

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

It is now a commonplace of criticism that the books of the Bible were written to convey, not historical or other scientific fact, but moral guidance and spiritual truth. Their writers' object is not education but edification.

When this was first recognized it was somewhat keenly resented. And a curious situation arose. Those who went most frequently to the Bible for edification were the most reluctant of all to acknowledge that edification was its only end. If its historical accuracy is questioned, they said, where will its authority be?

Its authority for historical accuracy will certainly be impaired. That is the only answer that can be given. But if that is not the authority which the Bible claims to possess; and if the authority which it does claim to possess is mightier, if it is so much mightier that that authority is lost sight of within its vast proportions, then it may truly be said that its authority as a Bible is not impaired.

Those who insist upon a scientific as well as a spiritual authority for the Bible, point out how difficult it is to find one absolutely undeniable error in it. But that does not prove that the writers of the Bible made themselves responsible for scientific accuracy. It proves that the feeling for truth, which is so characteristic of them,

usually finds truth all round. The 'conscience as the noonday clear' sees clearly. Instinctively it recognizes the fact whenever it comes over its horizon. But whereas spiritual truth is of all time and may belong to Moses as authoritatively as to Paul, scientific truth is of the year and the day.

Certainly there are degrees of authority, both scientific and spiritual. It may be said that the Fourth Gospel is more authoritative spiritually and less authoritative historically than the Synoptic Gospels. The difference is ably discussed in a book, entitled *The Renaissance of Jesus*, which has been written by a minister of the United Free Church of Scotland, the Rev. J. R. CAMERON, M.A. (Hodder & Stoughton; 6s.). Mr. CAMERON does not deny the historical accuracy of the Fourth Gospel. Like others, the more he studies it, the more is he impressed with its simple scientific truthfulness. He quotes the experience of Dr. E. A. ABBOTT, 'I find that the Fourth Gospel, in spite of its poetic character, is closer to history than I had supposed.' He even says that there is a sense in which it is the most historic of the four Gospels, for 'it makes us feel more keenly than the rest the something deeply interfused in word and deed, in life and death, the presence or the personality that informs the whole and is the whole.'

But, in spite of that, in spite also of his insistence on the historicity of the facts which underlie all the spirituality of this Gospel—especially the one magisterial fact that ‘the Word became flesh and dwelt among us’—Mr. CAMERON holds it true to say that there is a difference in authority between the first three Gospels and the Fourth. And if the Fourth Gospel is the most authoritative, as he believes it is, that is due not to its historical accuracy, but to its spiritual worth.

For the authority of the spirit is higher than the authority of the letter. Even if it is to be admitted that in respect of historical happening the Synoptic Gospels are more to be relied upon than St. John, that will not give them greater authority over us. The difference between the authority of the letter and of the spirit is as the difference between the authority of the law and of the gospel.

Now there are those who feel ill at ease until they make the gospel such an authority over their life as was the law over the Jews. If Jesus says, ‘Give to him that asketh of thee,’ they give. They do not understand that in so doing they deny that Jesus came to fulfil the law and the prophets; they make it out that He simply came to repeat them. They forget that while the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The law is one thing, grace and truth is another. Between them is all the difference which Christ makes. And just in this do we find the authoritative advantage which St. John possesses. For it is he and not the Synoptists who uses this phrase, and by means of it (to quote Mr. CAMERON’S words) ‘compasses both the inwardness and the outwardness of the historic magnitude of Jesus.’

The *historic* magnitude. For, as he goes on to say, ‘the narrative in the Fourth Gospel is historical in the sense that more than any other it conveys the impression of a person full, as it says, of grace and truth, full of a marvellous personal influence or effluence which not only changed men through

and through (“Thou art Simon, thou shalt be called Cephas”), but became in them a fount of kindred life to others. The narrative is rich in poetry, mysticism, impressionism, but history is as much a thing of impression as of fact; and if the secret of a personality is ever to be told, it needs the genius of the artist, the insight of the seer, to do it. The seer may wander far indeed from the trodden ways of time, just as in art he may wander far from any actual scene or landscape in his effort to convey the spirit of Nature as a whole, but in neither case does it mean that the seer abandons fact and trusts to phantasy alone. It means rather that through a deeper reach and reading of the facts he is able to divine their inner truth, and adapts and uses them to set it forth. The result may not be history as a record or synopsis of the past, but it may be history as a revelation of the life, and one may take it that the Fourth Gospel is history in this wider sense.’

