

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

ON another page will be found a frank but responsible article on the Teaching of Theology in the Baptist Colleges. Principal Witton Davies is dissatisfied with the present position of the Colleges, and with great plainness he indicates the causes of his dissatisfaction. Notes and criticisms, whether in confirmation or contradiction of his statements, will be welcomed, and, as far as possible, space will be found for them.

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The next issue of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES will contain examination papers upon the first twelve chapters of Isaiah and the Epistle to the Hebrews, in connexion with the Guild of Bible Study. Modern books of value, such as Buhl's *Canon and Text of the Old Testament*, will be offered. Particulars of the examination will be given in the issue referred to.

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Meantime we shall continue to publish such Expository Papers as we receive in connexion with the Guild; and we hope soon to be able to arrange for somewhat larger space being given to this department. It has been with the greatest reluctance that papers of unquestionable merit have been passed over from the pressure on our space. Those whose papers are published in this issue will, as usual, let the Publishers know which volume of the Foreign Theological Library they wish sent to them.

An evidence of our steadily advancing circulation, which has been most gratifying all along, but much more rapid since the enlargement of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, is presented every month in the increasing and now nearly overwhelming number of unsolicited articles which reach us. These we are not unwilling to receive and examine, and we have more than once found superior merit in them. But we must now announce that we cannot any longer return them if unsuitable, or enter into correspondence respecting them.

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*The Oxford Magazine* of March 16 publishes a Sermon which was delivered on the previous Sunday at St. Mary's (Newman's St. Mary's), Oxford, by the Rev. F. W. Bussell, M.A., Fellow of Brasenose College. The sermon has moved the University as it has not been moved by a sermon for many a day. And yet it contains no novelty of doctrine, nor any freedom of un-academical expression.

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Why, then, has it outlived its allotted nine days? There are many reasons. The preacher himself is one. For Mr. Bussell is of the ablest of Oxford's younger men. The place is another reason. Who can gauge its subtle, pervading influence? But the great reason lies in the matter of the sermon itself. It lies in the novelty at doctrine in which we have said there is

no novelty. For it has come to pass that the oldest doctrine of all, being delivered in such a time as this, in such a place, and by such a preacher, comes to our ear with all the freshness and surprise of the thing that is strange and new.

Mr. Bussell's text is Eph. v. 8: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." And he asks: "Is this darkness, whence the world was called, whence in our text each of us is summoned, a mere void where light is not? Is it a negation, a state of weakness to be illuminated by compassion? Or does it represent a rival principle, a conscious rebellion, as I have termed it, against the Father of lights, to be overcome by warfare?" Thus the sermon goes to the foundation. We are sent with a message: what *is* that message? "The voice said, Cry: and he said, What shall I cry?" We cannot move a step until we know the answer.

But there are two answers. Philosophy has offered one. Starting from a firm belief in the oneness and goodness of the Fount of life, it has found no place in such a creation for evil. Since He who made the world is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, there is no darkness in the world He has made, "Save that we may term that dark which is in its nature distant from the light, or unable, through lack of self-knowledge, to receive rays." "Evil," says Heine more frankly, "is a result of the arrangement of the world by spiritualists. . . . Matter becomes evil only when it is forced into secret conspiracy against the usurping spirit, when it is stigmatised by the spirit, and then degrades itself through loss of self-respect, or when, with the hatred of despair, it avenges itself on the spirit." And so our message to the world is to respect itself, to seek more light, to claim more liberty, to live truer to its own better nature.

"To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

—to any man, or God.

The other answer is from Christ. He says that between God and the world there is antagonism. He expresses it by the figures of light and darkness, life and death, a new creation and an old. "God is a power distinct, and in a sense opposed to, over against the world, which is alienate. We are called to cross over from darkness to light." Thus our message is not in a true sense to the world at all. "Call the complex of visible existence the world, and the new spirit will reveal itself as the world's antagonist, and an object of hatred to the children of the natural world." Our message is to the men and women who are *in* the world, certainly; to the men and women who are *of* the world, if you will; but it is not to the world itself. It is to the individual men and women who are in the world and who are of the world; but it is to call them out of the world, that they may be no longer of the world.

