

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

It is a good many months since Mrs. Gibson sent a note to THE EXPOSITORY TIMES on the Parable of the Unrighteous Steward. Since then there has been a steady stream of communication on the subject, not half of which could be printed. A new book on the Parables has just been issued. Its claim to notice lies in the comparison which is carried through it between certain of the Parables and the Beatitudes. In one place the Parable of the Unrighteous Steward is explained. And which is the Beatitude it is found to illustrate? It is the Beatitude of the Pure in Heart.

The book is written by the Rev. A. Allen Brockington, M.A. Its title is *The Parables of the Way* (Longmans; 2s. 6d. net). In an introductory note, the Rev. F. A. Clarke, M.A., Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, directs attention to Mr. Brockington's original view of the Unrighteous Steward, and we turn to that chapter at once.

What is its lesson? We need not stay with particulars. Let the controversy between those who affirm and those who deny a spiritual application in every detail of a parable be settled some other time. All agree that at the heart of each parable there is a lesson. What is the lesson of the Parable of the Unrighteous Steward? Mr. Brockington says it is Single-mindedness.

Did the steward's lord commend him—surely we need not ask if our Lord did—for his dishonesty? He did not. He commended him for his single-eyed foresight and endeavour. The steward used his opportunity for a certain end, he used it solely for that end. Was it a selfish end? That is not the point. The point is that whatever the end was he was single-minded in pursuing it. His single-mindedness—that was the virtue his lord commended in the steward, that is the virtue our Lord recommends to us.

Now Single-mindedness is Purity. You thought Purity of Heart was chastity, the absence of sins of the flesh, the absence of lustful thinking? It is more than that. It goes deeper than that, deeper down into the personality. 'Purity of matter,' says the manual of science, 'is connected with the vital and energetic connexion between its particles.' Purity of heart is connected with the vital and energetic connexion between the soul and God. In the Apocalyptic vision they that have washed their robes follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. They have no divided aims. Their Purity consists in their Single-mindedness.

Mr. Brockington quotes Ruskin. 'With the idea of purity,' says Ruskin, 'comes that of spirituality; for the essential characteristic of matter is its inertia, whence, by adding to its

purity of energy, we may in some measure spiritualize even matter itself.' He quotes Tennyson. He quotes Tennyson on 'Sir Galahad the Pure'—

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure;
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.

But Mr. Clarke, who writes Mr. Brockington's preface, quotes to yet better purpose. For he quotes Dr. Hort, who says that the pure or single in heart are those who have no double thoughts, no taint of falsehood; he quotes St. James, who says, 'Purify your hearts, ye double-minded'; and to show the connexion between single-mindedness and seeing God—for it is the Pure in Heart that, like Sir Galahad, shall see God—he quotes most pertinently from Browning. Of the irresolute, of the men and women of divided aims, Browning says—

They see not God, I know,
Nor all that chivalry of His,
The soldier-saints who, row on row,
Burn upward each to his point of bliss—
Since, *the end of life being manifest,*
He had burned his way thro' the world to this.

At the 'Annual Meeting' of Mansfield College, Oxford, Professor Buchanan Gray delivered a lecture on 'Biblical Study and Travel in Palestine,' which is reported in the *Examiner* for June 23. The title of the lecture does not name two separate things, but one thing. Professor Gray's purpose was to encourage the study of the Bible by means of travel in Palestine.

Is this not done already? Not by this country. The Germans do it, and the Jesuits, and the Americans. In Beirut there is a Syrian Protestant College, which is an American institution, and the Jesuit University there has an Oriental Faculty. In Jerusalem there are German and American 'Schools,' as well as a 'school' of the Dominican Fathers. There is no School, Faculty, or Foundation yet for any British subject.

Dr. Buchanan Gray desires to see his countrymen take their place in the geographical study of the Bible. It is true there is in Palestine a British (and American) Palestine Exploration Fund. And under the guidance of Mr. Stewart Macalister that Fund is doing wonderful work at Gezer. But the Palestine Exploration Fund is handicapped for lack of money. It is a Fund without funds. And great as the enterprise is, heroic as have been the efforts of its officers at home and abroad, the Englishman who visits Palestine and sees the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund stopped here and hampered there, finds little occasion to think well of his countrymen's liberality.

