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comparing them with the testimony of other ancient systems it is possible to show that they mirror a very archaic and undeveloped state of society, and that they would have been inadequate (and in part also obsolete and unintelligible) in the days of, say, Solomon. Indeed, we may go further. The difficulties that at present surround the Pentateuchal legislation are largely due to the fact that in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah a system of ancient law had to be applied by men who were neither lawyers nor historians to a community which in its atmosphere, state of development, and social needs differed very remarkably from that for which the Mosaic legislation was originally designed. The procedure of the higher critics is the more astonishing as they often admit that "P" contains much that is early and can only be understood in the light of savage parallels. It is strange that it never occurred to them to follow up this admission to its logical conclusion. Surely it should have led them to test the laws by referring them to the work done by scholars in other fields of ethnology, instead of arbitrarily assigning dates on the ground of what appeared "reasonable."[1]

Keble and "The Christian Year."

By the Rev. Canon COWLEY-BROWN, M.A.

IT is a striking testimony to the merits of "The Christian Year" that it awakes a responsive chord in minds altogether dissimilar. Men at the opposite poles of religious thought have felt the influence of this fascinating book. The lines for morning and evening are found in almost every hymnal. For the most various minds "The Christian Year" has an undying charm.

[1] For discussions of the legal arguments of the critics, see "Studies in Biblical Law"; the various papers I have contributed to the Churchman; also *Princeton Theological Review*, April, 1907, 188-209.

That it should have been welcomed by those with whom Keble was associated, and others in sympathy with them, is not surprising, but that it should be the loved companion of those out of sympathy with them is its most remarkable merit. We know the admiration felt for it by Dean Stanley, who also records the equal appreciation of it by Dean Milman. In his paper on Keble in the "Essays on Church and State" he says: "There were few for whose genius and character the Dean of St. Paul's expressed a deeper regard and veneration. Long before the author of "The Christian Year" had become famous, his prescient eye had observed that Keble was somehow unlike anyone else."[1] In one of Erskine of Linlathen's letters occurs this tribute: "I have Keble lying open before me. The hymns for the Holy Week are beautiful. Monday is exquisite. I think I like it best of them all. The use made of Andromache's farewell is quite filling to the heart, and the theology of the fourth stanza, 'Thou art as much His care,' etc., is worth, in my mind, the whole Shorter and Longer Catechisms together." James Shairp, who became one of Keble's successors in the Chair of Poetry at Oxford, while differing widely from the theological position he took up, has written an appreciative criticism of the book and of the man. Oliver Wendell Holmes ("Autocrat of the Breakfast Table") says: "I am not a Churchman, but such a poem as 'The Rosebud' makes one's heart a proselyte to the culture it grows from. . . . The fondness for 'scenes' among vulgar saints contrasts so meanly with that—

> "'God only and good angels look
> Behind the blissful screen.'"

Holmes seems to have misread this last word for "scene." Robertson of Brighton dwells lovingly on several of the poems. Of that for the twentieth Sunday after Trinity he is reported to have said: "That is my favourite hymn" ("Life," p. 496).

"The Christian Year," certain pieces which were added in subsequent editions excepted, was published anonymously in

[1] See Newman's "Apologia," p. 76.

two volumes in the year 1827. Arnold declared that "nothing equal to them exists in our language" (Stanley, "Life," chap. ii.). Before the revered author's death the book had passed through ninety-eight editions. The profits were devoted to the restoration of Hursley Church. When we remember that many of the poems it contains were written by a young man of twenty-seven, we are struck by the depth as well as the precocity of devotional feeling. He seems to have sounded the depths of religious emotions and experiences before most men have begun on these themes to think or feel at all. Yet even of this exquisite work it must be confessed that the meaning is in some cases obscure. Bishop Blomfield called it the "Sunday puzzle." Yet it is worth puzzling out. We must not cast it aside with the exclamation which Plato provoked from a despairing student: "Si non vis intelligi, non debes legi." Yet Keble himself declined, when asked, to explain the meaning of what was not, perhaps, altogether clear to himself. "I think it was Keble," says Cardinal Newman (letter in the *Guardian*, February 25, 1880), "who, when asked in his own case, answered that 'poets were not bound to be critics, or to give a sense to what they had written'; and, though I am not, like him, a poet, at least I may plead that I am not bound to remember my own meaning, whatever it was, at the end of fifty years." But, as his friend Bishop Moberly, who edited his "Miscellaneous Poems," admits, "There is mingled in his writings an occasional inexactness and roughness of expression and rhythm, which he did not care to smooth. Indeed, it is said, on very good authority, that the poet Wordsworth (for whom Keble always entertained the highest reverence . . .), having read 'The Christian Year,' expressed his high sense of its beauty, and also of the occasional imperfections of the verse, in the following most characteristic terms: 'It is very good,' he said—'so good that if it were mine, I would write it all over again.'" It seems strange that in some undoubted poets the sense of rhythm should be dissociated from an ear for music. It was so absolutely in the case of Stanley. It was so, though in less degree, in the case of

