

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

PROFESSOR SAYCE is still in Egypt, whence he writes on February 24: "Our Egyptian winter was over rather earlier than usual this year, and for the last fortnight I have been enjoying summer heats, which have, however, driven the other dahabiyehs northwards. I shall not turn northwards myself till the beginning of March. . . . My next letter shall be the article."

In a recent issue of the *Methodist Recorder*, Professor W. T. Davison reviews Dr. Milligan's Baird Lectures for 1891—*The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord* (Macmillan, 1892, 7s. 6d.). "The subject," he says, "is one which has not received very full treatment at the hands of theologians; and while leading us distinctly into 'heavenly places in Christ,' it has more direct bearing upon practical Christian life than might at first sight appear."

In one matter of extreme difficulty he does not altogether agree with Dr. Milligan; and yet he sees "something attractive" about his suggestion. It is the use of the definite article with the words "Holy Spirit" in the New Testament. Dr. Milligan holds that, when the article is employed, "*the* Holy Spirit" means the Spirit in Himself, as one of the three Persons in the Godhead. When the article is not employed, "Holy Spirit" refers to His operation, especially as manifested in full

power and magnitude in the Christian age. Professor Davison refers to Moulton's *Winer*, which is against Dr. Milligan, and quotes Bishop Ellicott, who says that the rule cannot be considered of universal application.

Nevertheless, Professor Davison finds something attractive in Dr. Milligan's suggestion. He says that perhaps the reconciliation may lie in Ellicott's "not of *universal* application"; that is, that though the distinction may not always be insisted on, there are passages where it helps the interpretation. And he chooses as an example that most significant verse in the doctrine of the Spirit (John vii. 39), which runs literally: "For Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." "Here the meaning clearly is, that the operation and influence of the Divine Spirit *in its full efficacy as the Spirit of Christ* had not been and could not be imparted till the work of Christ had been accomplished. Dr. Milligan's exposition of the meaning of that operation, as distinguished from the operation of the Spirit in pre-Christian times, is most instructive. We often forget," concludes Professor Davison, "that the Holy Spirit promised to Christians is no mere vague heavenly influence; it is Christ's own Spirit in a very definite and particular meaning—the Spirit of Him who wore a Divine-human nature on earth, and wears it still [in heaven."

Towards the end of January, a correspondence of unusual theological importance for a newspaper could be read in the columns of the *Scotsman*. The writers were the Duke of Argyll and the Bishop of St. Andrews. And the point to mark is, that Dr. Wordsworth accepts the conclusion at which the late Bishop of Durham arrives in his famous essay on the Christian Ministry, but rejects the "concessions" which Dr. Lightfoot made in the course of it. He enumerates five concessions which in his opinion are more than questionable. They are these: 1. "There is no doubt," he says, "that presbyter and episcopus (bishop) are convertible terms as used in the New Testament, and also in others of the earliest Christian writers, as St. Clement and the author of the *Didachè*; and that episcopus, as there used, probably never means what is meant by our Saxon word 'bishop.' But, according to Bishop Lightfoot, after the apostles' time what came to be called the episcopate was not a continuation of the apostolate—it was developed out of the presbytery. So he says; but, in my opinion, he has not proved it." 2. "Bishop Lightfoot concedes (against the unanimous voice of early Christian writers) that James at Jerusalem was not *bonâ fide* Bishop, but only Head or President of the College of Presbyters." 3. "He concedes (wrongly, as I think) that Timothy and Titus only acted as bishops *pro tempore*." 4. "He concedes (contrary to Archbishop Trench and many other commentators, ancient and modern), that the angels of the Apocalypse were not bishops." 5. "Lastly, he concludes, upon grounds which will not bear close examination, that the Bishop of Alexandria, during the first three centuries, continued to be not only elected, but ordained by his co-presbyters."

Dr. Wordsworth then quotes certain letters in his possession in reference to the Bishop of Durham's essay. Among the rest there is one from the late Dean Church, whom he describes as "a liberal Churchman," and a scholar and divine scarcely inferior to Bishop Lightfoot himself." Dean Church wrote: "Lightfoot is a very dear

friend of mine, and I have abundant reason to know how great his powers are in every way. But I never could understand what he was thinking of when he wrote that essay."

