

"HOOLIGANS" OF THE SEAS



ALASKA
INDIANS
PREPARING
THEIR
SUPPLIES
OF THE
"HOOLIGAN"
FISH

One of the most interesting of Alaska industries is the harvest of the "Hooligan" fish, or, as it is scientifically known, the Eulachon, which resembles the smelt and belongs to the salmon family. This fish enters Alaska rivers by the million, spawns, and, like the salmon, dies when it has produced its successors. The picture shows Indians along the Chilkat River scooping up their "Hooligan" fish, which assures them of their winter supply of food

HEATING
ROCKS AS PART
OF THE
PROCESS OF
RENDERING
THE OIL
FROM THE
"HOOLIGAN"
FISH

A pile of rocks is prepared, a huge fire built upon it, and the rocks made white-hot. They are then picked up with tongs made from split poles and carried to the place where the rendering-out is done



Kadel & Herbert

THE BOOK TABLE

CHRIST IN MODERN THOUGHT

BY LYMAN ABBOTT

THESE three writers (Mr. Irvine, Professor Vedder, and Professor Drown) represent with much force and entire candor three schools of modern thought concerning Christ: Christ and no Theology; Christ and New Theology; and Christ discoverable in and emerging from the Old Theology. There are also some schools of theologians who think that the whole of Christianity is to be found in the Old Theology, as, for example, in the Nicene Creed, as the bird is found in the egg and the oak is found in the acorn. But they would be quick to resent the title "modern thought" applied to their philosophy.

That a spiritual genius speaking to all classes of society and to all serious religious thinkers throughout all future ages should be misunderstood and misinterpreted was to be expected. It is clear from the history that he was misunderstood and misinterpreted even by his devoted followers. Ever since his time men have formed their own moral and religious ideals and then have gone to the New Testament, not to find out what Jesus taught, but to see what they could find in his teaching to confirm their views. Protestants have gone there to find support for Protestantism and Roman Catholics for Catholicism, Churchmen for Apostolic authority and Congregationalists for Independency, conservatives for current thought and radicals for revolutionary thought. Mr. Irvine¹ follows the fashion and, quite unconsciously, goes to the Gospels to find support for semi-Socialistic doctrines. That is the one fatal defect in what is in many respects a suggestive and valuable interpretation. For example:

The author rightly affirms that Jesus did not come to support or supplement the laws of Moses with a new system of legalism, and yet he proceeds to interpret Christ's teaching as laws for the regulation of conduct to which his followers must yield unquestioning obedience. He thinks that it is necessary to qualify Christ's command, "Judge not," because it is not practicable to omit all judgments of men from social intercourse or human organizations, but he resents the idea that "Resist not evil" may, for the same reason, be qualified. He argues that the disciples of Christ may not defend themselves by force against wrong-doers, but he does not even so much as consider the question whether they may by force defend the defenseless intrusted to their protection. He gives the impression that in most of the giving of modern times we sound trumpets to make known our benefactions. "Our trumpets are newspapers

and our alms are universities, libraries, church windows, and organs." He apparently does not know that many of our largest givers take every pains to keep their benefactions out of the newspapers, partly because they do not wish to be flooded with letters asking for gifts; and that a very considerable number of our churches are supported wholly by voluntary contributions, through what is known as an envelope fund, one characteristic of which is that the donors' names are never printed. He declares dogmatically that "the rich and the powerful, the parasite and the exploiters, are now in full possession of the machinery of whatever religion the world possesses." He does not know that the church which is reported to have the largest Sunday school of any church in New York City, with three well-attended services on Sunday and a parish house of varied activities open and at work every day in the year, is a free church, is supported by voluntary contributions from both rich and poor, and is attended both in the church services and in the Sunday school by a population drawn apparently in about equal numbers from the most aristocratic and one of the least aristocratic sections of the city. Though this church has an unusual history, its spirit is to be found in an increasing number of churches throughout the country.

Jesus never addressed classes as classes. He never treated rich men as criminals or poor men as saints. He dealt with men as *men*. In fact, both riches and poverty are sometimes the result of wrong-doing, sometimes the result of right-doing. Christianity is not the religion of a class and gives no warrant for a teaching which defames one class or glorifies another. The best way to show that the teachings of Jesus Christ are practical is by showing that when they have been practiced the result has been peace and happiness. There is much of truth in Mr. Irvine's criticisms of modern society, including modern churches, and we profoundly regret that he has so written as to awaken just resentment by his unconscious partialities.

We regret this the more because this volume has some excellent qualities. Chief of these is its realism. Too frequently Christ has been set apart and his life so portrayed as to produce the impression that it is a kind of fairy tale. The world which Mr. Irvine describes is a real world; the people are real people; Jesus is a real teacher; his ideals are presented as real ideals. The book is almost as human as Renan's "Life of Jesus," though without Renan's charm of style and poetic and pictorial imagination. It presents an aspect of Christ's teaching to which the Church in the past has paid scant attention. To

the *student* of the teachings of Christ it will render valuable service; but he who simply *reads* it must read it with caution.

There has within the last decade appeared in the Evangelical churches a school of thinkers who call themselves "Fundamentalists." They hold that such doctrines as the Infallibility of the Bible, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the Fall of Man, the Vicarious Sacrifice, are fundamental to Christianity. True, not one of these doctrines is referred to by Jesus Christ, but, in their opinion, they are all implicit, if not in his teaching, at least in his subsequent work through his Church, which is the "body of Christ." Professor Vedder's volume² is written in reply to the attacks which these somewhat combative Evangelicals have made on their dissenting brethren.

Professor Vedder sees in the Church two forms of Christianity, one dogmatic derived from Paul, the other vital derived from Jesus Christ. His book represents a school popular in current thought, especially among the laity. It voices a very much needed reaction against traditional dogma, but, like all reactions, is partial.

According to Professor Vedder, Jesus Christ is neither a philosopher nor a moralist, but a poet. He was a prophet and teacher, "the Supreme Teacher of his time and of all time," and as prophet and teacher he had imagination, wit, and humor, and his real meaning, therefore, is lost by the literalist. The Christianity which he preached is "a social ideal, a vision of a reconstructed world, a new human society, composed of regenerated men, a society of which good will to others, mutual service and helpfulness, was to be the law." Christianity is not merely a preparation for death and a future world. "If Jesus can do no more than

make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
he is out of date. It is help in life, not death, for which the hard-beset man of to-day is looking and longing; and no religion that does not offer this has the slightest chance of acceptance with him." "What is Christianity? Is it a form of worship, or a form of sound words, or a form of polity, or a form of ministering sacraments? If it is none of these things, but the negation of forms, a thing of the spirit and not of the letter, where shall we look for Christianity to-day? . . . If men must choose between the dryness of anarchism that goes by the name of Protestantism, and the paralyzing spiritual despotism called Catholicism, they will assuredly choose—neither."

We dissent entirely from Professor Vedder's interpretation of Paul's religion as one of dogma, and we wonder if

¹ The Carpenter and His Kingdom. By Alexander Irvine. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. \$1.50.

² The Fundamentals of Christianity. A Study of the Teaching of Jesus and Paul. By Henry C. Vedder, Professor of Church History in Crozier Theological Seminary. The Macmillan Company, New York. \$2.