

only the more painful by his own sensitive nature. True, that in the extreme distance there was the faint dawning of a better future. True, that his sufferings did save the Church, and give it new life. But this light was far away, and obscured by too thick clouds of murky darkness for any ray of it to gladden his own sad soul. Yet he fainted not. In weakness he was made strong; and the promise was fulfilled, with which he had entered upon his ministry, that God would "make him to be a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls; and that none should prevail against him" (Chap. i. 18, 19).

R. PAYNE SMITH.

### BIBLICAL NOTES.

JOSHUA iv. 9.—On first reading the Biblical Note on this passage contributed by Mr. Shalders to THE EXPOSITOR for August, I was strongly inclined to think that he had made a discovery of some value, and had removed a stumbling-block which has led Rosenmüller and other critics to doubt the genuineness of this Verse. But a subsequent study of the passage has convinced me that this ingenious interpretation is hardly tenable; and as I am sure that Mr. Shalders, like myself, only desires to arrive at the truth, he will, I know, pardon me if I state my reasons for dissenting from his view, and for holding to the received Version. They are these.

1. The grammar of the passage appears to me (but I am open to correction) to be entirely at variance with the proposed rendering. Mr. Shalders says, "The literal translation of the Verse is as follows: 'And the twelve stones Joshua raised in the midst of Jordan from under the place where stood (*viz.* the station of) the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant.'" Now I submit, with all deference and respect, that this is *not* the literal translation, and that the literal translation *is*—precisely that of the Authorized Version. For, in the first place, the definite article ("*the* twelve stones") is wanting in the Original. The Original says simply, "And twelve stones set up Joshua;" that is, obviously, "twelve *other* stones," as both the LXX. and the Vulgate understand it—the former having here *καὶ*

ἄλλους δώδεκα λίθους; the latter, *Alios quoque duodecim lapides*. The article, which Mr. Shalders justly sees to be essential to his view, he has somehow read into the passage. Had the Original aimed at expressing his meaning, it would have stood, as it stands in Verse 20, "these twelve stones," or at least "the twelve stones" (הַיָּסִידִים). Secondly, it is, to say the least, doubtful whether יָסַד (statuit, stare fecit) could ever be used of "raising up stones out of the bed of the river." Its meaning is to *set up, to erect*, not to *take up* or *lift up*. Words to express this latter sense *are* found in this Chapter, as in Verses 3, 5, 20, and in Verse 8, immediately before our text; and it is presumable that, if the sacred writer had wished to convey this meaning here, he would have used one of these words, and *not* the very word which in Verse 20 is employed to express the idea which Mr. Shalders repudiates. But be that as it may, this, I think, is almost certain, (3) that to express the meaning of Mr. Shalders, a different preposition must have been used, namely, "out of the midst" (of the Jordan), instead of "in the midst" (בְּתוֹךְ, not מִתּוֹךְ), and all the more so, as this preposition is used to convey this meaning in Verse 8. The design of Verse 9, according to Mr. Shalders, is "to record where the stones came *from* that were set up in Gilgal." But I venture to suggest to him that if that were so, a preposition of motion, not a preposition of rest, would have been used. And the same remark applies (4) to תַּחַת. Mr. Shalders renders this word "from under," that is to say, he imports the idea of motion into the word which of itself simply signifies *under*—*from under* being regularly expressed by מִתַּחַת. The rendering of the Authorized Version, "in the place where the feet of the priests stood," so far from "missing the force of the preposition," is the exact English equivalent of the Hebrew idiom, "under the standing-place of the feet of the priests," &c. And that our translators were warranted in their rendering, "in the place," &c., a glance at Exodus x. 23 and xvi. 29 will shew. I am constrained to say, therefore, in view of these four considerations, that Hebrew grammar is altogether against Mr. Shalders's novel and ingenious view, and that the Original asserts unmistakably that Joshua "erected a second cairn in the course of the Jordan itself."

2. The other difficulties suggested by Mr. Shalders are also disposed of by a careful study of the sacred narrative. It is asked—and the question has been put before—what could be the object or the good of this second cairn? For it is natural to suppose that, as soon as the river resumed its customary flow, these memorials of the passage would forthwith be hid from view. It also seems certain, as

Mr. Shalders says, that "one stone could not long remain upon another in a river subject to such a periodical rush of waters as took place every spring, when the snows of the Lebanon [? Hermon] melted." And to this it may be added that the current of the Jordan is always extremely rapid—in some places eight knots—owing to its rapid fall, 11.8 feet in each mile, according to one estimate; 1,400 feet in about 100 miles, according to another; a circumstance to which it is probably indebted for its name, "the Descender" (יִרְדָּן). And the strength of the current at or near this very place is curiously illustrated by the not infrequent accidents which befall the pilgrims who annually bathe here. It is not surprising therefore that we should be asked, first, how the twelve stones could possibly remain *in situ* "unto this day"? and, secondly, how the writer could possibly know they were there, when they were covered by the waters? But the narrative supplies an answer. The passage, it reminds us, was effected in the first month (April). At that time the river would be, and as a matter of fact was, full to overflowing (Joshua iii. 15). Not only the snows of Hermon, but probably the latter rain also, had swelled its waters. It may be that Joshua iii. 15, literally interpreted, only informs us that the river was "*full up* to all its banks," though the Original seems to me to suggest an overflow. But we find at the present day, when the volume of the Jordan is considerably less than it was formerly, that the sedge and bushes which fringe its banks are constantly submerged in the time of harvest (Furrer, Robinson). Now "the place where the feet of the priests stood," the place where Joshua raised his memorial, was not in the bed of the river, but in the shallow overflow on the eastern bank. For it was when "the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in *the brim of the water*," that the flow of the stream was stayed. And here, "at the brink of the water of Jordan," the priests continued to stand (Chap. iii. 8; Chap. iv. 3) until all the people had passed over. In this same place, therefore, away from the rapid current, and where they were not likely to be dislodged by the annual flood, the twelve stones were set up. They may have been partially covered while the flood lasted, but when the river retreated to its proper channel they would all be exposed to view.

