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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

WHAT is Christianity? Professor Ernst von Dobschütz of Strassburg answers: 'Christianity is the religion in which everything is defined by the historical person of Jesus Christ.'

Professor von Dobschütz has just had his book on *Christian Life in the Primitive Church* translated into English. It is published by Messrs. Williams & Norgate in their 'Theological Translation Library' (10s. 6d.). He is led to answer this question, and to answer it in the very preface, because his book, though it is a history of early Christianity is neither an ecclesiastical nor a dogmatical nor a mystical history. That is to say, Professor von Dobschütz has adopted none of the usual methods of describing the Christianity of the first age: he has not written a narrative of the founding of the Christian *Church*; he has not written an account of the earliest efforts to give the Church a Creed; and he has not written the story of those waves of ecstasy and enthusiasm which seem to separate the early Church, not only from the world around, but also from all the later periods of her history.

He does not believe that Christianity is either an ecclesiastical organization, a theological formula, or a mystical experience. 'Everything in Christianity,' he says, 'is defined by the historical person of Jesus Christ.' And when we are asked what was the characteristic of the historical person of Jesus Christ, we all with one consent reply, the doing of the will of God.

Does Professor von Dobschütz say that the Church and the Creed and the Mystical Union are nothing in Christianity? He does not say that. He only says that they are not Christianity. They are not the end in Christianity. They are only the means to the end. The end, the essential final sufficient thing in Christianity, is the doing of the will of God. He who does God's will is a Christian.

It is therefore of most consequence in all research into the history of early Christianity to consider to what extent the first Christians did the will of God. To consider what were their forms of Church government or the like, may be of much importance in the comparison between their forms and our own, and in ascertaining how these forms helped them, and may help us, in the doing of God's will. But it is clear that if we do not know how the early Christians lived,—if we do not know how they restrained their ungodly lusts, how they denied themselves for their brethren, how they loved one another in the light of the love Christ had for them,—we do not know what sort of Christians they were, we do not know whether they were Christians or not.

Now this is not the way in which we have been accustomed to look at early Christianity. We have spent much learning on the search for the exact signification of the title 'bishop,' and on the origin of the Apostles' Creed; we have especially been impressed with those spiritual gifts which seem to set the early Church on a pinnacle of privilege, and after which every succeeding generation has seemed to suffer from the effects of another Fall. But Professor von Dobschütz is right. The early Church is not to be envied for its ecstatic outbursts of feeling; it is to be judged by its moral life.

We are reluctant to acknowledge this. For the doing of God's will is much more difficult than attachment to a particular form of Church government or profession of a special Creed; it is much more difficult than even the abandonment of the mind to the ecstasies of devotion. And not only is it much more difficult, it is also much less visible and impressive. So, in our reluctance to acknowledge that the doing of God's will is the thing, and the only thing, for which Christ came and gave us Christianity, we turn and call it bad names. 'Mere morality,' we say, 'cold moderatism'; and comfortably recalling some advice to 'put our deadly doing down,' we return to our Creed or our Church or the sweet rapture of our Bible reading, and forget that the grace of God appeared to teach us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Yes, Professor von Dobschütz is right. The test of the Christian in all ages of Christianity is the moral life. And when we apply the test to the early Church we are surprised and encouraged.

When St. Paul was in Ephesus, word came to him one day that among the Christians in Corinth was a man who had been guilty of incest. He had married his stepmother. Professor von Dobschütz has no doubt that it was marriage, and that the father was dead. Still, it was bad enough. For even the Roman law forbade such marriage, and instances of its occurrence are extremely rare.

Well, what then? One swallow does not make a summer, nor its departure a universal winter. How will the Church in Corinth deal with the offender? St. Paul sent them a letter. That letter is now lost. But we know its attitude. The apostle, in general terms, without too close identification, exhorted the Corinthian Christians 'to have no company with fornicators' (1 Co 5^9; cf. 2 Co $6^{14ff.}$). The Church in Corinth was offended. 'Have no company with fornicators?' they asked, in feigned surprise. If they were to avoid all contact with immoral men, they should have to go out of the world.

