THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

WHAT is the difference between an author and a writer? In the *Churchman* for June the Bishop of Durham tells us, and he has a purpose in telling us. His purpose is not to correct our English, it is to settle the authorship of the Second Epistle of Peter.

The article begins with China. For Dr. Moule, though himself 'a stay-at-home as regards Christian labour,' has many relatives at work in China. One of his brothers is the veteran Archdeacon at Ning-po. The other is Bishop in Mid-China. He has therefore much interest in things Chinese, and not a little knowledge of the same. Now there is in China a person who is known by the name of 'teacher.' And it is Dr. Moule's intention to use this Chinese teacher to help him to get at the author of the Second Epistle of Peter.

But, first of all, Dr. Moule objects to the title 'teacher.' This so-called teacher is a native scholar, a skilled expert in classical Chinese. He attaches himself to a missionary; especially to a missionary who is a man in authority, having under him other missionaries. And the teacher's business is to see that the missionary's correspondence, especially his official correspondence, is expressed in good Chinese.

Dr. Moule objects to the title 'teacher.' He would call him, as some missionaries actually do, the 'writer.' For he remains attached to the missionary after the latter has learned all the Chinese that he is ever likely to learn, even after he has acquired a genuine mastery of the language and its literature, sometimes to the end of a very long life. And his business is not to teach the missionary, nor even to correct his composition. His position is more honourable than that, his work more arduous and original.

When the missionary has a message to send, he writes it down in his own Chinese. The 'writer' reads this, talks about it, and then 'drafts the material afresh into the correct classical phraseology.' The missionary reads this over, sees that it expresses the meaning of his message, makes perhaps some necessary revisions, and then sends it out 'as his own authentic message to the converts and the pastors far away.'

Here, then, we have the missionary who is the author of the letter and the Chinese scholar who is the writer of it. And the writer is very much more than a mere scribe. Now, suppose that a missionary bishop's writer should die, and he has to appoint another. The new writer expresses himself in classical Chinese, as the old writer did.

But his style is different. For, of course, good Chinese writers have a style of their own, as good English writers have. Turn to the two Epistles of St. Peter. Their style is different. 'The Greek of the First Epistle is, of its sort, pure and beautiful. The Greek of the Second Epistle is often singularly laboured in construction and unexpected in vocabulary.' Can they possibly be by the same writer? No, says the Bishop of Durham, but they may be by the same author. St. Peter may have used two different writers, as the Bishop of Mid-China has had to do. But St. Peter may be the author of both Epistles.

In the January number of the *American Journal of Theology*, Professor Bertholet of Basle reviews 'some important books on the history and philosophy of religion.' The first book is the new edition of Chantepie de la Saussaye's *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*. And the first thing in that new edition that he notices is the new claim that is made for the science of religion. 'The science of religion,' said de la Saussaye, in his second edition, 'is a new discipline which has arisen and developed as an independent branch of learning only in recent decades, and is still partly in a state of embryo, struggling for the acknowledgment of its right.' But in the third edition he says: 'The science of religion has in the recent decades acquired and maintained its place in the range of sciences.' The second edition was published in 1898, the third in 1905. Only seven years lie between them.

When he enters the book itself, what does Professor Bertholet find? He finds an immense increase in bulk. Instead of 399 and 512 pages of the former volumes, there are now 543 and 587; that is over 200 pages more. And this increase is due to additional information. The Chinese religions now require 58 pages instead of 28; the Japanese 57 instead of 10; the Semites take 138 pages instead of 81; and even the religions of the uncivilized tribes fill 40 pages instead of 32. But here there is a blot in the book. With all this enlargement of space, 'I cannot but feel,' says Professor Bertholet, 'that we have comparatively much too brief a treatment of these tribes, especially since I am convinced that in the religions of primitive peoples we best get acquainted with certain popular *undercurrents* which are still flowing at the base of higher religions.'

What are these undercurrents? Professor Bertholet mentions the most important one of all. It is the distinction between official religion and popular religion, between the religion of the priests and theologians and the religion of the common people. We are only beginning to detect that distinction in religion. But already we have discovered this, that popular religion, always and everywhere, remains remarkably unchanged, and consists of a remarkably small number of elements; while the religion of priests tends steadily to grow in variety both of belief and of practice.

