

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

MESSRS. T. & T. CLARK have sent us a copy of the *Life of James M'Cosk* (8vo, pp. vi + 287. 9s.). It is a moderately-sized octavo, beautifully printed on white paper, and furnished with a fine frontispiece etching and four photogravures of excellent finish. Running through it—and we have not been able to do more just yet—we see that not an inch of space is lost. Professor Sloane is an accomplished man of letters, and knows how to turn his material to account. But, indeed, his work was already done. For it is a great joy to find that nearly the whole book is autobiographical.

Two valuable discoveries have just been made in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. A young Italian scholar—Dr. Giovanni Mercati—discovered a palimpsest which contains some portions of the continuous text of Origen's Hexapla of the Psalms. And then, when he was studying some patristic commentaries for the purpose of illustrating and editing his discovery, he was led to make the other. He discovered that a celebrated Irish MS. of that library, which, for the sake of its Irish glosses Professor Ascoli had already edited in part, contained a Latin translation, in slightly abridged form, of Theodore of Mopsuestia's *Commentary on the Psalms*.

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These discoveries have been made public, first, by Dr. Salvatore Minocchi in his recently-founded *Rivista Bibliografica Italiana*; secondly, and more fully, by Dr. Mercati himself, in a brochure entitled *D'un palimpsesto Ambrosiano*, etc.; and Dr. Driver gives a short notice of them both in a recent issue of the *Academy*.

The translation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's Commentary is valuable. For hitherto it was known only from scattered quotations preserved in the Fathers, and partly in a Syriac MS. But Dr. Driver attaches most importance to the discovery of the Hexapla of the Psalms, which also was formerly known only from detached quotations. The text is of the tenth century, and it is arranged as Origen himself arranged it, in five parallel columns, containing the Hebrew in Greek letters, and the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, LXX, and Theodotus. The Hebrew text itself, which originally filled the first column, is not there, being omitted, Dr. Driver thinks, because the Greek scribes could not copy it. But the very interest of the discovery lies in the fact that the Hebrew is given in Greek letters. For thus we may gather the pronunciation of the Hebrew as it was heard by Origen in the third century A.D. The portions which have been recovered are

these: Ps. xvii. (= Heb. xviii.) 26-48, xxvii. 6-9, xxviii. 1-3, xxix., xxx. 1-10, 20-25, xxxi. 6-11, xxxiv. 1, 2, 13-28, xxxvi. 1-5, xlv., xlviii. 1-6, 11-15, and lxviii. 26-53.

But a greater discovery than these has just been made. For more than eight years the University of Pennsylvania has been sustaining excavations at Niffer in Northern Babylonia. The excavations have been carried out under the personal direction of Mr. Haynes, 'who, in spite of a pestiferous atmosphere and Bedawin raids, has remained steadily at his post, excavating the masses of débris inch by inch, and carefully examining, surveying, and photographing all that has been found.' Then, as the results come to hand, the texts are translated, and the photographs reproduced in the most accurate and artistic manner by Professor Hilprecht of Pennsylvania. The Second Part of the first volume has recently appeared, and Professor Sayce reviews it in the *Academy* of August 1.

Professor Sayce begins by expressing his surprise at the rapidity with which these important documents are being put into the hands of scholars—'a rapidity, however, which has involved no sacrifice of accuracy, though it may be feared that it implied a severe strain upon the health and eyesight of the editor.' This Second Part contains fifty beautifully executed plates, along with the cuneiform texts, and 'the results which Professor Hilprecht has to lay before us are truly sensational.'

Hitherto we have been accustomed to look upon Sargon of Accad and his son Naram-sin, who founded a great Semitic empire in Babylonia about 3800 B.C., as belonging to the 'grey dawn' of history. It is true that the art of their day is highly advanced, like the art of the earliest period to which we have yet been able to push back the history of Egypt. It is more highly advanced, indeed, than the art of the period following. But

Sargon and Naram-sin seemed to belong to the number of 'the world's grey fathers' simply because we knew no history of an earlier time. That is all altered now. Nipur, the ancient name of the modern Niffer, where these excavations are being accomplished, was already a city and shrine of hoary age when Sargon began to reign.