It is not, however, for the purpose of digging below the surface, but for the purpose of exploring and interpreting what is above the ground, that Dr. Buchanan Gray desires to see a new 'school' established in Jerusalem. He is not even sure if he would establish a new school. It would be more economical to co-operate with such existing institutions as are suitable for English-speaking students. It would also be more profitable. Dr. Gray has examined the three institutions in Jerusalem. The American school was founded four years ago. Scholars so eminent as Professor Torrey of Yale, Professor Mitchell of Boston, Professor Barton of Bryn Mawr College, and Professor Lewis Paton of Hartford Seminary, have been its successive directors. A permanent director will be appointed by and by. The German school has a permanent director already. 'It is fortunate,' says Dr. Gray, 'in being under the direction of so accomplished and distinguished a scholar as Professor Dalman,' the author of *The Words of Jesus*.

But the most fully equipped and most active school in Jerusalem is that of the Dominicans. Dr. Gray was especially impressed with the excellence of its library. 'All the leading periodicals devoted to the languages or subjects of the Bible are taken, including, for example, among those published in England, the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, the *Journal*

of *Theological Studies*, and *The Expository Times*.' It might not be desirable, and it probably would not be possible, to affiliate an English school of research with that of the Dominicans. But Dr. Gray found the Dominican Fathers most ready to assist him in his studies, and he does not doubt that they would offer the same unattached assistance to others.

The Schools are there already. 'What we now need,' says Professor Gray, 'is at least one or two scholarships, offered yearly to English students, and open without limit of Church or Creed.'

On the 27th of May the Rev. W. Douglas Mackenzie was inducted into the office of President of the Theological Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut, and delivered his inaugural address. What subject did he choose? There are many most interesting and some very entertaining subjects for a theologian of our day to choose. Dr. Douglas Mackenzie chose the Absolute.

There is just one thing, he holds, that is of vital consequence in our day. It is the question whether truth is a matter of opinion or of absolute authority. We have a moral law. Why should we obey it? Is it because it has been found expedient for the sake of society to do so, and for our own sake in the long run? If that is the only reason, we shall not obey it. For at the time when we are debating whether we should obey it or not, we are not concerned about society, and are ready to let our own future welfare take its chance. But if we have a moral law which is the absolute will of the Absolute, then we cannot choose but obey it. 'There is nothing,' says President Mackenzie, 'which we need more to-day than a theology which shall establish securely the ancient prerogative of God as the supreme and the absolute fountain of definite laws for the conduct of man.'

How is theology to set about it? There is only one method, and theology must use it, use it

loyally. It is the historical method. We must investigate the past. Now, almost the moment we turn to the past we find ourselves in the presence of One who stands towards the religious development of mankind in a relation which is unparalleled. Who is this? We are not seriously detained along the way until we come to Him. We are not seriously detained by Moses or Gotama or Plato. But when we come to Him we are completely arrested. For He claims to possess the sinless consciousness; He asserts the authority to forgive men's sins; He offers His death as essential to man's recovery of right relations with God and essential to man's recovery of right relations with himself; He sets Himself, in short, upon the throne of the universal conscience of man.

How do we know this? By the way of historical investigation. There is no other way. By historical investigation we come upon Jesus. By historical investigation we discover what His claims were. We call these claims the manifestation of His self-consciousness. When we see, by actual historical investigation, that Jesus Christ's self-consciousness manifested itself in these ways, we see what Jesus Christ Himself was. Now these claims are absolute. They are the claims of the Absolute God. If Jesus Christ can make good these claims, we are in the presence of a moral law that is not a matter of expediency, but of absolute personal obligation.

Now there are two ways of discovering whether Christ makes good His claims. Both are historical. But the one belongs to the past, the other to the ever present. First of all, we must examine the records of His own time. What does history say about Him? Did He in His own life, and conduct fulfil the claims which He made for Himself. Was He sinless?

Here we may leave Dr. Douglas Mackenzie for a moment and consider Canon Hensley Henson. Dr. Mackenzie is not a blind apologist for traditional orthodoxy. Canon Hensley Henson is as

suspicious of traditionalism as Canon Cheyne is of the Old Testament text. What does Canon Henson say? In his volume of sermons, *The Value of the Bible* (6s.), just published by Messrs. Macmillan, he says, 'The New Testament, read in the light of honest criticism, justifies, so far as documents can justify, the apostolic doctrine of the sinlessness of Christ.' That will do for the present.

But there is another way of discovering whether Christ makes good His claims. The appeal is still to history. But now it is not to a single period in the history of the past, it is to the experience of those who have put His claims to the test in all the ages and generations of men since the Christian era began. It is to the experience of men who are alive unto this present. Professor Mackenzie says that this is the supreme test. He is not so suspicious of documentary evidence as Canon Hensley Henson. He is not so unsteady in his step as he walks through the history of the first century. But he holds that the experience of men and women is the supreme test of the claims of Jesus Christ. He says, 'We of the Christian Church ought deliberately and broadly and calmly to assert and reassert that this is the final and the supreme test.'