Keble. To this want of ear there is perhaps plaintive reference in the lines:

> "In vain, with dull and tuneless ear,
> I linger by soft Music's cell,
> And in my heart of hearts would hear
> What to her own she deigns to tell."

In his "Miscellaneous Poems" (p. 248), in the lines to a child, he plainly admits the defect:

> "You ask me for a song, my dear,
> Born with no music in mine ear."

But it may be inquired how it comes that a book of sacred verse which had such an unparalleled influence upon some of the best minds in various schools of religious thought is less popular than it was, less popular than so many collections of the kind that cannot be mentioned in the same breath with it. The question may, perhaps, be answered in Keble's own words in the short Preface, in which he speaks of "a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion." In these "times of much leisure and unbounded curiosity, when excitement of every kind is sought after with a morbid eagerness," people prefer something more sensational.

It may seem ungracious to offer any criticism on one so greatly and justly revered, and the present writer, who has made the book a loved companion for more than fifty years, yields to no one in his admiration for its author; but "Magis amica veritas," and what is here stated is not meant in any degree to detract from the personal charm of the beloved author of "The Christian Year." Yet it must be confessed that Keble the sacred poet and Keble the controversialist and theological partisan seem two different men. It is difficult to recognize in "Eucharistic Adoration" the author of "The Christian Year." We speak of this exquisite collection of sacred poetry as its author was content to leave it for some fifty years, and for more than as many editions, before the deplorable alterations urged upon Keble by some of his school vitiated the whole argument of one of the poems. Keble, it must be admitted, assented to

it in his later years, and seems to have argued with peculiar logic that "in the hands" means the same thing as "not in the hands." The poem in question was originally entitled "An Address to Converts from Popery." It is evident that Keble's views had developed, that he had come in the storms of controversy to take another view to that which he formerly entertained, when, in the short Preface to "The Christian Year," he spoke of bringing one's "thoughts and feelings into more entire unison with those recommended and exemplified in the Prayer Book."

It is to be regretted that Keble threw himself later on into religious controversy, seeming to abandon, to some extent, the *mitis sapientia* which marks his great work. His controversial pamphlets are not convincing, and only make us desire to distinguish the poet from the polemical pamphleteer. "The poet," it has been said, "should live in a world of his own, not in a world perpetually wrangling about University Reform, about Courts of Final Appeal, about Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, and other like matters, into which Keble, in his later years, threw himself heart and soul."[1]

As his college contemporary Thomas Mozley said of him, "he had not the qualities for controversy." Keble, however, happily—like some other High Churchmen—was sometimes inconsistent with himself. He was eminently human, and, if we may venture to say so, often much saner in his judgments than those with whom he was associated. It is said that "he disapproved of the austerity of William Law, whom he otherwise admired, and thought that even the 'Imitation of Christ' required to be read with caution."[2] And, with regard to the special peculiarities of his school, it is remarkable, as Stanley observes ("Essays," 605), how "he broke away from them in his poetry."

But now, turning to the more agreeable task of pointing out some of the beauties of this exquisite book, which, like the abundance of choice flowers in a garden, may from their very

[1] Julian in "Dictionary of Hymnology."
[2] "Dictionary of National Biography."

wealth and profusion escape notice, we would disclaim any idea of judging the garden by the few flowers we have culled from it. It is no doubt a mistake to think we can represent an author by select quotations. To take a line from a poem in the hope of recommending it is something like taking a feature from a face. "Ex pede Herculem" is all very well in statuary, but in a poem we cannot always judge of the whole from a part. Nor does Keble lend himself as readily to select quotations as some inferior authors. Still, there are gems (to employ a somewhat hackneyed word) of surpassing beauty scattered up and down the pages of "The Christian Year," as (to mention only a few) where he speaks of hidden worth, unseen by all but Heaven:

> "Like diamond blazing in the mine."
> *Third Sunday after Epiphany.*

Or where, under the similitude of the sensitive plant, he tells of

> "Love, the flower that closes up for fear,
> When rude and selfish spirits breathe too near."
> *Good Friday.*

Or the description of the fallen minstrel:

