

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE Index to Modern Sermons will in future take a wider range and embrace Expositions and Illustrations of value; and it will be given in four divisions, viz., Genesis (and onwards), Psalms, Matthew, Romans. Occasionally it will be replaced by an Index of Subjects. Every effort will be used to make these Indexes complete and accurate, and authors or publishers of books and periodicals omitted will confer a favour by sending word to the Editor, Kinneff, Bervie, N.B.

Sir George Stokes's recent lecture at the Finsbury Polytechnic has given rise to much discussion, some of which is founded on false notions of what the lecturer said, arising from the fact, frequently complained of, that a complete and accurate report of the lecture was scarcely to be had. *The Family Churchman*, however, did contain an excellent report of it, and now publishes a large-type edition, revised by the author. ["I:" a lecture, delivered at the Finsbury Polytechnic, March 30, 1890, by Sir G. G. Stokes, Bart.; price 2d.] The subject is one of pressing interest. Utterly erroneous ideas about immortality are complacently held by thousands of persons who would shudder at the charge of heresy, ideas which, nevertheless, are not only unscriptural, but violently opposed to Scripture. The lecture which we are able to present this month, and which Sir George Stokes has done us the honour carefully to revise for THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, although in form a homely conversation, not originally intended for publication, is an able and interesting effort to open up the Scripture doctrine on this great subject.

VOL. I.—10.

Messrs. Rivingtons have just issued a little book under the title of "Problems in the New Testament" (*Problems in the New Testament: Critical Essays* by William Spicer Wood, M.A. Rivingtons. 1890. 3s. 6d.), which will be a great delight to every one whose interest is in an accurate study of the New Testament. It contains five-and-twenty short essays (very much what Bishop Westcott would call "Notes") on difficult and disputed texts. Some of them we shall have a word to say upon afterwards. Meantime, here are some of Mr. Wood's more striking translations. John viii. 46, "Which of you proves Me in the wrong about sin? If I say truth, why is it that *you* do not believe Me?" Acts viii. 23, "For I see thee destined to the gall of bitterness and the bond of unrighteousness." Acts xxvi. 28, 29, "And Agrippa said to Paul, Briefly thou persuadedst me, to make me a Christian. And Paul replied, I will, so please thee, pray to God both briefly and at length, that not only thou, but also all those who hear me this day, may come to be such as also I am, these chains excepted." Rom. i. 17, "For righteousness from God is being revealed thereby [by the gospel] as a consequence of faith in order to faith." 1 Cor. xiv. 10, 11, "There are, so chance it, such and such a number of races having languages in the world, and no one race is without a language. If then I am ignorant of the import of the language, I shall be to the speaker a barbarian [or 'foreigner'], and the speaker will be a barbarian [or 'foreigner'] in respect of me."

Canon Girdlestone is contributing to the *Record* a painstaking and valuable series of papers on Old

Testament criticism. In the number for May 30, he gives a useful *résumé* of the fourteen papers which have appeared up to date. He says: Our work has been first analytical, and then constructive. After giving reasons for the conviction that the historical books of the Old Testament were substantially the same in Nehemiah's time (B.C. 400) as they are now, and that they were attributed by a consensus of ancient opinion to Moses and the Prophets, we traced back the history of writing from the days of Nehemiah to the patriarchal period, thus removing a preliminary difficulty affecting the literary position of the books. We then analyzed the historical books, and found that they were mainly compiled from contemporary documents, and that the Pentateuch itself may be considered a compilation also. Starting afresh from the age of Nehemiah, and working backwards, we found that the later books presupposed not only the substance, but also the words of the earlier, all the way through. The Old Testament is therefore to be regarded as the literary growth of many ages, from the patriarchal period to the time of the Persian Empire. This position was further tested in two ways; first, by an examination of the Genealogies, which are the backbone of biblical history, and then by an analysis of the notes, which are found all through the books. These independent lines of study confirmed the conviction that there is a vital continuity in the books, as in the people of whom they speak; and that the patriarchal age is their source, and the period of Nehemiah is their termination. Some of their characteristic features have been pointed out; and their chronological and topographical elements are now under discussion.

