

Westminster; in 1924 he was selected by Ramsay MacDonald for the vacant bishopric of Birmingham, where he remained until his retirement on account of ill-health in 1952. From 1924 onwards he became more and more involved in controversies in the Church, fighting on behalf of truth as he saw it and as he fearlessly proclaimed it. His views are expressed in "Should such a Faith Offend?" (1927), a series of addresses to such bodies as the British Association, the British Medical Association, the International Congress of Psychology and the Eugenics Education Society. The fact that he was invited by such bodies to address them indicates their appreciation of his position in the world of religious intellect and of his efforts to awaken the Churches to the need of facing up to the findings of modern science. His Gifford Lectures on "Scientific Theory and Religion" given in the University of Aberdeen (1927-29) develop this important side of his teaching; his later books, "The Rise of Christianity" (1947) and the Rede Lecture to the University of Cambridge (1949), "Religion amid Turmoil", involved him in serious disputes inside the Anglican community.

This is not the place to discuss the theological controversies in which Bishop Barnes took an active part, nor the position of the Broad Church party within the Anglican Church; but tribute must be paid to the complete honesty and love of truth which he displayed in his battle against much that he regarded as superstition. For him, truth was to be sought and followed even though some traditional dogmas of Christian belief had to be changed. He could and did state that science had preserved standards which organized religion had frequently failed to safeguard. Despite protests, he felt it his duty to proclaim this from inside the Church; his mission was to attempt to free Christianity from many late accretions.

In his intellectual approach to such questions, in his views that religion is essentially fellowship with the unseen and that the spiritual world is a type of reality lying outside the world of sense, Bishop Barnes must have found many outside the churches who were in close agreement with him. How far his deeply religious sense could bridge the gap between those outside and those within the churches it is not easy to say. But there is little doubt that any body which condemns men of his honesty and width of outlook is running a serious risk of alienating more and more serious thinkers from its fold.

Barnes was deeply concerned with the need to adapt Christian theology to meet the changed viewpoint resulting from the acceptance of evolution. He was at odds with both fundamentalism and sacramentalism for their failure to win the confidence of educated youth. The modern world demands that faith should be reasonable and not blind. Faith he defined not as submission to authority but as the product of our best, expressing itself in our relations with all our fellow men in all our human activities, not merely in those which we call religious. For Barnes, Christianity must be dynamic and not static; though it is the finest product of the religious evolution of the race, there must be freedom in it for further onward movement. As the conscience of man gradually develops in humanity, so must a factor of variability be allowed in the statements of our faith.

Barnes emphasized in his book "The Rise of Christianity" that the use of scientific methods in the examination of documents and early records, even when applied in the most radical way, did not

affect what he regarded as the fundamentals of Christianity. The progress of knowledge has not forced us to admit imperfection in the view of God and of man's relation to God as given by Jesus, but it should compel some changes in the framework in which those views are expressed. In forming our attitudes to moral issues and to social problems which have arisen in the complex society of to-day, we must look to fundamental principles and not to set teaching of the past. The unity between the human mind and the processes of Nature is paralleled by a unity between the moral and aesthetic judgments of the human spirit and the Divine Spirit.

Barnes issued a double appeal—to the men of religion to adopt the outlook of science with its reverence for truth, and to the men of science to foster spiritual progress while preserving spiritual freedom.

F. J. M. STRATTON

### Prof. C. Białobrzewski

LIKE so many other prominent Polish intellectuals, Białobrzewski (pronounced Biaubobjesky) was a descendant of the class of small gentry of the eastern borderland. Having finished his studies at the University of Kiev, he went to Paris and investigated in P. Langevin's laboratory the influence of radioactive radiations on solid and fluid dielectrics. Returning to Kiev, Białobrzewski graduated in physics and afterwards lectured in physics and mathematics. In 1914 he was invited to Cracov, where he was installed at the Jagellonian University as professor of theoretical physics, at the end of the First World War.

Meanwhile, Białobrzewski published in 1913 in the *Bulletin of the Academy of Science of Cracov* his main work, a paper on the equilibria of stars. It was customary up to that time to treat this problem as one of a sphere of gas in polytropic conditions. Białobrzewski introduced the pressure of radiation as a new factor. Owing probably to the outbreak of war in 1914, this paper remained little known, so that his results were, a few years later, rediscovered by Eddington. In 1920 Białobrzewski moved to the University of Warsaw, where he held the same chair, and created a flourishing school of research in theoretical physics. As he always believed in the co-operation of theory and experiment, he organized also, in his institute, a laboratory for the study particularly of spectra and dielectrics. He himself contributed in 1927 a further astrophysical paper discussing the role of fluctuations. Very early he became interested in the new quantum-mechanics and gave it a large part in his lectures.

This 'idealistic bias' brought Białobrzewski a lot of trouble in his last years. An idealist he was indeed, in the less technical, true, meaning of the word. He believed, as he showed in his popular writings, that the mission of science was to promote the moral progress of mankind. A marked aloofness and far from robust health did not prevent him contributing to the academic underground teaching during the German occupation. In the early months of the War, the Germans publicized the shooting of a namesake of Prof. Białobrzewski; and an obituary notice by Dr. M. Mathisson was then published in *Nature* (145, 132; 1940). The present notice is intended to be complementary to the former. During the relatively liberal spell, in 1947, he visited Great Britain. He died during September last at the age of seventy-five.

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