

the consequences may be, we are bound to accept the language referred to in its true import. And if we cannot find some meaning which does meet all the conditions of the case we cannot present the reason we have given as conclusive against the theory under consideration.

What, then, is the meaning of our Lord's words? We cannot now go into an exhaustive treatment of the whole question, but we may be able to say enough to stimulate further inquiry. It must be remembered that our Lord had just performed a miracle, and on this account he was charged with casting out devils by Beelzebub. He resented this, and replied in a way which silenced even His enemies; and, among other things, clearly intimated that what He did was by the Spirit of God. Now, if we take the whole context, it must be evident to any one that what He called blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was attributing to Beelzebub what the Holy Ghost had done. In other words, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is a deliberate refusal to accept the testimony of the Holy Ghost in any instance as a truthful testimony. Now let us go a step further. Christ's own claims were, and are, presented to the world, not because He says He is the Christ, but because the Holy Ghost says He is the Christ. He Himself said, "If I do not the work of My Father, believe Me not." But this work was done by the Holy Ghost, and consequently everywhere the Holy Ghost became the testifier of the truthfulness of Christ's claims as the Messiah. This view of the matter is still further confirmed by what He said the Holy Ghost, or Paraclete, would do when He came. Among other

things, He was to convict the world of sin, because of unwillingness to believe on the Son of God. Here is positive evidence that a refusal to accept the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the Messiahship of Jesus is positive sin, and this is the sin which, when persisted in, can never be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come. Hence, our Lord was perfectly justified in saying, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Hence, instead of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost having to do with the Spirit's indwelling presence it has to do with that definite and clear testimony which the Holy Ghost has given concerning the claims of Jesus Christ, when, as Paul says in Hebrews, "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts (or distributions) of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will." Our conclusion, therefore, is that the sin against the Holy Ghost, as it has been called, is the sin of deliberate and persistent rejection of Jesus Christ; and the character of this sin is seen in the fearful penalty attached to it. In other words, the wilful unbeliever cannot be saved. Infidelity is not only ruin to the soul in this life, but it fixes the soul's eternal doom. It is not sin against Christ Himself directly, for He does not Himself assert His Messiahship and ask any one to believe Him on His own statement. But He does ask faith in Himself, on the testimony that the work which He did was the work of His Father, and that this work was done by the Spirit of God. And it is easy to see that this view of the matter makes the sin of unbelief, as John calls it, "the sin of the world."

---

## Professor Alexander Roberts on Galatians v. 17.

BY JOHN MASSIE, M.A., PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS,  
MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD.

ALL students of the New Testament owe much to Dr. Roberts of St. Andrews; and therefore it is with great respect that I venture to call in question his interpretation of the above passage as given in your December number. He rejects the translation of the Authorised Version, "so that ye cannot do the things that ye would," because therein "the

*flesh* is represented as the conquering principle, inasmuch as it is spoken of as successfully hindering believers from doing those things which, under the influence of the *Spirit*, they would fain perform." "This view" (he says) "is not a little dishonouring to the Spirit of grace." He accepts the revised of the Revised Version, "that

things that ye would," and calls it "undoubtedly the correct one," because, "instead of the *flesh*, the *Spirit* is spoken of as the dominant power in the souls of believers, so that they are able to overcome those evil desires to which they would otherwise yield."

No doubt this is in itself an attractive interpretation; but is it borne out by the passage taken as a whole? The thought of the passage would seem to run as follows: "Walk by the Spirit," says St. Paul to his regenerate readers, "and ye shall in nowise fulfil the lust of the flesh." And then he illustrates from the experience of the regenerate that idea of inherent opposition which his exhortation involves: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for [to explain more emphatically] these oppose one another, that whatsoever things [either way] ye would, these ye may not do."<sup>1</sup> The construction requires that this purpose be the purpose, not of the Spirit only, but of both the flesh and the Spirit. Each desires to prevent the one from obeying the other. If man would do something fleshly, the Spirit seeks to assert itself; and if he would do something spiritual, then the flesh seeks to assert itself. So there is no compromise. As St. Paul has before said, "You must walk by the Spirit entirely, if you are not to fulfil any lust of the flesh." The interpretation of Dr. Roberts, whether of the Authorised or of the Revised Version, seems to ignore the fact of the *mutual* opposition on which Paul lays such stress, an opposition which can only be satisfactorily settled by the Christian definitely and unreservedly taking one side, the side of the Spirit. And the apostle goes on to say: "If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under law [which is weak through the flesh, Rom. viii. 3]." As though he would remind them, "If ye are led by the Spirit, ye will meet the lusting of the flesh, not with any outward commandment, not with the powerless and reluctant 'I must not,' but with the joyful yearning after the good and the victorious, omnipotent 'I will not.' Ye are not in bondage under law, but in free service under grace."

