

tion—first principles cannot be demonstrated—it has marvellously illuminated for us the methods of God's working in the world.

These then, the worth of man as man, and the evolution of life and history, are the new things which the things of the old century have become to us. And Professor Gwatkin claims that they are both intensely Christian. The reddest of red republicans, he says, never claimed for man such dignity as is given him in our old story of the Son of God who gave Himself a ransom for us all. The boldest of levellers, he says, never went such lengths as we go in the Lord's Supper, where rank and race are utterly ignored, and all come up alike to feed by faith on Christ. Nor can the greatest enthusiast of nations—of man gathered into societies—outdo the love of country which lights the pages of his Bible. It flashes up at the outset, when Miriam sings her song of triumph over Pharaoh's host; and it shines out at the end on the gloom of the gathering storm, when the last of the Hebrew prophets, James, the Lord's brother, denounces wrath from the Lord of Hosts on the oppressors of the poor.

And as for evolution, what else, asks Professor Gwatkin, is the majestic development of revela-

tion, from the farthest past which the astronomer can discern, to the farthest future which the prophet can divine? Gradually the ages led up to the coming of their Lord; gradually the centuries are unfolding something of the fulness of His grace and truth.

But if these, the guiding ideas of the nineteenth century, were in the Gospel from the first, they could hardly, Professor Gwatkin believes, have been got out of it without the Reformation. He gives the Latin Church its due. But its doctrines, he says, were all poisoned by one colossal blasphemy. It demanded to be believed without regard to reason, and obeyed without regard to conscience. And that is more than God has ever asked even for Himself. So the yoke of Christian Phariseism had to be broken, that man might be free to serve God in spirit and truth. The unspiritual unity of Western Europe had to be shattered in pieces that nations might escape the tyranny of an alien and sectarian Church. Above all, the idea of an infallible Church holding plenary powers from an absent King had to be rooted out, before men could begin to see the gradual development which is God's word to successive generations. But, adds this great Church historian, 'an infallible Church is also incorrigible; therefore He cut her in sunder and appointed her portion with the hypocrites.'

## The Servant of the Lord.

BY THE REV. R. M. MOFFAT, M.A., F.R.S.E.

### I.

#### The High Calling of the Servant (Isa. xlii. 1-7).

THE character and work of the Servant of the Lord is in some respects the most important subject with which 2 Isaiah deals. It is not only very important. It is also on the one hand very interesting, and on the other very difficult. It is very interesting, inasmuch as it is largely through the servant that Jehovah brings about the salva-

tion of Israel and of other nations, and the methods of the unchanging God must be fraught with the utmost personal interest for His people of any period. It is very difficult, because the greatest care is needed in order to determine precisely who the servant is; and only a close comparison of different passages where he is

described can entitle us to any opinion on the matter.

The title 'Servant of the Lord' is applied by 2 Isaiah first to Cyrus, the deliverer of the captives from the yoke of Babylon; but with the fall of Babylon Cyrus disappears from the prophet's view, and there rises another figure whom he invests with the same title, one who has a great spiritual task to perform, instead of a military one. Chapter 41 contains the first mention of him: 'But thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend; thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away; fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.'

The servant then is, in this passage, Israel, the entire people whom the prophet is addressing. The servant is not an individual. Let us be clear about this to begin with, or 2 Isaiah will remain a sealed book to us. With us Westerners the unit of society is a single person, but in the East it is the family; and so the Old Testament is full of references to the nation, or to some part of it, when to Western ears it sounds as if an individual were meant. Thus, 'The men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure *thou* dwellest in *my* midst; and how shall *I* make a covenant with *thee*?' (Jos 9<sup>7</sup>). Again, 'The children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given *me* but one lot and one part for an inheritance, seeing *I* am a great people, forasmuch as hitherto the Lord hath blessed *me*?' (Jos 17<sup>14</sup>). Instances like these might be quoted numerously.