These are the two answers; and they differ, and are irreconcilable. We must choose between them.

The temptation to choose the former is tremendous. It is not merely that it is so plausible. It is more than plausible. It is not merely that it is so popular. It has proved intensely attractive to the finer natural minds amongst us who have scorned the delights of immediate popularity, and have deliberately preferred to live the laborious days of personal self-culture and unconquered hope for the progress of the race. But over against its keen temptation God has mercifully set one consideration, and it is a consideration of such a kind that it should appeal most powerfully to minds like these. *The facts of experience are dead against it.*

"The course of this century," says Mr. Bussell, "is the history of a disillusionment. Such noble enthusiasm at its outset, such high hopes of universal regeneration, such belief in the goodness of the natural heart, such promises of liberty and knowledge, and a life as in Paradise here on earth for our descendants, if not for ourselves! What

is the state of feeling as detected now by the clear-sighted? In fiction" (to name but one department, where the evidence is thrust even obtrusively before our eyes) "a strange paradox of loathing yet fascinated curiosity in the results of the natural and evil life of darkness, which loves to tear the veil from the enticements of sin, and expose, not its agreeable, but its terrible side. Is this the return so lately promised to the Greek blitheness, and harmony with nature?"

"And so the dogmas of our faith, sometime thought obsolete, of human frailty, of inherent corruption and propensity to evil, of the need of Divine grace, appear reinvested with new authority." Again he says: "The doctrine of original sin needs not to be supported by argument; it is a fact of human history; where, with increasing sense of what ought to be done, comes increasing weakness to do it."

Again: "The mission of Christianity has not changed in the ages; the Church need not adapt herself to the knowledge or progress of the human race. When man comes to be without consciousness of shame, unease, and guilt; to be at natural peace with himself; to satisfy the discontent with the present, the universal craving after the absent (which, contrary to Socialist promise, is ever parallel, not with the greatest misfortune, for that is a palliative, but with the greatest prosperity of society)—when the seventh chapter of the Romans ceases to describe the inner conflict—then will we acknowledge that the harmony is restored; that our faith preaches contentment, social progress, belief in powers of the natural man, acquiescence in the present comfort of home or nation."

But, as a final word, "Though the Church is tempted to adapt her own position and language to the fluctuating guesses and prejudices of the world, yet must she constantly remind herself of the fundamental basis of her creed in the antagonism of light and darkness; that she is in the world, not so much to redeem or renovate the world (that

success is never promised to her), but to provide an asylum of refuge for those who would escape from the world to God."

In the Convocation of York, on the 23rd of February, the Bishop of Wakefield proposed the appointment of a committee to consider: "Whether certain of the more important amendments in the Revised Version of the translation of the New Testament might be selected and recommended by Convocation for adoption in the reading of the Lessons in the Church Service."

"It is quite plain," said Dr. Walsham How, in speaking to his motion, "it is quite plain (whether Dean Burgon slew it or not) that the book which was received with so much interest has forfeited its first popularity, and is now comparatively neglected." He was followed by the Bishops of Manchester, of Liverpool, and of Durham, none of whom disputed this statement. The Bishop of Durham, indeed, tacitly accepted it. He said: "We have to bear in mind that it took fifty years and a revolution before the Authorised Version was generally adopted, and I am content to wait for the next generation to see how the Revised Version will be received."<sup>1</sup> We are not all so content, however; not all so patient, if you will. We should count it a great misfortune that the present generation should be deprived of the results of the magnificent scholarship that spent itself upon the revision. If the Revised Version is dead to this generation, then for the sake of this generation itself we should gladly welcome some revision of the Revised Version, such as the Bishop of Wakefield has proposed.

While the bishops of the northern province were thus discussing and rejecting a motion for the issue of a selection of the readings in the Revised

<sup>1</sup> This quotation is from the report in the *Guardian*, and is substantially correct. But the Bishop of Durham has sent us, since the above was written, a complete and corrected copy of his speech. It will be published in our next, along with some very interesting letters.

