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# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

ONE of the most astonishing things in the New Testament is the identification of Jesus of Nazareth with Jehovah. It is so astonishing that the ordinary reader does not receive it. The name of Jehovah does not occur, for, being counted too sacred for pronounciation, it had gone out of use. The word 'Lord' is used instead. And it is easy enough to accept the word 'Lord' as applied to Jesus, without seeing that it is the name of God.

But if it is astonishing to the ordinary reader, it is more astonishing to the scholar. For the scholar in some measure realizes what it meant to a Jew of the time to give the unspeakable name of the God of the Old Testament to a human being, to a man who had 'come out of Nazareth.' That the name 'Jehovah' itself was not used made no difference; the name 'Lord' carried all its awfulness. We sometimes say, or hear it said, that the early Christians did not realize what they were doing when they accosted Jesus with 'my Lord and my God.' No careful student of early Christianity says so.

How were they able to do it? After many centuries of surprise we are now in a position to understand. The way was opened for them by the Books of Testimonies. The discovery of one of these books within the last year or two has given us the key to the mystery.

The Books of Testimonies were selections of passages from the Old Testament. They were made for the purpose of convincing the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. They were the first of all the Christian writings, preceding the Gospels and even the Epistles. And when the Epistles and the Gospels came to be written, these Books of Testimonies, and especially one Testimony Book which seems in time to have superseded all the others, were used as the authority for finding the events of the life of Jesus foretold in the Old Testament, and for identifying Jesus Himself with the Old Testament Jehovah.

There is a passage in the Epistle of Jude. In the Authorized Version the surprise of it is completely disguised. It is disguised also in the text of the Revised Version, but comes out of its disguise in the margin. The passage is the fifth verse. Read it according to the Revised Version margin: 'Now I desire to put you in remembrance, though ye know all things once for all, how that Jesus, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.'

A month ago in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, Professor SOUTER spoke of the amazing versatility of Dr. Rendel HARRIS. He spoke also of his equally amazing genius for discovery, and suggested that in the future one of the greatest of all the

present generation's contributions to Biblical learning would seem to be his discovery of the Odes of Solomon. With deference, but decidedly, we assert that of greater significance than that is the discovery of a Testimony Book on Mt. Athos. If Dr. Rendel HARRIS did not make the actual discovery of that book, he certainly discovered and declared the importance of it. In the second part of his *Testimonies* (Cambridge University Press; demy 8vo, pp. 150; 12s. net) he discusses the passage in the Epistle of Jude.

He has no doubt that 'Jesus' is the correct reading. Not simply because it is the more difficult reading. The canon of textual criticism which says, of two readings take the more difficult is, like fire, a good servant but a bad master. He prefers the reading 'Jesus' because it has excellent authority from the manuscripts, and especially because it is entirely in accord with the thought of primitive or Palestinian Christianity.

The Rev. Hubert SHEARS, M.A., Queen's College, Oxford, has written a book on *The Gospel according to St. Paul* (Parker; 7s. 6d. net). It is a book hard to read. And if it were not for its first paragraph there are few who would take the trouble to read it. But in that paragraph Mr. SHEARS makes a statement which is so revolutionary and yet so reasonable that the reader finds it necessary to proceed.

The statement is that to St. Paul sin was not what we mean by sin, but wholly different. To us sin is due to disobedience and incurs guilt. To St. Paul it was due to ignorance or immaturity and did not incur either guilt or condemnation. God simply passed it over—'winked at' it, in the audacious metaphor of our English Version. 'The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now——'

'The times of this ignorance' were for the Jews the period from the Creation to the delivery of the

Mosaic Law; for the Gentiles the whole history of the world up to the preaching of the Christian Gospel. When St. Paul speaks to Jews he says, 'Where there is no law there is no transgression,' and therefore no sin in our sense. When he addresses Gentiles, as at Athens, he says, 'The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.'

St. Paul's argument to the Jews is that where there is no law there is no transgression, and where there is no transgression there is no guilt. But is not transgression sin, and sin transgression? Transgression, says Mr. SHEARS, is sin, but sin is not transgression. That is to say, the word which we usually translate 'sin' (*ἁμαρτία*) does not mean transgression. It cannot mean transgression until there is a Law to transgress. Now from Adam to Moses, says the Apostle, there was no Law. It was only when the Law came and was transgressed that sin became transgression. And in order to declare the difference he uses another word for the sin that was commuted after the Law came. He calls it *παράβασις* or *παράπτωμα*, transgression or trespass.

From Adam to Moses, then, there was no trespass or transgression. There was only sin, that is, error, 'missing the mark.' If men did wrong they did it not against God, who had given them no Law as yet, they did it rather against themselves. And whatever penalty it involved fell on themselves by the constitution of the world; it did not involve guilt or punishment. Only when the Law came and sin was turned into trespass could men be guilty before God and deserve His righteous judgment.