Among the 'results' which Mr. Haynes sent home for Professor Hilprecht's examination were a number of fragments of clay tablets, covered with cuneiform writing. With patient care and previous knowledge, Professor Hilprecht pieced those fragments together,—an achievement, says Professor Sayce, of which he may well be proud,—and read an inscription of an hundred and forty-two lines in length. The hero of the inscription is Lugal-zaggisi, the son of Ukas, who was high priest of the Land of the Bow. Professor Hilprecht thinks that the Land of the Bow is to be identified with Harran in Mesopotamia, familiar from the history of Abraham. In that, however, Professor Sayce cannot follow him. In 'the people of the Land of the Bow' he would rather see the Bedawin, the Suté of the Assyrian inscriptions, the Sati or Sittiu, that is, 'archers,' of the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Be that as it may, this Lugal-zaggisi, the son of the high priest of the Land of the Bow, tells how he left the Land of the Bow and came and conquered Kengi, founding an empire there which spread from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. Now Kengi is the ancient name of Babylonia, the Babylonia of the days before Sargon. Its religious centre was Nipur, the great temple of Nipur, which was dedicated to the god Mul-lil, whom the Semites afterwards turned into a Bel.

So Lugal-zaggasi conquered Kengi and founded his empire, and fixed its capital at Erech. Was that the time when Erech received its proud name? For Erech means 'the city,' the city beyond all other cities, and it could be called so only when it stood out beyond all the rest as the capital of a great empire, or the head of a great religion. But

the time came when the native Sumerians of Babylonia threw off the yoke of these people of the Land of the Bow, and left their dead bodies a prey to vultures on the open battlefield. Then a new dynasty arose in Babylonia, and the capital was transferred to Ur of the Chaldees. And after that came the age of Sargon and Naram-sin, and the *beginnings* of the history of Babylonia as we hitherto have understood it.

Thus, Professor Hilprecht's discovery is a very great one—in the words of Professor Cheyne, who has kindly directed our attention to it, 'the really exciting archæological news just now.' Sargon and Naram-sin stand henceforth, not at the very beginning, but almost in the middle of the ancient history of Babylonia. Four thousand years elapsed from the time they built so extensively at Nipur to the time when Nipur ceased to be inhabited. And these four thousand years may be measured in the accumulation of débris they have slowly gathered. Mr. Haynes has measured them, and finds the depth to be eleven metres. It is a new way of writing history by the pick and the probe. But when you have reached to the bottom of these eleven metres and struck the great brick platform of Naram-sin, there still lie more than nine metres of accumulated rubbish below. It is the history of the previous period of this city's greatness, waiting the skill of the investigator and the decipherer.

But what is the influence of this discovery on the great international controversy of our day? For it must not be supposed that the only international dispute has respect to the boundary of Venezuela. Of older date than that, and dealing with an older subject, is the controversy between the archæologists of America and England about the earliest inhabitants of Babylonia. For the archæologists of England maintain that when the Semites settled in Babylonia, they found a native race there, whom they call Accadians. These Accadians had already reached a high degree of

civilisation, and although in course of time the Semites succeeded in causing their own to be the only spoken language, the native Accadian language remained still the vehicle of all literary and religious intercourse. With this the archæologists of Germany and France agree, only calling the native race Sumerian, for reasons of locality and unimportance. But the American archæologists deny the very existence of either Sumerians or Accadians. The Semites were themselves the 'native' inhabitants of Babylonia, and the whole story of a long struggle between a Sumerian or Accadian native tongue and the language of the Babylonian Semites is 'a figment of an over-zealous scientific spirit.'

Now, these discoveries are made under the generous patronage of an American University. The discoverer and the decipherer are American scholars. In what direction do the new discoveries take us? Do they confirm the stand which American archæology has so boldly made? Or do they throw their influence on the other side? Professor Sayce says nothing about it. *Directly* he says nothing about it. But throughout his review he takes the existence of the Accadians or Sumerians for granted, and all that English archæologists have ever claimed. More than that, he looks upon the new discovery as valuable above all else for the light it casts upon the development of the cuneiform writing, 'and the part severally played in its formation by the Sumerians and the Semites.' In these discoveries he finds the evidence that the Semites of Babylonia were in contact for many centuries with the Sumerian possessors of a higher culture and a system of writing. The Semites may, therefore, he says, have borrowed far more from these Sumerians than we formerly supposed. No longer can we be sure that this word is purely Semitic, and that is purely Sumerian. And then, he says explicitly that Professor Hommel's theory of a mixed Chaldæan language, partly Sumerian and partly Semitic in derivation, which was carried in

prehistoric days to the banks of the Nile, has received a striking confirmation.