Version of the New Testament, the Convocation of Canterbury was also occupied with the Revised Version, discussing another motion and accepting it. The subject was the issue of the Revised Version with marginal references. And on the motion of the Bishop of Oxford, seconded by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, the following resolution was carried:—"It being the opinion of this House that the study of the New Testament would be greatly furthered by a carefully selected list of marginal references, and as it is known that important materials for such a selected list can be referred to, resolved: That a small committee of both Houses, with power to associate other scholars with the work, should be appointed, and that immediate communications should be opened with the University Presses on the subject."

"I have had many and many complaints made to me," said Dr. Ellicott, "by earnest and devout people, who thought themselves spiritually helped by using the Revised Version, that what they felt was seriously wanting were marginal references." These complaints have been made in the hearing of us all. There cannot be a doubt that, if the thing had been possible, the Revised Version ought to have had marginal references from the first. And it is now made clear that the thing was altogether possible, and only missed accomplishment by some faithless afterthought. "I may now mention to your lordships," said the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, who, it will be remembered, was chairman of the New Testament Revision Company, "that the Revision Company was at one time very closely connected with this question of references. In the early years of the Company it was felt that a carefully digested series of references would be of very great value to us in the different parts we were engaged upon, and at the time we even contemplated making it a final part of our work. The way in which we set about it, so far as I remember—I am speaking now simply from memory—was this: we first agreed upon what seemed to be the best set of marginal references, and, so far as I recollect, we almost

distinctly agreed that the three or four quarto volumes of the Holy Bible published by the University of Cambridge, probably twenty years ago, contained the best selection, and for this reason—that my lamented and valued friend, Dr. Scrivener, was editor of this Bible. Whatever Dr. Scrivener undertook he did thoroughly, and he bestowed enormous pains upon the references in the book to which I am referring. It was then thought by us all that we should induce our very able friend to take up the work anew for the uses of the Company. I do not remember whether we associated anybody else with him or not; I believe we did, but such was his devotion to Scripture that practically he undertook the work almost single-handed. He went very carefully over his own marginal references as appearing in the volumes to which I have referred. He or his associates may have probably made some, but he did not tell us exactly what changes were introduced. They were not, however, very many. We were thus supplied with a set of marginal references which were put into print, and which I still have in what might be termed the second edition of our work—second as regarded ourselves. And it was with great satisfaction the other day that I pulled out these volumes and found that the marginal references went through the whole of the New Testament, and I rejoiced the more when I remembered how carefully they had been drawn up."

It is not without surprise that we hear of all this work being done for the Revised Version. Why was it not made use of? Dr. Ellicott tells us that the Revisers felt that they could not issue a body of marginal references, however capable and trustworthy their compiler, without going through them steadily and systematically. But surely a prefatory note would have removed the burden of responsibility. And we cannot but sympathise with "the very great disappointment" of the Bishop of Oxford "that with the Revised Edition of the New Testament the publication of Dr. Scrivener's references was shelved or withdrawn."

When the motion came down to the Lower House, Archdeacon Farrar speedily showed the great need there is for a thorough revision of the references that are now printed with the Authorised Version. From 8000 in 1611, they have gradually increased, till now there are more than 30,000. Some of them, said Dr. Farrar, are altogether misleading. And he gave this single instance: One of the references to Rev. xiii. 14, a passage which speaks of lying miracles, is 2 Kings xx. 7, which records the fact that the prophet laid the figs on the boil, and Hezekiah recovered.

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Professor Sanday, who is writing in the *Expositor* on "The Present Position of the Johannean Question," has come in the issue for April into closest contact with the heart of his subject. His argument is *the* one which those who deny the Johannean authorship of the Fourth Gospel have always found hardest to answer; and he presses it home with a persuasiveness which is almost irresistible. But we shall be pardoned for saying that, as Dr. Sanday puts it, it seems to us to prove too much.

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The argument is that there are scenes and incidents in the Fourth Gospel which could not have been imagined and still less described by a writer who had not been a partaker in them. "There was one moment in the history of the Church which, when once it had passed, did not return—the moment when the new faith was in the act of forming and bursting through the husk of the old . . . The atmosphere was highly charged; a single spark would set the combustible materials all around in flame. Constantly that spark seemed to be on the point of falling, and still it was in some mysterious way held back. On one occasion in particular it was very near. Something strange had happened on the waste land to the east of the Sea of Galilee. Great crowds had collected, and their wants had been wonderfully supplied. A sudden enthusiasm seized them, and they tried to take their benefactor by force and make Him king. From which of the Gospels is it that we

get this trait so exactly true to the situation—a trait so true to the situation then, but by no means true permanently and at all times? . . . We ask what gospel it is which has so caught the flying moment, and we find that it is the Fourth."

