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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE Notes in our last issue on "The Unpardonable Sin" have brought us a number of communications, some of which have just come in. We shall return to the subject in our next, when, in a Special Discussion, we shall be able to publish some very acute criticisms and important articles.

Messrs. Nisbet have recently become the publishers of a little book, by the Rev. James Neil, M.A., on *Figurative Language in the Bible* (8vo, pp. 47. 1s.). Mr. Neil, who was for some time resident in Jerusalem, is known as one of the most reliable writers on Palestine, and this book owes its value to the author's intimate knowledge of the Land and the People of the Land. It is not much of a book to look at, being but the throwing together within a "figurative" binding of two disjointed public lectures. But it contains quite a number of fresh illustrations, and new and catching expositions of some of the most familiar words.

But first he reminds us, in a pleasant way, that the Land of the Book is the very home of flowery and figurative language. "In Palestine, a knowledge of colloquial Arabic soon reveals the astonishing and charming fact that the ordinary conversation of the humblest and most uneducated of the people, who can neither read nor write, and who have not the scientific knowledge of a well-taught English child of seven years of age, abounds with figures of speech which, in the West, would be thought worthy of a great poet." "I have used similitudes by the hand of the prophets," says the Lord in Hosea. And thereby the message must have been the more intelligible to the common people. For the very street-cries in Jerusalem are in the shape of similitudes. The woman with water-cresses and lily roots sings in musical tones, "Daughters of the river, buy them, buy them!" and the vendor of the produce of the vineyard has been heard cry, "Lovely grapes, lovely grapes. Oh, how often have the doves made their nests among them!"

One of the passages of the Word in which Mr. Neil finds the Eastern language of Figure, is John iii. 5, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (R.V.). A discussion went on for some time recently in the *Record* on the meaning of these words of our Lord. All the known methods were suggested to get rid of the seeming necessity of water or baptism to regeneration; but the general conclusion arrived at (for the discussion was conducted with great fairness and candour) was, that water did mean baptism, and the Spirit was the Holy Spirit; that baptism, however, was not asserted to be essential to regeneration, the essential, and only absolutely essential, element being the presence and working of the Holy Spirit of God.

"I believe," said the Rev. W. Butler Doherty, one of the writers, "had we been present, we should have heard the most inconceivably impressive tone of emphasis laid upon the words 'and of the Spirit.' Henceforth, in the conversation the Holy Spirit alone is mentioned in connection with this wondrous, this mighty birth into the new moral and spiritual creation, of which the last Adam is the everlasting Head and only source of life." And Sir A. Blackwood wrote to a subsequent issue: "I have for a long time been convinced that the interpretation of John iii. 5, given by Mr. Butler Doherty, is the only admissible one."

The difficulty felt by all the writers was with the word "water." To remove that word, or, if it could not be removed, to minimise its importance as much as possible, was their evident and natural desire. But Mr. Neil holds that it is the other word—the word "Spirit"—that, according to the genius of the language, should be so dealt with. Let it be understood that there is no article in the Greek, and nothing to show that spirit is the Holy Spirit; the phrase is simply "of water and spirit." Now, he believes that that phrase is an instance of the figure of speech called *hendiadys*. Hendiadys means "one by means of two," and is the expression of one qualified subject as if it were two separate subjects. Vergil can say, "We pour out a libation from bowls and gold" (*pateris libamus et auro*), where our more prosaic English tongue will permit us only to say "from golden bowls." The qualifying adjective is, in hendiadys, turned into a separate substantive. It is a striking expedient for rendering the quality of the substantive emphatic. We have not had the courage to adopt it in English, or in any of our Western tongues; and it is not quite easy for us to see its force or even admit its presence in the bolder, more figurative, languages of the East. But when St. Luke tells us that the priest of Jupiter brought "oxen and garlands" with which to offer sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, it is plain enough that he means wreathed or garlanded oxen. When Daniel saw that the little horn "cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground" (viii. 10), a less figurative speaker would have spoken simply of the starry host. And when St. Paul rejoices that "our Saviour Jesus Christ hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10), does he mean more than immortal or incorruptible life, though he puts it more emphatically? Nay, even our Lord's own graphic words, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John xiv. 6), is not the meaning of them just "I am the true and living way?" It may not readily seem so, for how many noble and edifying sermons have been preached on these words in their literal, prosaic Western acceptation. But it is certain that it is the "way," and neither the truth nor the life, that is the topic of conversation, for the words are a direct reply to Thomas's question, "How can we know the way?" And this view of it does seem to "make the whole passage more forceful and consistent."