> "Cold while he kindled others' love."
> *Sixth Sunday after Trinity.*

Or the picture of the father:

> "By the sad couch whence hope hath flown,
> Watching the eye where reason sleeps."
> *Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.*

Or that expression of the largeness of his heart, so different to the limitations of his theology:

> "We mete out love as if our eye
> Saw to the end of heaven."
> *Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.*

Or that most exquisite line of all:

> "Thou who canst love us though Thou read us true."
> *Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.*

Keble's defence of sacred art, so long as it is inspired by

love, is very fine. In the poem for the Third Sunday after Epiphany he notes its tribute to the Saviour dying, dead, risen again:

> "Love on the Saviour's *dying* head
> Her spikenard drops unblam'd may pour,
> May mount His cross, and wrap Him *dead*
> In spices from the golden shore;
> *Risen*, may embalm His sacred name
> With all a painter's art and all a minstrel's flame."

All lawful so long as it proceeds from love.

We have spoken of the limitations of his theology, of which an instance may be seen in the poem for the second Sunday in Lent, in which there is a gloomy coupling of "the treasures of wrath" with the "promised heaven," linking "the sinner's fear" with the "hope of contrite hearts." Happily, he is sometimes inconsistent with himself. As Stanley said, "The voice of Nature made itself heard above the demands of (his) theology" ("Essays," 603).

Keble, too, with his prototype "holy George Herbert," with whom one loves to compare him, was a "country parson," and in his love of Nature and frequent references to rural life shows himself a true disciple of Wordsworth, as, for instance, in that picture with its exquisite epithet of "the relenting sun":

> "When the relenting sun has smiled
> Bright through a whole December day."
> *St. Simon and St. Jude.*

It is a picture which might have been interpreted by a Turner. We may refer also to that elegy on "Forest Leaves in Autumn," which may almost be placed alongside of Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard":

> "Red o'er the forest peers the setting sun."
> *Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.*

Keble was a great admirer of Gray. He refers to him more than once in a few footnotes to "The Christian Year," and we find more than one unconscious imitation.

His accuracy in description has been noticed by Stanley,

who, however, points out the single exception, as he supposes, in the mention of rhododendrons instead of oleanders on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. To this the present writer, who has made "The Christian Year" the companion of a pilgrimage from the cedars of Lebanon to Jerusalem, ventures to point out another. Tabor is not a "lonely peak," but a dome-shaped mountain. The epithet "lonely" is felicitous, and accurate enough, as Tabor rises, a lofty mound, out of a plain which surrounds it like the sea; but the term "peak" can only be applied by a poetic licence.

Keble was an admirer of Burns as well as of Gray. It is very interesting to note this appreciation in his "Prælections" as Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and the parallel he draws there between Burns and Theocritus, pointing out the remarkable coincidences in thought and expression between these two pastoral poets, separated by unknown tongues and an interval of two thousand years. He calls him, "Scotiæ lumen, Homeri simillimus . . . Scotorum ille princeps poetarum . . . quo nemo ferme pastorales modos omni tempore felicius cecinit."[1]

Without any disparagement of Keble's originality, we may note several interesting coincidences of thought or of expression with other authors, ancient and modern. Some of them he has noted himself. When we remember Keble's wide knowledge of classical literature, we may be surprised that the instances are so few. It may be interesting to trace some of these. One of the most interesting, perhaps, is the rendering of the prayer of Ajax in the "Iliad" (xvii. 646): "Give light, and let us die"; with which we may compare Gladstone's version: "Let us die in the daylight." Besides those allusions which Keble himself has acknowledged, we may note the reference to the song of Harmodius (Athenæus xv. 694), "The sword in myrtles drest," quoted also by Collins in his "Ode to Liberty." Lowth ("Prælect.," i.) has an article upon the passage. The "Thracian wives" in the poem for the Third Sunday after Easter remits us to Herodotus (v. 4).

[1] "De Poeticæ vi Medica," xiv. 238, xvi. 281, xxiv. 467.

The phrase, in the poem on St. Barnabas, "To live in memory here" finds a curious counterpart in Pliny (Lib. ii., Ep. i.): "Vivit enim, vivetque semper, atque etiam latius in memoria hominum, et sermone versabitur, postquam ab oculis recessit."

But not classical literature only, but later and modern literature also, is made to yield its tribute. The line "To live more nearly as we pray" is found in a letter of Santa Teresa's to Father Gratian. The phrase "the heart untravelled," in the poem for the Third Sunday in Advent, occurs in Goldsmith's "Traveller." The line "Content to die or live," in the poem for St. Stephen's Day, and the similar line in that for All Saints' Day, "Content to live, but not afraid to die," resemble the lines in Baxter's fine hymn:

> "Lord, it belongs not to my care
> Whether I die or live."

