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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE coming of a great theological controversy is like the coming of the Kingdom itself—without observation. We are generally quite unable to say, Lo here! or lo there! till we find the controversy amongst us. Nevertheless it may be true, as one hears it confidently stated, that a reopening of the question of the life to come is near at hand. For it must be admitted that no religious discussion was ever less scientific than the discussion that raged so wildly some fifteen years ago over the destiny of the wicked, or left its subject in a less satisfactory state. But if it is to come, it is not Universalism that will be the alternative; every prospect goes to show that it is the Annihilation of the persistently unbelieving, and that it will make a bolder stand than Universalism has ever made.

In the preface to the second edition of his *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, Dr. Salmond says: 'Among my most generous critics I have the honour of reckoning Mr. Gladstone, who in the interesting series of articles which he is contributing to the *North American Review* makes some remarks on certain words in my closing pages.' Now, that interesting series of articles is not yet complete, and we dare not conjecture what Mr. Gladstone will say in the end of it. But of one thing we cannot be mistaken, and we run no

risk of contradiction in making it known, that in the papers he has already published Mr. Gladstone advocates the doctrine of Conditional Immortality.

Clearly, Mr. Gladstone believes, for he clearly states, that Immortality does not belong to man by nature, but is received by faith in Jesus Christ. Natural Immortality, he tells us, as distinguished from Christian Immortality, 'crept into the Church by a back door.' Origen is the father of it, before whom it was almost unknown. And Mr. Gladstone spares no pains to prove that Origen was in the wrong.

To the *Guardian* of May 20th Canon Driver contributes another article under the title of 'Archæology and the Old Testament.' The subject is *Nimrod and Cush*.

First of all, Professor Driver quotes the passage in Genesis that tells us all we know from Scripture of Nimrod and of Cush. This is the passage: 'And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before Jehovah; therefore it is said, Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before Jehovah. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of

that land he went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and Rechoboth-Ir, and Calach, and Resen between Nineveh and Calach: that is the great city' (Gen. x. 8-12). The only other place in the Old Testament where Nimrod is mentioned is Micah v. 6, where it is said of the competent princes, to be appointed in the Messianic age, if the Assyrians should invade Judah, that they will 'waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in its entrances.' These are the Scripture passages, then, or rather that is the passage, for the second does not count. Of that passage Dr. Driver reminds us that it is assigned by critics to the early pre-Exilic writer 'J'; and he remarks that when Professor Sayce writes, in the *Higher Criticism and the Monuments* (p. 160), as though it were an archæological discovery that Gen. x. 12 could not have been written during the Babylonian exile, he writes beside the mark, for 'no critic has ever ascribed J to a date as late as this.'

Next, Professor Driver takes up each of the places named in that passage, and tells us all that can be told of their identification. And then he passes to Cush and Nimrod—for that is the subject wherein he differs from Professor Sayce.

'Cush' is generally in the Old Testament the Hebrew name for the country south of Egypt, which we commonly term Ethiopia (in the Egyptian inscriptions *Kêsh*); and that is certainly the sense in which the word is used just before, in vers. 6 and 7, where Cush is a 'son' of Ham and 'brother' of Mizraim (Egypt). It has, however, always seemed strange that Ethiopia should be mentioned as the home of Nimrod, and through him of the civilisation of Babylon and Assyria. Hence Professor Friedrich Delitzsch supposes that 'Cush' in Gen. x. 8 is really a designation, not of the African Cush, but of the Babylonian Kasshu, a warlike people, very prominent in early Babylonian history, and that the apparent identification of the Babylonian with the African 'Cush' is due to a misunderstanding on the part of the compiler of the chapter. In this supposition

Delitzsch has been followed, as Professor Driver points out, by Schrader, Ed. Meyer, Haupt, Hommel, Winckler, and Sayce, to whom we may add Margoliouth, who, strong on the linguistic side, has made a special study of this subject for the forthcoming Dictionary of the Bible.