Then St. Paul became quite explicit. Their callous reply had shocked him. Professor von Dobschütz thinks it probable, too, that before their answer arrived, he had learned — perhaps from the Corinthians' own envoys, Stephanas and his companions—how gross the transgression was and how long it had been tolerated. He sent them another letter. 'So you are puffed up. Instead of lamenting the existence of such a foul stain on your Christianity, you glory in it. You ask me if I expect you to leave the world. I will tell you what I expect. I expect that if you have among you anyone who is guilty of any gross sin—a fornicator, a covetous man, an idolator, a reviler, a drunkard, an extortioner—henceforth you are to keep no company with such an one, you are not so much as to eat with him.' And the apostle did much more than that.

He singled out this particular offender, and ordered him to be solemnly and judicially cursed. It was something that one who had been called a brother should be called a brother no longer, but should be expelled from the community. It was surely much more that he should be handed over to Satan. What did the Apostle mean?

Professor von Dobschütz says that we cannot understand his meaning until we consider the ideas about cursing which prevailed among Jews and Greeks in the Apostle's time. They believed that when a curse was pronounced upon a man, in the name of a righteous God, and by a lawful assembly or recognized servant of God, the man would be struck down dead. Professor von Dobschütz has a long Appendix in his book on the subject. He quotes many instances. But for us the most impressive instance is the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Professor von Dobschütz believes that when St. Paul urged the Corinthians to meet together, and reckon himself as present with them, and then 'in the name of our Lord Jesus' to deliver the offending brother 'unto Satan for the destruction of his flesh,' he expected that the effect of the curse would be that the man would immediately die.

He added, however, 'that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.' For he desired not only to purify the community, but to rescue the man. But how is his spirit to be saved? Professor von Dobschütz believes that St. Paul expected the death of the body to release the spirit of the man; and then when it was free from the body in which the offence was committed, his spirit would return to its allegiance and be saved.

But the Church of Corinth refused to pronounce the curse. The first letter was received with surprise; the second was treated with contempt. What will the Apostle do now? Professor von Dobschütz admits the scantiness of our information. But he thinks that the Apostle at once determined to visit Corinth in person. His apostolic authority was at stake. More than that, the existence of the Corinthian Church was at stake. He sailed direct to Corinth. But he met with a grievous disappointment. The party who shielded the offender was strong enough to resist him. He himself was suffering from physical weakness and could not enforce his demand. He returned to Ephesus bitterly disappointed and depressed.

Suddenly the feeling in Corinth changed. What his arrival in anger could not do, his departure in sorrow accomplished. The party in favour of purity gained the upper hand, and the curse was pronounced.

But the man did not die. Was St. Paul disappointed in that? We do not understand the situation and we do not understand St. Paul if we think so. It often happened that the man or woman upon whom the curse was pronounced did not die. Provision was made for such a contingency. When the great curse was pronounced by Theseus upon Hippolytus (see Euripides, *Hipp.* 888 ff.), it was arranged that if he did not die he should depart into exile. St. Paul did not want the man to die. He wanted him not to die. At the worst it was the body that was to die; the spirit, which is the man, was to be saved. And when the man repented and made his repentance unmistakable, St. Paul rejoiced over a returned sinner as well as a purified Church. Timothy brought the news. And as soon as he brought it, the Apostle sent him back with a letter. All the sternness was turned into gentleness. He urged the Church not to deal hardly with the penitent, but to receive him back and treat him again as a brother.

What is Christianity? It is the doing of the will of God. As soon as the Christians in Corinth were ready to do the will of God the Apostle was content.

We cannot have Christianity without morality. Can we have morality without Christianity? This is a more serious question. For the answer to it let us look at the new book which Mr. Illingworth has published.

Mr. Illingworth's new book is entitled *Christian Character* (Macmillan; 7s. 6d.). It is made up of

a number of lectures on Christian ethics. But it is not altogether the thing which such a description is wont to offer us. For it is not usual to find chapters on Prayer, the Sacraments, and Mysticism in a volume on Christian ethics. And it is not usual to find the lectures begin with insistence on the need of *life*.

In the very first sentence Mr. Illingworth associates Christianity with life. 'I am come that they might have life.' And what is life? It is the source and condition of good conduct. It is the power to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Now this life is inseparable from Christiantity, and good conduct is inseparable from this life. 'When we speak of Christian ethics,' says Mr. Illingworth, 'we do not mean a series of precepts which may be adopted by the adherents of any other creed.' No. If you wish to behave as the Christians do, you must live as the Christians do, you must have the Christian life. Christian conduct cannot be separated from Christian life.