One alternative suggestion may be made. The *ἵνα μὴ* of verse 17 is translated in the Authorised Version, "so that ye cannot." Such a rendering is

<sup>1</sup> This is substantially Meyer's interpretation.

very questionable; *ἵνα* is not provably used in the New Testament of actually fulfilled result; this requires *ὥστε* with the indicative. *ἵνα* had not yet so far degenerated. But it is sometimes used of an approximation to this, a kind of halfway house between the purpose and the fulfilled result, viz. of the result *contemplated as naturally and logically consequent*. The late Canon Evans of Durham—would that he had left behind him more proofs of his fine and delicate insight!—brought out this use of *ἵνα*, after his usual acute, quaint, and original fashion, in the *Expositor* (2nd Series, vols. iii. and v.). Take, as an instance, Rom. xi. 11, "Did they stumble, *ἵνα*—*in such a way as to fall?*" not "that they might fall" (as if this had been their own purpose, or God's, who would thus be gratuitously or strangely thrust in); nor "so that they actually fell" (which would be an illegitimate use of *ἵνα* with the subjunctive); but "in a way *requiring* a fall to follow." Take a second instance: In John ix. 2 we read: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that (*ἵνα*) he should be born blind?" Here the thought is not "in order that he might be born blind," as if this could be his own design or his parents'; nor is it "so that he was born blind," again an illegitimate use of *ἵνα* with the subjunctive; but "a sin *requiring that* he should be born blind."

Possibly the *ἵνα* of our Galatians passage may have this deteriorated force, and should be explained neither as "so that ye cannot" (an actually fulfilled result), nor as "in order that ye may not" (as if this were the design of the Spirit and the flesh respectively, or of God, which, in regard to the opposition of the flesh to the Spirit, would be strange indeed), but as "an opposition which, while it is kept up by the neutrality or the compromise of the man, *requires that* he should not do the things he would," an opposition which naturally brings about this *impasse*, and can only be crushed when the man definitely and uncompromisingly takes sides with the one or the other, the Spirit or the flesh; and the Christian must, of course, take the side of the Spirit.

Either this, or the interpretation suggested before, offers, as it seems to me, a solution most in harmony with all the parts of the passage.

## Apologetics.

*Natural Theology and Modern Thought.* The Donnellan Lectures for 1888-89. By J. H. KENNEDY, B.D. 1891. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 5s.

FOR some reason or other original works in the Apologetic field are very rare. Form and substance remaining the same, originality is limited to the words. Mr. Kennedy's originality is more than verbal. The argument of natural theology has been recast in the mould of his own mind. The result is a distinctly fresh discussion.

Lecture I., which deals with "The Veto of Positivism," puts two points clearly and strongly—first, that those who repudiate teleology in nature cannot avoid using its language; and secondly, that many of the chief conceptions of science are arrived at in precisely the same way as the doctrines of natural religion. How often are we told that to look for purpose in nature is to follow an *ignis fatuus!* Yet Hæckel says of organic bodies, "In them we can almost always prove a combination of heterogeneous parts, which co-operate together *for the purpose* of producing the phenomena of life." In Darwin, such phrases are common. Again, we talk of *force* as if it were something tangible or visible. But it is a purely ideal or metaphysical conception. Comte and his followers would get rid of it, name and thing. But to do so would be to bring science to a deadlock. Scientists will never bow to the Positivist veto. Yet our only reason for believing in force is its necessity in order to the explanation of phenomena. So with the theory of a luminiferous æther. We cannot explain light without the undulations of this unseen ocean; with them we can. "These are but a few out of many instances in which the pioneers of physical science have been compelled to disregard limitations from which we are constantly assured that the mind of man can never free itself. While Positivists always assume to speak in the name of science, science has in reality taken its course in defiance of barriers which they sought to impose on it—barriers, the maintenance of which is essential to the logical consistency of their doctrines."

