

effort is made to make it better known, not to speak of refuting it (pp. 206-208). Afterwards, speaking of the Epistles separately, he writes sixteen lines concerning the authenticity of that to the Galatians, in which the principal objections are enumerated, but not criticized (p. 221). Not a word about the authenticity of the Epistles to the Corinthians. Not a syllable about the authenticity of the Epistle to the Romans, notwithstanding that four pages (242-246) are bestowed upon former observations about chaps. 15-16, and every now and then two or more pages are devoted to the objections from time to time raised against the remaining Pauline Epistles.

To give a second example, Jülicher vents his wrath on our 'Hyperkritik' on p. 17 of his *Einleitung in das N.T.*, 'ganz kurz' (very shortly), but does not take any account of the objections mentioned by us. With all the N.T. Epistles he refers to the authenticity, either to defend or to oppose it. Only in those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians he considers this quite superfluous. We poor 'modern sceptics' do not seem to be worth more than to be put in a corner with a few great words and to be referred to no more.

Dr. G. Krüger, professor in Giessen, of the same mind as Jülicher, describes, in his *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, 1895, p. 14, 'this wave of hypercriticism' as a criticism which finds its pleasure in completely destroying, by unfounded phantasies, the little light which has been vouchsafed to aid our examination of the problems of primitive Christianity. He has told us lately how he has been partially converted from Ritschl to Schwegler. He had already read the latter's

*Nachapostolische Zeitalter*, but . . . 'im Bann der Vorurteile' (*Das Dogma vom neuen Testament*, 1896, p. 24). Now the book seemed quite different to him. He assures us emphatically that then only he got acquainted with the book.

The suspicion does not seem groundless that the 'best critics of Germany,' in as far as they have made themselves independently acquainted with this 'wave of hypercriticism,' have not up till now got their knowledge from the essays and books relating to it because they read it 'im Bann der Vorurteile.' If one asks why these writings have been banned, the answer can once more be given in Krüger's words: 'Wegen Verbreitung von—natürlich wissenschaftlichen—Irrlehren' (*Das Dogma*, p. 25). It is a false doctrine of science which has fascinated 'the best critics of Germany,' so that hearing they do not hear, and seeing they do not see, and so become unfaithful to their principles respected everywhere else, and refuse to take serious account of objections, which they are bound to consider, once they have been felt and plainly brought into notice by theologians whom they used to honour as fellow-soldiers in the struggle for perfectly untrammelled scientific research. That false doctrine consists of the belief in the infallibility of our opinion of the history of the oldest Christianity, which the great Baur has mostly brought to light, a light that can and must be tempered, but cannot be strengthened. To this opinion belongs, among other things, the dogma of the authenticity of the leading epistles which may not be doubted at any price, and which from the nature of the case does not need examination, much less proof.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## The Great Text Commentary.

### THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

JOHN xvi. 7.

'Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.' (R.V.)

EXPOSITION.

'Nevertheless I tell you the truth.'—*I tell you the truth* (Bengel, *mentiri nescius*): comp. 14<sup>2</sup>, 'If it were not

so, I would have told you.' Jesus makes it express and emphatic that He tells them the truth in this matter; because, as the sadness of the apostles shows in v. 6, the matter seemed to be very different.—HENGSTENBERG.

'It is expedient for you that I go away.'—The gift of the Holy Spirit depended on Christ's ascension, on Christ's receiving Him as glorified man. The advantages of this exchange are: (1) the deeper knowledge of Christ; (2) the thorough development of their own character, living by faith, having communion with an unseen Lord, attaining a

self-dependence and inner spiritual maturity. What was implied in the Comforter's coming, has been already stated; (1) in 14<sup>16, 17</sup>, where the facts that He is the Father's gift at the Son's request, His permanent abode with them and in them, and their exclusive reception and knowledge of Him as the Spirit of truth, unrecognisable by the world as such, are insisted on; (2) in 14<sup>20</sup>, where His work as teacher and reminder to the disciples of all that their Lord said to them is asserted; (3) in 15<sup>26</sup>, where he is spoken of as a witness to Christ through his disciples. The last and fullest account of His office in the world and in the Church now follows. The expediency of Christ's departure can be gathered from all this great work of the Holy Spirit. Thus He is (1) Permanent Indweller; (2) Teacher and Remembrancer; (3) Witness; (4) Guide into Truth (v. 13<sup>ff.</sup>).—REITH.

'That I go away.'—There are three different Greek verbs in vv. 5, 7, 10, and our translators have not been happy in translating them. The verb in vv. 5, 10 should be *I go away*: here, for 'I go away,' we should have *I depart*; and for 'I depart' we should have *I go My way*. In the first, the primary idea is *withdrawal*; in the second, *separation*; in the third, *going on to a goal*.—PLUMMER.

