

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for September will contain the report upon the examination papers in connexion with the Guild of Bible Study. It will be understood that the delay is made for the purpose of giving members who are abroad an opportunity of sharing in the competition.

Mr. Bussell's University sermon, upon which some notes were written here recently, has been printed in full in the *Church of England Pulpit*. Those who have inquired for it, and have complained that the *Oxford Magazine* was costly and hard to find, may be now recommended to order the *Pulpit* for June 25, which any bookseller will procure for a penny.

Recently, a short series of letters appeared in the *Spectator* on Our Lord's Authority and the Criticism of the Old Testament. One of them was signed "Thomas Ethelbert Page," a name well known to students of the Book of the Acts. Unlike many of the others, Mr. Page's letter took up one point in the discussion, and confined itself strictly to that. The point was our Lord's reference to Jonah as a type of Himself.

Dr. Liddon claimed, in his famous sermon on *The Worth of the Old Testament*—we quote Mr. Page's words—"the infallible sanction of Christ

for St. Matthew xii. 40, which places the story of Jonah in the whale's belly on a parity as a historical fact with the burial and resurrection of our Lord."

But to consider the question it is necessary, Mr. Page holds, to place side by side the words of Christ, as recorded by St. Matthew xii. 39, 40, with His words as recorded by St. Luke xi. 29, 30, thus:—

MATTHEW XII.

39. An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet.

40. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

LUKE XI.

29. *This generation is an evil generation: it seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Jonah.*

30. *For even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so also shall the Son of man be to this generation.*

The words given in italics are those in which the two narratives differ. "It will be at once observed," says Mr. Page, "that the explanation given by St. Matthew of 'the sign of Jonah' is absolutely different from that given by St. Luke. This remarkable diversity interrupting a remarkable identity of language is very noteworthy, and, occurring in words which are explanatory, cannot but suggest that in Matthew xii. 40 we are dealing, not with the *ipsissima verba* of Christ, but with an explanatory addition of the Evangelist."

Mr. Page supports this position by three arguments. 1. The words in Matthew xii. 40, "Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale," are a quotation from the Old Testament, and quotations from the Old Testament are a marked peculiarity of St. Matthew's Gospel. 2. Both Evangelists agree, *without a single letter of variation*, in the comparison which is afterwards drawn (Matt. xii. 41 and Luke xi. 32) between the preaching of Jonah to the Ninevites and that of Jesus to the Jews. This, therefore, which is St. Luke's explanation, is more likely to be the meaning of "the sign of Jonah." 3. "If Matthew xii. 40 is the utterance of Christ, and to be taken literally, then it presents insuperable difficulties, for it is impossible to explain away the emphatic clearness of the 'three days and three nights,' or to reconcile it with historic fact."

Now, of these three arguments, the second is the one that has most independent force. And the question at once arises, Is a statement to be considered more reliable if it is found in more than one of the Gospels? Is the importance of a statement or of a narrative to be determined by the frequency of its repetition? There is no doubt we have been taught so. It is almost a commonplace of that easy form of exposition which is content to repeat what has been uttered already, if it has a homiletical use in it. You scarcely find a commentary that resists the temptation of saying that the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand is to be regarded as of the utmost significance, inasmuch as it has been recorded by all four Evangelists. But what, then, of the miracle of the Raising of Lazarus? "Why should it seem a thing incredible to you that God should raise the dead?" asked the apostle. So it did seem a thing incredible to them then. And it is not more credible now. But, apart from what the bringing back to life of one who was dead may be in itself, it is certain that this particular miracle had a significance in the history of Christ greater than that of any other outward circumstance. "From that day forth" the Sanhedrin "took counsel how

they might put Jesus to death." And they did not slacken their pursuit till they saw Him on the tree. Yet the Raising of Lazarus is told by St. John alone.

"The sanctified unbeliever and children born holy"—such is the startling title of an article which Professor E. J. Wolf of Gettysburg contributes to the *Homiletic Review* for April. "These paradoxes may shock orthodox ears," he says. "They nevertheless stand in the Scriptures just as they do here, excepting the word 'born,' which is unquestionably implied; and when faithfully interpreted, according to the clear import of the original language, they offer nothing in conflict with the analogy of the faith."

