

"The direct love of Christ, as it was felt by his first followers, is a rare thing among modern Christians. His character has been so much obscured by scholasticism as to have lost in a great measure its attractive power." That can hardly be said so unreservedly now.

The virtues especially insisted on by early Christianity were Love, Enthusiasm, and Faith: all lying in the region where intellectual ideas are fertilised by emotion,—the most actively motive-producing region of the mind.

It is easy to misunderstand what is meant by "faith," sometimes wilfully to misunderstand it; but let no one suppose that to the educated and thoughtful man belief is easy. A period of doubt and uncertainty must almost inevitably be gone through, and the problems presented require close study.

The author fully admits the difficulties of Christian belief. "We conclude," he says, "that though it is always easy for thoughtless men to be orthodox, yet to grasp with any strong practical apprehension the theology of Christ is a thing as hard as to practise his moral law."

Facile belief is of but little value: it often only means that as certain words make no impression whatever upon the mind, so they excite no opposition in it. There are few things which Christ would have visited with sterner censure than that short-cut to belief which consists of abandonment of mental effort.

Yet faith is among the most important and expressive ideas in Christianity, and it is an essential condition for fellowship in the Kingdom. Properly understood, it is the attitude in which the most neglected and most ungifted of men may make a beginning. Even in half brutal countenances faith will light up a glimmer of nobleness.

"The savage, who can do little else, can wonder and worship and enthusiastically obey. He who cannot know what is right can know that some one else knows; he who has no law may still have a master; he who is incapable of justice may be capable of fidelity; he who understands little may have his sins forgiven because he loves much."