It still remains to mention the purpose of this second cairn. It was obviously intended to mark the exact spot. The twelve stones set up at Gilgal would only proclaim to future generations the fact of the miraculous passage; the twelve raised by Joshua would shew them the place where the ark rested while their forefathers crossed. It was Joshua's own idea, apparently. And it seems to me, I must

say, to have every stamp of naturalness and truthfulness. God appointed a memorial of the event—the Divine wisdom has never sanctioned respect of *places*—but the great captain, who on that day was “magnified in the sight of all Israel,” he would fain fix the place. He has been commanded to take twelve stones *out* of the Jordan, and erect them elsewhere. He is to take them from the very spot where the feet of the priests stood firm. What a natural idea that he should take twelve other stones, and set them up *in* the Jordan, on the spot which had been thus consecrated, and which must ever be a “holy place” to the Hebrew people!

JOSEPH HAMMOND.

CANDOUR obliges me to surrender to Mr. Hammond’s criticism my interpretation of this Verse. The cumulative weight of his objections is irresistible. But while he has successfully impugned the translation I proposed, I doubt whether he quite adequately appreciates the difficulty it was intended to remove.

E. W. SHALDERS.

LUKE xi. 5-10.—When Jesus had been praying in a certain place, his disciples came to him, and said, “Lord, teach us to pray;” and He taught them the Lord’s Prayer. But when He had done this He goes on to speak to them in a parable that seems to cast a new light on some of those relations of man to God which are to be affected by this mysterious agency. For instead of representing the Divine Nature as so open and tremulous to our cry that it needs not even a whisper when we pray, but can hear our sighing and be stirred by our longing, it is opened to us here as if wrapped in a slumber heavy as midnight, and only to be awakened by our persistent and most urgent endeavour.

In all the words of the Messiah which we possess, there is but one other parable touching the same principle. It is where the widow comes, in her helplessness, to the unjust judge, who neither fears God nor regards man, and cries, “Avenge me of mine adversary.” He has no mind to listen to her cry; she is the embodiment of all helplessness; there is no eloquence in her words, no gift in her hands, and no reason in the world why he should attend to her, except her simple persistence in urging her claim: but that carries the day against every obstacle. Her continual cry for what she has a right to seek has in it a touch of omnipotence. So he gives that to importunity he would not give as a duty or a right.

The first feeling we have about the matter is either that there has been some mistake in the way these parables are reported, or that it is hopeless for us to try to understand them. We say, “This house-

holder asleep at midnight! What can this mean?" I think the meaning is that Jesus would teach us in this way what we are learning in many other ways—that the best things in the divine life, as in the natural, will not come to us merely for the asking; that *true prayer is the whole strength of the whole man going out after his needs*, and the real secret of getting what you want in heaven, as on earth, lies in the fact that you give your whole heart for it, or you cannot adequately value it when you get it. So, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;" means, "Put out all your energies, as if you had to waken Heaven out of a midnight slumber, or an indifference like that of the unjust judge."

This I conceive to have been the meaning of Christ in the parable, and it teaches something in our life we seldom adequately consider, viz., what I would call *the indifference of God to anything less than the best there is in man—the determination of Heaven, if I may say so, not to hear what we are not determined that Heaven shall hear.*

ROBERT COLLYER.

### BRIEF NOTICES.

THE late Professor Herbert has happily left behind him the manuscript of a work which will enable those who did not know him to understand why those who did know him so highly esteemed and loved him. A man of rare character and ability, simple and refined in speech, clear yet deep in thought, passionately and steadfastly devoted to the study of the loftiest and most difficult questions the mind can grasp, he was yet more conspicuous and beloved for his singular purity and kindness of heart. Of his intellectual power and reach, the work to which I have just referred will give ample illustration. It deals with the problems common to science, philosophy, and religion, and refutes the materialistic arguments of such men as Comte, Helmholtz, J. S. Mill, Huxley, Tyndall, Herbert Spencer, in the most striking and conclusive way, simply by carrying them out to their logical issues. The book, which will appear early in this season, it is hoped, might have been called "Realism Self-Refuted," had it not been felt that Mr. Herbert's modesty would have shrunk from putting so large a pretension on his title-page. But I, who have had the good fortune to read it twice—first in MS. and then in proof—venture to predict that it will have to be reckoned with by