This is the figure, then, which Mr. Neil finds in the words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and spirit." "If taken literally," he says, "and so applied to the baptism of water, this is not true, for the unbaptized dying thief, and many another believer before he could be baptized, has entered into the kingdom of God. It must, therefore, be the figure of *hendiadys*, and it means, 'Except a man be born of *spiritual* water,' where a strong emphasis is laid on the word 'spiritual.'" And as for this "spiritual water," our Lord shortly after explains its meaning in the same Gospel. For, "On the last day, the great day of the feast (the Feast of Tabernacles, when they brought a golden pot filled with water, in procession into the temple), Jesus stood and cried, saying: If any one thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believes on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 37–39).

The Headmaster of Millhill School is the author of an article in the *Baptist Magazine* for November, on "Carnage and Bloodthirstiness in the Old Testament." In a few graphic words he points out the contrast between the seventh and eighth chapters of 2 Samuel. Here, in chap. vii., "is the pious purpose of David; and Nathan addressing the king with a singular and unqualified assurance of Divine favour. Here is David replying in language of the most admirable piety—manly, reverential, dignified, humble, sincere. At the end of the seventh chapter we usually stop reading. But if we read on, only two sentences more, we shall be startled by an amazing incongruity. For immediately after comes the massacre of the Moabites, related, as so many of these bloodthirsty episodes are narrated in the Old Testament, without a hint of disapproval, and with a brevity that seems to us unfeeling. Here is an act of the man who has just moved our admiration by his high spiritual piety. He smites the Moabites; and having their army in his power, he slays after the battle, in cold blood, two out of three of them; and, to save the trouble of counting, makes them lie down in their ranks, and measures them off with a tape, two-thirds for death, and one-third to keep alive."

Mr. Vince tells us that he has been driven to face this antithesis, not only for himself, but also for the sake of his pupils. For, reading this book in school, he felt that they could not but be struck by the contrast, and that he was not entitled to leave it unnoticed. There is the ordinary explanation that David was a barbarian as compared with these days of Christian civilisation, and his acts are not to be judged by our modern standards. Mr. Vince knows this excuse, and accepts it as "reasonable enough and fairly to the point." But it does not meet the difficulty. Sufficient to explain the conduct of Achilles, it does not touch the case of David. For "the difficulty is not that a given man 3000 years ago committed, without misgiving, a terrible outrage, but that David did it, and that David who did it is one of our great religious teachers."

The real difficulty is in the contrast, in David himself. "Here are two indisputable statements. First, there is no doubt about the reality of David's religion. He *was* a very spiritually minded man; he *had* attained regions of meditation which it is the constant ambition of men who value religion to reach. But, the other fact is, that in respect of humanity (and indeed of other virtues, of good faith, and purity, and perhaps equity), he was very far indeed behind the most of us." From these two facts Mr. Vince draws a conclusion which he holds will not only answer the taunt of the mocking unbeliever: "This is your man after God's own heart!" but is itself a powerful evidence of the truth of that which we seek to maintain against the unbeliever, that God did choose David, a man after His own heart, and the nation of which He made him king. For—"to put the point plainly, at the risk of putting it perhaps rather too bluntly—if," says our author, "we compare the backwardness of David (and other Old Testament saints) in humanity and in other elements of *morality*, with their forwardness in *religion*, we can account for their religious proficiency (so to speak) only by assuming for them that direct communication from the mind of God which we call inspiration." Religion is not "morality touched by emotion," but distinct.

The Editor of the *Methodist New Connexion Magazine* contributes to his current number a useful paper on "Scripture Misquotations." "It is quite amusing," he says, "to hear some Christian friends who are laudibly proud of their total abstinence principles praying, with luscious anticipation, that coming services may be so spiritually invigorating that they may feel like 'giants refreshed with new wine.' Now these good teetotallers who rejoice in such vinous allusions are under the delusion that their prayer is a scriptural one, but if asked where that Scripture occurs, they would be utterly at sea."