The Second Lecture, "Design and Mechanical Causation," is the longest and perhaps the ablest in the volume. The argument is so continuous and closely woven that it will not bear epitomising. The proof, that all the attempts made by able men

to explain everything by mechanism and exclude the action of will break down, is irresistible. Du Bois-Reymond is the opponent chiefly dealt with, although the Cartesian theory of conscious automatism, and Leibnitz's Pre-established Harmony are considered. It is curious to notice the nervous fear of thoroughgoing materialists of admitting any loophole for free-will. Prof. Clifford says: "If we once admit that physical causes are not continuous, but that there is some break, then we leave the way open for the doctrine of a Destiny or a Providence outside of us." Du Bois-Reymond, himself a pronounced materialist, awakened the wrath of his more fanatical friends by asserting that there are three mysteries which materialism will never explain,—the existence of indivisible atoms, the origin of motion, and the origin of consciousness. For this he was classed with "the black gang." These three points he pushes aside as insoluble, and in spite of them asserts the universal reign of mechanical causation. He is candid enough to admit that the proposition "consciousness is bound up with material conditions" is not identical with "consciousness can be mechanically explained." Some of the shifts to which materialism is reduced are curious. Thus, we have Hæckel driven to suggest that atoms are in some sense animated. He says, "Without the assumption of an atom-soul, the commonest and most ordinary phenomena of chemistry are inexplicable." Mr. Kennedy well remarks: "It is strange that Hæckel should have persuaded himself that he was erecting a barrier against supernaturalism by propounding this theory. . . . The necessary development of this theory would be the recognition of will as the original cause and explanation of all material phenomena. But, as this multiplicity of wills would not in the least help to explain the unity and order of nature, these characteristics would also demand an explanation; and the previous recognition of will as the only cause which can account for motion would involve our seeking in the same direction an explanation of the order and unity apparent in the motions of the universe as a whole. This would afford a basis as broad as the universe for the analogical argument which infers one intelligent will as the original cause of the universal Cosmos."

Lectures III. and IV. deal with one subject, namely, the bearing of Natural Selection on the

principle of Design. Materialists, like Physicus in "A Candid Examination of Theism," argue that the persistence of force and the primary qualities of matter explain everything. But, granting that these principles prove necessity in the chain of physical causation, we are conscious of design in our own minds, design which acts freely and takes account of the future, and we infer its presence in our fellow-men. Whether, then, we can reconcile these two opposite lines of phenomena or not, they must be reconcilable, for they exist. But we see similar evidences, both of physical causation and free choice in nature. How is purpose, then, to be explained away? It is hoped, by the theory of natural selection. Still, as our author says, development or natural selection produces nothing, it merely eliminates the unfit. Would it be a sufficient explanation of the order and fitness of the buildings of a city to say that the unsuitable buildings have been weeded out? There might have been no buildings at all. How, then, can such organs as the eye and the ear be explained in this way? Helmholtz's criticisms of the structure of the eye are answered from himself. The supposed imperfections are only so from an ideal standpoint. Helmholtz says: "They are not so in the eye, so little indeed, that it was very difficult to discover some of them." No one can study the eye without feeling that the idea of vision, *i.e.* of something not yet existing, determined its structure. To shift this back to some original germ of all things makes no difference. Du Bois-Reymond, who himself snatches at natural selection as a plank to save him from drowning, *i.e.* from accepting the principle of intelligent design, says: "Organic laws of formation could not work teleologically unless matter were teleologically formed at the beginning; laws working in this way are consequently irreconcilable with the mechanical view of nature."

In the Fourth Lecture, which is the most original part of the work, "The Beautiful and Sublime" in nature is used as a criterion by which to try whether design or blind natural selection is the cause at work everywhere. Mere utilitarian adaptation may plausibly, though unjustly, be ascribed to the latter. But in our own life we know that the beauty of art is due to intelligence which selects ends and means. What then of the beautiful and sublime seen on so vast a scale in nature? Darwin acknowledges that the

beauty of flowers and animals is due, in part at least, to intelligent choice in birds and animals. Here an intelligent cause is recognised. The application of the analogy is obvious and irresistible. Kant seems to have anticipated this argument, and his objections are considered by the author at length, especially his effort to explain both away as mere subjective notions without external basis. The discussion is longer than was necessary for the author's object, but it is exceedingly interesting. Kant ascribes natural beauty to a "mechanical tendency in nature." Mr. Kennedy says: "We are thus confronted with the paradox of a mechanical cause steadily and constantly working for an ideal result. Du Bois-Reymond's remark about the apparent purpose in nature will apply with full force: 'Laws working in such a way as this are inconsistent with the mechanical view of nature.'"