In its actual contents Professor Bertholet finds the third edition much richer than the second. More stress is laid on the interesting phenomenon of Secret Associations. The fact also is emphasized that, without prejudice to the worship of spirits, the idea of a mighty deity, who (Bertholet says 'which') is considered as having created the world, or as governing it, is widespread. And there is especially to be noticed, he says, the new conception of animism, not in Tylor's sense of the belief in individually formed souls, but in an impersonal vital power, a fluid of life—*tanoana*, as the Barëe tribes of Celebes call it. He suggests that it may be like the Orenda of the Iroquois. It is that which Professor Söderblom speaks of as life-electricity, a soul-material which has the faculty of evaporating or condensing, and of giving itself different bodily shapes.

Passing to the more advanced religions, Professor Bertholet points out that the religions of China, 'at the hand of so eminent a connoisseur as De Groot, have been given quite a new form. They are no longer treated separately. Confucianism and Taoism are seen to be not merely closely

connected, but quite intermingled. Here the remark may be made parenthetically, that De Groot is engaged upon the article on the Religions of China for the forthcoming *Dictionary of Religion and Ethics*, and that he absolutely refused to look at it, unless he were allowed to cover the whole field: for it is impossible, he said, with the knowledge we now possess, to describe the religions of China separately.

There are two things more. Jeremias is the author of the chapter on the Religion of Babylonia. What does he say about Monotheism? He says that in Babylonian religion there is no real Monotheism, and that you must carefully distinguish the 'monarchical speculations' of the Babylonian priests from Monotheism. And Professor Bertholet says he is certainly right.

The other thing is the great progress that has been made even in the study of the religion of Greece and Rome. In the religion of Greece, in particular, there is recognized a steadily increasing anthropomorphism. But it is not that God is clothed in human passions; it is that man with the passions that are in him is raised to the dignity of Godhead. The Old Testament also is full of anthropomorphism. But the contrast between the anthropomorphism of the worshipper in Israel and in Greece is complete.

The editor of *Church and Synagogue* begins, in his April number, some Notes on Hebrew Archæology. Mr. Oesterley is an accurate scholar. These Notes show that he is as ingenious as he is accurate.

The first is on the 'Prophet's Badge.' Mr. Oesterley believes that the prophets of Israel, or at least the very early ones, were distinguished by a special mark or badge. And he thinks that it was a tattoo or a cut of some kind, either on the forehead or in the hands. The best passage for his purpose is 1 K 20^{35-43}. It is a difficult passage, and Mr. Oesterley is careful not to risk a new doctrine on it. But he thinks that at least it lends colour to his view. The prophet is sent to rebuke Ahab. Before presenting himself to the king he asks a fellow-prophet to wound him. On the latter refusing, he gets another man to do it. In order that the king might not know him to be a prophet he disguises himself 'with his headband over his eyes.' Having accomplished his purpose, he snatches the headband from his forehead. Immediately the king 'discerned him that he was one of the prophets.'

In this case the badge, if it was a badge, seems to have been a cut in the forehead. There are other two passages which seem to speak of some mark on the hand. The one is Is 44^{5}, 'One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall write on his hand, Unto the Lord.' The other is Zec 13^{4-6}, 'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been made a bondman from my youth. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds between thy hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

The third Note (we pass the second) is on the 'Bundle' or 'Bag of Life.' In 1 S 25^{29}, Abigail says to David: 'And though man be risen up to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul, yet the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle (bag) of life with the Lord thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall He sling out, as from the hollow of a sling.' What is this bundle or bag of life?

It may be remembered that in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for March (p. 259) a guess at the meaning of it was quoted from Mr. J. A. MacCulloch's *Childhood of Fiction*. Mr. MacCulloch thinks that the reference may be to the separable soul, a belief

which, however strange to us, is very widespread among primitive peoples even to-day. Mr. Oesterley reaches the same conception in another way.

He starts with the Hebrew text. He prefers 'bag' to 'bundle,' since the Hebrew noun means that in which something is bound up. So the idea apparently is that God has a bag in which He keeps souls, as an archer keeps stones in his bag. And that as 'David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it' (1 S 17^{49}), so God may sling out of His bag the souls of David's enemies. Then Mr. Oesterley refers to Frazer's *Golden Bough* and the primitive notion of the separable soul. According to that primitive notion, you can leave your soul at home when you go abroad, locking it up for safety if you please. And it may be that the early Hebrews, if they held that notion, were wise enough to give their souls into the safer keeping of Jehovah.