The passage which gives this paradoxical title is 1 Cor. vii. 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." That is the rendering of the Revised Version; and the only substantial alteration from the Authorised is in giving "brother" instead of "husband," an alteration the propriety of which it is impossible to dispute, since the manuscript evidence is overwhelmingly on its side. Nor can there be much question as to what "brother" means here. It means Christian brother, not brother by blood. The apostle *could* have said "husband," and his meaning would have been the same. What he did say was "brother," for he thought of him for the moment in a larger and more enduring relationship than that of marriage; as a brother in Christ, rather than as the husband of the unbelieving woman.

The apostle's statement is eminently in keeping with the epistle in which it is found. It is the statement of a principle, a principle that may be broken down for the guidance of the Corinthian brethren in their present and pressing circumstances. Here are a husband and wife in Corinth. Both are aliens from God, having no hope, and without God in the world. The apostle comes

with "the mystery of the gospel." One accepts, the other rejects it. One believes to the saving of the soul, the other draws ever farther back unto perdition. So it is not peace but rather division that has come to this house. Would it not be better for the believing husband to separate from his unbelieving wife, the Christian wife from her heathen and blaspheming husband? It is the living joined to the dead: will the unbeliever not cause corruption in the believer; is there not the danger of defilement and desecration? The apostle answers, No. It will be all the other way. "The unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

What then does St. Paul mean when he says that the unbelieving husband is *sanctified* in the wife? What does he mean when he says that their children are *holy*? "What claims paramount attention," says Professor Wolf, "is the meaning of these two terms translated 'sanctified' and 'holy.'" In the Greek they belong to one stem; it is the theological poverty of the English language that separates them so utterly. "Sanctified" is the verb (*ἀγιάζω*) and "holy" is the adjective (*ἅγιος*), and the same meaning is common to both. "And this reveals at once what has been so singularly overlooked by dogmatic commentators, that the same property of holiness which attaches to the children attaches also to the unbelieving husband or wife. The analogy between the two forms of relationship," continues Dr. Wolf, "is assumed, and if this quality which the apostle predicates of the *children* of mixed marriages entitles them to receive baptism, then on the same ground their *unbelieving parent* is also entitled to baptism? From this conclusion there is no escape. In the one case holiness is attributed because of descent from a Christian, in the other because of union with a Christian."

Therefore, to baptize a child, one of whose parents is not a Christian, on the ground that

the other *is*, is to contradict the apostle's position here. For it is not with the believing but with the unbelieving parent that he classifies the children. And, more than that, the sanctification of the unbelieving husband comes first. "The organic relationship of marriage with a Christian must first confer a holy character upon the unbelieving spouse, otherwise the offspring would be unclean. The holiness of the children is conditioned by the holiness not of their believing, but of their unbelieving parent. Unless he first obtains it, they cannot obtain it."

Professor Wolf's argument, accordingly, is that "sanctified" and "holy" in this passage cannot refer to internal purity. "Notwithstanding the organic unity of the family, neither marital nor filial union is a condition of personal salvation. Cohabitation with a Christian spouse is not a means of actual sanctification, and children do not become really holy by natural birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Moreover, the saving and sanctifying work of grace demands faith, and it is explicitly stated that the person sanctified is without faith (*ἄπιστος*). His conversion is presented in ver. 16 as a future possibility, while his sanctification is spoken of as a condition already realised.

Dr. Wolf goes back to the "clearly defined meaning of holiness" in the Old Testament, namely, that which is separate, distinct, set apart. "Any creature, animate or inanimate, which was separated from ordinary or profane use and consecrated to God, any being or thing that received ceremonial cleansing, was sanctified or called holy. The Sabbath was holy, the Levites were holy, the first-born were holy, so were the tabernacle and all its vessels. Jerusalem was the holy city. Whatever stood in special relation to God or sacred things bore the stamp of holiness without any reference to intrinsic or internal purity."

The objection is at once raised that holiness of this external and merely ceremonial kind has no

place under the New Covenant. To which Dr. Wolf replies that Christianity was still and was inevitably in large measure encompassed by the realm of Old Testament ideas. He refers to the lesson that St. Peter needed and received in the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, to the Canon of the Apostolic Council concerning the pollution of idols, to the ever-recurring argument of St. Paul "inculcating charity towards those who were still befogged by the distinctions of holy and unclean with respect to days and meats and drinks, 'which are a shadow of things to come.'" And he holds that the present passage is exactly in a line with these. The Christian wife or husband being apprehensive that intercourse with a heathen spouse would violate the sanctity of the Christian life, and that separation thus became inevitable, "Not so," says the apostle, "separation is not called for; the unbelieving one by this vital relation to you becomes sanctified, stands in a sacred environment. Your union with him really withdraws him in a sense from the contamination of heathen impunity, brings him into a Christian atmosphere, into contact with the means of grace, and under the influences of the Holy Ghost. Externally, at least, though yet an unbeliever, such an one is brought into sacred relations, that is, sanctified."