The advocates of the Historical Criticism of the Old Testament will now be able to claim another convert in Germany, if not so exalted, yet in some respects even more remarkable than the late Dr. Franz Delitzsch. Professor August Wilhelm Dieckhoff ranks among the most conservative of the Lutheran theologians of Germany. He is a senior member of the extremely conservative faculty of Rostock, which cast out even Moses Baumgarten as unsound, and was long represented by F. A. Philippi as its typical theologian. Professor Dieckhoff is a man of mature years, and in his controversies with Professor Kahnis of Leipzig as to Lutheran theology, and with Professors Volck and Mühlau of Dorpat as to the authority of Scripture, he showed himself most tenacious of the orthodox tradition of the Church. But in 1886 he made some concessions to the claims of the Higher Criticism; and now he has issued a little book on "Inspiration and Inerrancy" in which he not only defends his former concessions, but advances beyond them. And he seeks to prove that neither the Fathers nor the Reformers held the view of inspiration now regarded as orthodox; it was elaborated by the dogmatic theologians of the seventeenth century.

Professor Mahaffy of Dublin contributes a long article to the Philadelphia *Sunday School Times* of 13th February, on the "Petrie Greek Papyri." Mr. Petrie's fortunate discovery that when you found nothing inside an Egyptian coffin, you still had the coffin itself to work upon, has already borne fruit, and has opened a prospect for the future as promising as it was unexpected. For the last eighteen months, Professor Mahaffy tells us, he has been occupied taking to pieces the coffins which Mr. Petrie brought home from Tell Gurob. For in Egypt, wood was scarce; every tree was required for fruit or for shade; none could be

spared for the making of coffins. "Hence the coffin-makers devised the ingenious expedient of making their coffins and moulding them to fit the human form by laying together layers of paper, either simply or with glue, and then covering the surface on both sides with a coat of Nile mud, upon which they printed designs and figures."

Now the paper which was used for this purpose was "writing paper." It was paper that had actually been written upon. And Professor Mahaffy has spent "one of the most interesting years of my life" in separating, deciphering, and sorting these layers of written papyri. It is a task as difficult as it is agreeable. "In the first place," he says, "the outer coat of clay or mud must be washed off; and when the writing is turned outward, it is almost impossible to wash off the clay without effacing the writing. Again, where glue was employed, not only is it hopeless to sever the layers without destroying them, but the whole texture is riddled by worms, which have gone in search of the glue, and have reduced the papyrus almost to powder." Nevertheless, the first instalment of manuscripts, severed, sorted, and deciphered, now lies before the public in the Cunningham Memoir (No. 8), published by the Royal Irish Academy, with thirty autotype plates reproducing the faint and curious writing in great perfection.

The literature thus unexpectedly recovered belongs to the Greek tongue, and dates mainly from the reigns of the second and third Ptolemies, 274-225 B.C. The great majority of the fragments are portions of household accounts, from which at least may be learned valuable lessons in palæography. For not only every individual, but every century has its own style of handwriting; and by the new light just acquired, Mr. Maunde Thompson has fixed the date of several fragments in the British Museum. We have also discovered that scrawling and illegibility are no modern developments of the diffusion of letters and the hurry of life. The Greeks of the third century B.C. scribbled

and scrawled as we do. "We have in their private documents every variety of hand, from the large round hand of the youth writing to his father, to the shorthand notes of the clerk on the back of an old account."

And there are greater gains than these. Here comes the description of a testator, almost always a veteran with scars, a Greek, a Macedonian, a Carian, a Thracian, as the case may be, of such an age, of such a complexion and hair. Then the formula: "May I be vouchsafed to live on in good health, and mind my own affairs; but should anything human happen to me, I bequeath," etc. Should anything *human* happen to me: there is no religious fear or feeling expressed; there is no hint in all these wills and testaments that the Ptolemaic Greek looked forward, as the old Egyptian did, to be judged hereafter according to his works.

"Before I leave these myriad scraps, with their sundry information, I will only," says Professor Mahaffy, "add a word concerning the peculiar dialect in which they are written. It is, of course, the mixed or common dialect of later Greek times, when the conquests of Alexander had made all Greek culture of one kind and type. But in the vocabulary we find a closer likeness to the Greek of the Septuagint than to any other book I could name. I have already found several words used in the Septuagint only, so far as we hitherto knew; and this is a strong corroboration of the legend,—which many have doubted,—that this translation of the Old Testament was really made in Egypt. According to the story, this translation must have been in process at the very time of the documents we have discovered, and, of course, in the language of that day; but I hardly think it likely that copies of the Greek Version had already travelled into the country, or that it was read by the settlers in the Fayoum. I have hunted with anxious care for the smallest trace of any such book; but in vain."