The penalty which fell on men in the period from Adam to Moses fell on them through the

constitution of the world and of man. Not, however, through their original constitution. The world was created 'good.' And man was created 'very good.' There could be no penalty then of any sort. But to the first man was set, not a law covering conduct, but a single command, 'Thou shalt not eat of it.' That command Adam disobeyed. He therefore to that extent was guilty of transgression. And he suffered for it.

He suffered exclusion from Paradise and he suffered death. Exclusion from Paradise was the immediate punishment for his sin of disobedience. Death was its remoter consequence. And death passed upon his descendants.

Thus death 'reigned' even from Adam to Moses, because of Adam's transgression. No one else transgressed, however, and therefore no one suffered otherwise than this penalty of death, due to the new state of the creation which Adam's transgression had brought about. There was sin, but it was of ignorance and therefore was not 'reckoned.' Listen to three verses of the fifth chapter of Romans: and then to Mr. SHEARS'S interpretation of them—'Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed unto all men for that all sinned;—for until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that did not sin after the likeness of the transgression of Adam' (Ro 5<sup>12-14</sup>).

That is the passage. This is the interpretation. 'St. Paul looked upon the period from Adam to Moses as one in which there was no law, and consequently no transgression. Yet there was sin, and there was its physical penalty death in which it reigned; but the sin was not "reckoned." Most remarkable are the words, "those that did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression." In the case of Adam, St. Paul recognized *transgression*, the violation of a distinct command, "Thou shalt not eat of it." And he held that

that one act involved the race in sin and death (5<sup>12</sup>), but not in transgression (5<sup>14</sup>). The transgression ended then and there. Its effect remained as sin, moral disease leading man astray in the absence of any revelation of the right way. And the sin reigned in death even over those who were not involved in the guilt of the transgression. Thus the words, "those that did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression," apply to the whole human race in the specified period; their purpose is to shew that sin in its original unconscious, unintentional phase brought death in its train even when it was not "reckoned" in the sight of God, even when there was no law to make it something more than sin. Mankind were suffering from a deadly disease of which they were wholly ignorant, and were to remain ignorant until the revelation made to Moses first brought man face to face with his true condition and involved him in that guilt of *transgression* from which he had been free hitherto both in God's sight and in his own.'

Now, if throughout the long period from Adam to Moses there was no guilt in the world and no condemnation, why was the Law given? Would not the world have been better without it? Would it not at least have been an easier place to live in? So apparently thought the translators of our Authorized Version, and so thought the Revisers after them. But so thought not St. Paul.

Our translators, Authorized and Revised, made the Apostle say that the Law was given *because of* transgressions. How that could be, when there were no transgressions as yet, it is hard to see. What St. Paul said was that the Law was given *for the sake of* transgressions (*χάριν* is the word). And that can mean only this, that the Law was given by Moses in order that sin, unconscious and therefore guiltless, might become transgression, conscious disobedience and therefore guilt in the sight of God.

Does it look like theological beating of the air?

It is the thought of St. Paul and worth considering. Is it not the thought of the whole of the New Testament? How could God bring home to men the fact of sin, without a Law to test their conduct by? And how could the sinner remain guiltless, when once a Law was given? And how could grace and truth come by Jesus Christ, as St. John says they did, if the Law had not first been given by Moses?

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The comparison of one religion with another, once the preserve of the opponents of Christianity, is now become so popular that it cannot be kept out of the pulpit. As it was with the historical criticism of the Old Testament, so is it with the comparison between Christianity and the other religions of the world: the time has come when it must be handled in the ordinary exposition of the gospel. And everything depends upon the handling.

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The amount of attention given to it need not, should not, be very great. But whatever is said about it must be said with authority. That authority comes from two sources. First, an accurate knowledge of the subject, giving confidence to the speaker. And next, an assured conviction that there is in Christianity an essential, fundamental, unconquerable superiority over every other form of religion.

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An accurate knowledge of religion can be gained only by study. A conviction of the superiority of Christianity may be obtained by the recognition of a single outstanding fact. Christianity alone of all the religions of the world is an ethical religion—that is the fact.

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Look at it. It is mighty as truth itself and prevails. A book has been published with the title of *Personal Religion and Politics* (Murray; 6s. net). The author is Canon W. H. CARNEGIE, Sub-dean of Westminster Abbey, Rector of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and Speaker's Chaplain of the House of Commons. The title of the book is too narrow

for its contents. Canon CARNEGIE's purpose is to show, not that the religious man is a politician, but that he is a moral man—as moral as he is religious and as religious as he is moral.