But to come back to the term 'servant' as applied to the nation. It is used at least twice by Jeremiah (30<sup>10</sup> 46<sup>27</sup>), and twice by Ezekiel (28<sup>25</sup> 37<sup>25</sup>). 2 Isaiah takes the phrase, and uses it in such a manner as to develop a great doctrine. In finding out what this is, it is necessary of course to compare the various passages in which the servant is mentioned. A little attention shows that these resolve themselves into two sets, those in which God is spoken of as doing something for His servant, and those in which the servant does something for Him. And the significant thing

is that the servant of the one set is not identical with the servant of the other; the servant who in the former case is the whole nation becomes now that part of the nation which is really serviceable to God.

When the prophet is speaking of God's love for His servant, His redeeming activity on the servant's behalf, he naturally thinks of all his people, good and bad alike, all needing God, all dear to God. But when he is thinking of what the people ought to do for God, and recalls the great missionary purpose for which God selected Israel originally, and sought to train them all along, he cannot but feel that there are members who are morally incapable of doing that which they ought. He sees that the nation as a whole cannot at present be the servant of the Lord in the full sense; and so when he is speaking of the activities of the servant, he has to restrict the term to include only the pious kernel within the nation. Thus in the early verses of chap. 42 it is this God-fearing heart of the nation of which the prophet represents the Lord as speaking in such lofty terms; and in v.<sup>6</sup> it is expressly said, 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people,' *i.e.* to be the medium of the restoration of the people Israel as a whole; and after that, 'for a light of the Gentiles.' Then from v.<sup>18</sup> onwards the prophet speaks in a very different tone, because he is now thinking of the inefficacy of the nation as a whole that ought to have been the Lord's servant. As he looks round upon the people he loves, and sees how very incomplete is their knowledge of God and their obedience to Him, their ignorance seems to him the veriest blindness to divine things, and their disobedience deafness to the voice of the Lord. 'Hear ye deaf, and look ye blind, that ye may see. Who so blind as my servant—this chosen nation here? or deaf as the messenger that I send?' (For other examples contrast 44<sup>21. 22</sup> 48<sup>1. 8-11. 18. 19</sup> with 49<sup>5. 6</sup> 50<sup>4f.</sup>)

Here then we have an exemplification of that saying of Jesus, 'Many are called, but few are chosen,'—a saying which is true for all time; and the real servant of Jehovah we see to be that part of the nation who recognized their duty to the whole world, but who felt their immediate responsibility to be towards their own unbelieving countrymen.

There was a preparation in an earlier prophet

for this conception of a section of the people being used by God even if the rest had to be given up. One of Isaiah's great doctrines was that a remnant should return from the Captivity which he saw to be inevitable; and in order to give prominence to the idea, he called one of his sons Shear Jashuv, 'A remnant shall return' (7<sup>3</sup>). Moreover, he expressed his view very emphatically in the words, 'Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah' (1<sup>9</sup>).

Let me recall a recent instance of a remnant, a remnant which may possibly still be used as the servant of the Lord for the salvation of a great country. In France two years ago, there was waged a disgraceful 'campaign, ostensibly having for its object a single individual, but in reality being a vast conspiracy organized for the overthrow of religious liberty, and for the subordination of the civil to the military power.' But the 'very small remnant' was there—a mere handful of Jews, Protestants, and non-sectarians—who maintained their faith and courage and energy in spite of the breaking up of old ties, the boycott of society, and the persistent hounding down of a filthy press. None of these things moved such men as Labori, Demange, de Pressensé, Joseph Reinach, Clémenceau, and the rest, a very small remnant, but strong in their sense of justice and their faith in the eternal righteousness. These men were able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand, not merely because of their own steadfastness of purpose, but because they were as the servant of the Lord of whom it was said, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth,' and to whom God promised, 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand . . . to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house' (42<sup>4, 7</sup>).

The early verses in chap. 42 in which these words occur contain a very inspiring and very attractive description of the servant, one who is able to serve his fellows wisely and well because he is first and foremost the servant of the Lord. It has been beautifully said of the servant of the Lord that he is 'useful only because he is used, influential only because he is influenced;

victorious because he is obedient; learning the methods of his work by daily wakefulness to God's voice, a good speaker only because he is first a good listener, with no strength or courage but what God lends, and achieving all for God's glory.' 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles' (Is 42<sup>1</sup>).

Now what are the characteristics of this servant who knows that God's hands are about his spirit?