Why are the members of the Society of Friends unwilling to go to war? The best answer we have seen, since this war began, is found in a small volume entitled *War from the Quaker Point of View* (Headley Brothers; 1s. 6d. net). The author of it is Mr. John W. GRAHAM, M.A., Principal of Dalton Hall, in the University of Manchester. In a word, Mr. GRAHAM’S answer is ‘the teaching of Christ.’ It seems to him that our Lord forbids His followers to engage in war.

The conscience of the Quakers is not instructed by the teaching of Christ alone. The doctrine of the inner light enables them to be critics of the written word, and they recognize the peril of trusting to ‘fading words of Greek manuscripts, handed down through perilous centuries and copied into modern print.’ They know that they ‘must have something living to meet the living foe, and happily,’ says Mr. GRAHAM, ‘we have that living Presence. God has not left Himself without a witness. It is because we cannot defile the living Christ within that we cannot join in war.’

But in spite of that, it is to the teaching of Christ upon the earth that the Quaker ever returns. He is content with the evidence for its authenticity. Throughout this able and temperate defence of the Quaker attitude to war, Principal GRAHAM makes his appeal constantly to the words which were spoken by Christ.

Now when you take the words which were spoken by Christ separately and quite literally, there is no difficulty in understanding them. The difficulty is in getting them to agree. There is one passage in particular which has given the Quakers trouble from the beginning, and gives them trouble still. Mr. GRAHAM calls it 'the two swords passage.'

Let us read it in the Authorized Version: 'And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough' (Lk 22³⁵⁻³⁸). The Revisers made only one alteration of any consequence. Instead of 'for the things concerning me have an end,' they substituted 'for that which concerneth me hath fulfilment.' That alteration will be looked at in a moment.

This passage, then, puzzles the Quakers. It seems to be in contradiction to the teaching of Christ elsewhere, and to be itself contradicted a few verses later. For we are told that almost immediately after, when one of them smote the servant of the high priest and struck off his right ear, Jesus answered and said, 'Suffer ye thus far'; to which in St. Matthew's Gospel it is added, 'Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.'

How does Mr. GRAHAM meet the difficulty? In the first place, he suggests that the reference to prophecy is an addition of the Evangelist. It is that reference, he says, that induced the Revisers to change 'the things concerning me have an end' into 'that which concerneth me hath fulfilment.' Whereby the Revisers blundered. For the Greek word here is nowhere else translated 'fulfilment,' and nowhere else is it used for the fulfilment of prophecy. It is the ordinary word for 'end' (τέλος). Dr. MOFFATT translates, 'Yes, there is an end to all that refers to me.' A strikingly similar sentence occurs in Mk 3²⁰, 'If Satan hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.' So, in the second place, Mr. GRAHAM meets the difficulty of the passage by saying that for the moment Christ had dropped His ideal of non-resistance, *having lost heart*.

He had lost heart. The burden had become too heavy. The high hope He once had that the men whom He had chosen would be able to make disciples of all the nations, without the use of retaliation, had for the moment left Him. All was lost: 'the things concerning me have an end.' Now they must take money in their purse and a sword in their hand, and go forth to subdue the earth as other pioneers had done.

This is Professor GRAHAM's explanation. The disciples took His words literally, though they did not see the despair that was in them. 'Lord,' they said, 'behold, here are two swords.' And He said, 'Enough, enough' (ικανόν ἐστί).