Keble in his notes more than once refers to Baxter. We need not be surprised at echoes of Shakespeare. To mention only one, the line in the poem for St. Peter's Day, "He loves and is beloved again," is evidently an echo of "Now Romeo is beloved and loves again."

Keble was a sincere admirer of Scott, of whom he wrote in the *British Critic* an appreciative criticism. We may note the remarkable verbal coincidence between Scott's well-known lines:

> "Full many a shaft at random sent
> Finds mark the archer little meant,"

and Keble's, in the poem for St. Luke's Day:

> "While from some rude and powerless arm
> A random shaft, in season sent,
> Shall light upon some lurking harm,
> And work some wonder little meant."

Though our study of Keble has been chiefly in connexion with "The Christian Year," which will go down to posterity as embodying that which is permanent in his poetry, it may not be amiss to refer briefly, in conclusion, to his other poetical efforts.

Of the "Lyra Innocentium" it may be said that, while it affords abundant evidence of the love felt for children by this childless man, and shows here and there characteristic touches of our author, this "Child's Christian Year," to use the alternative title, can hardly appeal to any but "children of a larger growth."

Of the pieces contributed by Keble under the signature γ, to the "Lyra Apostolica," there seems, in our judgment, hardly one that comes up to the standard of "The Christian Year." The description of the Athanasian Creed (No. CXV.)—

> "Creed of the saints, and anthem of the blest,
> And calm-breathed warning of the kindliest love
> That ever heaved a watchful mother's breast"—

seems clean contrary to the opinion of his friend Bishop Moberly, who says of the damnatory clauses: "In what appears to me to be the plain historical sense of the words, they seem to say what I consider it to be beyond the power of the Church to say. . . . They seem, to my understanding, to chase the unhappy misbeliever out of the farthest corner of the uncovenanted mercies of the most loving and merciful God."[1] The "Miscellaneous Poems," edited posthumously by Bishop Moberly, who enjoyed "his intimate friendship during the last thirty years of his life,"[2] contain a few beautiful hymns and translations. Bishop Moberly reprints and claims for Keble the translation "Hail, gladdening Light," assigned in the "Lyra Apostolica" to Newman. Of the "Metrical Psalms" Keble himself says: "It was undertaken with a serious apprehension, which has since grown into a full conviction, that the thing attempted is strictly impossible." Keble's criticism of the Old and New Versions is no doubt true enough: "That of the Elizabethan age wants force; that which dates from the Revolution, fidelity." But Keble himself seems to offend against one of his own canons, rendering, *e.g.*, the portions of the 119th Psalm in various metres. He has also provided a special *Gloria* to suit the varying metres of his Psalms.

We have spoken of the precocity of Keble's poetic genius.

[1] Charge of 1873. [2] Preface, p. xii.

It seems strange to note in this connexion his failure to obtain the prize poem at Oxford. We would give a good deal to be able to compare his unsuccessful poem on "Mahomet," sent in for the "Newdigate," with the verses of his successful rival, who gained the prize two years running, and was never heard of afterwards.

Keble's is not the first attempt to treat poetically the holy-days of the Church's year. The earliest, perhaps, of these is a curious collection of "Epigrams," by one Nathanael Eaton, to which attention has been called by Mr. Lock, dedicated to Charles the Second. The abject style of the dedication is on a par with that of the verse. Eaton's "Epigrams" are a curious contrast to Keble's "Odes."

Worthier attempts, however, followed. Bishop Ken, a kindred spirit, wrote "Hymns for all the Festivals in the Year." Wither, the Puritan poet, in his "Hymns and Songs of the Church," made a similar attempt. Bishop Heber published "Hymns adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year," mostly of his own composition. And there have been modern imitators. For us, however, there can be but one "Christian Year," as there is but one Keble. In Newman's words, with which we may fitly conclude,[1] "When the general tone of religious literature was so nerveless and impotent as it was at that time, Keble struck an original note and woke up in the hearts of thousands a new music."

The Church and the Labour Movement.[2]

By the Rev. J. E. WATTS-DITCHFIELD.

THE Christ is the theme of all our preaching, the Christ as the Good Shepherd, the Light of the World; but when did we preach on Christ the Carpenter? Do we clergy, do employers of labour, realize that He in whose Name we present every

[1] "Apologia," p. 77.
[2] A paper read at the Church Congress, October, 1907.