And this test stands. Jesus Christ, according to the claims which He made on earth, according to what the Germans have taught us to call the 'content of His self-consciousness,' is alive on earth to-day; is alive and active, producing conviction of sin, leading to reformation of life, the inner nourishment of weak wills, the inner cleansing of the fountains of life. It is history that gives us that. It is the history of the life of the men and women who, from the first century to the twentieth, have through Christ entered into conscious fellowship with God, and into the meaning of the apostle's question, How can they that have died to sin live any longer therein?

We have mentioned Canon Hensley Henson's new volume of sermons. Its most instructive

sermon is this very sermon on the sinlessness of Christ. As we have seen, Canon Henson asserts Christ's sinlessness. How does he reach it? Just as President Mackenzie reaches it, by an appeal to history. And his appeal is the double appeal—first to the documentary facts of the life of Christ, and next to the experience of Christians.

The value of Canon Henson's testimony lies in the appeal to experience. Who could be more suspicious of apostolic testimony? Who could affirm more unmoveably the facts of the religious consciousness? 'We,' he says, 'if we are Christians in fact as well as in name; we, not less than the writers of the New Testament, build our fabric of belief on the foundation of experience. Jesus Christ is to us, as to them, an Object of affection, and of the confidence which affection makes possible; we, as they, have carried to Him our secrets of trouble and shame, and we also have found that our trust was not misplaced. We have an interior certitude, phrase it how you will, that we have nothing to fear from the most searching criticism of the historical memorials of our Master's life; for our knowledge of Him has made us secure where His Character is in question.'

In his new volume of sermons—if we should call them sermons—entitled *Faith and Knowledge* (T. & T. Clark; 4s. 6d. net), to which reference has already been made, Mr. Inge is occasionally the master of a style in the use of which he seems to be unapproached by any theological writer of our day. It is a style which gives to a new thought not merely a clear and fitting expression, but leaves upon it a sense of artistic fearlessness. You know how the great Masters make you say, 'How did he dare to defy conventionalities?' Mr. Inge defies our conventionalities, not at all for the sake of defiance, but because the truth he seeks to express is higher.

We need not go further than the preface for illustration. We need not go further than the

title-page. For the title is not chosen at hazard, the order of words is not set down by chance. 'Faith and Knowledge,' says Mr. Inge, that is the true order; and there is nothing that the present generation needs recalling to more urgently than this, that Faith is first and Knowledge afterwards.

Is that not daring? The present generation is the generation of all the Sciences. To know is first, to know is last, to know is everything. What is its text?—'This is life eternal, to know.' You will find no other so frequently announced by the preachers of this generation.

And the philosophy of this generation has fallen into line with that. Its text is Lotze's dictum, 'We strive to know that we may learn to do.' Its title now is Pragmatism. Mr. Inge does not believe in Pragmatism. He disputes Lotze's dictum. First comes Faith, he says, and then Knowledge. Or, as the mystics put it, Let self-discipline precede, and enlightenment will follow.

What is Mr. Inge's advantage? He breaks down the idea that we must know all that can be known and then believe the rest. That is the idea of the men of this generation. And so they say there is the Natural and there is the Supernatural. You get at the Natural by Knowledge, at the Supernatural by Faith. Push the Supernatural back. Push it back ever further. Know all that can be known, and you will find that there is little Supernatural left.

Mr. Inge destroys that idea. If there is a distinction between the Natural and the Supernatural, the Supernatural comes first. It is truer to say, 'By faith gain all you can of the Supernatural, and the Natural will be yours. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you. But there is no distinction between the Natural and the Supernatural, says Mr. Inge. And as he says it, we are in the presence of the highest daring of

theological art. Faith embraces the whole universe. In its immaturity it may need the crutch of the distinction between Natural and Supernatural. But as it goes on to know the Lord, it finds that the things which seemed Natural once are Supernatural now, and the Supernatural is in Him Natural.

'In the writer's opinion'—so Mr. Inge ends his preface, 'two things are now most necessary, if the Church is to take her proper place in the life and thought of the twentieth century. One is, that her teachers should steadily discourage the popular supernaturalistic dualism—the notion that God only begins where Nature leaves off, and works with a free hand only in the ever-narrowing gaps which Science has not yet filled up. And the other—a positive precept—is that many competent workers should devote themselves to a rigidly scientific study of the *normal* phenomena of religious experience.'

'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?' Our fathers answered the prophet's question by saying, It is the Lord Jesus Christ. And when the prophet asked further, 'Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?' they answered again, It is because they are dyed with His own blood shed on Calvary.