On 'Cush,' then, Driver and Sayce are at one, though they differ from 'the compiler of the chapter'; on Nimrod, however, they differ from one another. 'Nimrod,' says Professor Sayce (*Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 171), 'is no myth, but a historical personage, and the historical character of Chedorlaomer's campaign has been amply vindicated.' Says Professor Driver: 'We have tested the value of the latter statement, and found it to be *nil*: is the value of the former statement any higher? Let us examine the grounds upon which it rests.'

And first let us see what further Professor Sayce has to say of Nimrod. In the same book (p. 148) he writes: 'The mention of the African and South Arabian Cush (Gen. x. 6, 7) has served as an occasion for the mention of the Babylonian hero, Nimrod. But Nimrod stands on a wholly different footing from the names with which he is associated. They are geographical expressions; he is a living man.' Then, after remarking that the designation of Nimrod as a son of 'Kush' (*i.e.* a Kasshite) connects him with the period when the Kasshite dynasty was reigning in Babylon, and urging that the proverb, 'Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before Jehovah,' can only have originated in Canaan, not in Babylonia, where the worship of Jehovah was unknown, and must have originated in Canaan when the Kasshites were still known there, and the Babylonian influence was still strong in the West, he continues (p. 151): 'We may conjecture that Nimrod was the first of the Kasshite kings who planted his power so firmly in Palestine as to be remembered in the proverbial lore of the country, and to have introduced that Babylonian culture of which the Tel el-Amarna tablets have given us such abundant evidence.'

'We may conjecture,' says Professor Sayce. And Dr. Driver does not forbid it. But he reminds us that it is only a conjecture, and 'here is Professor Sayce employing with great effect a logical vice peculiar, we had supposed, to the "critical" mind—the fallacy of deducing a certain conclusion from a hypothetical premiss.' The conclusion is that Nimrod 'is no myth, but a historical personage.' Let us observe then, says Canon Driver, that, 'apart from the biblical data, there is no foundation for this statement except a *conjecture*, entirely destitute of support in the monuments, respecting the introduction of Kasshite power into Palestine.'

Nevertheless, Dr. Driver does not forbid either the conjecture, or the conclusion that is drawn from it. As for the conclusion, he will touch upon that in a moment. But as for the conjecture, he immediately proceeds to show, that though he does not forbid it, Professor Sayce himself contradicts it, and makes it quite impossible.

In his latest book (*Patriarchal Palestine*) Professor Sayce hazards a further conjecture about Nimrod. He says (p. 269): 'Nimrod himself may be the Kasshite monarch, Nazi-Murudas. The cuneiform texts of the period show that the names borne by the Kasshite kings were strangely abbreviated by their subjects . . . (examples quoted). . . . There is no reason, therefore, why Nazi-Murudas should not have been familiarly known as Na-Muruda, especially in distant Canaan.' He hazards that further conjecture,—rather, he hazards the acceptance of it; for Dr. Driver tells us that it was first propounded in 1884 'by a distinguished Assyriologist and "critic," Paul Haupt, now Professor of Assyriology at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.' But let that pass. The point is, that if Nimrod is Nazi-Murudas, then he could not well have been 'remembered in the proverbial lore of the country'; and, more than that, he belongs to a very different age from that in which he is evidently placed in Genesis.

For if Nimrod was Nazi-Murudas, he was almost a contemporary of Moses. Professor Sayce himself says so. 'Indeed we can almost fix,' these are Professor Sayce's words, 'the date to which the lifetime of Nimrod must be assigned. We are told that out of his kingdom "one went forth into Assyria," and there "buiided" Nineveh and Calah. The cuneiform inscriptions have informed us who this builder of Calah was. He was Shalmaneser I., who is stated by Sennacherib to have reigned six hundred years before himself. Such a date would coincide with the reign of Rameses II., the Pharaoh of the Oppression, as well as with *the birth-time of Moses*.' Now, if the date of Nimrod coincided with the birth-time of Moses, if Nimrod was therefore only an older contemporary of Moses, and if Moses wrote the Pentateuch, could he have spoken of Nimrod as he does? Could he have represented him as the son of Cush, and grandson of Ham? And, then, could he have traced the descendants of Ham's brother, Shem, down through many hundreds of years to Abraham, between whom and the Exodus there still lay a considerable interval of time?