In *The Methodist New Connexion Magazine* for June, there is a fresh interpretation by the Editor of that most difficult passage of Scripture, Malachi ii. 15. The translation of the verse given in the authorized version is as follows: "And did he not make one? Yet had he the residue (*Margin, excellency*) of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth." This is quite unintelligible, all except the last sentence. Yet there is no difficulty with the translation. True, the word translated "residue" is given in the margin as "excellency," but there is no authority for that meaning, which was first suggested by Kimchi, and it has been dropped by the Revisers. It is the clause in which this word occurs, however, that makes the difficulty: "Yet had he the residue of the spirit." *Who* had? *what* spirit? and what is *the residue of the spirit*?

It sometimes happens that an obscure text takes a greater hold of the mind than an equally appropri-

ate and much clearer one. Here the phrase, "Yet had he the residue of the spirit," is popularly quoted: "Yet has God the residue of the Spirit," although there is nothing to show that "he" means God, or that this "spirit" is the Holy Spirit. And then, as Dr. Watts points out, it is a very favourite phrase upon some devout lips in prayer, with the meaning that God has not yet exhausted His gifts or His grace. Who has not heard the word *residue* rolled out with loving slowness, as if there were a wealth of untold blessing in the very syllables of it? But it is to be feared the theology and the exegesis are both unsound. We prefer Whittier's theology:

"Immortal love, for ever full,
For ever flowing free,
For ever shared, for ever whole,
A never-ebbing sea!"

And we prefer Dr. Watts' exegesis, for it makes sense, it suits the context, and it agrees with other Scripture. The subject of the prophet's complaint is the conduct of his degenerate countrymen in the matter of divorce and marriage. He finds them guilty of separating themselves from the lawful wife of their youth, and marrying "the daughter of a strange god" (ver. 11); that is, a heathen woman. "Yet (he says) no one hath done so who hath a remnant of the (ancient) spirit. But what now? Is there one who seeketh a godly seed? Then, take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth."

Some interesting contributions have been sent us with reference to the note on "clear glass" in the issue for May. The most important are by the Rev. H. Heber Evans, and the Rev. P. Lilly. We quote the latter:—

"The argument brought forward by Principal Brown with regard to the date of the Apocalypse (EXPOSITORY TIMES, No. 8, page 174) is ingenious, but seems to me based on a misapprehension. Not one of the passages referred to involves the thought of *white* glass.

"(1) Rev. iv. 6. The glassy sea is of the colour of heavenly blue. The imagery evidently corresponds with that of Ex. xxiv. 10, 'And there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness.' So Reuss (L'Apocalypse), 'Le sol sur lequel repose le trône de Dieu, la mer de cristal, c'est ce ciel azuré, considéré comme noir étendue solide, telle que la décrit la Genèse' (i. 7).

"(2) Rev. xv. 2. 'A glassy sea, mingled with fire;' the same firmament as in iv. 6, only now more intensely coloured, as at dawn or sunset, with the fire of the divine righteousness.

"(3) Rev. xxi. 18, 21. 'Pure gold, as it were transparent glass;' implying, surely, not whiteness, but a golden hue.

There is thus nothing here to weaken the overwhelmingly strong and cumulative argument in favour of an earlier date of the Apocalypse, *i.e.* before the destruction of Jerusalem."