Milton's Satan is usually reckoned the most interesting of all his creations. There is a Satan in the Bible who is certainly not less interesting. Yet the Satan of *Paradise Lost* is more spoken of, more written upon, and much better understood than the Satan of the Old Testament.

"Give the devil his due," we say. Yet we certainly do not give the devil of the Old Testament his due. We do not give him his due when we call him "devil." In the Old Testament itself he is not once so called; nor in any of our English translations of the Old Testament. And there is enough in this name to place the Satan of the Old Testament in a position which he never occupies, and to suggest a malignity of disposition which he is never said to possess

No doubt these are the days of historical white-washing; and it will be said that surely the fashion is about to change when we are ready to apply the brush to the devil himself. But let it be borne in mind that the devil is left untouched. It is Satan we mean for a moment to regard, the Satan of the Old Testament; and he differs from the devil of the New Testament not in name alone, but most unmistakably in position and purpose as well.

Let first the word be heard of a most accomplished and considerate Old Testament scholar. "It may be doubted," says Dr. A. B. Davidson, "if in the mind of the author of Job, Satan was even a cynic. He has no personal characteristics as yet beyond instinctive assiduity. With reverence be it spoken: the Satan of the Old Testament is a sheep-dog, over-officious in his calling, and needing to be a good deal sworn at. The Lord's rebuke of him goes more to our heart than twenty positive declarations of His mercy; it is the inward recoil of His own heart from the trials which He sees to be needful for the discipline of His children. There is no dualism in the Old Testament: the Lord reigneth, let the earth be glad. Hence the Satan disappears in the *dénouement* of the Book of Job. Some writers have impugned the dramatic consistency of Job, and insisted that the book should have ended by causing Satan to appear, and casting in his teeth the failure of his prophecy, and making him acknowledge it. Such a view is so foolish that only ignorance can explain and excuse it."

In a recent issue of the *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, Herr P. K. Marti of Muttenz, near Basel, has an article on "The Origin of Satan," of which the Rev. W. Ewen, B.D., gives an admirable account in the *Modern Church*.

The word "Satan" is by no means of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament. As a proper name it occurs, according to our Revised Version, only in three places—1 Chron. xxi. 1; the opening scene of the Book of Job; and the third chapter

of Zechariah. The Authorised Version gives it also as a proper name in Ps. cix. 6; but scholars are generally agreed that there as elsewhere it has the common meaning of "an adversary." Now it is, of course, with the personal Satan that we have to do. And the question arises, Was it the author of Job or was it Zechariah who first used the name as a personal designation? After a long investigation, Herr Marti decides that Zechariah is earlier than the Book of Job. If that is so, then Satan's first appearance in the Old Testament is in the third chapter of the Book of Zechariah, in the vision which records the trial of Joshua the High Priest, and he appears there as the counsel for the prosecution.

How did Zechariah reach this conception? If this is the first appearance in the Old Testament of Satan as an individual spirit, where did Zechariah find him? Herr Marti has three possible sources to suggest. He may have borrowed the conception from some other religion; he may have discovered it in an earlier form of the religion of Israel itself; or it may have been a creation of the prophet's own imagination. If he borrowed it from another religion, that religion was of course the Persian. For there alone have we the necessary dualism, Ahura-mazda (Ormuzd), representing the good principle, and Angro-mainyu (Ahriman), the bad. But how could he have taken this much from the Persian religion without taking the dualism of that religion complete? Yet, as Dr. Davidson says, there is no dualism in the Old Testament, not even in the Book of Zechariah. Besides, the Satan of Zechariah is very different from the Persian Angro-mainyu. He does not represent the principle of evil. He is on the side of unbending righteousness.

There are those, however, who hold that this personification of the Satan belongs to the ancient religion of Israel. Some remnants of a primitive belief in a personal devil they think still lingered among the people, and they point to Lev. xvii. 7:

"They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils," where the Revised Version gives "he-goats," with "satyrs" in the margin. But Herr Marti holds that the Satan of Zechariah's vision has nothing in common with those "doleful creatures" the satyrs, "and it would have been impossible for any prophet, however daring, to have even dreamed of introducing such a dreaded form as any of these among the angels of Jehovah, and giving him free access to and bold converse with God."

