

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

"THIS spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year he prophesied." Is it ever possible to read these words without a start? "When all that knew Saul beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" When we who knew Caiaphas aforetime, and know that even now it is no Spirit of God that has come upon him as it was with Saul, but much rather surely the spirit of the Devil, yet see the apostle turn aside from his narrative that he may describe the selfish and cruel sentence of this cunning diplomatist, and call it a prophecy, "Is Caiaphas also among the prophets?" we say, with greater amazement than they.

What led the apostle to turn aside and call it so? *Who* led him, we should have said? No doubt. But the question is not answered in that way. For St. John must himself have seen the marks of the prophet here, though to us the marks of the Beast are so much more plainly to be seen. Now the marks of a prophet are these.

First, he must be in the succession. We think of the prophet sometimes as the one original man of his generation. But originality was the last claim the true prophet would have made for himself. And had any other made the boast of that

most coveted modern distinction, the true prophet would have known and named him false at once. No, the true prophet must be in the succession. That which was of old was the message he declared to the people. In his own way he declared it, no doubt. But he was not careful even of that; and sometimes, as we know, caught up the very words of another as he uttered his oracle and passed it on to him that came after.

Was Caiaphas in the succession, then? What is his prophecy? "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." So said Isaiah the prophet: "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." And passing swiftly down the succession, we reach the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Next Jesus, the Prophet, prophesies of Himself: "Verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." And just here comes in the prophecy of the prophet Caiaphas: "It is expedient that one man die for the people." Yes, he was in the succession. Of the marks of a true prophet he bore that mark at least.

The other test of a true prophet is that his prophecy be fulfilled. That was the test which

was given at the beginning: "If thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him." And so, when Ahab would go up to battle at Ramoth-Gilead, in spite of the warning words of Micaiah, and tauntingly ordered him to be fed with the bread of affliction and with the water of affliction "till I come in peace," this was the test which the prophet at once accepted: "And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you." For it is the simplest test possible, if you can only apply it.

And we can apply it here. Does the prophecy of Caiaphas stand the test of fulfilment? "From that time forth they took counsel how they might put Him to death." And soon there entered the open palace of the high priest the stealthy foot of the traitor, and Caiaphas turned and saw in his gleaming eye the avarice that spoke his purpose. And he covenanted for thirty pieces of silver. Then came the Supper in the upper room. Judas was there also. And Jesus was troubled in the spirit, and testified and said, "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me."—"Is it I? Lord, is it I?" And Judas dared his defiant "Is it I?" But the sop followed, and "That thou doest, do quickly," and he went out, and it was night. Within we may feel the change that has passed over the spirit of Jesus; for surely His own trouble is gone when He says, "Let not your heart be troubled." But they leave the upper room, they cross the Kedron, and enter the garden. "Father, if it be possible—Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done!" Scarcely more than the astonished disciples do we know the depth of the anguish or the far reaches of the victory. He comes with His "Arise, let us be going." We hear the steady tramp of the Roman

soldiers, we see the fitful flash of the lanterns, and He has passed to the mocking judgment-hall and the tree. Yes, Caiaphas was a prophet.

About two years ago there appeared an article in *The Theological Monthly*, under the title of "The Epistle to the Ephesians Self-Interpreted." It was accepted at once as a complete and helpful Commentary on the Epistle. And yet there was not a word of comment in it. There was not a word of any kind but the words of the Epistle itself. But they were so skilfully arranged, that the reading of that article gave us the Epistle better,—gave it as an epistle with a meaning and a message, better than the most laborious study of the best Commentary we knew.

The writer of the article was the Rev. Charles Neil, M.A., Vicar of St. Matthias, Poplar. Further studies of the Pauline Epistles on the same lines were looked for, but they did not appear. Now, however, it becomes evident that the special talent which then revealed itself has not lain dormant. An immense work on parallel lines, and demanding the same original skill, has been conceived and planned in all its details.

It is called "The Comprehensive Scripture Lesson Scheme." It consists of three departments of work, closely related to and fitting into one another, but independent if you will. The first department is now completed, and is contained in one large volume. Its special title is *The Teacher's Synoptical Syllabus* (Nisbet, 8vo, pp. xx, 518, 1892, 12s.). From the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of the Acts of the Apostles, the whole narrative portion of the Bible is divided into parts suitable for Sunday-school lessons. Each lesson is then presented, not in the words of the text itself (that is reserved for the second department of the whole scheme of work), but in headings and topics, so arranged as to catch the eye, and at a glance show their connexion and subordination. The plan is simple, but probably nothing but experience

joined to special insight in this direction could have devised it. Such a synopsis of the lesson as this, is the first thing that is wanted, and in many cases it is all that is wanted.