Another misquotation which Dr. Watts mentions is the phrase "that he who runs may read." It is

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not only a misquotation, but also a serious misapplication. And yet it is of quite frequent occurrence. A writer in the *Homiletic Review* draws attention to a recent notable instance of it. In the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July, Professor Hunt of Princeton asserts that "one of the supreme tests, on the secular side, of a call to the ministry is . . . . so to express thought as to make it perfectly plain to the recipient mind, so that, as the Scriptures declare, 'he who runs may read.'" The "Scripture" is, of course, Habakkuk ii. 2: "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." "He who runs may read" is not the same either in word or in meaning, it suggests that the message is so plain that the passing glance of one hurrying along may catch the significance of it. But the prophet's words mean that the warning should be so plain that he who reads it may quicken his step till he reaches a place of safety.

The Cambridge University Press has just issued Part I. of the second volume of *Texts and Studies*. It is *A Study of Codex Bezæ*, by Professor Rendel Harris of Haverford College, Pennsylvania (Cambridge, 8vo, pp. 272, 7s. 6d. *net*). What a delight the volume would have been to the late Dr. Scrivener had he lived to see it. He himself edited the most serviceable edition which we have of that singular codex, though it has generally been overlooked in the published lists of his works; and throughout his long life he was strongly attracted by the perplexing questions which surround it.

"That singular codex." Since Dean Burgon's articles in the *Quarterly* the phrase has become classic. There are educated Englishmen who will tell you, if you inquire about Codex Bezæ, that it is a singular codex; they will tell you so much with alacrity, and they are surprised to find that that is all they know about it. Possibly they will venture the further remark that it was the late Dean Burgon called it so, but tentatively, they may be mistaken in that (and they *are* mistaken), but they are quite sure that it is a singular codex.

Dean Burgon was not the author of the phrase. He quoted it from the present Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. But it is through Dean Burgon that it has become an English classic, for he quoted it so aptly and he quoted it so often that he made it stick, and classic is that which sticks. Its original place is Bishop Ellicott's *Considerations on Revision*, 1870, p. 40 (will Dr. Murray note the place and date?). There the Bishop describes four of the five great MSS. of the New Testament in the following terse and perfectly accurate words:—"The simplicity and dignified conciseness of the Vatican Manuscript (B); the greater expansiveness of our own Alexandrian (A); the partially mixed characteristics of the Sinaitic (א); the paraphrastic tone of the singular Codex Bezæ (D), are now brought home to the student." Of these famous codices, including C (Codex Ephræmi or Manuscript of Ephræm, now in the National Library, Paris), Dr. Burgon had no great opinion, though the expression of his opinion went further than the opinion itself. In one of the *Quarterly* articles, it will be remembered, he gives it as his belief that, so far from being the best authorities for the text of the New Testament, the four א B C D "are indebted for their preservation *solely* to the circumstance that they were long since recognised as the depositories of readings which rendered them utterly untrustworthy"; and, as is his wont, he challenges any one to deny the statement. And again he asserts, "without a particle of hesitation," that "א B D are *three of the most corrupt copies extant*," the italics being, of course, his own, for no one has to mark the emphasis after Dean Burgon has written.

No sooner, therefore, has he quoted the Bishop of Gloucester's description of the four MSS. than he leaps forward into the following never-to-be-forgotten illustration of their corruption. "Could ingenuity," he asks, "have devised severer satire

than such a description of four professing *transcripts* of a book, and *that* book, the everlasting Gospel itself?—transcripts, be it observed in passing, on which it is just now the fashion to rely implicitly for the very orthography of proper names,—the spelling of common words,—the minutiæ of grammar. What (we ask) would be thought of four such '*copies*' of Thucydides or of Shakespeare? Imagine it gravely proposed, by the aid of four such conflicting documents, to readjust the text of the Funeral Oration of Pericles, or to re-edit Hamlet. Why, some of the poet's most familiar lines would become scarcely recognisable: *e.g.* A—'Toby or not Toby; that is the question.' B—'Tob or not, is the question:' א—'To be a tub, or not to be a tub; the question is that.' C—'The question is, to beat or not to beat Toby?' D ('the singular codex')—'The only question is this; to beat that Toby, or to be a tub?'"