Take an example. Take the example of love. Does Mr. Illingworth mean that a man cannot love unless he is a Christian? That is what he means. Why were the early Christians not content with love as they found it? Why did they need a new name for it? It was not because their love was purer or stronger. It was because it was a new thing. It did not come from below; it did not come from an uplifting of the love of the Greeks. It came from above, it came from life. And until love came from life, it was not worth calling love.

Or take humility. 'Humility,' says Mr. Illingworth, 'has a more important place in the Christian than in any other scheme of life.' Why? Because every other scheme of life, beginning with man, has little room for it, is somewhat suspicious of it, very likely rejects it altogether. But the Christian scheme of life begins with God. And when we see how we stand to God, humility springs into being. For we see that we have sinned against God, that is to say, we have assumed a false independence of Him. And when we also see that His sovereignty over us is one of love, our humility assumes a deeper hue. Humility could not arise on the level of human morality; it is always in danger of seeming to be weakness there. But in the presence of God it is simple truthfulness. Now it is Christ that sets a man and his conduct in the presence of God. 'I am the light of the world.' 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' When Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' Humility was born.

There is one thing more. Christianity is the doing of the will of God; and the doing of God's will is due to the gift of life. How do we obtain this gift? For answer to this question we turn to a new book by Bishop Welldon.

It is only a volume of sermons, its title *The School of Faith* (Bemrose, 3s. 6d.). And its answer is nothing new. How do we get life? Bishop Welldon answers, by conversion.

By conversion? And you a bishop? We thought conversion had gone out of fashion in these days. Twenty years ago it was turned out of the Revised Version of the Bible; has it not been slowly going out of existence since? Never received into the very best Christian society, have not even those churches which owe their existence to belief in it been somewhat shy in the use of it of late? Yet Bishop Welldon says conversion. And he means conversion.

For he quotes the case of John Wesley. Now John Wesley always held that he had been converted, and named the hour of the day. It was Wednesday, he said, the 24th of May, at a quarter to nine in the evening. He had gone

to a meeting in Aldersgate Street. Someone was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. 'About a quarter before nine,' says Wesley, 'while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.'

Bishop Welldon quotes the case of Colonel Gardiner also. You smile: 'Very old and very familiar.' Well, he has other cases which are not so old nor so familiar. But what has age or acquaintance to do with it? Bishop Welldon quotes the case of Colonel Gardiner, and we refer to it here because it is so appropriate. For Colonel Gardiner was converted when he was waiting to commit a sin. And he says that, though that particular kind of sin had so great a hold upon him that he thought nothing short of shooting through the head would cure him of it, from that day forth 'all desire and inclination to it was removed as entirely as if I had been a sucking child, nor did the temptation return to this day.'

And then Bishop Welldon says for himself: 'When I was a schoolmaster, people used to ask me, Do you believe in conversion? I would answer, I do not believe in it; I know it.' 'Yes,' he says, 'I know. If there is anything in the world I know, I know the changed aspect, the softened manner, the grace, the smile, the radiancy of the boy who has begun, in God's mysterious providence, to live a new life.'

'If a man die, shall he live again?' There is no question in the Bible that seems to some to need an answer more imperatively. There is no question that seemed to need an answer more imperatively to Miss Caroline Haskell Ingersoll. So she founded a lectureship. She bequeathed to Harvard University five thousand dollars, directing that the annual interest thereof should be paid to some lecturer who should lecture on the Immortality of the Soul. One lecturer has been Professor Royce, one Professor James, and one Professor Osler.

William Osler, M.D., F.R.S., is Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford. For Miss Ingersoll emphatically said that the lectureship was not to be confined to America, and that it was not to be restricted to the Church. Professor Osler delivered his lecture in the session of 1903–1904. It is published now by Messrs. Constable. The title given to it is *Science and Immortality* (2s. 6d.).