But that is only one part of the book. The rest of it consists of two Appendixes, each of which might have formed a complete and useful volume. The first Appendix contains a series of seventy-eight historical and other tables. All the familiar genealogies, weights and measures, and such like, are here. But there are also many tables that are new and unfamiliar. They must have cost some patience in the making. Then the second Appendix presents the most complete series of maps and diagrams on the Bible that, so far as our knowledge goes, can anywhere be found. This part of the work will probably be accepted by the best-equipped teachers as the most useful part of all. And scholars will acknowledge the care and accuracy with which it has been executed.

So this is the Sunday-school teacher's "Ready Reckoner." It is neither to be read right through nor committed to memory. But if it is always at hand for reference, it will save both endless research and inevitable disappointment.

We must return for a moment to 1 Cor. vii. 14 and Mr. M'Clelland's interpretation. The Notes have called forth many remarks and some remonstrances.

First of all, Mr. M'Clelland himself writes and says that we have misunderstood and so misrepresented his position in one point. He does not understand the children spoken of,—“Else were your children unclean,” or in his own amended translation, “Since indeed your children are unpurified,”—he does not understand the children here to be children of parents, one of whom was an unbeliever. The statement is general; it applies to all the children. And thus it becomes clear, he holds, that the argument is

from the children to the parents, and not the other way. What shall the believing wife do with her unbelieving husband? or rather, what shall we do with him? is the Corinthian Christian's perplexity. Count him holy, is the apostle's answer. For your children are unpurified (he means unbaptized, says Mr. M'Clelland), and yet you count them saints; treat the unbelieving parent in the same gracious way.

This correction by Mr. M'Clelland anticipates the best point made by an interesting letter from Norway on the matter. But there is one from Bedford which still deserves a moment's attention. Accepting Mr. M'Clelland's translation, “Since indeed your children are unpurified, but now are they holy”—“I cannot see,” says the writer, “that any inference is to be drawn from this, that the children were in apostolic times unbaptized. Rather the word ‘unclean’ or ‘uncleansed’ might just suit their baptized state. Only put baptism where our Lord put it, before *instruction*, not before conversion, and all seems clear. The command is, ‘Make disciples of all nations’—how? by ‘baptizing them in the name,’ etc., and by ‘teaching them all things.’”

In the face of this perplexity, then,—and our correspondents do but reflect the perplexity which abounds in the minds of the best and the greatest commentators,—it is somewhat unexpected to read in that interesting little volume which Mr. R. F. Horton has just published (“*This Do.*” Clarke, 2s.), that “this verse is the foundation of the practice, which is common in most of our churches, of infant baptism.” Mr. Horton holds by the old translation and the apparent meaning of that translation, and he is in excellent society. But he is scholar enough and more to know the difficulty there. And then, further, is it good Biblical theology to say, as Mr. Horton says, that all children of all professing parents are (baptism or no baptism) holy, and that that is what our Lord meant when He said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven”?

The Hibbert Lectures for 1892 will be published shortly. The book will create widespread interest, and even astonishment. For while we are ourselves deeply stirred with the present controversy respecting the Old Testament, we have almost failed to perceive that by our side there is being fought to-day a fiercer controversy even than ours, involving more mortal issue.

We are deeply stirred with our controversy; for the Old Testament is dear to us, and never so dear as now, when it is passing through its baptism of fire. Still, the Old Testament is only a part of our Scripture; and with all our affection we will not name it the dearest or most vital part. But the Old Testament is the whole Bible of the Jew. Undermine its authority and he has no dearer, no other Scripture to fall back upon. It is the sole foundation of his religious life. And not of his religious life only. His very existence as a Jew is bound up with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Prove to a Christian that the Law was *not* given by Moses: he may yet retreat into the dear assurance that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. But the Jew has no retreat. If the Law was not given by Moses, his whole religion is a gigantic delusion; and in the long centuries in which he has suffered for his religion, while sufferance has been the badge and one grand heroism of all his tribe, he has spent his strength for nought and vanity.