But as to Nimrod being 'no myth, but a historical personage,' Dr. Driver says neither yea nor nay. He only says that up to the present moment we know nothing of Nimrod beyond what the Bible tells us.

Canon Driver's articles in the *Guardian* have been the occasion of a flood of correspondence in the pages of that long-suffering journal. And the end is not yet. We have read the letters from the beginning, although we must frankly say that, like the bones of Ezekiel's vision, they are very many, and lo, they are very dry. And the thing that is most touching in them is the singular simplicity with which men write on matters they know nothing of. This is more manifest perhaps on one side than on the other; but it is clearly seen on both sides, and, strangest of all, it is sometimes openly confessed.

There is Canon MacCöll, for example. His letters are among the longest in the journal. They contain, too, not a little miscellaneous information which, under other circumstances, might be both interesting and profitable. But what are we to do with a man who sits down to write long letters on the Higher Criticism, and commences one of them in this way: 'I do not happen to have a Hebrew Bible at hand, and my knowledge of Hebrew, moreover, is too meagre to entitle me to base any argument upon it. But I am told,' etc. ? And then, in the middle of the same letter, abruptly pulls himself up and says, 'Since writing the above, I have got a copy of Dr. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Pentateuch*.'

Immediately above that unexpected confession and confusion there occurs the following paragraph: 'Deut. xi. 10, "The land of Egypt, whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot," is an expression which shows casually the familiarity of the writer with the rural life of Egypt. I have not got my own books with me here, but I have been able to look at three Old Testament commentaries, and not one of them gives the true explanation. The water of the Nile is drawn up to the level of the fields by means of shadoofs (water-wheels), or by relays of three men, one above the other, with buckets. At the top it is poured into a cistern, from which it is distributed over the fields by means of little canals or rills, which are divided from each other by tiny mud-banks. The semi-naked fellaheen walk over the fields, and with their feet make openings in these banks to let the water pass and fill the canals in succession, closing the openings with the foot when they have admitted enough water. They literally water the fields with their feet. Now, this is an incident in agricultural industry which would be quite unknown to the Jews of a post-Mosaic era, and which even an ordinary traveller to Egypt does not often see unless he goes up the Nile beyond Cairo. But the allusion to this irrigating with the foot implies familiarity with it, not only on the part of the

writer, but also on the part of his readers in the mass—an impossibility on the hypothesis of the Higher Criticism.'

It is a picturesque paragraph. And it is possibly true. Both the explanation and the argument may be true. But when Dr. MacColl was about to answer Professor Driver's articles, and looked at three Old Testament commentaries, one would have expected him to look at Dr. Driver's own. Had he done so, he would have found this very explanation clearly, though much more briefly, stated there, with a reference to so old an authority as Shaw's *Travels* of 1738. He would have found other explanations besides this, with such names as those of Lane, Robinson, Niebuhr, and Conder attached to them. And he would have come to the conclusion that, whether Dr. Driver could meet the difficulty or not, he had at least considered it fairly.

Under the title of *Studies in Judaism* (crown 8vo, pp. xxx + 442, 7s. 6d.), and in a very attractive form, Messrs. A. & C. Black have just published a volume of Essays by Mr. S. Schechter, the distinguished Jewish scholar, whose official title is Reader in Talmudic in the University of Cambridge. The volume is of varied interest. It contains essays on the Chassidim, the Dogmas of Judaism, the Law in Recent Criticism, Women in Temple and Synagogue, and other subjects of modern consequence. But the part of the volume which we have found of most interest by far is its short and easy-going Introduction.

For in that Introduction, short and easy-going as it is, Mr. Schechter raises a question which has to do with the very existence of Judaism—a question which, he says, Judaism cannot live and answer truthfully, and which accordingly, he says, and says with engaging frankness, Judaism must answer untruthfully and live.