It is a statement of the case not without exaggeration, even exaggeration which "o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side." But if in any instance there is an approach to accuracy in the illustration, it is in respect of the last, that singular Codex D. Professor Rendel Harris has made a most painstaking examination of the manuscript, which belongs to the University Library at Cambridge, where "the open volume is conspicuously exhibited to visitors in the New Building." He has made the examination with the patience of a German, he has marshalled his results by the clear and open vision of an Englishman, and, most difficult of all in such a subject, he has set them forth with all a Frenchman's grace, so that his book is as easy for the beginner in textual criticism as it is important for the scholar of the same; and it must be confessed that the impression which it leaves as to the reliability of this codex is not very far away from the estimate so vigorously expressed by Dr. Burgon. But let it not be imagined for a moment that its value in the textual criticism of the Gospels and Acts (the only portions it covers) depends upon the reliableness of its text. It may seem a paradox to say that where its text is least reliable its textual value is greatest, but it is a paradox which a study of Professor Harris's volume will prove to be true. That certainly is not, nor ever has been, the popular belief among textual critics, with whom the method is simple and summary, namely, to accept its readings when they agree with others of the leading codices, and to set them aside when they do not. But the importance of this new volume of the Cambridge *Texts and Studies* lies in this, that it runs right against the ruling ideas about the Cambridge codex, even the ideas which have had Cambridge itself for their stronghold, and the great names of Westcott and Hort for their champions.

The singularities of Codex Bezæ—perhaps it ought to be explained that it gets its name from the fact that it once belonged to Beza, by whom it was presented to the University of Cambridge in the year 1581—its singularities are many; but the most striking thing is the number of additions it makes to the commonly received text. The word "additions" is used advisedly, for to speak of them as "interpolations," which even Scrivener does, is to brand them at once, and brand them all, with spuriousness—and that is by no means a settled question yet. The longest of these additions is found after Matthew xx. 28. But perhaps the most interesting is the often-quoted sentence inserted after Luke vi. 4:—"On the same day he beheld a certain man working on the Sabbath, and said unto him, Man, blessed art thou if thou knowest what thou doest; but if thou knowest not, thou art cursed, and a transgressor of the law." There is also a touching appendix of scarcely less interest to Acts viii. 24, where, after the words in the received text, "Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me," our codex adds, "and he wept much and ceased not," words which every one, says Dr. Scrivener, must wish to be genuine.

One such addition (which is also an interpolation without any more doubt) is found at Luke xxiii. 53.

It is of much less interest in itself, but from its bearing on the singularities of this codex, and as a clue to the explanation of these singularities, it is of the very highest importance. The verse stands thus (let us place the addition made by Codex Bezæ within brackets):—"And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb that was hewn in stone, where never man had yet lain [and having laid Him, he laid against the tomb a stone which twenty hardly moved]." How is this curious addition to be accounted for? With consummate skill Professor Rendel Harris has discovered the explanation, and marvellous as the story is, you cannot resist the evidence of its absolute truth.

In the first place, let it be remembered that our codex is a bilingual. It is written both in Greek and in Latin, the Greek occupying one page and the Latin standing line for line on the page opposite, so that when you open the volume you have the Greek on the left page and the Latin on the right. Thus, if one of our columns will be allowed to represent both pages of the manuscript, the verse in question will be found as follows:—

και καθελων	et deponens
ενετυλιξεν το σωμα του ιηυ εν σινδονι	involvit corpus ihu in sindone
και εθηκεν αυτον εν μνημειω	et posuit eum in monumento
λελατομημενω ου ουκ ην ουπω	sculpto ubi adhuc
ουδεις κειμενος και θεντος αυτου επεθηκε	nemo positus et posito eo imposuit
τω μνημειω λιθον ον μογις εικοσι	in monumento lapidem quem vix viginti
εκυλιον	movebant

"Now (to quote Professor Harris), concerning this added sentence (*και θεντος . . . εκυλιον*) Scrivener remarks acutely that it is 'conceived somewhat in the Homeric spirit.' Let us examine, then, whether either in the Greek or Latin the added words show traces of having once been in metre. Fixing our attention on the added words in the Latin, we see that the words *posito eo* and *in monumento* are a repetition from the preceding words *posuit eum in monumento*. And if we erase them, we have left what is certainly meant for a hexameter verse,—

'Imposuit lapidem quem vix viginti movebant.'