Yet there is a party among the Jews to-day which unhesitatingly accepts the results of Old Testament criticism to their uttermost. Young in years, it is of no account when compared with the whole number of Jews throughout the world. But it is so strong in scholarship, in mental vigour, in moral persuasiveness, that it is making its presence felt everywhere; and now there is no Jew of intelligence who does not know that Judaism has reached a crisis the most searching and acute that has come upon it since the birth of Christianity.

There are three parties in appearance. In reality there are only two. For the party which is known by the name of the "Breslau School," a party which has for some years struggled to find a *via media*, maintaining the utmost rigidity of ceremonial observance by the side of complete disbelief in the origin and meaning of the ceremonies, is no longer to be reckoned with, since the personal influence of the late Professor Graetz has been withdrawn. Distrusted, and even openly denounced, alike by the reformers and the orthodox, it has ceased in any respect to complicate the issue. The two sides now stand squarely face to face.

The most characteristic spokesman of the "reforming" party in England is the Hibbert lecturer for the present year—Mr. Claude G. Montefiore, M.A. The lectures are already delivered, but we shall leave their exposition till the volume itself is in our hands. There is material enough for our purpose beyond these lectures.

In *The Jewish Quarterly Review* for January last, Mr. Montefiore says: "Has not criticism proved to a certainty the non-fulfilment of numerous Biblical prophecies? He who is willing to split up the Pentateuch into a number of independent documents, which have been added to, modified, and pieced together before they reached their present form, cannot possibly hold the same view of inspiration, or the same disposition to credit Pentateuchal miracles, as the man who believes that the five books issued without a break from the divinely-guided hand of Moses. Take such a crucial point as the Sinaitic Revelation. Criticism shows that Exodus xix. is a conglomerate, that the Decalogue of Exodus xx. has been more than once revised and enlarged, that the importance assigned to it has been a matter of gradual growth within the Pentateuch itself, and that the date of its origin may be as late as the eighth or seventh century B.C. Accepting such results, who can believe in the literal truth of the revelation? who can still regard the Decalogue as the direct communication of God

to man? Things do indeed 'hang together,' as Caleb Garth said: the old faith cannot consort with the new criticism, and it would be idle to pretend that a full reconciliation is still within the limits of possibility."

Again he says: "The most important result of Old Testament criticism is the disintegration of the Pentateuch. It is one which appears easily acceptable to Christians, but of very great difficulty to Jews. The consequence is that quite orthodox Christian clergymen are ready to admit that Moses did not compose the Pentateuch, and that the five books themselves are made up of many documents of various dates, pieced together, and modified in the piecing, by a number of different editors. Now the eighth article of the Jewish creed expressly asserts, 'I believe with perfect faith that the whole law, now in our possession, is the same that was given to Moses, our teacher.' The contradiction is obvious and insuperable. Either criticism or creed must be abandoned."

On the other side, a book of some account has recently appeared in America, entitled *Pronaos to Holy Writ*. It is written by Rabbi Wise, President of the Hebrew College, Cincinnati. But in our own country the ablest representative of the orthodox party is Dr. M. Friedländer, the head of the Jewish College in London. Dr. Friedländer has lately written a book which is intended to be at once a manual of the Jewish religion and a manifesto of the orthodox among the Jews. He has called it emphatically *The Jewish Religion*. He is as fully alive to the gravity of the present issue as his opponents. He is as definite in his creed. He is as precise in his statement of it. He accepts the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch as heartily and as wholly as the party of reform rejects it. "The whole Torah, including both history and precepts, is of divine origin: nothing is contained in the Torah that was not revealed to Moses by the Almighty." Again: "The whole Torah (except the last few verses, added by Joshua) is the work of Moses. There is nothing

in the Pentateuch that betrays a post-Mosaic origin." And again: "Judaism, without the recognition of the Torah, has no *locus standi*, and the first words which a Jewish child is taught by its pious mother to utter are, therefore, the following, 'May the Torah be my faithful companion.'"