He comes to the question this way: 'Some years ago, when the waves of the Higher Criticism

of the Old Testament reached the shores of this country, and such questions as the heterogeneous composition of the Pentateuch, the comparatively late date of the Levitical Legislation, and the post-Exilic origin of certain Prophecies as well as of the Psalms, began to be freely discussed by the press and even in the pulpit, the invidious remark was often made: 'What will now become of Judaism when its last stronghold, the Law, is being shaken to its very foundations?' That, then, is the question, and that is how he reaches it. He immediately says: 'Such a remark shows a very superficial acquaintance with the nature of an old historical religion like Judaism, and the richness of the resources it has to fall back upon in cases of emergency.'

'As a fact,' continues Mr. Schechter, 'the emergency did not quite surprise Judaism. The alarm signal was given some 150 years ago by an Italian Rabbi, Abiad Sar Shalom Bazilai, in his pamphlet *The Faith of the Sages*. The pamphlet is, as its title indicates, of a polemical character, reviewing the work of the Jewish rationalistic schools; and, after warming up in his attacks against their heterodox views, Bazilai exclaims: "Nature and simple meaning, they are our misfortune."'

By 'nature and simple meaning' Bazilai, who wrote in Hebrew, understood what we would call Natural Science and Philology. And says Mr. Schechter: 'With the right instinct of faith, Bazilai hit on the real sore points. The real danger lies in "nature" (or Natural Science), with its stern demand of law and regularity in all phenomena, and in the simple meaning (or Philology) with its inconsiderate insistence on truth.' These are Mr. Schechter's words.

Now, of these two, 'simple meaning is the more objectionable.' For it demands that the words of Scripture be taken in their plain and simple sense. Accordingly, it increases the difficulties that are raised by Natural Science. In fact, it is the simple

meaning that makes them difficulties. If I could follow some traditional interpretation of Scripture, if I could allegorise it, or otherwise deal with it as I found myself obliged, then I should easily dispose of the difficulties which Natural Science has raised. Take Gen. i. 1. The beginning of the world was much earlier than the beginning there contemplated, you say? The world, you say, was not *created* at all,—'evolved' is the scientific word? Be it so; 'if words could only have more than one meaning, there would be no objection to reading the first verse of Genesis, "In a beginning God *evolved*." 'Thus in the end,' says Mr. Schechter, and that we may not misrepresent him, we give his own words again, 'all the difficulties resolve themselves into the one great difficulty of the simple meaning. The best way to meet this difficulty was found to be to shift the centre of gravity in Judaism, and to place it in the secondary meaning, thus making religion independent of philology and all its dangerous consequences.'

The most distinguished of the writers who have thus deliberately sacrificed truth to save Judaism is Dr. Leopold Zunz of Berlin, who died in 1886. Zunz, who began, in 1832, with denying the authenticity of Ezekiel, concluded his literary career in 1873 with a study on the Bible (*Gesammelte Schriften* i. pp. 217-290), in which he expressed his view 'that the Book of Leviticus dates from a later period than the Book of Deuteronomy, later even than Ezekiel, having been composed during the age of the Second Temple, when there already existed a well-established priesthood, which superintended the sacrificial worship.' Thus he swept away the authority of Moses and the Written Law. But in this emergency he had his 'resource' to fall back upon. As the Written Word lost its authority, the Spoken Word gained it. For Judaism must have an external sanction for its existence, and here it is at hand in the shape of Tradition. He found the beginnings of Tradition within the Bible itself. The later books, Chronicles most of

all, betray the moralising tendency of their authors, and are in fact little more than a traditional interpretation of older portions of Scripture, adapted to the religious needs of the time.' If writers in the very Bible itself moralise and allegorise and let the plain and simple meaning of Scripture go whenever it is inconvenient to retain it, why should not we? Dr. Zunz follows their example. The great majority of modern Jewish scholars follow the example of Dr. Zunz. And now we have this remarkable confession of the meaning and motive of the whole great movement, expressed in words that are plain and simple enough.