The disciples did not understand Him. And, so far as Principal GRAHAM knows, the Church has never understood Him. For he thinks that the Church has been too timid in respect of Christ's humanity. If this scene is so interpreted he holds that it brings Christ much nearer to the human heart. And he does not believe that it stands alone. This use of the word 'end' bids him look again at the words, 'It is finished' (τετέλεσται). Is that an exclamation of triumph? He does not

think so. He thinks it is an exclamation of despair. He regards it as parallel to the cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And when he thinks of that cry, he does not wonder that Jesus had His moment of depression before the betrayal.

We are often assured that the conflict between science and religion has come to an end. The assurance, however, comes most frequently from the side of religion. On the part of science the most recent and most confident attitude is that this conflict will come to an end only with the end of religion.

For religion, we are told, rests on ignorance. As science diminishes the area of our ignorance of the world, it drives religion ever into a smaller corner of it. Let knowledge grow from more to more. In course of time it will have covered the whole universe, and religion will automatically cease to be.

Hear Professor SHOTWELL of Columbia University in his book on *The Religious Revolution of To-day*. 'Science renounces authority, cuts athwart custom, violates the sacred, rejects the myths.' Again, 'Science is moving the mystery farther and farther from the sphere of daily life and action, destroying taboos, and building up a world of rational experience; and if religion is nothing but the submission to mystery, it is doomed.' And again, 'The battle between science and the old religion has been a real one, and the result in any case is not the defeat of science.'

Is that not clear enough? Then listen to Professor Gilbert MURRAY of Oxford University. Religion, says Professor MURRAY, 'essentially deals with the uncharted region of human experience.' And again, 'A large part of human life has been thoroughly surveyed and explored; we understand the causes at work; and we are not bewildered by the problems. That is the domain of positive knowledge. But all round us on every

side there is an uncharted region, just fragments of the fringe of it explored, and those imperfectly; it is with this that religion deals. . . . Agriculture, for instance, used to be entirely a question of religion; now it is almost entirely a question of science. In antiquity, if a field was barren, the owner of it would probably assume that the barrenness was due to "pollution," or offence somewhere. He would run through all his possible offences, or at any rate those of his neighbours and ancestors, and when he eventually decided the cause of the trouble, the steps he would take would all be of a kind calculated, not to affect the chemical constitution of the soil, but to satisfy his own emotions of guilt and terror, or the imaginary emotions of the imaginary being he had offended. A modern man in the same predicament would probably not think of religion at all, at any rate in the earlier stages; he would say that it was a case for deeper plowing or 'for basic slag.' These things says Professor Gilbert MURRAY in his book on *Four Stages of Greek Religion*.

And these things are plain. If Professor SHOTWELL hedges his position somewhat with 'ifs' and 'buts,' and obscures it a little by queries and conditions, Professor MURRAY has neither hedging nor obscurity. We have been comfortably assured that science has begun to recognize its limits. Science, he says, has no limits. Give it time, and no place will be found for religion; science will be all in all.

What are we to say? Dr. C. J. KEYSER has two things to say. Dr. KEYSER is Professor of Mathematics in Columbia University—and therefore colleague to Professor SHOTWELL. Under the title of *Science and Religion* (Oxford University Press; 3s. 6d. net) he has published an address which he delivered last year before the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni in New York. In that address he quotes the authors whom we have quoted, and then he answers them.

The first thing he says in answer is that science

will never cover the universe. He takes it for granted at first that religion is simply ignorance. He admits, for the sake of argument, that as knowledge advances religion will recede. He recognizes gladly the progress that science is making, and allows at least the possibility that its progress will be still more rapid in the future. But let its progress be as rapid as the mind of man is able to conceive, science will never embrace the universe. For the universe is infinity. The universe is perfection. And however near man may come to infinity he will never reach it. However nearly perfect his knowledge may be, there will still be a little space left for that ignorance which is called religion.

The other thing which Professor KEYSER says is that science can never occupy one foot of the territory of religion. Science and religion do not come into contact. They belong to different spheres. The one is rational, the other is super-rational. To say that scientific knowledge is going to increase until it drives religion out of its last foothold, is to say that the earth will gradually encroach upon the atmosphere, until there is no air left to breathe.