Without dread or dream of contradiction, Josephus once said (*Contra Ap.* i. 8): "What credit we give to these books is also well known. In all these ages past no one has been so bold as to add anything to them, or to take anything from them, or to change anything in them. But it is natural to all Jews immediately and from their birth to regard these books as the teachings of God, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, to die for them." But now there has arisen a Jew who says: "The Pentateuchal criticism of the last half century has established the fact that Moses bore little, if any, share in the compilation of the five books which commonly bear his name," and he speaks for an already powerful body among his nation. No wonder Dr. Friedländer complains, "There is a certain un-Jewish or even anti-Jewish spirit that permeates Mr. Montefiore's work."

What the issue of this keen controversy may be, cannot yet be seen. "That historic Judaism has vitality," says Dr. Friedländer, "the past has proved. It has been victorious in spite of many hard trials; and I have the firm conviction that the present trials will likewise pass away without injury to Judaism." It may be so. But if it is so, it cannot well be otherwise than by the complete triumph of the orthodox party, the complete suppression and annihilation of "reform." And the signs lie all the other way.

But there is one thing we see and must sorrowfully admit. The tendency of Jewish reform is not towards faith in Christ. It is true that Dr. Friedländer accuses his opponents of being constantly on the watch for the defence of Christianity and the attack of Judaism. It is true that Mr.

Montefiore utters such words of reparation and of hope as these: "Some Jews there are whose true place in the religious development of Judaism is still denied or misunderstood. St. Paul is one. He first taught the absolute equality of all races from the religious point of view." It is true that in the concluding sentences of his Hibbert lectures (to refer to them but for one moment) he goes so far even as to say: "When the Pentateuch is estimated at its true worth, and subjected to the scalpel of a criticism which disintegrates its unity, and bereaves it of its glamour, Judaism begins to feel the want of a dominant religious doctrine, which, independently of the Law, can explain and illuminate the relation of the individual to God. Then it begins to feel the want of teaching such as that of Him who said, 'He who loses his life shall

find it;' 'Not that which goes into but that which cometh out of the mouth defileth a man;' 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.' And if the old legalism has in truth broken down, Judaism can scarcely make a big step forward until it has accepted this teaching as a part of its higher self, and has acknowledged the unique greatness of the Jew who first proclaimed it."

Nevertheless there is no sign of a speedy acceptance of the Christ of St. Paul. For the modern-reforming Jew rejects the miraculous altogether; he has given up the belief in a personal Messiah; and he looks upon the Christian doctrine of the Person of Christ as not less incredible and much more idolatrous than the old opinion that Moses wrote the story of his own death.

Francis Tilney Bassett.

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THE death of Prebendary Bassett removes from our midst a man possessed of a rare combination of excellences. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," seems to have been the guiding principle of his life; certainly few have acted up to this high outward standard with more consistency of aim. Born in 1827, he proceeded to Caius College, Cambridge, in his twenty-first year, and, but for a very serious illness which nearly proved fatal, would doubtless have taken high honours at his university. As it was, he had to content himself with an ordinary degree. In 1852, the year in which he took his B.A. degree, he was ordained deacon; in 1857 he became officially connected with the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, acting as deputation secretary in the two important centres of Cambridge and Bath; in 1872 he was appointed to the Vicarage of Dulverton, Somerset, where, on September 23 last, he died. In 1885 Mr. Bassett was given a vacant prebendal stall in Wells Cathedral—a tardy and inadequate recognition of his great and varied gifts both as preacher and writer.

Of his sermons delivered at Wells, a consider-

able number have been printed in the *Church of England Pulpit*; and many of his ablest theological pieces are to be found imbedded in the pages of that periodical. It would be a pious work to select a dozen or so of these sermons and papers, and print them together in a volume.¹ Perhaps the most striking of all his contributions to the *Pulpit*, was a paper on that worried passage in St. Luke xxii. 19, *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*, where he regarded *ἐμὴν* as emphatic by position, and, therefore, as probably pointing a comparison or contradistinction between "my" and something else which is not expressed,—“Do this for MY memorial,” *i.e.*, a memorial ordained by Myself of my past Passion, and a nucleus of promises which still concern the future.

Passing over several shorter works of his, *e.g.*, a valuable little work "Christ in Eternity and Time," as well as several thoughtful pamphlets, notably one entitled "Elohism and Jehovism," written nearly thirty years ago, at a time when few scholars

¹ Prebendary Bassett, in 1885, reprinted one series of sermons from the *Pulpit*, consisting of four admirable discourses on the "Transfiguration: Type of the Future Kingdom of Christ."