‘Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal’ (Matt. vi. 19). ‘Break through and steal.’ But the Greek word means to *dig* through (διορύσσω), as the margin conveniently tells us. Whereupon the commentators all agree to remind us that the house of which our Lord was thinking was built of mud or clay, and to get through mud or clay digging is the appropriate action.

But there is a previous question to that, and the commentators say nothing about it. Why does the thief go that way to work at all? It is easier, we do not doubt it, to dig through the mud wall of a Syrian house than to break through the stone and lime wall of an English one. But after all, it surely cannot be so easy to get through any blank wall as to get in at a door or window.

Well, the fact seems to be that the thief does get in by the *window*, and just as often as he can. That he does not enter by the window oftener is due to the circumstance that he can find no window to enter by. ‘One night,’ says the Rev. W. Ewing, M.A., late of Tiberias, writing in the *Sunday School Times* of America, whence it is quoted by Dr. Trumbull in his book, *The Threshold Covenant*,—‘one night I was driven from my resting-place under a stunted olive-tree in the plain of Sharon by a terrific thunderstorm, and took refuge in the miserable fellahy village of Kalansaweh. A good woman unbarred her door and admitted me to a single apartment, in which, on the ground level, were several sheep and cattle with an ass, and on the higher level a pretty large family asleep, all dimly discerned by the light of a little oil lamp stuck in a crevice of the wall. The atmosphere was awful. I asked why they did not have a window or opening in the wall. The woman held up her hands in amazement,

“What!” she exclaimed, “and assist the robbers?” The robbers were the Arab thieves of the plain. Greater rascals do not exist. They were great experts, she explained, in digging through the house; to put a window in the wall would only tempt them, and facilitate their work.’

So the answer to the question, Why does the thief not enter by the window? is easy. He enters as often as he finds a window to enter by. But when the question is asked, Why does he not enter by the door? the answer is not so easy. For the door is there, and it is mostly standing open. It is doubtful if the answer was ever fully found till Dr. Trumbull wrote the book of which we have already spoken, and which goes by the name of *The Threshold Covenant*.

Since the publication of Thomson’s *Land and the Book*, no volume that we have seen has thrown so clear and full a light on the social side of the Bible as Dr. Trumbull’s *The Threshold Covenant*. It does not set out deliberately to illustrate the Bible, as Dr. Thomson’s volume did. It does this work very well, but it does it accidentally. Having discovered that the most sacred spot in all the land was the doorstep of every home, Dr. Trumbull wrote with the sole intention of proving that. But his proof is a vast array of illustration, and much of it comes from the *Land*, and much of it from the *Book*, and they illustrate one another.

That the doorstep of every home is the most sacred spot in the land, is the great discovery that Dr. Trumbull has made and illustrated. And he has proved that the doorstep is universally sacred, because it is the universal family altar. To step over the threshold of the door is thus to perform a religious act. It is to enter into a covenant relation with the family and with its God. And if any one passes over the threshold of any house with evil intent, he has made the God of that home his enemy, and *He* will avenge the insult. Says Dr. Trumbull, ‘I asked a native Syrian woman, “If a thief wanted to get into your house to steal from

you, would he come in at the door if he saw that open?" "Oh no," she answered, "he would come in at the window, or would slip in from behind." "Why would he not come in at the door?" I asked. "Because his *reverence* would keep him from that."