The modern commentator is shocked. 'It was a serious misapprehension of the spirit of prophecy which led many of the Fathers [and practically all of our fathers] to apply the prophecy to the passion and death of Christ. Although certain phrases, detached from their context, may suggest that interpretation to a Christian reader, there can be no doubt that the scene depicted is a "drama of Divine vengeance" into which the idea of propitiation does not enter.' And the modern commentator is right. It was a serious misapprehension on our fathers' part. Is Christ not in it then? Yes, Christ is in it after all.

Edom and Israel were enemies of old. Edom is Esau and Israel is Jacob, and they strove ere they left the womb; they maintained their strife all the days of their existence. Then there came a day when the strife reached its climax. When Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar, the Edomites took part in the destruction. They gathered their ancient enmity into one sweeping merciless blow, and when the city fell they raised a shout of exultation. The Israelites were carried captive. The Edomites watched them as they passed to the land of their captivity. They lined the way and mocked them as they went. Will Israel forgive it? You do not know Israel if you think so. Have you read the book of the prophet Obadiah? 'In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. . . . As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy dealing shall return upon thine own head.' Surely you have read the 137th Psalm—

Remember, O Lord, against the children of Edom
The day of Jerusalem;
Who said, Rase it, rase it,
Even to the foundation thereof.

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little
ones
Against the rock.

Surely you remember that terrible Psalm. Israel never forgot.

So one day Isaiah had a vision. Looking out from Jerusalem, he saw a conqueror return from the direction of Edom, from Bozrah the capital of the Edomites. He accosted him: 'Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?' The answer is terrible in its strength, in its vindictiveness: 'I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my fury; and their life-blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment.' Israel has had her revenge. The day of vengeance upon Edom has come. There is no mercy, there

is no escape. 'I poured out their life-blood on the earth.'

How did Isaiah know that Edom would suffer? He had a vision, you say. But what is a vision? Certainly the vision came before the fact. Isaiah saw the blood-stained conqueror return from Bozrah while the chief city of the Edomites was dwelling in insolent security. He had a vision. But what is a vision?

Isaiah knew that there is a righteous God in the earth. There were others in Israel besides Isaiah who knew that. What was it that separated Israel from the nations of the earth? It was the knowledge that there is a righteous God. Other nations knew that there were gods, and that it was possible to play off one god against another; other nations knew that righteousness had little to do with the gods or the gods with righteousness. Israel knew that there is one only living and true God, that He is the God of the whole earth, and that He doeth righteousness continually. All Israel knew it. But Isaiah knew it better than the rest of Israel did. It was Isaiah's absorbing victorious belief in a righteous God that gave him his vision. So there are three things in the Vision.

There is this first: That *there is revenge on earth for every wrong that has ever been done*. Why did Isaiah see the blood-stained conqueror come from Edom? Because Edom had exulted over Israel in the day of her calamity, and Isaiah knew that Israel would one day be amply avenged of that wrong. He knew it because there is a God in this earth that doeth righteously. Our modern poet knows it. 'God's in His heaven—All's right with the world!' You scoff at the modern poet; you scoff at him when you are smarting under your wrong. The creed of the optimist, you say; the purr of the well-to-do English citizen of the middle class! But Browning is right. You did not know that God is in His heaven and that every wrong would be amply avenged? Even

Isaiah knew that. Even the Psalmists of Israel knew that—

The Lord executeth righteous acts,
And judgments for all that are oppressed.
He made known His ways unto Moses,
His doings unto the children of Israel.

God has the power and exercises it. He never makes a mistake. He sees to it that every wrong is amply avenged.

What a discovery it is! What a revolution it makes in a man's life when he discovers it! God righteous judgment executes for all that are oppressed! Then, the wrong that I have suffered, I shall yet have vengeance for it? Yes, ample vengeance.

That is the first thing. The second thing is that *the revenge is obtained by the self-sacrifice of the wronged*. Isaiah did not know that. This is where our fathers made their mistake in interpreting Isaiah. They thought that Isaiah knew that the wrong was avenged by the person that suffered it. Ah no. There is progress in the doctrine of revenge. There is an advance over the position of Isaiah. It is to be admitted, however reluctantly, that the conqueror whom Isaiah saw return from Edom was stained, not with his own, but with the blood of the Edomites. Isaiah saw that there is revenge. How ample it is, he also saw. You never read the story of a more ample, a more awful revenge than this. But Isaiah did not see that the vengeance was obtained at the cost of the conqueror's own life-blood.

