side of caution. Wherever a reasonable doubt can be entertained concerning the value of evidence, he gives the benefit of the doubt to the doubter; indeed he does more — he entertains the doubt himself to the limit of its applicability. He certainly accepts nothing as definitely proven, except on twice or three times the evidence that would condemn a man to death in an English court of law. He is not concerned to prove a case, but to discover the real truth. All this gives additional weight to the results at which he undoubtedly arrives. There are many who must have long suspected — on general principles — what the result might be; but the verdict, on one point, is none the less startling.

It is, first of all, to the effect that a large part of so-called 'advanced' criticism is of negligible value. Many innocent believers in the bluff of pseudo-intellectualism have been vaguely persuaded that 'advanced' criticism has in some mysterious way disintegrated the value of the Gospels as a record of actual life. This was particularly the case

with regard to the Fourth Gospel. Lord Charnwood's book shows quite conclusively that much of this 'advanced' criticism is — from the purely intellectual point of view — worthless, and that it is based on fallacies as elementary and crude as those upon which pseudo-intellectualism has relied in every other department of life during recent years. Much of the destructive reasoning has that strange childish eagerness, which often seems to beset a certain type of scholar, to say a new thing at the expense of truth, even though it involves the shutting of both eyes to ascertainable facts.

Lord Charnwood does not commit himself to the decision that the Fourth Gospel was actually the work of Saint John's own hand, either as a whole (which it is obviously not, in view of the last chapter), or even in part (which the evidence before him really more than sustains, allowing for an occasional interpolation). But, on the other hand, he makes it quite clear that there are certain limits, both with regard to the time and the manner of its composition, beyond which 'advanced' criticism cannot go, and that there is enough left, within these limits, to compel us to conclusions of immense importance. There is perhaps a touch of irony in the fact that these judicial conclusions are more definite, and more full of what may be called religious certainty, than those of the 'advanced' churchmen, after hearing one of whom preach against his own religion. Mr. Thomas Hardy once said he would now go home and read that moderate man Voltaire.

Incidentally Lord Charnwood's book contains one of the wisest sayings to be encountered anywhere about the vaunted 'sincerity' of the easy skeptic. 'The first duty is to be sincere towards yourself and the world. *Only, since after all you are probably going to let*

yourself off something on the ground of sincerity, be quite thorough with the sincerity. It is not at all easy.'

And again: 'In indifferent matters fashions are harmless things, and certainly there is no merit in eccentricity. But there are graver things in which not to stand upon one's own feet, but to seek first for the approval of those around us, is the surrender of all real self-respect. . . . The mere drift of the world sets at present away from all religion; at other times it has set, and may set again, in another direction; but it never set in favor of any great surrender of self to what is truest or best.'

It is in accordance with this view that, at the end of one of the most masterly essays on the subject that have come from a modern pen, the author says: 'I find myself, somewhat to my surprise, a very ordinary Christian in my beliefs. It has ceased to be a matter of doubt to me that there is a living God, and simultaneously with the passing of that doubt, I have come to believe that the nature of that living God was revealed to man in Jesus Christ.'

It is impossible, in the space at one's disposal, to do more than indicate the nature of Lord Charnwood's argument; but, in conclusion, one may call attention to his treatment of what I have called the strains of intellectual music in the Fourth Gospel. In his chapter on the literary characteristics of this Gospel, Lord Charnwood goes far toward establishing a new kind of 'higher criticism.' It has always seemed to me that definite results of a very remarkable nature are obtainable by the application to the sayings of Christ of the same kind of critical valuation that is applied — for æsthetic purposes — to Dante or Milton or Shakespeare. The stupendous nature of those utter-

ances of Christ is at once manifest. There is not only a difference, but an infinite difference, between their beauty and that of any other words in the world: —

'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Who but a madman, or a being that felt himself to be possessed by Divine Power, could be responsible for those words, which are followed at once by the most amazing reversal of the rôles of God and man — a reversal that is in itself a kind of stooping to earth, a little verbal incarnation, typifying the whole process, an assertion, not of His Godhead, but of His lowliness of heart. It is as though some higher Being were trying to approach and soothe the fears of the wild creatures of the field and forest. 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.'

Mere poetic criticism reveals in these things something immeasurably greater than is to be found in the personal utterances of the greatest genius that earth has ever known. This difference in the tone and character of the words has to be accounted for; and Lord Charnwood's book is the best summing-up that has yet been made. 'The simple remark that "I speak as a child" or that I "see through a glass darkly" deprives of all logical force,' he says, 'those objections to Christianity which come from mere dissatisfaction with the fact that we know little.' He shows that at least we know enough to put the matter to a practical test, and that the test, when made, has been followed by real results of incalculable importance to the spiritual growth, both of individuals and of the race. The book — if it is read as widely as it ought to be — should have a great and salutary influence on contemporary thought.

EPSTEIN AND MRS. PYM¹

BY V. T. MURRAY

MRS. PYM was modest by nature, a timid nervous little woman who treated the world at large as her intellectual superior. The very tradespeople with whom she dealt in her native village — Mrs. Pym was born in the country and had lived there during all the fifty-five years of her life — seemed to her wise all-seeing individuals, people who knew their job from A to Z, and made a success of life.

But from an intellectual standpoint only was Mrs. Pym a respecter of persons; intuitionally, subconsciously, if one may so speak, she felt that she had superior vision. Not that she would have admitted this for a moment; such an idea had never entered her head, and if questioned she might have said: 'Well, perhaps . . . it is true that I cannot agree with all the views that are commonly held, but that is because I *see* things differently, they don't *look* to me the same. But then,' she would have added, 'I am only an obscure person; I have never had to *get* anywhere or do anything in particular, like shining in society, or even earning my own living; I am just a little stone that has detached itself from the heap and fallen by the wayside.'

Intellectually, there was just one class of persons whom Mrs. Pym permitted herself to despise. These were the clergy. They appeared to her to batten upon the superstitious element in mankind, and Mrs. Pym was not

superstitious. As a class only, however, did she despise them; individually she thought them charming people, with just the kind of manners she could herself have wished to possess.

Mrs. Pym read a great deal in an aimless sort of meandering way, as uneducated people will. She subscribed to a town library, and would get as many as four volumes down at a time — not reading them all at once, of course, but taking, so to speak, philosophy with her breakfast, history or science with her lunch, and, if so be that Fate, in the shape of a library assistant, had been kind, a readable novel to bed. It was rare, however, according to Mrs. Pym, to get hold of a readable novel nowadays, and very often she would put down the book that had sounded so enticing in its review and have recourse to her own shelves, where Dickens, Thackeray, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Trollope, and even Smollett, were to be found. For, be it whispered low, Mrs. Pym could not abide the ultra-moderns. She herself would have said that it was because she was not educated up to them; she would never have admitted that she belonged to a past age, when people said what they had to say in a plain straightforward manner, without leaving you to guess their meaning. But she adored Galsworthy and Wells, and she thought Maurice Hewlett's trilogy among the finest products of the age. Many others, too, she read with great pleasure. Mrs. Pym occasionally made special expeditions to London to

¹ From the *New Statesman* (London Independent weekly), January 30