Another volume of essays by Cambridge men has been published. The editor is Canon F. J. FOAKES-JACKSON, and the title is *The Faith and the War* (Macmillan; 5s. net).

Look at the title again. It is not 'Faith and the War,' but 'The Faith and the War.' Some of the essays are on the Faith, and some are on the War; they are not all on the relation of the War to Christianity. Professor Percy GARDNER deals with 'Providence and the Individual'; and his sister, Miss Alice GARDNER, with 'The Idea of Providence in History,' while the editor himself calls his essay 'Providence—the Universal Aspect.' Dr. Hastings RASHDALL has taken 'The Problem of Evil' for his topic; the Dean of St. Paul's, 'Hope, Temporal and Eternal'; Professor A. E. TAYLOR, 'The Belief in Immortality'; and Mr.

E. A. BURROUGHS, 'Faith and Reality.' It is not before the eighth essay that we come to the War. And only three essays remain. They are 'War and the Ethics of the New Testament,' by Mr. C. W. EMMET; 'What is a Christian Nation?' by Mr. W. M. GLAZEBROOK; and 'The Church of England after the War,' by the Dean of Durham.

We turn at once to Mr. EMMET. His subject is 'War and the Ethics of the New Testament.'

'War and the Ethics of the New Testament'—that is another way of saying 'War and Christ.' For the writers of the New Testament do not diverge from Christ. They do not go beyond Him, though sometimes St. Paul gets that incredible credit. The marvel is that they do not fall short of Him. If Christ made war impossible, St. Paul never makes it possible.

Not only so, but 'War and the Ethics of the New Testament' is practically 'War and the Sermon on the Mount.' There are other utterances, assuredly. Mr. EMMET makes a point of quoting and comprehending them. But they are all really comprehended already in those two amazing portions of the Sermon on the Mount—the beatitudes and the instructions about non-resistance.

Now if we are going to gain a working command of that gathering-up of the teaching of our Lord which we call the Sermon on the Mount, there are four considerations to which we must give due weight. Mr. EMMET has them all in his mind, though he does not handle them separately.

The first consideration is that Christ speaks in epigrammatic language. So do Orientals always, or seem to us to do, though no Oriental ever did so more whole-heartedly. Mr. EMMET quotes three unmistakable examples: 'If any man . . . hateth not his own father and mother, and wife . . . he cannot be my disciple.' 'When thou makest a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy

brethren, nor thy kinsmen.' 'Call no man your father upon earth.'

That is the language of the Sermon on the Mount. The late Principal LINDSAY was so impressed with this consideration that he offered it to his students as sufficient relief. He even attempted to put Christ's epigrams into modern English. 'I should be inclined to say that the general direction for Christian life which was meant to be conveyed in these four precepts might be put in the two sentences: Never seek to exact full justice for yourself, but be ready to give more than full justice to another. Never let any self-seeking appear in your demand for justice.' His words will be found in the volume of *College Addresses and Sermons* which has just been published.

The second consideration follows the first. Christ did not utter precepts but principles. The Law was there already. He did not come to destroy, but to fulfil it. And how did He fulfil it? By enacting a new law? No, but by breathing life into the old. The old law was summed up in love to God and man. Christ fulfilled that old law by loving God and man, and by making us able to go and do likewise. 'I came that ye may have life.'

Now precepts are for obedience, but principles are for interpretation. And each man must interpret them for himself. The third consideration, therefore, is that the Sermon on the Mount is addressed to individuals.

Christ discovered the individual. That strong statement is true, even although it is not new. So far were the ancient Israelites from recognizing the rights and responsibilities of the individual that they had no clear conception even of individual immortality. The immortality they longed for was national. And not only so, but when they would express prophetically the greatest of all the discoveries which they made on the social side

of life they expressed it nationally. 'Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows?' Who? We at once leap to the individual. It is almost inevitable for us to leap to Christ. But in any case we should leap to the individual from the form of the expression. Yet it is reasonably certain that the prophet himself, and the people who heard him, thought of the atonement as the work of the nation.