The Fifth Lecture, "Determinism and the Will," is an acute discussion of the objections raised against the freedom of the will from two quarters, natural science and biological morals. Sidgwick, in his *Methods of Ethics*, seems inclined to think that opinion is tending more and more to accept Determinism in the region of thought and morals as in that of physics. It is strange that the advocates of necessity and unbroken law in the physical world allow that will, in some mysterious way, influences our acts; only they hold that the will is determined by motives. But if the former principle is admitted, however inexplicable scientifically, why may there not be a like mysterious freedom in the antecedents of the will as testified by consciousness? Determinists allow that the notion that the will does not influence actions is illusory. Why may not the same be said of the notion that the will itself has not power to choose between different motives? Sidgwick allows that the result of Determinism being adopted must be to degrade morality (p. 207). In reply to Spencer's derivation of moral distinctions from physical pleasure, the author points out that, if this is correct, the ideas of music, art and science must spring from the same base source (p. 231).

The Sixth Lecture discusses "Kant and the Moral Law." Kant, it is well known, disparaged the Design argument, placing the whole stress of the theistic argument on man's moral nature. This he held to be quite sufficient, and denied that

it could support the other argument. Man, he said, must recognise the voice of conscience as the voice of God, and, unless his faith is to be reduced to impotence, he must believe that nature also is God's work. The Design argument, he said, only gives us at most a Being of limited power and wisdom. To this it is justly replied that our belief in universal natural law is an inference from limited experience. Mr. Kennedy argues that the world is *as if* it were the work of God, *i.e.* this supposition explains the facts, which is the only kind of proof that we have for the existence of the æther and of reason in our fellow-men. We accept Kant's positive, and reject his negative teaching. It is interesting to notice the resemblance between two such different men as Butler and Kant. The former speaks of conscience as

"a faculty, in kind and in nature, supreme over all others;" Kant describes it as "an inward judge," by whom every man "finds himself observed," and as a "power which watches over the laws within him." There is also a good retort on the materialist Büchner. Büchner calls Spencer's *Unknowable* an "anthropomorphic" conception. Mr. Kennedy replies that "force," one of the twin deities of materialism, is also anthropomorphic, being taken from man's action. Fiske's "Cosmic" Theism is also criticised.

This necessarily brief, and therefore imperfect, outline of the course of argument may suffice to illustrate its originality and force. The work is full of the results, not merely of reading, but of thought. It meets the objections of unbelief in their newest forms.

J. S. BANKS.

## Expository Papers.

### The Lord Exalted in Righteousness.

NOTE ON ISAIAH ii. 9-21.

THE great purport of this chapter is clearly to emphasise the fact that Jehovah is about to be exalted in righteousness. The terrible picture drawn of the condition both of society and religion in Judah and Jerusalem, is the dark background against which the glorious righteousness of God is set with marvellously striking effect. This background is traced in vers. 6-8, where four aspects of the national life are alluded to—(1) Contact with foreign nations, and (2) consequent wealth and luxury: (3) Prevalence of idols, and (4) consequent idolatry.

The "striking effect," above referred to, will be greatly heightened if we admit the suggestion of Delitzsch, and treat these verses (9-21) as four poetical strophes, in each of which there is a refrain touching the exaltation and glory of Jehovah. This exaltation is to be brought about by processes of judgment through which the degenerate people must pass. Each strophe treats of one separate subject, tracing the work of judgment upon the four aspects of the national life (6-8), but ends (though not throughout in the same words) with the same grand result, *viz. Jehovah lifted high.*

Strophe I. (9-11). Judgment will affect all classes, low and high, for all alike have been influenced for evil by the contact with foreign nations. Sarcastically the prophet bids them hide away from the burning majesty of God. For all arrogance, pride, and loftiness of man shall be laid prostrate, that high above all the Lord alone may be exalted.

Strophe II. (12-17). Both the natural and artificial glories of the land, in which the people take exceptional pride, will also feel the withering effects of judgment. Greater than all human glory is God. Their wealth, strongholds, military pride, and commercial greatness must all succumb at His approach. At all costs the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

Strophe III. (18, 19). The idols, too, are doomed. All pretenders, all usurpers must vanish when He who once said "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" arises to vindicate Himself. Here the refrain changes its form, though not its purpose and meaning. It is still the glory of God's majesty that is uppermost.

Strophe IV. (20, 21). As with the idols, so with their worshippers. Frightened for their lives at the approaching judgment, and in a vain effort of fear, they cast the idols in ~~which~~