Well, 'if a man die, shall he live again?' What does Professor Osler say? He does not say. At least he does not say at once. He is within three sentences of the end of his lecture before he says what he himself believes. First he says what other men believe. There are three classes of men. He calls them the Laodiceans, the Gallionians, and the Teresians. He tells us first what the Laodiceans believe.

The Laodiceans believe that if a man die he shall live again. No, they do not believe it. They only say that they believe it. They do not always take the trouble even to say. They are never sure. They are never sure if they want to be sure. And the Laodiceans are the great majority of mankind.

The Laodiceans are the great majority of mankind. And the great majority of mankind have but two primal passions—to get and to beget. Satisfy these—the passion to get the means of sustenance (with, to-day, a little more) and to beget his kind—and the average man looks neither before nor after, but 'goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening.' And when the evening comes?—'Sweats into oblivion,' says Professor Osler, 'without a thought of whence or whither.'

How does Professor Osler know? He observes that the future life is not once mentioned in the drawing-room. He finds that the columns of the public press, so sensitive to all that agitates men, keep silence on the life to come. He sees that 'except officially from the pulpit,' the topic is too delicate for even the clergy to allude to. And if a Teresian (we shall come to them in a moment) should be found in ordinary society to buttonhole his acquaintances and inquire earnestly after their souls, he is shunned like the Ancient Mariner. But he knows best of all, because he is a physician and sees how men die.

Professor Osler has studied how men die. He says: 'I have careful records of about five hundred deathbeds, studied particularly with reference to the modes of death and the sensations of the dying.' And he finds that 'ninety suffered bodily pain or distress of one sort or another, eleven showed mental apprehension, two positive terror, one expressed spiritual exaltation, one bitter remorse.' The rest, and they are the great majority, 'gave no sign, one way or the other; their death was like their birth, a sleep and a forgetting.'

So the great majority of men, even of the men who in our day and country are the heirs of all the ages, are lukewarm Laodiceans—they think they believe in a future life, but they are really concerned with the price of beef or coal. The second class Professor Osler calls the Gallionians.

The Gallionians care for none of these things. They are mostly men of science. Immortality does not belong to their range of study. It has, besides, some suggestion of the supernatural about it, and they do not believe in the supernatural. There are those who violently deny the reality of a life to come. The greater number do not trouble to deny it. 'It was my privilege,' says Professor Osler, 'to know well one of the greatest naturalists of this country, Joseph Leidy, who reached this standpoint, and I have often heard him say that the question of a future state had long ceased to interest him or to have any influence in his life.' And then Professor Osler adds: 'I think there can be no doubt that this attitude of mind is more common among naturalists and investigators than in men devoted to literature and the humanities.'

Why is it that so many students of physical science have no interest in the question of a life to come? There are four reasons. The first is that the idea of man, his origin and nature, and consequently his destiny, has been completely altered by physical science. The old idea, the idea we teach our children still,—Professor Osler calls it the 'Sunday story from orthodox pulpits,'—is that man is an *angelus sepultus*, who had

> Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
> And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay;

that he was created in the image of God, 'sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,' and that he fell; that he is now an outlaw from his Father's house, to which he is privileged to return 'at the price of the Son of God.'

To the student of physical science man has moved all the other way. He has had no fall, he has slowly but steadily risen. He is 'the crowning glory of organic life, the end-product of a ceaseless evolution which has gone on for æons'; he is the heir of all the ages; 'with head erect and brow serene, he is confident of himself and confident of the future, as he pursues the gradual paths of an aspiring change.'

The second reason is that science—modern psychological science—dispenses now with the soul. The old psychologists found 'something in us that can be without us, and will be after us'—in the language of Sir Thomas Browne. The new psychologists have no place for this something. 'The association of life in all its phases with organization, the association of a gradation of intelligence with increasing complexity of organization, the failure of the development of intelligence with an arrest in cerebral growth in the child, the

slow decay of mind with changes in the brain, the absolute dependence of the higher mental attributes upon definite structures, the instantaneous loss of consciousness when the blood supply is cut off from the higher centres—these facts,' says Professor Osler, 'give pause to the scientific student when he tries to think of intelligence apart from organization.'