Herr Marti believes that the personal Satan was a daring creation of Zechariah's own imagination. It was a time of much heart-searching among the people. Mindful of the past and the dreadful calamity that had befallen the nation because of unrighteousness; mindful of their own present shortcomings and the awful majesty of God's holiness, they could not believe that the promises of the divine favour and blessing which the prophet held out to them were really to be theirs. Their fathers had suffered the due reward of their deeds, and they were guilty as their fathers had been; how could they hope to escape the righteous judgment of God?

Zechariah allays their anxious forebodings by a bold prophetic figure. He puts their murmurings and suspicions into the mouth of an opponent or "adversary." He represents this adversary as appearing in the very courts of heaven, in the very presence of Jehovah. Satan states his case. It is not vindictive; it is not calumnious; it is just and true. From a legal point of view their punishment is plainly due. But they are not to be treated with purely legal justice. "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, the Lord that hath *chosen* Jerusalem rebuke thee." Legal justice is to be swallowed up of mercy. God's love will have free exercise upon this brand whom He has plucked out of the fire.

Thus the Satan of Zechariah is no Ahriman or incarnation of malignity. He is simply the advocate of unbending justice and judgment. He is the adversary of the mercy that pardons, of the

love that chooses and rescues from the burning. And this is essentially the character of the Satan of Job also. It may be, Herr Marti thinks, that in the Satan of Job there can be detected an inclination towards evil, or at least an undue suspicion of the good in men. But the most marked advance upon the Satan of Zechariah is that, while the latter appears in the heavenly court only in a particular occasion and for a particular purpose, the Satan of the Book of Job is a regular frequenter there, and has a standing office in the court of heaven.

One passage alone remains. It is 1 Chron. xxi. 1. It belongs, says Herr Marti, to a period about two centuries later than the Book of Job. Here Satan is represented as tempting David to number Israel, for the very purpose of bringing calamity on them. It is plainly a development in the direction of evil from the Satan of the Book of Job. But it is only when we go outside of the Old Testament canon to the so-called "Wisdom of Solomon" that we find him identified with the serpent that tempted Eve, and the occasion of Man's first disobedience and all our woe.

Studies in "Paradise Lost."

III.—MILTON'S ANGELS.

"Differing but in degree, of kind the same."

AN old tradition, condemned as heresy by the mediæval Church, represented men and women as disguised Angels. They had played a neutral part in the rebellion in Heaven, and had been punished by their cowardice by exile. Milton gives no credence to this tradition; nevertheless his men and Angels are curiously alike. His Angels are glorified men; or, to speak more accurately, his men are undeveloped Angels, differing in degree only, not in kind, from their happier fellow-creatures. The difference corresponds to the difference of dwelling-place. Earth consists, for the most part, of the lowest of the elements: Heaven is made of the fifth or highest element, the "ethereal quintessence." So man, though compounded of the four (grosser) elements, is mainly earth: Angels are "ethereal substance." Milton, it is true, distinguishes them as "spirits." But he means something quite different from what we mean, *e.g.* by the "spirit" of man, regarded as an entity distinct from the body. Milton does not believe in the existence of such an entity. He combats the popular distinction between soul (or spirit) and body. "Man," he says, "'became a living soul'; whence it may be inferred that man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual [inseparable], not compound or separable, not, according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body; but that the whole man is soul,

and the soul man—that is to say, a body or substance, individual, animated, sensitive, and rational."¹ Milton's Angels are "spirits," precisely as his men are "souls"; they, too, are substances, "individual, animated, sensitive, and rational." Like men, they are forms of that first matter which is common to all things, nay, inherent in GOD Himself.² The difference is that, being nearer to GOD, they are "more refined, more spiritous and pure."

"One first matter all,
Endued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
But more refined, more spiritous and pure,
As nearer to Him placed, or nearer tending."³

The result of this greater perfection in the angelic substance is an extraordinary power and yet suppleness, which are evidently regarded as natural rather than miraculous. Milton's Angels have, on the one hand, gigantic size and strength; on the other hand, all the flexibility and airiness which we associate with the word "ethereal." "The least of them," we are told,

"Could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions."⁴

¹ *A Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, chap. vii.

² *Ibid.* "Not even Divine virtue and efficiency could produce bodies out of nothing, unless there had been some bodily power in the substance of GOD. Nor did St. Paul hesitate to attribute to GOD something corporeal."

³ *P.L.* v. 472-476

⁴ *Ibid.* vi. 221-223.