He shall not cry nor be loud,  
Nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

We must be careful not to misinterpret this. This is not the praise of silence. On the contrary, the description of the servant suggests to us a prophet-preacher more than anything else. The writer himself depended upon language for the service he could do to man and for God; and for majesty and tenderness alike his words have never been surpassed. He is not likely then to disparage the gift of public speech. What he is thinking of is not so much the literal use of the voice as the method and demeanour of him who uses it. Matthew applies these words to Jesus with rare insight, when he says that Jesus charged those whom He had healed not to make Him known, and adds that this was a fulfilment of the words we have before us. Our Lord declined to be advertised in such a manner as would draw attention merely to His miraculous healing powers: much less would He advertise Himself.

Or to take another case, Jesus could denounce the Pharisees in the most scathing terms, yet no one thinks of impugning His humility. The thing had to be done in the name of God, and Jesus did not shrink from the disagreeable task of unmasking the hypocrites; but He never made capital out of their faults, and would have received every one of them with the utmost graciousness had they been penitent. And every servant of the Lord must seek to be like Jesus in this, especially if his service be of a public character. He must be perfectly fearless in uttering the will of God, but never sensational. If God is upholding him, 'holding his hand,' he will not be hysterical. He will be very modest, thinking only of God, and not at all of himself.

Another quality which will be conspicuous in

the servant who is taught of God is gentleness. He will manifest the gentleness of God.

A bruised reed shall he not break off.  
The dimly burning wick he will not quench.  
He shall bring forth law faithfully.

This was precisely what our prophet did himself. The exiles were the bruised reed and dimly burning wick, and the keyword of the prophet's utterances is comfort. 'Comfort ye, my people, saith your God.' Bid them have faith in God and trust His faithfulness. When Israel as a whole had realized this, she would have the same story of love to tell to the nations, how that God made all men . . . that they should seek Him, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being. That is what the servant of the Lord must make known to the Gentiles, how that all men have a Father in heaven, 'whose fondness goes far out beyond our dreams.' He is able to straighten and restore the reed bruised by sin, and to refresh with the supply of His love the wick of belief in goodness which is burning dim.

How characteristic of Jesus this was. If publicans and sinners were despairing of themselves, He assured them that He did not despair, and neither need they. And the common people heard Him gladly, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Here, again, He is the model for those who are servants of the Lord to-day. Wherever we find those who are depressed because their life has been a failure in the sight of God, or those who hoped and

strove to be so much more serviceable than they are in their particular line of life, or those to whom the world is hard in any way, with these we must be very gentle, and tell them of God whose gentleness and condescension makes men great. But our gentleness must never be mere softness. We must never forget that we are servants of an all-righteous God, and therefore we dare not offer the least comfort to one who will not part with sin. Whether he be a wreck of humanity, the miserable victim of his own vices, or a worldling who cares only for the things of this life, our first word to him from God must be, Repent. The servant of the Lord shall bring forth law faithfully, and he has no mercy or hope to offer to those who are not penitent.

The reward of the servant is mentioned in v. 4. It is that he shall succeed in the work of the Lord. 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.' 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged' unfortunately obscures the metaphor. The words mean literally, He shall not burn dimly like a wick, nor break like a reed, till he have set law in the earth. We are reminded of the beatitude, 'Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.' But there is more than the assurance of God's protection: there is the guarantee of His strength, His sustaining power. If we are working for the salvation of others, no less than if we are working out our own, 'it is God that worketh in us both to will and to work according to His good pleasure.'

## The Paraclete and the World.

BY THE REV. T. W. HODGE, M.A., LEICESTER.

It is unfortunate that the N.T. Revisers had not the courage to render *ὁ παράκλητος* in Jn 14-16 by 'Advocate' rather than by 'Comforter.' Their marginal rendering in 1 Jn 2<sup>1</sup> (Comforter or Helper) is as gratuitous as it is useless, and can be meant simply to cover the retreat from an untenable position in their translation of the same word in the Gospel.

To the English reader the substitution of 'Ad-

vocate' for 'Comforter' in the Gospel would seem a violent one. Equally violent would be the substitution of 'Comforter' for 'Advocate' in the Epistle, as it would also be much more unaccountable. And yet if there is one point upon which scholars are agreed it is that, both for the sake of accuracy and of consistency, the same word in the Greek should be rendered by the same word in English.