It would certainly be a great gain if by means of these Egyptian mummy-cases some of the per-

plexing questions that surround the Septuagint were laid to rest. To know for certain the when and the where of the origin of even the Pentateuch portion would be a great gain. Older by many centuries, and representing an older text, than the oldest Hebrew manuscript we possess, it nevertheless can be used with no confidence, and in actual fact is not relied upon by textual critics to any extent. Our own Revisers, after due consideration of its variations from the Hebrew text, practically set them aside in the end. Yet every one feels that this Greek translation ought to be of use in the interpretation of the Old Testament. On the one hand, its "painful literalness," to use Dr. Buhl's expression, in the Books of Ezekiel, Chronicles, the Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes should be of the greatest service in determining the Hebrew text which it has rendered so literally. And, on the other hand, the free and bold version of the Book of Job should at least indicate to us how this ancient litterateur understood the passages which now baffle our best exegetical scholarship. So let us wish success to Mr. Flinders Petrie in the discovery of Ptolemaic coffins, and more power to Professor Mahaffy's arm in pulling them to pieces.

Every generation has its theological controversy, and surely we have ours. Is it the inevitable throes that accompany the birth of new forms of religious truth? or is it merely the wrath of man working *not* the righteousness of God? It is hard to tell. But one thing is clear, that there is no possibility now of keeping it back. It is already upon us, and the dust and the din of it cover a wide field, and betoken a serious conflict.

Yet let one comforting feature be noted. Thus far, at least, it has been mercifully kept out of our pulpits. It is a paper war. As no theological controversy ever was before, it is being fought out in the periodical press. It is a distinct and gracious gain. For this one thing we know, that the pulpit is not the place for doubtful disputations.

Its echoes and something more are in all the newspapers. But the two which have most unreservedly thrown themselves open to the strife are the *Times* and the *Record*. In both, the correspondence has been of enormous extent; but it is full of instruction, if one can command the time and the temper to be instructed by it. The *Record*, in which Mr. Gladstone opened the campaign on the 8th of January, is the most manageable. The Editor's attitude is distinctly conservative, as one may see at a glance from the headline to the issue of the date just named: "The Attack on the Bible." The advocates of the Higher Criticism must have felt that the question was settled by such a title. And this may account for the large proportion of the writers—a much larger proportion than in the *Times* correspondence—being on the conservative side.

The controversy is this: Has modern criticism the right to question whether the 110th Psalm was written by David or not? It is not entitled so. It is not so assumed by any of the contributors. But that is the question which lies behind almost every letter: every letter, indeed, but one; for Prebendary Bassett is the only writer who has the courage to meet the critics on their own ground, and to say, You may discuss the authenticity of this psalm if you please, and I will meet your arguments with counter arguments, and overthrow them. It is not the authorship of the 110th Psalm, but *the right to dispute* the traditional authorship, that is asserted and that is denied. So narrow as that is the issue of the most momentous controversy that these modern days have known.

For the Son of Man said: "How doth David in the Spirit call the Messiah Lord, saying—

The Lord said unto My Lord,
Sit Thou on My right hand,
Till I put Thine enemies underneath Thy feet.

If David then calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son?" The place is Psalm cx., and by not a few of the writers in the *Record* these words are held

to settle the authorship of the psalm beyond dispute or question.

The issue is narrow, but it is a serious one. There had been little account made of the critical investigations into the Old Testament, if this question of the authority of our Lord had not been involved. For scientific investigation is the unknown god to which we are forward to erect our altars in these days. If criticism had but discovered that the 110th Psalm *was* written by David all would have been well; at least there would have been less of that "warmth of affection" in the controversy, which Mr. Gladstone deprecates. But criticism finds it otherwise. "This psalm," says Canon Driver (*Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 362), "though it may be ancient, can hardly have been composed by David. If read without *præjudicium*, it produces the irresistible impression of having been written, not by a king with reference to an invisible spiritual Being, standing above him as his superior, but by a prophet *with reference to the theocratic king.*"

Thus the issue is a serious one. If you can settle it by simply refusing the right to inquire into the authorship; if you can say, with the Vicar of St. Faith's, Norwich, "This is not debateable ground; it is holy ground, where mere criticism has no place"—but can you? Can you, as a Protestant and a reader of the *Record*? The Editor himself sees and acknowledges the difficulty; "We entirely agree, if we may say so, with those who tell us that you cannot stifle criticism by mere authority." And no doubt it is on that understanding that the pages of the *Record* have been opened to the discussion. But if you hold that Christ's reference to that psalm settled its authorship, what liberty is it that allows men only to reach a result already attained? Says Mr. Hay Aitken: "Although you, sir, affirm that you do not desire to suppress earnest inquiry, I confess it seems to me difficult to understand how such inquiry can be pursued, if we have to start with a

foregone conclusion on the other side, that the question has been for ever settled by the unimpeachable authority of Christ."