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That is one incident. But "a touch like this," continues Dr. Sanday, "is very far from standing alone." And he recalls several other scenes from the same Gospel which are like it. Now, when we say that this argument seems to us to prove too much, we do not mean too much for its own validity, but too much for the position which Dr. Sanday seeks to establish. Let it be remembered that Dr. Sanday holds that St. John wrote this Gospel towards the end of the first century, and therefore very near the close of his long life. Let it be remembered also that according to the Ephesian tradition, which Dr. Sanday accepts, John had been living for many years among Gentiles, apart from the places, the persons, and all the associations of the early years of his life with Jesus. Let it be remembered further, and more especially, that Dr. Sanday has recently uttered these remarkable words about the fidelity of this Fourth Gospel (*Contemporary Review*, October 1891): "To say that the Gospel was written by St. John is not to say that it is necessarily in all points an exact representation of the facts. It was written by the apostle towards the end of a long life. But what should we expect under such circumstances? When an old man looks back over the past, one of the first things which he is apt to lose is the sense of perspective. End and beginning draw nearer together. The facts, which belong to an earlier stage of development, are seen in the light which is thrown upon them by a later stage, and this later interpretation affects the statement of them as history. I admit that St. John's narrative may have been influenced in this way. I am not prepared to say exactly how far it has been influenced, but some such influence seems to me to be in the nature of the case."

That is Dr. Sanday's position. That is the extent of the claim which he makes for this Gospel. It seems to us that the argument which he presses home with so much skill in the current *Expositor* goes far beyond that claim, and makes that position intolerable.

Let us look at the second scene which he recalls, and quote his own words:—"A deputation from the priestly members of the Sanhedrin, or rather—as we are expressly and precisely told—from the Pharisaic party in that body, comes down to John the Baptist at Bethany beyond Jordan, to make a formal report upon his baptism, for the guidance of their colleagues. They ask, Who is he? 'And he confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou the prophet (cf. Deut. xviii.)? And he answered, No. They said therefore unto him, Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? . . . And they asked him, and said unto him, Why then baptizest thou if thou art not the Christ, neither Elijah, neither the prophet?' The Jews"—this is Dr. Sanday's comment now—"the Jews well understood that this baptism of John's was no mere form, but that it symbolised a thorough moral reformation, such as they connected with certain prophetic figures who were associated in their minds with the Messianic time. But how long can we suppose that this vivid recollection of John's baptism, and of the attitude of leaders and people towards it, would remain after the generation to which it had been preached had perished?"

In that incident there is a touch of exquisite significance to which Dr. Sanday does not refer. We shall return to that in a moment. But, as it stands, how does it agree with Dr. Sanday's concessions in the *Contemporary Review*? If St. John is writing in his extreme old age, when he has lost the sense of perspective, the facts and the interpretation of them being now so confused that this gospel is no longer an exact representation of the facts, and Dr. Sanday will not "vouch for the

literal accuracy of the discourses,"—if all this "must have happened unless the laws which regulate the processes of the human mind were suspended," how can it be that St. John throws himself into some of these facts, both of the earlier and the later stages in the history, and reproduces not merely their outward circumstance, but even their very life and breath?

There is an article in this issue of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, by an Oxford scholar, which will be read with the deepest interest by those who have made the most careful study of the Gospels. Following in the path which Mr. Gwilliam traced in the issue for April, Mr. Bussell simply pleads for an earnest hearing on behalf of that remarkable work which he describes as the *Novum Organon* of Gospel criticism. Yet it is hard for us to grant him even so much as that. For those who have given themselves to defend the Johannean authorship of the Fourth Gospel have so implicitly accepted the tradition that it was written at Ephesus in the apostle's extreme old age, that it is difficult even to question that tradition; it is as if we were questioning the genuineness of the Gospel itself. How far this is from being the case will speedily appear on the least acquaintance with Mr. Halcombe's work. If the results of that work were established, it would not only establish the genuineness of St. John's Gospel, but it would also be the most powerful apologetic that had ever been laid at the feet of the Christian religion within modern times.