Is it no longer possible to preach on Future Punishment? Have we absolutely and for ever surrendered the Future to the agnostic? A considerable portion of the New Testament is concerned with it. The most impressive things said about it have been said by our Lord Himself. Is the commentator henceforth to write 'mere metaphor' across all these passages? Is the preacher to cry helplessly,

Behind the veil, behind the veil!

and give himself wholly to the preaching of retribution in this life?

There is retribution in this life. We have discovered that every sin not only 'deserves,' as the Westminster Shorter Catechism has it, but receives 'God's wrath and curse in this life.' Science has helped us to that, and it is a great service that science has rendered. Are we to be content with it? The Shorter Catechism says, 'Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come.' Wesley went over the Catechism and cut out the phrases that did not agree with his Arminianism. Are we to go over it and cut out the last phrase of that answer, because we are no longer sure of it?

That the doctrine of Future Retribution has lost its power, there seems to be no doubt. It has lost its power because it has lost its certainty. We are no longer sure if it is true. We are not sure if there is any truth in it. But the loss is due to reaction. We are paying for the ignorance of our fathers.

Our fathers were not too confident. They were not too dogmatic. They were simply too ignorant. They took the words of the Authorized Version as they found them; they gathered their texts into heaps out of every book of the Bible indiscriminately; and they did not know their God.

We are paying for that. But let us come upon a sermon on Future Retribution by a scholar and we are arrested still. There is such a sermon in Professor Gwatkin's recent volume, *The Eye for Spiritual Things*. It arrests the attention of a reviewer in the *Church Family Newspaper*. After a word on the 'simplicity' of Dr. Gwatkin's sermons, 'their spirituality, their deep reverence and tenderness,' he says: 'Those who know the wealth of his erudition and the depth of his thought will turn with eagerness to certain titles.' And he names 'Eternal Punishment.'

'Let us begin,' says Professor Gwatkin, 'with one general thought.' It is the thought that 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' It is an old truth, he says. It is a truth of Scripture and Nature. Our fathers knew it. But science in these latter days has thrown on it light our fathers never saw. 'If there is another world at all, we need no message from heaven to tell us that our lot in it must be the natural consequence of our doings in this world. It is no mere decree which joins good and bad in this world with weal and woe in that. We cannot imagine it otherwise, for the necessity lies in God's

own nature. Just as we leave this world, so must we enter that, and take the place in it for which we have made ourselves fit.'

Here, then, is one certainty to begin with, and science has not made it less certain. As we leave this world, we enter that. 'If we are fit for the blessing of the righteous, we shall stand with them before the throne. If we are fit to be with the devil and his angels, with the devil and his angels must our position be.' Is it a hard decree? It is no decree, and it is not hard. It is of the fitness of things; and if there is fitness in it, there is also mercy. For heaven would be hell to the man who loves not God. It is no decree; for though the speaker is the Lord in glory, the sentence is our own decision. 'Whatever be the punishment of the wicked, it must be the natural consequence of his wickedness.'

This is a great statement to make. And it is a great thing to be able in these days to make it with certainty. Can we go further? Can we say what the punishment of the wicked will be?

'The words of Scripture are full of terror.' Yes, but they are very vague—a worm that dieth not and a fire that is not quenched—can we not get round them? 'Their terror,' says Professor Gwatkin, 'is only heightened by their studied vagueness.' 'But,' he goes on, 'but, once for all, get rid of the common ideas of hell. It is no more full of fire than the streets of heaven are paved with gold: and if it were, it could not harm our spiritual bodies. Scripture points another way; and so does common sense. Many a sinner here would gladly face a death of fire, if he were only sure that it would burn up the torments of remorse. And what will be our remorse when the drunkenness of sin is past—when the love of Christ we scorned is shining out, but not for us, in its unclouded splendour, and the wrath of God we set at naught is blazing down on us with all its terror? These are the fires of hell.'