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And he can be so only if he is a Christian. 'For while it is true to say that the Christian morality is distinguished by its supernaturalism, it is equally true to say that the Christian religion is chiefly distinguished by its moralism. It stands indeed unique in this respect. In it alone, or rather in the great spiritual movement of which it is the consummation, do we find the religious sense and the moral sense developing side by side in intimate and increasing interdependence.'

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It is not so elsewhere. 'In every other great religious movement of which history bears record religion and morality parted company at an early stage, and thenceforth pursued independent careers. And their separation in the long run proved disastrous to both. Religion deprived of its moral expression and field of activity soon evaporated into otherworldly quietism, or atrophied into ceremonialism, or degenerated into superstition. Morality deprived of its religious setting and sanctions quickly hardened into conventionalism, or became the cult of secluded cliques to whose teachings the mass of men paid small heed.'

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How does Canon CARNEGIE account for the difference? He goes back to Moses. 'I am sufficiently old-fashioned,' he says, 'to believe that the account which has come down to us of a special revelation of God's will unfolded on Mount Sinai in the terms of a code of moral enactments is founded on historical fact; that behind it lies some unique occurrence altogether transcending the ordinary laws of mental and moral development.' But he does not insist on that view of it, and he does not need to insist on it. For, 'the fact itself cannot be gainsaid that in the life of the Hebrew people alone the religious and moral strains were from the first intermingled, and that they developed in increasing interdependence.'

Hebraism consummated itself in Christianity. Now Christianity is Christ. And the moment we look at the character of Christ we see religion and morality living and working together in indissoluble unity. The Roman centurion recognized it: 'I also am a man under authority.' Jesus Himself recognized it and that at the very beginning: 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' The recognition of Father carried with it the recognition of duty. 'My Father' and 'my Father's business' were inseparable.

Here, then, is a test of the superiority of Christianity over every other religion, a test that is clear, comprehensible, convincing. And here also—for we cannot have the one without the other—is a test of the Christian. To know the Father, with us as with Christ Himself, is to be about the Father's business.

What is the business of the Father? We find it in our own day, in our own land, at our own door. We find it in this form, in that form. To those who are living at this time in Scotland and the North of England it appeals most openly, most undeniably, in the form of resistance to the traffic in strong drink.

When the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws made its report, men and women who had not looked into the matter were startled into at least a momentary uneasiness. There were eight representatives of 'the Trade' on the Commission. Every one of them signed the Majority Report. And that Report contained the following sentence: 'It is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation.' If, then, we call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, how are we meeting our obligation in respect of this gigantic evil? Are we saying to those who call us Christians, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?'

A man may plead that he does not see it. He does not see that this is such a gigantic evil. If he does not see it let him take the opinion of the leading representatives of the liquor trade. They are not likely to have given their names to an exaggeration of it. But where is he living who does not see it? Let him walk down the chief street of one of our cities on a Saturday night. He will see it then. Let him choose by preference the night after the declaration of the poll where the result has been 'no change.' He will see it then.

Did the BISHOP OF DURHAM do as much as that?

On the eve of the polling in some of the largest cities in Scotland a Sunday newspaper came out with a statement by Dr. Hensley HENSON, the present Bishop of Durham. It was a short statement, but 'the Trade' recognized the value of it and spread it over a complete page of the paper. This was the statement: 'Prohibition cannot be reconciled with the tradition of Christianity, or with the teaching and example of Christ.'

Dr. HENSON means prohibition of the drink trade. Read the sentence again and change one word in it. 'Prohibition of the slave trade cannot be reconciled with the tradition of Christianity, or with the teaching and example of Christ.' So it was said when the struggle was at its height for the abolition of slavery. And among the rest there were bishops who said it. What do we think of the saying now?

And yet it had more appearance of truth than Dr. HENSON's utterance. What claim has he to make such a statement? There is a superficial understanding of certain of Christ's words and acts—such words as 'The Son of Man came eating and drinking,' and such acts as the turning of water into wine—which has already done mischief enough both to Christ and to Christianity. It is time that men in the position of Dr. Hensley

HENSON began to consider what these words and acts really signify.

It is time to see that Christ's method of teaching was not to lay down a separate rule for every event. Muhammad attempted some such impossibility. But even Muhammad's regulations cover only a small part of life's experiences. What Christ did was to lay down one rule which should cover every experience; and then to leave us to apply it to each particular experience as it comes.

The rule was this: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' It was not new. Long years before it had been given to the Hebrew nation. But He put new life into it. More than that, He put new life into His followers, making it possible for them to apply the rule when the opportunity arose, even though it cost them something to do it.