Christ discovered the individual. And to the individual He addressed His principles. It is 'thou' and 'thee' throughout—not in the old way of personifying the nation, but in the new way of singling out of the nation and all mankind every individual, and demanding of him the interpretation and the deed. 'Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour? Go, and do thou likewise.'

But Christ was not an individualist. He addressed every man singly, but He set every man in society. In truth, He set every man who would listen to Him in two societies—the society He called the World and the society He called the Brethren. And He demanded of every man that he should apply the Sermon on the Mount—the Sermon on the Mount of which all the principles are comprehended in the one word *love*—He demanded that every man should interpret the principles as love and apply them in both societies. In the society of the Brethren, they would find it easy to make the application, the difficulty would be to find an occasion. In the society called the World they would find it very difficult. And that leads us into the fourth and last consideration.

The last consideration is that throughout the Sermon on the Mount our Lord holds up before us an ideal of conduct and of life. It is not a Utopia. It is an ideal that is to be realized, but it is an ideal.

What evidence have we of that? One single sentence is evidence enough. He said, 'Be ye

therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' No one can begin with that. A man may begin to-morrow to obey the four great commands about non-resistance, but he cannot begin to be perfect. Perfection is an ideal—did we say to be realized? Yes; and yet it never can be realized. It is to be aimed at; it is to be run after; but when we have 'done all these things'—even with the aid of the gospel and the Holy Spirit of God, and in the light of that great future in which we shall know even as we are known, and shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory—even then we shall say we are unprofitable servants, we have *not* done that which was our duty to do.

But this ideal is to be 'an ever fixed mark.' And since it is incarnate for us in Christ Jesus, we are at all times to 'look away unto Jesus,' so that we may carry the Sermon on the Mount, that is to say, love to God and man, into every relationship of life. In the midst of the brethren it will be easy; in the world we shall have tribulation.

Mr. Mark Guy PEARSE tells us that one day he heard one of his children say to another: 'You must be good or father won't love you.' And he tells us that he took that boy to himself, and said, 'Do you know what you are saying, my boy? That is not true; it is not a bit true.' And the boy was astonished, and asked, 'But you won't love us if we are not good, will you?' And he said to the boy, 'Yes, I will love you if you are not good. I love you when you are good with a love that makes me glad, and I love you when you are not good with a love that hurts me; but I cannot help loving you, because I am your father, you know.'

When the follower of Christ goes into the world, to take up his duties as citizen, he carries the principle of love with him and the exercise of it will often hurt him. For he will have to sit on juries, let us say, judging his fellow-men; and when the call comes (God grant it may never come to you or me again) he will have to go to war.

Anti-Zealotism in the Gospels.

BY THE REV. H. MALDWYN HUGHES, D.D., EDINBURGH.

MUCH attention has been devoted by students to Jewish sects in the time of Christ. The part played in the history of the nation by Pharisees, Scribes, Sadducees, and Essenes has been explored almost to the limits of existing knowledge. But there is one sect which can hardly be said to have received the attention which it merits—the sect of the Zealots. It is usually dismissed in a few words as a fanatical movement hostile to Rome. But a closer investigation of the Gospels and of the history of the times justifies the conclusion that the Zealots exercised a considerable influence on popular thought; while the fact that one of them was numbered in the Twelve should lead us to scrutinize Christ's words carefully with a view to ascertaining whether He disclosed His attitude to their propaganda.

The Zealot movement sprang out of Pharisaism. The Chasids (the forerunners of the Pharisees), who relied on the arm of the spirit rather than on that of the flesh, and who looked to secure national deliverance by simple obedience to God's will, had supported the Maccabean revolt in its early stages, but had shown signs of drawing back as soon as the dynastic aims of the Maccabean family became apparent. They were always restive under Hasmonean rule, until at length the final breach occurred towards the end of the reign of John Hyrcanus, about 106 B.C. The following century was marked by fierce quarrels between the Pharisees and the Sadducees—quarrels which are reflected in the *Psalms of Solomon*. During this period Pharisaic ideals were increasingly secularized and politicized, and only a remnant continued to