The Southern Cross of Melbourne, in three successive issues (March 20, 27, April 3), publishes a recent inaugural address by Dr. J. L. Rentoul, Professor of New Testament Greek Literature in Ormond College, Melbourne University. The subject of the address is the religious history of the late Professor Romanes. Now, it is quite possible, and the risk is sometimes very great, to make too much of an Agnostic's conversion to Christianity. This instance, however, notwithstanding every advantage of unquestionable sincerity, almost dramatic timeliness, and immediate influential publicity, has never been fairly caught up by the religious press, and actually seems to have passed out of mind already. We therefore give Professor Rentoul's able address the heartier welcome.

Is it possible that one of the reasons why Professor Romanes' conversion has not been made more of is this, that we like to give the credit wherever we can, and this time we could not tell where to give it? No doubt, there *was* a human instrument, or more than one. Was it Canon Gore himself, who edited the book and gave the story forth? He did not say so; the book did not say so. Yet no other hand was unmistakably present. Then came the rumour that one man did deserve the credit beyond all others, though he had been overlooked in the *Thoughts on Religion*.

That man was an obscure Chinese missionary of the name of Gulick. And now Professor Rentoul makes it abundantly manifest that Mr. Gulick was indeed the immediate and most impressive instrument; but there were other instruments besides.

And here lies the value of Professor Rentoul's address. It was not one man alone, it was not any number of men, that changed the agnosticism of Professor Romanes into faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the play of the naked truth upon a candid understanding. Scientific apologetic is supposed to have fallen upon evil days. Men are actually discussing the propriety of retaining Chairs of Apologetic in our Colleges of Divinity. We believe there never was a time when true Apologetic—Apologetic speaking the truth in love—had such a chance and such a prospect. Professor Romanes built his agnosticism upon a certain theory of physics. That scientific apologist, Professor Flint, united with other apologists in showing that the Spencerian theory of physics was false. Professor Romanes saw it was false. The rest was time and patience.

As President of the Baptist Union, the Rev. J. G. Greenhough, M.A., was invited to preach the annual sermon before the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and he preached it at Great Queen Street Chapel on the first day of May. The sermon was afterwards published in full in *The Methodist Recorder* of May 7th. There it receives the title of 'Certainties,' an excellent title, for its text is 1 John v. 19, 20: 'And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.'

Mr. Greenhough calls his sermon 'Certainties,' and we say it is an excellent title. It is also an excellent sermon. We hear the ring of that word

know throughout. For a moment, it is true, Mr. Greenhough steps aside to mutter a complaint of those who 'sit at the feet of mere dry scholarship,' and for that moment he is out of touch with himself and with his subject. For he is a scholar himself. Less instructed men might even say 'a mere dry scholar.' And, more than that, if he has his certainties, he has them, not in spite of mere dry scholarship, but even by accepting the hand which mere dry scholarship holds out to him.

But let that pass. It is only for a moment. And Mr. Greenhough's sermon, notwithstanding, is an excellent one. He says most truly that the strength and prevailing power of the early disciples was in their certainties. And then he says most truly also that the measure of our certainty is the measure of our power.

There is one thing, however, Mr. Greenhough does not say, and we cannot but think he ought to have said it. He does not tell us what we must be certain about. 'The strength and prevailing power of the early disciples was in their certainties; they went forth with decision upon their lips, with the fire of intense conviction in their hearts, and it made their testimony irresistible, and gave them their victory over the world.' It is very true; and if you had asked any of these early disciples what he was certain of, he would have told you without one moment's hesitation. Again, 'The measure of our certainty is the measure of our own power. We cannot lift others on the rock unless our feet are there. No man ever wrought conviction in his fellow-men until conviction had first swept hesitation out of him like a whirlwind, and cleansed his heart from doubt like a fire.' It is again most true, and admirably expressed. But ask Mr. Greenhough's audience—and they were Methodists, Methodists deeply interested in missions abroad—is it certain that they would have told you what they were certain about? Is it certain they would have agreed in their certainties?