Can we go further? Can we tell if these fires are to be everlasting? Professor Gwatkin proceeds to that. He says that in the text which he has already quoted, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment' (Mt 25^{46}), our Lord tells us that the punishment is everlasting, and 'beyond all doubt His words are true.'

But have we considered His words? Are we sure of their meaning? 'The meaning that first comes into our heads is not always right; and the "plain meaning" is very often wrong. What can be plainer than, If a man hate not his father and mother, he cannot be My disciple? Neither will it do to take for granted that our English Bible is always exactly right. Though the translators did marvellously well in their day, on some points every scholar now can see that they were mistaken.'

And Professor Gwatkin goes on to show that the Greek word translated 'everlasting' or 'eternal' does not mean a thing which never ends. 'It is the punishment of an age, which in this case is the age to come; and it is not a punishment which lasts all through that age, but the punishment which properly belongs to it, just as other punishment (fire, for example) properly belongs to this age.

But if the punishment is not everlasting, then surely the life is not. For Professor Gwatkin has said that the same Greek word is used of both. It does not follow. The life is the proper life of the world to come, as the Creed calls it, just as the punishment is its proper punishment. And that the life is without end we know, not from the adjective used of it, but from the nature of the life itself. 'For the life Christ gives of His own life cannot have an end.'

What, then, of the punishment? Is it everlasting? If the Greek adjective does not mean everlasting, is there anything in the nature of the punishment itself which shows that it cannot have an end? Professor Gwatkin says there is nothing. There is one passage which speaks of sin that hath

no forgiveness, either in this age or that which is to come. It is a passage, says Professor Gwatkin, which contains an awful warning. But it does not say that the punishment of sin is endless. For we are told elsewhere that God's glory lasts through all the ages, 'and we cannot say what splendours of it may light those further ages.'

But there is more than that. The word translated punishment, says Professor Gwatkin, 'positively will not bear the meaning of endless punishment.' It is not retribution, it is remedy. It is not mere punishment, it is punishment that is meant to cure men of their evil ways. And this punishment cannot last longer than the sinful temper which has to be cured. For now we know God better, and we know that the wrath of God will not rest on a sinner for a moment after he truly turns to Him, whether in this age or another.

And this leads to the last of the questions that remain. Will it be possible for a sinner to turn to God in that age? Once more Professor Gwatkin has an answer. Not from Scripture. There is much in Scripture about it, but it is on both sides of the question, and there is no clear statement either way. His answer comes from the knowledge of the purpose of God. God's purpose is to have mercy on all men, and '*we cannot imagine that purpose finally defeated by sin.*' 'The love which leaves the ninety and nine will never rest while a single one of those for whom Christ's blood was shed remains an outcast from the peace of God in bliss.'

It is a short sermon. We have almost quoted it. What other could we do? For, as the reviewer says, 'there is a thought in every sentence.' One thing remains. It is the question whether we do wise, in face of the evil that abounds, to let go the fear of endless punishment. The last paragraph touches it. Let us be consistent and quote it as it stands.

'Some there are who say that the fire must be unending, because nothing else will frighten men from sin. But does that frighten them? Did any man ever sin a sin the less for fear of hell? Scripture puts forward the love of Christ, not the fear of hell. Dark as the shadow is, it was never meant to fill our life with gloom. No, Christ came to fill our hearts with joy—with joy as natural as the joy of laughing children, keener than the keenest joy of earthly love. Mysterious and awful is the joy of joys, when our God has prospered us to find the lost, and bring it home to be for ever folded in the arms of Christ our Saviour's love—the love that beareth all things and abideth evermore.'

The Sabbath in the Light of the Higher Criticism.

By the Rev. Edward G. King, D.D., Gayton Rectory, Blisworth.

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The time has gone by when a question like that of Sunday observance could be settled one way or other by the random use of a few texts culled haphazard from the Bible. We are conscious of a development in Truth, so that the teaching which suited one age of the world may no longer be needed in the next. This consciousness is leading many to disregard the Bible. They see that it cannot be a storehouse of infallible *rules*, but they have not yet come to see that it does contain infallible *principles*. In the new study of historical criticism God is, I believe, guiding us to those principles, so that the next generation may come to study the Bible with the same affection that our forefathers did, but with a larger insight. . . .

The argument upon which the critical theory is based is essentially a cumulative argument. It would therefore be absurd in the course of one