In reply to Professor Driver's *Guardian* article on the new discoveries of the original text of Ecclesiasticus, of which some notice was taken in last month's EXPOSITORY TIMES, Professor Margoliouth writes in the current number of the *Expositor*. He writes mainly to ask 'those whom this controversy interests' to suspend their judgment. For he himself has not yet seen the additional sheets which have come into Dr. Neubauer's hands. And until these are published, 'it is premature to discuss the bearing these discoveries may have on the chief points that were then in dispute.' But he has seen the fragment which Mrs. Lewis brought home from Palestine. And so far as its evidence goes, he is by no means sure that he is about to be put to silence. He sought to show that Ecclesiasticus had been written in metre, and in late rabbinical Hebrew. In this fragment, 'which, though it does not eclipse, is well worthy to rank, both for interest and importance, with the most remarkable of the documents Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson have brought to light,' there are things which agree and things which disagree; but he is not sure that, by a little manipulation, the things which disagree might not all be turned in his favour.

For, in the first place, 'a great many verses suit the metrical scheme exactly.' And some of these could scarcely be turned into metrical Hebrew from the Greek which he had before. And although 'it must also be admitted that many of these Hebrew lines do not suit the metrical scheme,' Professor Margoliouth claims the liberty to make them suit. For who will say that this Hebrew fragment is necessarily free from corruptions? Even in the canonical books 'the best

critics are accustomed to treating the Masoretic text and the ancient versions as witnesses out of whose various assertions the truth must be forced.' How much more this uncanonical fragment, which comes from a carelessly copying scribe!

Whereupon Professor Margoliouth proceeds to force the truth. Sometimes he corrects the Greek from the Hebrew, and sometimes the Hebrew from the Greek. And when neither the Hebrew nor the Greek will yield a metrical line, he sometimes corrects them both. But he gives good reasons always. And although Professor Margoliouth says but little here of the language in which Ben-Sira wrote, it is evident that we have not heard the last of his metrical style.

The month before last some Notes appeared in these pages on the matter of Certainties. They arose out of a sermon which had been preached by the Rev. J. G. Greenhough, M.A., of which that word was both the title and subject. Much sympathy was expressed with Mr. Greenhough's view that it was by its Certainties the Apostolic Church prospered and overcame the world; and that without some Certainties the Church of to-day will never prosper, but the Gates of Hell will assuredly prevail against it. But it was pointed out that the difficulty of our day is not to hold that we must have Certainties, but to know what Certainties to hold. And then, as an attempt to meet the difficulty, it was said that there seem to be just two facts we must be certain about—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

There seem to be just two facts we must be certain about. But our Certainties were not reduced to two on the principle that the less we are asked to believe, the more securely we will believe it. That that is in anywise true, or deserves the name of a principle, is open to serious doubt. It is not even true that the less you give one to *do*, the more effectively he will do it. Our Certainties

were not reduced to two because their demands were reduced with their number. The Master gathered into two commandments all the precepts of the Law and the Prophets; but who will say that the two were easier to obey than the ten? Our Certainties were given as two, because upon just two Certainties, and these the two, the Church was sent forth to conquer the world, and she has not ended her mission yet.

The Church that was sent to prosper and conquer the world is the Church of to-day. And the Certainties with which she began are the Certainties with which she must finish the work that is given her to do. Yet we certainly do not find these two, the resurrection from the dead and the gift of the Spirit, persistently preached to-day. What we do find is, that by a great and growing body of Christian thinkers—of men who think and speak in the name of Christianity at least—the fact of the resurrection is openly denied. And what we further find is that by the great moving mass of professing Christian people the gift of the Spirit is absolutely ignored.

There is no school of Christian thought that is so influential in Germany now as the Ritschlian. Nor is its influence confined to Germany. Ritschlianism covers many varieties of belief, and also, we doubt not, some variations of conduct. But there must be a common article of belief among them all, or the name would possess no meaning. There *is* a common article of belief, or rather is it a common article of unbelief. It is the denial of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. We are not concerned for the moment with the reasons for this denial, or the explanations of how the belief arose and spread, as they are given by different writers. These are the trifling things that cause them to differ from one another. This is the thing that makes them all alike. They deny the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Now it would be folly to look upon this as an insignificant or accidental movement. The fol-