Yet we cannot be certain without being certain about something; and it is as imperative now as it was in the days of the early disciples that we should all be certain about the same thing. Now, there is no doubt of the thing about which the early disciples were certain. Practically, it was just one thing; and just one thing is enough, if it is the right thing. It was the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Says the Apostle Paul, speaking for all the early disciples: 'I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.' Well, of the three things mentioned there, two of them no one denied then, and no one, you may say, denies them now. Yes, Jesus died, and Jesus was buried. There is just one thing left—that He was raised on the third day. And we know that that one thing was the subject of the preaching of those early disciples, the certainty with which they went forth and conquered the world.

Is it not our certainty also, and is it not enough? For this one certainty, if it *is* a certainty, carries all other certainties with it. He *was raised*, you observe. By whom? Why, only by the mighty power of God. That they believed, and that we believe also; there is no possible escape from that. But if God raised Him from the dead, then God set to His seal that Jesus was true, that all He claimed for Himself was true; that in short, in dying, He died *for our sins* according to the Scriptures and His own repeated promise.

Well, then, their certainty is our certainty; and this one certainty is enough. But where do we get it? We know where the early disciples got it. 'He was *seen* of Cephas, then of the Twelve.' 'Last of all, he was seen of me also.' And when they spoke of their certainty they put it on that footing: 'We cannot but speak the things which we have *seen* and heard.' And it is manifest that

Jesus meant this to be the way. For He appeared to them again and again; He made them feel His hands and His side; He ate of their ordinary food before them. But how do we get it? Is there any other way, Mr. Greenhough, than by mere dry scholarship? Must we not be convinced by evidence, as they were? And is not that evidence made available to us—surely at least in the face of the denials of unbelieving men and our own unbelieving hearts—just by the patient perseverance of mere dry scholarship?

But it is time we had dropped the obnoxious adjectives. Mere dry scholarship brings us mere dry fact, and that is not enough. The early disciples themselves had been of very little use in the work that lay before them if they had not had something more than the mere dry fact of the resurrection to rest upon. A mere dry fact remains with itself, as a mere dry grain of corn

does. To give fertility to the fact of the resurrection the early disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Let us not lose sight of that. In the narrative of the appearances after the resurrection it is not made prominent, but it is there. It is not made prominent, because the early disciples had to get hold of the fact first. Still, even then we are told that after the disciples were sure enough of the fact to make them glad, 'Jesus *therefore* said to them again, Peace be unto you; as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' They had the fact; they must now use it. And that they might be able to use it, that it might bear fruit, that they might have *power* in preaching it, He saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'

The Spirit of Power.¹

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ANALYSIS.

Two preliminary thoughts—

- a. Acts i. 7. Christ's view.
- β. „ x. 38. Christ's baptism and power.

I. The state—

1. Features of it.

- a. Can be associated with conversion.
- β. Should be associated with conversion always.
- γ. Varies at times and may be lost. *πλησθεις*
υ. πληρης.

2. Its essence.

Analysis of cases—

- a. Speaking for Christ. Seeming exceptions.
Clear illustrations.
- β. „ „ „ suitably.
with miraculous signs
sometimes.
in varying fashions
as needed.
- γ. „ „ „ adequately.

II. How it came.

1. Outer means used.

- a. Ordinary.
- β. Extraordinary.

2. Inner state seen.

- a. The presupposition in all.
The mood of those blessed.
- β. Necessary and ideal elements in it.
Summary of cases.

Caution—Simon Magus.

BEFORE touching the subject proper, two remarks about it are suggested by the Book of Acts.

1. Christ thought this topic should occupy the attention of His disciples; for it was to be very practical and of the highest importance to them soon. They had inquired as to times and seasons which were reserved; He pointed them rather to this great gift of the near future as something of absorbing interest. It was of surpassing importance to them; by it they were to be fit for His work. 'It is not for you to know the times or the

¹ Delivered as an Address to Ministers of the Free Church of Scotland, assembled in Conference at Dunblane, and written out at the desire of the Editor, who heard it.