

PUBLIC OPINION AND THEOLOGY

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649372669

Public opinion and theology by Francis John McConnell

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL

**PUBLIC OPINION
AND THEOLOGY**

The Carl Lectures of the
Pacific School of Religion, 1920

Public Opinion and Theology

BY
FRANCIS JOHN McCONNELL
Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church



THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

TO PRESIDENT CHARLES SUMNER NASH

WISE ADVOCATE OF THE UNION OF THE
CHURCHES; HIMSELF A TYPE OF THE
MIND AND SPIRIT WHICH WILL
MAKE UNION POSSIBLE

THE E. T. EARL LECTURESHIP

The purpose of the foundation is to aid in securing at Berkeley, the seat of the University of California, as the center of secular learning for California, the adequate presentation of Christian truth, by bringing to Berkeley, California, year by year, eminent Christian scholars to lecture upon themes calculated to illustrate and disseminate Christian thought, and minister to Christian life; thus serving the purpose of a high evangelism.

CONTENTS

PART I

SOME REAL GAINS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY.....	13
II. THE DIVINE RESPONSIBILITY.....	32
III. RESPONSIBLE TO WHOM?.....	50
IV. GOD AND MAN AND THE DAILY TASK ..	67
V. PUBLICITY IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD ...	86
VI. THE DIVINE FRIENDSHIP	109
VII. PROVISION FOR RESCUE	129

PART II

SOME STEADYING FACTORS

VIII. THE INDIVIDUAL.....	153
IX. THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY	175
X. THE BOOK OF REBELLION AND FREEDOM	197
XI. JESUS.....	218
XII. THE CHRISTLIKE GOD	239

PART I
SOME REAL GAINS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

How can we adjust the claims of Christianity to be an absolutely binding religious system to a day which lays increasing stress upon the popular will as the only source of authority in society? Dogmatists of opposed types are ready with an answer. One declares that the problem is really no problem at all since the voice of the people is the voice of God. The dogmatist of the other camp oracularly replies that the sovereignty of the kingdom of God has right of way over all popular decrees whatsoever.

The dictum that the voice of the people is the voice of God does not help us much. It is very difficult to prevail upon the radical expounders of popular sovereignty to tell us what they mean by the voice of the people. A swarm of questions arise to our lips as this dictum is urged upon us. Who are the people? Is the term to be made all-inclusive? How are we to justify popular

aberrations and excesses with the claim of divinity for a popular utterance? When the champion of divine sovereignty insists upon the absolute sway of the God of Christianity we are beset by a no smaller swarm of questions than before. We all know that the idea of God is influenced and modified and even definitely shaped by the peculiarities of the times in which men live. Plainly, we cannot get far as long as we give heed to the dogmatists alone.

Suppose we begin by looking at some ways in which popular thinking does unquestionably modify the religious conceptions of men. For the sake of at least getting a start we will think of society in its broadest terms as consisting of a mass of persons of enough like-mindedness to live together fairly well as one of the major groups like a commonwealth or a nation, or even as a larger group that we have in mind when we speak of the civilized world or of Christendom as a whole. How does the spirit of such a group affect progress in thinking about God?

The most definite manner in which a social group might bring its influence to bear