And His example agreed with His teaching. One day He was present at a wedding when the wine went done. The people may have been poor, or more guests may have arrived than were expected. It was an extremely embarrassing situation for the bridegroom, who had to supply the wedding feast. In our country the shame would have fallen on the bride. What did Jesus do? He applied His own rule. Out of love for His neighbour He turned water into wine.

Why did He not bid them drink water? Simply because drinkable water was not to be had. The water that He turned into wine was there for purifying purposes. It was because of the scarcity of drinking water that wine was the common drink of the country.

But if the drinking of wine had been a 'national degradation' the case would have been altered. What would He have done then? We can see by what St. Paul did when a smaller matter became a serious question in his day.

It was not a question of drinking; it was a question of eating. In St. Paul's day it was customary for food to be taken into the temples and laid out before the idols. After a time it was removed and distributed among the poor. Many of the Christians were poor, and they did not like to eat the food that had been offered to idols. St. Paul himself had no difficulty. To him an idol was nothing. But when he found that other Christians were troubled about it, he said that for their sakes he too would abstain from eating it: 'If meat make my brother to offend (that is, to feel that he is not doing right), I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.'

Is that more than was to be expected of him? Is it more than Christ would have done? Where did St. Paul learn to think of such a thing? Where did he find the spirit to do it?

But the BISHOP OF DURHAM may answer, and for a moment one may think that he is entitled to answer, that his statement was not of the right of any man to do as he pleased for himself, his statement was that no one has the right to compel another man to do it. His words were '*Prohibition* cannot be reconciled with the tradition of Christianity, or with the teaching and example of Christ.'

Dr. HENSON was himself at one time Sub-dean of Westminster Abbey and Rector of St. Margaret's. Will he listen for a moment to his successor? 'As Christ drove the money-changers from the Temple, so His Church is bound to use all her influence to drive from public life men who sully its fountain springs by unclean practices.' Those are Canon CARNEGIE'S words.

If there is one thing that has come clearly out of the elections in Scotland it is that the issue lies between 'no licence' and 'no change.' Throughout the whole country the vote for 'limitation' has been nearly negligible. And it must be so.

The writer of these Notes once went over a distillery in the north of Scotland, on the invitation of the distiller, in order to see the various processes in the manufacture of whisky. When a certain vat was reached, the distiller drew particular attention to it. 'That,' he said, 'is the place where the good grain is turned into poison.' 'It is considered a pleasant way of taking poison.' 'That may be,' he answered; 'it is poison all the same.' 'Yet you sell it?' 'Yes,' he said, 'I sell it; I do not drink it, however; if other people drink it, that is their business; I have nothing to do with that.'

Is it poison, then? That is no longer in dispute. Just because it is poison its sale is regulated by Act of Parliament. And if the sale is regulated, that is prohibition. It is partial prohibition. All that remains is to consider, to consider carefully and in the light of Christ's commandment (which the distiller had for the moment forgotten), whether partial prohibition is enough.

The present writer spent his ministerial life in two country parishes and in a great city. Soon after he went to one of the country parishes he was visited by one of the farmers. His eldest son, he said, had given way to drinking, and he wondered if the new minister could do anything with him. But it was too late. In a few months he died a drunkard. It was the minister's first funeral in the parish.

The family had consisted of the old man and two sons. The younger son was working on the farm—a large and prosperous farm. He was a fine-looking young man, well educated, most unselfish and most gentlemanly. Every year the Sunday School picnic was held at that farm, and the farmer's son was the secret of its invariable success. His way with children was wonderful.

The old man called again. His second son was drinking. The story does not need lengthening. It is common enough. One thing, however, is worth mentioning—the fight he made. Of his own accord he went to an institution for some months. Last week he died.

Now the point is this. What would partial prohibition have done for those young men? They got their liquor in the neighbouring town. Suppose that all the licences in that town had been withdrawn except one, yet, when the craving was on them—a craving, let us remember, caused by the poisonous nature of the drink—they would have gone and found what they wanted in the one licensed place remaining.

No doubt there still remains the other remark of the distiller: 'That is their business; I have nothing to do with that.' Does the BISHOP OF DURHAM agree?

## William Sanday and his Work.

BY THE REV. ALFRED PLUMMER, D.D., FORMERLY MASTER OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DURHAM.

### First Paper.

THE death of Dr. Sanday is the greatest loss which the cause of Theology, in its widest and highest sense, has sustained in the present century; and it will be some time before those who are best qualified to estimate its magnitude will be able to do so with full judgment and accuracy. Nevertheless, one who keenly feels the loss and has

large knowledge of the facts may be allowed to make some contribution towards such a result. Sanday's death may be looked at from two opposite points of view. On the one hand, it may be said that, after half a century of almost ceaseless study and production, he passed away without having written a page of what was to have