It is clear, then, that the scribe of Codex Bezæ, or, if we prefer it, an ancestor of his, *has deliberately incorporated into his text a verse of Latin poetry*, which he has then turned into Greek, following closely the order of the Latin verse." The verbal critic will at once pounce upon the long *i* ending *viginti*. But let him remember that we have here neither Vergil nor Professor Mayor, but a second or a sixth century popular poet, and perhaps not much of a poet after all. Harder to accept, much harder to most, will be the suggestion of so close a connection as this between Homer and the manuscripts of the Gospels. For it is not generally known how thoroughly saturated with Homer were the minds of men, educated and uneducated alike, in the early centuries of the Christian era. Says Dr. Hatch in his Hibbert Lectures:—"The main subject-matter of literary education was the poets. They were read, not only for their literary, but also for their moral value. They were read as we read the Bible. They were committed to memory. The minds of men were saturated by them. A quotation from Homer or from a tragic poet was apposite on all occasions and in every kind of society. Dio Chrysostom, in an account of his travels, tells how he came to the Greek colony of the Borysthenitæ, on the farthest borders of the empire, and found that even in those remote settlements almost all the inhabitants knew the *Iliad* by heart, and that they did not care to hear about anything else." "Homer," says Professor Harris, "was the Bible of the expiring faith, and the staple of pagan education. It was no more strange that a scribe should gloss from Homer than that a modern writer should give a New Testament turn to his speech."

But there is a fact of much greater pertinence to the subject, and it is perhaps even less widely known than that. At a very early period in the history of the Christian Church, it was sought to

make popular the leading facts of the Gospel history by turning them into Greek verse. For this purpose the very language of Homer was largely employed. Verses and half verses of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were mixed up with the words of the gospel narrative, the Homeric heroes stood side by side with the apostles, and references to the pagan Olympus were pressed into the service of the religion of Christ. The effort suited the taste of the time, and these curious patchworks became known by the name of Homeric Centones (Ὁμηροκέντρωνες). "It is not generally known," says Professor Harris, "that these collections have exercised a very great influence over the primitive Christian literature. But such is the case, as I hope at some future time to demonstrate. As far as I know, no attention has been given to the subject, and I only refer to it here in order to point out that, when the Homeric Centonists went to work to write the story of our Lord's burial in Greek hexameters, they made the very same connexion with Polyphemus as we find in the Codex Bezæ." For Mr. Rendel Harris has discovered the very source of the strange addition made by Codex Bezæ to the narrative of the burial of our Lord. The stone which covered the entrance to the Lord's tomb has been compared with the great stone which Polyphemus rolls to the mouth of his cave. Of this we are told that it was such a great stone that two and twenty waggons would not be able to stir it (*Odyssey*, ix. 240).

The bearing and the immense importance of this discovery will at once be seen. The peculiarities of Codex Bezæ are due to the influence of the Latin version upon the Greek. It was Homer, not in his own tongue, but in a Latin translation, that was in the mind of the scribe. The line he quoted was a Latin hexameter. But having quoted it so, he proceeded at once to turn it into Greek. For, according to the arrangement of his manuscript, the Greek on one page and the Latin on the other must correspond line for line. Here, then, is the easy but most effective way to resolve an enormous number of the singularities of the singular codex. Begin with the Latin. It is a free and a popular translation. It bears the impress not only of the translator, but of his time. Then turn to the Greek. It must conform line by line to the Latin version opposite. If it does not do so naturally, it is *made* to do so, with strange results at times. And finally, the one page acts and reacts upon the other, backwards and forwards, till it becomes a difficult but deeply interesting exercise to track the influences back again.

This is not a new discovery. That the Greek text of Codex Bezæ had been influenced by the Latin was seen and asserted long ago by Mill. But it was opposed by Griesbach, who "threw the whole weight of his great authority against the theory of latinisation." And Griesbach prevailed. So that now, even in Cambridge, it is regarded as an exploded fiction to speak of latinising. But Mr. Rendel Harris works his theory out with so great an ability and a perseverance so exemplary, that not only does he compel acquiescence to the main point of it, but all through he delights the reader with the many fresh finds—textual, literary, and philological—of which he makes him a sharer. The worth of this book is not confined to the student of Codex Bezæ, or of textual criticism generally. It introduces welcome light into some dark corners of ecclesiastical history. And, though it may be least of all expected, it is a contribution of undoubted value to the history of human speech, especially of the Romance languages, at their obscurest and most intricate period.