lowers of Ritschl who disbelieve the resurrection are but as one in a thousand to the followers of Jesus who believe it. But they are mostly scholars and thinkers, and it is scholarship, we know, and original thought that win their way in the world. It is wisdom to look upon it as the special form of unbelief which the Church of Christ to-day has to meet and answer and vanquish. In the days of the earliest Church the form was different. When the early disciples went out to preach Jesus and the resurrection, the unbelief they faced was the unbelief of ignorance, a wholly different thing from the disbelief of knowledge. But their manner of facing it was the same as always it must be. For the resurrection is a fact of history. It came into touch with human life. So the proof of it must be along the lines of human thought and experience. The earliest Christians said: 'That which we have *seen and heard* declare we unto you.' We cannot exactly say that. But we still can say, 'that which we have felt and known.' The experience of the ages, and our own, can stand against the force of the personal testimony of the apostle. This was the mark of the apostle that he had seen the Lord, for this was the single external event he had to testify and make good. In face of that we seem at a serious disadvantage. But we really are at none. For we have the witness of all the apostles, waiting the test of investigation according to the laws of the human mind, and we have the accumulated experience of the fruit this fact has brought forth in the lives of all its believers—when once it has been fertilised by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

But the fact of the resurrection must be fertilised by the gift of the Holy Spirit. No 'dead fact stranded on the shore of the oblivious years' is ever of any value. Herod Antipas was desirous for a long time to see Jesus, and now was very glad, because he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. And no doubt Jesus would have wrought some miracle if it would have done Herod any good. But even the resurrection is a mere mountebank's miracle to those who receive not the

gift of the Holy Spirit to give it spirit and to give it life. Now, the Holy Spirit is not concerned solely with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. He is concerned with Jesus Himself, His person, and all His work. But the resurrection from the dead is the crown of Jesus' work, and the seal that is set on His person.

He is concerned with Jesus Himself, His person, and all His work. He has no other concern than that. 'He shall glorify Me,' said Christ. 'He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.' Jesus Himself came to glorify the Father, and to finish the work that the Father gave Him to do. And when He has finished that work fully, when all the redeemed for whom He gave His life a ransom are gathered in, then shall the Son be made subject to the Father, that God may be all in all. So also is it with the Spirit. 'I have glorified Thee'—'He shall glorify Me.' The Spirit has no other work to do than this, to glorify the Son, to finish the work that the Son has given Him to do. And when He has finished it, He also shall be

made subject to the Father and to the Son, that God may be all in all.

Therefore the work of the Spirit is this: to commend the work that Christ has done for us, to commend it and make it ours. We include the whole of Christ's work for us under the one great name of Salvation. And we call Salvation a double substitution. It is the substitution of Christ on the cross for our justification, and it is substitution of Christ in the heart for our sanctification. Jesus Christ has done it all, and the Father seals it all with His acceptance in the resurrection from the dead. But it is outside of me; a sublime spectacle, it touches me with admiration but not with love; it moves, but it benefits me not; till the Holy Spirit completes the circuit, and the current flows free, a current of knowledge and of faith, of influence and of exercise, and behold, both Himself and the resurrection from the dead are fertilising Certainties within me.

The Theology of the Psalms.

BY PROFESSOR THE REV. W. T. DAVISON, D.D., BIRMINGHAM.

V. THE FUTURE.

IN our last paper it was said that the hope of a future life formed no part of the psalmists' working creed. But this statement must be strictly limited to the prospect of personal life beyond the grave. Hope of a glorious future, so far from being absent from the Psalms, is the very light of life in many of them, and forms a fringe of beauty, or undertone of music, in nearly all of them. But it is a hope for the community rather than the individual, and is to be realised upon the visible earth, not in an intangible and inconceivable heaven. Only, as sometimes at sunset the horizon which forms the meeting-line of earth and sky is doubly indistinct by reason of the glory which illumines both, so it is often hard, in the writings of psalmists and prophets, to say under what conditions the splendid ideal which they picture is to

be realised, and the very attempt to define the hopes of the seer in modern speech and in terms of modern ideas is misleading.

The use of the term 'Messianic psalms' is apt to be misunderstood. Just as the Lord Jesus Christ avoided the use of the word Messiah because it was associated in the minds of His contemporaries with certain fixed ideas, of which He would fain disabuse it, so we are apt to bring with us to the study of certain psalms called Messianic, ideas of our own which we read into the text when we cannot actually find them there. The so-called 'Psalms of Solomon,' really Psalms of the Pharisees, written about a century before Christ, are—many of them, at least—Messianic in the customary use of the term. They have much to say of a personal Messiah, an Anointed of the Lord, a true