Now there can be no doubt that Dr. Sanday's argument in the current *Expositor*, whether it contradicts his own position in the *Contemporary Review* or not, points in the direction of Mr. Halcombe's contention, in the direction of a much earlier date in the life of St. John for the writing of this Gospel. And it is in our power to strengthen that argument. In a volume just issued by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, and noticed among the books of the month (*The Fourth Gospel: Essays by Ezra Abbot, A. P.*

Peabody, and J. B. Lightfoot), there is an essay by the late Bishop of Durham. His subject and his line of argument are identical with those of Dr. Sanday. Among the rest, he uses the very incident which we have just quoted from Dr. Sanday. We shall quote it in Dr. Lightfoot's own words also, drawing particular attention to the sentence which we shall give in italics.

“Connected with the Messiah's coming,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “are certain conceptions, on which it may be well to dwell for a moment. One of these is the appearance of a mysterious person called ‘*the prophet*.’ This expectation arose out of the announcement in Deut. xviii. 15, ‘The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, like unto me.’ To this anticipation we have allusions in not less than four places in St. John (i. 21, 25; vi. 14; vii. 40), in all of which ‘*the prophet*’ is mentioned, though in the first three the distinctness of the expectation is blurred in the English version by the rendering ‘*that prophet*.’ In all these passages, the mention of ‘*the prophet*’ without any explana-

tion is most natural in the lips of contemporary Jews, whose minds were filled with the Messianic conceptions of the times; while such language is extremely unlikely to have been invented for them more than a century after the date of the supposed occurrences. *But the point especially to be observed is, that the form which the conception takes is strictly Jewish and not Christian.* Christian teachers identified the prophet foretold by Moses with our Lord Himself, and therefore with the Christ. This application of the prophecy is made directly in St. Peter's speech (Acts iii. 22), and inferentially in St. Stephen's (Acts vii. 37); and later Christian teachers followed in their steps. But these Jews in St. John's Gospel conceive of ‘*the Christ*’ and ‘*the prophet*’ as two different persons. If he is not ‘*the Christ*,’ they adopt the alternative that he may be ‘*the prophet*’ (i. 21, 25); if not the prophet, then the Christ (vii. 40). It is hardly conceivable, to my mind, that a Christian writer, living in or after the middle of the second century, calling on his imagination for facts, should have divested himself so absolutely of the Christian idea and fallen back on the Jewish.”

## The Study of Theology in British Baptist Colleges.

BY THE REV. T. WITTON DAVIES, B.A., PRINCIPAL OF THE MIDLAND BAPTIST COLLEGE.

I HAVE been requested by the editor of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES to write an article on the above subject, and, hardly realising at the time the difficulty and delicacy of the task, I consented.

The word “Theology” in the title of this paper is used so as to embrace all studies included in the curriculum of a well-organised theological seminary. In the small space at my disposal it is impossible for me to lay out a complete scheme of “*theologische Encyklopädie*.” Those who care to go into this subject may consult the *Encyklopädie und Methodologie der Theologischen Wissenschaften* of Hagenbach, or the *Theologik oder Encyclopädie der Theologie* of Rübiger, Leipzig, 1880: (Messrs. T. & T. Clark have published an English edition). There is a neat little work by Rev. James Drummond, D.D., entitled *Introduction to the Study of Theology*

(Macmillan & Co.), which, though open to criticism, is really useful.<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this paper, I adopt the following conspectus of Theology:—

- I. SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY, dealing with the basal truths of religion.
- II. HISTORICAL THEOLOGY in its three departments—
  1. History of Doctrine.
  2. Church History and Polity.
  3. Comparative Religion.
- III. APOLOGETICS.
- IV. BIBLE LANGUAGES, together with Archæology, Introduction (General and Special), Exegesis, and Criticism.

<sup>1</sup> I hope that a volume on this subject will be included in Messrs. T. & T. Clark's “International Theological Library,” so well begun by Driver's *Introduction*.