The third reason is that science in our day has searched for the spirits of the dead and has not found them. But Professor Osler is not so confident here. He is not quite sure that there are no ministering angels around us. He is not sure that there is not a world of spirit somewhere; he is not sure that that is not the real world, ours the shadow. Is the poet right?—

> I tell you we are fooled by the eye, the ear:
> These organs muffle us from that real world
> That lies about us; we are duped by brightness.
> The ear, the eye doth make us deaf and blind;
> Else should we be aware of all our dead
> Who pass above us, through us, and beneath us.

Professor Osler is not sure.

Nor is he sure that science has been altogether baffled in its search. If only science had undertaken the search before it fell into the hands of those untrained devotees who throng the banks of the spiritualistic river, amid whose solemn incantations one can now hear the mocking laughter of Puck and of Ariel, as they play among the sedges and sing the monotonous refrain, 'What fools these mortals be.' Professor Osler is not sure that science has been baffled yet. Give him time. The Society for Psychical Research has done something; 'that earnest soul,' F. W. H. Myers, did something to pierce the veil and explore the mysteries behind it. But after all, after a careful review of all the literature, for he has studied it, Professor Osler comes to the conclusion that the uncertainty has not been rendered less uncertain, or the confusion less confounded. He comes to the conclusion that no message from the spirit-land has yet arrived legible enough and sensible enough for the National Academy of Sciences to call a meeting to discuss it.

The fourth reason is that just when it had lost the immortality of the soul, science discovered the immortality of the flesh.

This is the great discovery of the day. Professor Osler calls it a revelation, an astounding revelation. He calls it one of the fairy tales of science. What is it? Professor Osler must tell what it is himself.

He calls it 'the morphological continuity of the germ plasm'; and he says: 'The individual is nothing more than the transient offshoot of a germ plasm, which has an unbroken continuity from generation to generation, from age to age. This marvellous embryonic substance is eternally young, eternally productive, eternally forming new individuals to grow up and to perish, while it remains in the progeny, always youthful, always increasing, always the same.' And then Professor Osler takes refuge in the words of another. Quoting from the *Review of Neurology and Psychiatry* of January 1904, quoting the words of the naturalist Noll, he adds: 'Thousands upon thousands of generations which have arisen in the course of ages were its products, but it lives on in the youngest generations with the power of giving origin to coming millions. The individual organism is transient, but its embryonic substance, which produces the mortal tissues, preserves itself imperishable, everlasting, and constant.'

Whereupon Professor Osler ventures to say that 'science minimizes to the vanishing point the importance of the individual man, and claims that the cosmic and biological laws which control his destiny are wholly inconsistent with the special-providence view in which we were educated—that beneficent, fatherly providence which cares for the sparrows and numbers the very hairs of our head.'

The third class of men are the Teresians. They

are called Teresians because they are mostly women and under the control of their emotions. These are they who believe in the life to come. 'Not always the wise men after the flesh (except among the Greeks), more often the lowly and obscure, women more often than men, the Teresians have ever formed the moral leaven of humanity. Narrow, prejudiced, often mistaken in worldly ways and methods, they alone have preserved in the past, and still keep for us to-day, the faith that looks through death. Children of Light, Children of the Spirit, whose ways are foolishness to the children of this world, mystics, idealists, with no strong reason for the faith that is in them, yet they compel admiration and imitation by the character of the life they lead and the beneficence of the influence they exert. The serene faith of Socrates with the cup of hemlock at his lips, the heroic devotion of a St. Francis or a St. Teresa, but more often for each one of us the beautiful life of some good woman whose

Eyes are homes of faithful prayer,
. . . . . .
Whose loves in higher love endure,

do more to keep alive among the Laodiceans a belief in immortality than all the preaching in the land.'

They are mostly women. It is a little disturbing. When they are not women they are very emotional men. It is a little disconcerting. And it is not that they are emotional besides being intellectual. It is not that they have head as well as heart. They are 'under the dominion of the emotions,' their deeds are 'the outcome of passion and prejudice, of sentiment and usage much more than of reason.' If they believe in immortality they do so in spite of reason and science, for 'from the standpoint of science, representing the head, there is an irreconcilable hostility to this emotional or cardiac side of life's problems.'

We shall not stay to enumerate the men who have believed in the life to come. We shall not stay to prove that they were not always so emotionally one-sided. The choice of the name itself is enough to arrest the sweep of Professor Osler's generalities. For Saint Teresa had an intellect that could not easily be despised, and she had some considerable capacity for the management of affairs. And when we are arrested, we become utterly amazed at the simplicity of Professor Osler's methods.