Dr. Martineau has a chapter in his *Seat of Authority in Religion* (Longmans, 1890, 14s.) on the relation of the Apocalypse to St. John's Gospel. It is marked by the same clearness and charm as the rest of the volume, and, we must add, by the same excess of unbelief. John did not write either the Gospel or the Apocalypse, according to Dr. Martineau; and "never will the same mind and heart produce two such books till 'all things are possible' to men as well as 'to God.'" The passage upon which he relies for determining the date of (part of) the Apocalypse (which he gives as between 69 and 79 A.D.) is Rev. xvii. 10: "There are seven kings: the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a little while." The reference, he says, is to the emperors of Rome, the *fifth* of whom was Nero. During the confused eighteen months which followed Nero's fall, three emperors, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, exercised a precarious authority, or received but partial allegiance. In the East they were never counted as emperors. To a writer, therefore, in Asia Minor, Vespasian would be the sixth, and when he says, "five have fallen, one *is*," it is within *his* reign that he declares himself to stand, *i.e.* between A.D. 69 and 79.

But what about the next verse, which speaks of an *eighth*?—"And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition" (Rev. xvii. 11). This verse Dr. Martineau believes to be an interpolation by a later hand. The original author had spoken in verse 10 of one that was not yet come—"one is, the other is not yet come." This was Nero, of whom the author, in common with the popular imagination of the day, held the belief that he was not really dead, but was living among the Parthians, and would yet reappear in Rome. Thus Nero was the fifth and also the seventh ("not yet come") in the series. And while this belief still held ground during the reign of Vespasian, the prophecy was published. But now Vespasian dies, and is succeeded by Titus. The seventh place is filled, not by the convulsions of the advancing Antichrist in the person of Nero, but by the tranquil two years of Titus. The prophecy seems to have failed. To save its credit, some other hand interpolates the eleventh verse. There are really only seven, he says, seven *emperors*, though eight *reigns*; for this one that is to come is not another emperor, being the same who was fifth in order, *viz.* Nero. The prophecy is quite correct, he would say, there

are to be eight reigns, but only seven kings. This shows that the interpolation must have been made in the short reign of Titus (A.D. 79-81), for on his death Domitian succeeded to the throne, and the belief in the return of Nero died away.

Thus, according to Dr. Martineau, the Apocalypse is a composite work, in which there are found "passages which cannot have been later than the seventh decade of the first century, and others that cannot have been earlier than the fourth decade of the second century." Or, to be more precise, "The Judaic groundwork owes part of its text to the Zealot period of the first Jewish war, A.D. 66-70, and part to a time about eight years later; and the Christianized recension shows the hand of two editors,—one, in Domitian's time, responsible for all the twenty-nine passages speaking of '*The Lamb*;' the other, belonging to Hadrian's reign, answerable for the letters to the Churches, as well as for the introduction and conclusion of the whole work. It cannot, therefore, have been issued before A.D. 136, and is altogether post-apostolic."

It will thus be seen that Dr. Martineau accepts the theory of the composition of the Apocalypse with which Professor Harnack startled New Testament scholarship in the year 1886. In that year Dr. Harnack caused an essay on the composition of the Apocalypse to be published, which had been written, not by himself, but by one of his students in theology, a young man of the name of Eberhard Vischer. To this essay Dr. Harnack added a postscript, which tells so interesting a story, and comes from so high an authority, that we shall give it in Dr. Martineau's rendering:—

"In June last year, the author of the foregoing treatise, then a student in theology at our University, came and told me that in working out the theme prescribed for his department, 'On the theological point of view of the Apocalypse of John,' he had found no way through the problem but by explaining the book as a Jewish Apocalypse with Christian interpolations set in a Christian frame. At first he met with no very gracious reception from me. I had at hand a carefully prepared College Hefst, the result of repeated study of the enigmatic book, registering the opinions of a host of interpreters, from Irenæus downwards; but no such hypothesis was to be found among them; and now it came upon me from a very young student, who as yet had made himself master of no commentary, but had only carefully read the book itself. Hence my scepticism was intelligible; but the very first arguments, advanced with all modesty, were enough to startle me; and I begged my young friend to come back in a few days, and go more thoroughly with me into his hypothesis. I began to read the Apocalypse with care, from the newly-gained point of view; and it was—I can say no less—as if scales fell from my eyes. After

the too familiar labours of interpreters on the riddle of the book, the proffered solution came upon me as the egg of Columbus. One difficulty after another vanished, the further I read; the darkest passages caught a sudden light; all the hypotheses of perplexed interpreters—of 'proleptic visions,' 'historical perspectives,' 'recapitulating method,' 'resting stations,' 'recreative points,' 'unconscious relapse into purely Jewish ideas'—melted away at once; the complex Christology of the book, hitherto a veritable *crux* for every historical critic, resolved itself into simple elements."