But the moment you admit the right to inquire into the authorship of this psalm by ordinary critical methods, you face the possibility of admitting that David was not its author. And then, what is the result? To hold that the 110th Psalm was not written by David does not imply assertion both of the limited knowledge of the Divine Saviour, and of His accommodating His teaching to the ignorance and prejudice of the Jews of His day, as Dr. Macaulay strangely asserts in the *Sunday at Home* for January; but it does seem to involve one of these. It seems to say that either Christ did not know that David was not the author of this psalm; or, knowing it, spoke as if David were its author. Let us examine these suppositions.

The first is that He did not know. Two texts are mainly relied upon—Phil. ii. 5–8, the great passage which describes the *Kenosis*, or Emptying, as it is called; and, more definitely, Mark xiii. 32: "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." The former passage is touched upon in this issue of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, by an unbiassed and most painstaking scholar, and we shall not enter on it further here. There are many who deny that it was ever intended to imply limitation of Christ's knowledge, or does in any respect imply that. And they see a serious obstacle to the application of the passage from St. Mark also. It is the only instance given of a limitation of knowledge on the part of the Son. It manifestly refers to a subject of special and separate importance. And we know that in innumerable other matters of the same kind as this matter of the authorship of a psalm, He had knowledge, perfect and immediate. "You are not surprised," says Mr. Hay Aitken, "that Christ in His manhood was not the equal of Newton in mathematical knowledge." Yes, they would be surprised if it were so. They cannot

believe that He who could tell Peter the exact place to put down his hand and take up the fish with the coin in its mouth, could have been ignorant of the law that governs the ebb and flow of the tides, of which He Himself had been the Author.

The alternative supposition is, that Christ accommodated Himself in His dealings with the Pharisees to their conceptions, even when these were erroneous. Its most recent and most eloquent advocate is Mr. Gore; and we shall remain content for the present with merely stating the arguments which he pleads on its behalf.

He believes that Christ did not exhibit the mathematical knowledge of a Newton, simply because it was no part of His *work* to do so. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners;" "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." All are agreed that our Lord's work on earth had limitations. All see that He strictly confined Himself within them. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day, the night cometh." Coming, then, in the pursuit of His work, upon an argument which touched the authorship of a book of the Old Testament, was it needful, was it part of His work, that He should enter into the question of its authorship? Conceive Him doing so in the case of the 110th Psalm, upon which the heat of this controversy has become focussed. He is not teaching His disciples; He is arguing with the Pharisees. He uses an argument which shall be *felt* by them. He shall not convert them, but He will leave them without excuse. The argument is, *from their standpoint*, unparalleled in simplicity and force. "If David calleth Him Lord, how is He his son?" It is not difficult to see with what avidity the Pharisees would have seized upon any loophole of escape from their dilemma. Would our Lord have been working the works of His Father if He had entered upon a discussion of the authorship of the Psalm He wished to quote, a discussion from which the Pharisees would have seen to it that He did not speedily return?

Accommodation — it is less terrible, Mr. Gore argues, than it looks. The whole method of Christ's dealing with the people may not unjustly be described as accommodation. "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries, but to them in parables, that seeing they may not see." And especially was this so with the ever hostile Pharisees. One may fairly say that He always answered them from their own standpoint, reasoned with them on their own premises. Take, for example, the conversation regarding the casting out of devils. Their accusation—it was transparently insincere — was that He cast out devils through the help of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. His answer is, as usual, to place them in an inextricable dilemma,—in a *double* dilemma here indeed. First He shows the absurdity of Satan casting out Satan. Then He says: "And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, *by whom do your children cast them out?*" Was this not an instance of accommodation? Surely we are not bound to believe that these words prove the reality of the power to cast out devils claimed by these unbelieving Jews.

If this is accommodation, then it is held that precisely similar is the accommodation in the argument from the 110th Psalm. With the Davidic authorship, says Delitzsch, "the argumentation of the Lord stands or falls as untrue, or only indirectly true." What he means by "indirectly true" it is not easy to say. There is, however, no doubt of it that, as an argument addressed to us, it is simply untrue, if David was not the author of the psalm. But it is not addressed to us. It is not meant for us. It was not meant for the disciples even then. It was meant for the Pharisees alone. They held that the Messiah was David's Son; they held that David called Him Lord; they were simply asked to put these two things together and reconcile them if they could. They were asked to think, and not repeat mere tradition, slaying the Son while they built the tombs of the prophets.