Why has he swept all the believers in immortality into the company of women and the emotions? Because he has found that they *are* either women or emotional men? Not so. It is because 'on the question of immortality the only enduring enlightenment is through faith.' Now faith is to Professor Osler a purely emotional act. The head is not in it; it comes entirely from the heart. It is in direct antagonism to reason and to science. '*Only believe*, and *he that believeth*,—these are the commandments with comfort; not *only think*, and *he that reasoneth*, for these are the commandments of science.' And without a moment's hesitation Professor Osler fortifies his amazing statement from Scripture, and says, 'unfortunately, with the heart man believeth, not alone unto righteousness, but unto every possible vagary, from Apollonius of Tyana to Joseph Smith'; not knowing apparently, and never suspecting, that in the language of Scripture the heart is the seat, not of the emotions at all, but just of the thinking and reasoning faculties.

Was Professor Osler called to bless? Miss Ingersoll founded the lectureship in memory of her father. What comfort has he for her? As a student of science his philosophy 'finds nothing to support' a belief in the future life. But as a student of science he is ready to acknowledge the value of a belief in the hereafter 'as an asset in human life.' The noblest of his fellows have clung to it, it has been of incalculable comfort to those sorrowing for precious friends hid in death's dateless night; it has served humanity in a way that demands the gratitude and reverence even of the student of science—but that is all. Professor

Osler says that that is all. Was he called to bless? Surely he did not know it, but he came to curse.

What is it that the student of science does to himself, not merely to make him incapable of belief in immortality, but capable of such preposterous belief in his fellow-men? Does Professor Osler honestly think that, when we believe in the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, we are suffering from excess of emotion? He does not once mention Christ. As if the Resurrection from the dead had never been named, he makes his own confession of faith, and says that like Cicero he would rather be mistaken with Plato than in the right with those who deny altogether the life after death. But what business has he, as a student of science, to be content to be mistaken with any man? If his science makes immortality impossible, let him say so and reject the belief in immortality. He does not say so. All through the lecture he seemed to be saying so. He does not say so at the end. He says at the end that science is organized knowledge, and knowledge is of things we see. 'Now the things that are seen are temporal; of things that are unseen science knows nothing, and has at present no means of knowing anything.'

If, then, science does not say that belief in the life to come is impossible; if it merely says that it is outside its province; why does not Professor Osler leave science for a little and consider Christ?

On the Translation and Use of the Psalms for the Public Worship of the Church.

By the late Professor W. Robertson Smith, D.D., LL.D.

II.

The offences against the childlike directness of the Old Testament apprehension of God's self-manifestation in Creation, Providence, and Revelation, which disfigure many versions, and which are always apt to creep into new translations unless carefully guarded against, are of very many kinds. I select a few instances, almost at random.

(1) All devotion is so far anthropomorphic. The abstract view of God, as the unconditioned, the all-powerful, the principle of infinite justice, and the like, is not that which can predominate in prayer and praise. God is prayed to as a personal God, and where this personality is grasped with strong undoubting faith, strongly anthropomorphic language is sure to be found. Of such language the Psalms are full, and we cannot afford to lose it. When, for example, the Dutch version in Ps 99 speaks of God as the *Heilig Opperwezen*, everyone feels the incongruity. But an offence of the same kind, if not quite so gross, is committed when Watts writes—

> His *sovereign power* without our aid
> Made us of clay and formed us men,

or when Tate and Brady give us in Ps 36—

> Thy Providence the world sustains,

or when, in Ps 3, 'Thou hast put joy in my heart,' becomes 'So shall my heart o'erflow with joy'; or when in Ps 8 Watts writes—

> When I behold Thy works on high,
> The moon that rules the night,
> And stars that well adorn the sky,
> These moving worlds of light.

The Hebrew poet spends not a word on the description of the heavens; what absorbs him is the thought that they are 'Thy heavens,' 'the works of Thy fingers,' 'the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained.'

The anthropomorphisms of the Psalter are only an extreme case of the general principle that the concrete and personal is everywhere fitter for the language of devotion than the general