This theory of the composition of the Apocalypse Dr. Martineau accepts unreservedly. "In this generous tribute to his pupil," he says, "Harnack does not, in my judgment, over-estimate the convincing effect of his analysis."

But let us listen to the judgment of one whose right to speak on such a subject is not inferior to that of any living scholar. "Such a history of a Jewish Apocalypse," says Dr. A. B. Davidson, "is unexampled. Further, there could be no thought of the Apostle John in connection with the book. The authorship of the Presbyter, mentioned by Papias, is a purely modern conjecture. We should have to conclude that the Christian editor gave out the whole with the design that it should be taken for the work of the Apostle John, and that his deception succeeded. This is a strong assumption, considering that the book was probably known to Papias. Again, the Christian editor appears to adopt the Jewish views of the rest of the book, e.g. the earthly reign of the saints over the nations (ii. 26 with v. 10, xx. 4). When we take into account the known opinions of

Papias, Justin, and Irenæus, and fancy to ourselves the various complexions of faith, the crosses, as we might say, between Judaism and Christianity that must have existed in the earliest times of the Church, we hesitate to admit that a Christian could not have written the whole book. And to mention only one other point: the theory gives no account of the parallelism between the book and our Lord's eschatological discourse."

The review of Vischer's essay, from which we have quoted, was contributed by Dr. Davidson to the first number (November 1886) of the *Theological Review and Free Church College Quarterly*. This is one of the ablest journals of the day. Its review department, in particular, has been conducted with singular judgment, every number containing the results of such scholarship and literary form as are associated with the names of Dr. Bruce, Dr. Davidson, Dr. Dods, and Dr. Salmond.

We are glad to see that its sub-title is now to be removed and its scope widened. Henceforward it is to contain critical reviews only, but they are to be contributed by the foremost scholars in all the evangelical Churches, and to cover not only the current theology, but also philosophical and general literature, so far as it bears upon theology and religion.

This is a most needful, and, under skilful and generous management, should prove a most successful enterprise. And we believe that it will be managed both skilfully and generously. Its editor is to be Dr. Salmond, of Aberdeen, and its publishers, Messrs. T. & T. Clark, of Edinburgh.

“J.”

BY PROFESSOR SIR G. G. STOKES, BART., M.P., PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

I HAVE chosen for the subject of my lecture a word of only one letter, a word which is constantly in the mouths of us all. Simple as the word is, there is a great deal contained in it, and, I doubt not, you are wondering what branch of the subject I am going to take up. There are many that I might take up, but I will confine myself to one. I mean to confine myself to the question: "What is it that personal identity depends upon and consists in?"

Now it is very often easier to ask a question than to answer it, and I cannot pretend that I am able to answer that question myself. "Well," perhaps you will say to me, "what is the use of bringing before us a question that you tell us you cannot answer yourself?" Well, I think it is

sometimes not without its use. It may happen that we are called upon by authority, or what we have a right to regard as authority, to accept such and such a statement. Perhaps we say within ourselves: "If that statement is true it must be brought about either in this way or in that way, or perhaps some third way." I will call these ways "A," "B," and "C." "Well," perhaps we think, "how can it be brought about in the way 'A'?" Here is a very great difficulty; I do not see how to get over it. Let us try 'B.' Here is another great difficulty, and so perhaps for the third." And then perhaps we may say within ourselves: "We have tried all possible ways of conceiving how this asserted statement can be brought about, and they are all beset with such difficulties that we cannot