Why should we be afraid to say that Isaiah did not see this? Why should we be reluctant to allow some originality to Jesus? It is not to be denied that Isaiah had the sense of vicarious suffering. But that is not the same. No one knew till the Lord Jesus Christ came that God's method of obtaining vengeance on His enemies was to die for them. No one knew that that is the only way for men.

There cannot be another way. God Himself has told us so. For if there had been another way He certainly would not have taken this way. But history has told us also. Was there ever revenge got by making the guilty suffer? Were the ancient clan-feuds ended so? We may not have learned the lesson fully yet. It is so great a lesson to learn, there is no greater or more blessed lesson to be learned on earth. Not one of us may have learned the lesson fully yet. But we are learning it. Slowly but surely even as nations we are learning it. There was not the wildest Maf-ficker among us who did not feel that it would have been nobler for Lord Roberts that day he telegraphed the news of Cronje's surrender, if he had not reminded us that it was the anniversary of Majuba.

So there are these two things in it. First, that there is revenge on earth for every wrong; and next, that the vengeance is obtained by the self-sacrifice of the person who has been wronged. The third thing is the *loneliness of the avenger*.

The loneliness of the avenger is a prominent matter in Isaiah's vision. The commentators notice that. 'The keynote of the piece,' says Professor George Adam Smith, 'is the loneliness of the Hero.' And all Christendom has noticed it. Where are the words that have carried more sorrow to the Christian heart than these: 'I have trodden the wine-press alone?' The commentators say that Christendom has been mistaken. The solitary Avenger is not the Lamb of Calvary, it is Jehovah the God of Israel, obtaining Divine vengeance for His chosen people. But the heart of Christendom has not been wholly wrong. The Avenger of guilty man must also tread the wine-press alone. And even the man who has suffered wrong must go out and obtain his revenge alone. Of the people there can be none with him.

Why has the Avenger to go out alone? Because Israel now is God and Edom is guilty man. Who can stand out among his fellows and reconcile

them to God? The wronged must be his own Avenger, and it is always, 'Gainst thee, thee only have I sinned.' If God has suffered the wrong, none but God can obtain revenge for it. And it is so between man and man. In this also we are crucified with Christ. No one can pay the price that will reconcile to thee the man that has done thee wrong. Thou too must tread the wine-press alone. Thou must see of the travail of thy soul and be satisfied. So when thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that *thou hast aught against thy brother*, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

But we have not touched the heart of the matter yet. What is this loneliness? It is the loneliness of the soul that craves for sympathy. Did you think that the loneliness of the Conqueror consisted simply in His solitary grandeur? 'A striking majestic figure!' We know the commentators' commonplaces. What is a striking majestic solitary figure to us? It is a God who craves for human sympathy, for human love, we need.

What is the wrong that we had done Him? We had simply withheld our love from Him. We had done Him, we could do Him, no other wrong

than that. He came to get back our love. He came to Calvary for no other end than that. And of course He came alone. Until He suffers and in suffering has His revenge upon us; until by His solitary sacrifice He wins back our love, He cannot but be alone. But He is not proud of His loneliness. Ah, God forbid. When the commentators tell us that His cry, 'I have trodden the wine-press alone,' is a proud boast, how utterly are the commentators astray. Listen to Him at the Supper: 'I will not drink of the fruit of this vine until I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom,' and yet 'with desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.' Watch Him in the garden. He is only a stone's-throw away from them, but He must be alone. He must be alone, and yet He returns to them, returns to them again and again, and gently chides them, 'What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?'

He craves for sympathy, for the love of men. There was nothing else that brought Him to the Cross. Yet He must be alone. Until He wins the love He must be alone. We have not yet sounded the depth of distress in the words of Edom's Conqueror, 'I have trodden the wine-press alone.' But the Christian heart has been right. There is no sorrow like unto this sorrow.

The New Oxyrhynchus Sayings.

A TENTATIVE INTERPRETATION.¹

BY THE REV. H. B. SWETE, D.D., LITT.D., REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

IN July 1897 I had the pleasure of lecturing in this place upon a series of sayings of our Lord which had been discovered on the site of Oxyrhynchus by Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt.² The indefatigable zeal of these two Oxford scholars has now brought to light a second fragment, belonging

apparently to the same collection though not to the same papyrus, which adds five or six new sayings to the seven previously given to the world. Through the courtesy of the discoverers, a proof of the new sayings, with their comments upon them, has been in my possession since April, and some of my spare time has been agreeably spent in an endeavour to interpret the treasure. The result, such as it is, is printed overleaf.

¹ A lecture delivered at the Divinity School, Cambridge, on 7th July 1904.

² See THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, viii. pp. 544 ff., 568.