'For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.'—He does not say, will not come, but will not come *unto you*. Hitherto the Spirit had been given only to men especially fitted by their spiritual nature to receive its teachings, and to become in turn teachers to others. After the death and resurrection of Christ the Spirit was given to the Church universal, to all believers (see Ac 2<sup>8</sup>). The language, therefore, does not prove according to Alford, that 'the gift of the Spirit at and since Pentecost was, and is, something totally distinct from anything before that time.' The difference consisted in its universal bestowal, whereas before it was limited to a few. Why could not the Spirit be sent until Christ had first gone away? Because it is impossible for men to live at the same time by faith and by sight. So long as the disciples had a visible manifestation of God with them, they would not and could not turn their thoughts inward to that more sacred but less easily recognised manifestation which could not be seen, and therefore could be known only by spiritual apprehension.—ABBOTT.

'But if I go, I will send him unto you.'—The absence of the pronoun before the verb here (*πέμψω, I will send*; cf. *ἐγὼ πέμψω, I will send*, 15<sup>26</sup>, *I will send*) gives predominance to the thought of the mission of the Spirit as a fact (cf. Lk 26<sup>40</sup>, Ac 1<sup>4</sup>). The departure of Christ was in itself a necessary condition for the coming of the Spirit to men. The withdrawal of His limited bodily presence necessarily prepared the way for the recognition of a universal presence (cf. 7<sup>39</sup>). And again, the presence of Christ with the Father, the consummation of His union with the Father as God and Man, was the preliminary to the mission of the Spirit. He sent the Spirit in the virtue of His ascended manhood.

And yet again, the mission and the reception of the Spirit alike required a completed atonement of Man and God (He 9<sup>26ff.</sup>), and the glorifying of perfect humanity in Christ.—WESTCOTT.

## METHODS OF TREATMENT.

### I.

*By the Rev. T. D. Bernard, M.A., Canon of Wells.*

'Nevertheless,' He says, 'I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away.' Strange as it sounds to you, it is the truth, and it is I who tell it to you (the arrangement and use of the personal pronoun are emphatic). It is for your interest and advantage that I go away. There is loss and gain; but the loss itself is gain, as Augustin frequently insists, and as all more spiritual thinkers expound. It has been often shown how the withdrawal of the visible presence of Jesus was for the disciples' salutary progress and advance. In these arguments, two leading ideas may be distinguished. It was the end of tutelage which would have kept them children, and the removal of a veil which would have kept them carnal. The first reason is incidental to the natural constitution of man; the second is inherent in the supernatural scheme of things.

It belongs to human nature in childhood, or in stages analogous to childhood, to be formed by external supervision, and in maturity to be set free from it; and there is a time when prolonged supervision would not promote, but arrest, maturity. The greater independence of judgment and action has its risks; but the virtue of the child who is kept right is of less perfect character than that of the man who keeps right himself. The time had come when it was better for these disciples to pass out of the first stage of discipline into one which would test the principles and powers they had gained, and to exchange the eye ever upon them, the word ever in their ears, the visible presence which had made their life and safety, for a state in which service, loyalty, and love would be strengthened by more independent exercise, and an obedience of sight would become obedience of faith. It was good for them to be with Jesus; it was better to prove that they had been with Him. Even in this sense it was expedient for them that He should go away.

But this was the more superficial gain. Still more necessary, in the order of grace, was the removal of the veil which would have kept them carnal. The presence of Christ in the flesh, so great a help to the life which they had lived, would be a hindrance to the life which they were to live; for it must have kept their minds in relation to

Him in the region of the visible, the corporeal, the external. While He sat there before them in the body, it was hard to enter into the mystery of a spiritual union, or duly to apprehend the divine in the human. Man is by nature slow to pass beyond sight and sense, and the affections which these can generate. Indeed, there has been too much evidence in historical Christianity of the disposition to 'know Christ after the flesh,' and to fashion His religion to a corresponding character. His warning on that subject was connected with the lesson of His departure. 'What, then, if ye should behold the Son of Man ascending up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life, (6<sup>62,63</sup>). For this reason, and in the same sense, He may well say, 'It is expedient for you that I go away.'

## II.

*By the Rev. John Morgan, Edinburgh.*

It was expedient for Christ to go away.

### I. *On His own account.*

1. He had left Heaven and home and His Father's house on a blessed errand—to reveal the Father and His love. And now He had finished the work given Him to do. Like one who goes 'into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return,' He has finished His work, He has nothing to linger for, He must go home.

2. He could exercise a new function, and claim a new prerogative after His 'obedience unto death.' A home-coming welcome awaited Him as the new Head and King of the Church and the world.

3. The Spirit was the agent in His sinless conception. Hence the sinlessness of His human nature. Yet it was none the less human nature, not something above it, but the perfection of it. All through His humiliation He was sustained by the Spirit. Now His triumph is complete, and the Spirit will glorify His perfect humanity transferred to Heaven.

### II. *For the sake of His disciples.*

1. They had heard of His departure before, but had never fully realised it. He had spoken to them of it, and Peter had rebuked Him. At His Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah spake of His decease at Jerusalem. In the words of the institution of the Last Supper, He tries to bring it home to them. It is an awful necessity, but expedient for them.

2. On the Day of Atonement the high priest, after offering the sacrifice, went into the Holy of Holies. Our High Priest has done the same. His work, finished on earth, is continued in Heaven. We have now an Advocate with the Father.

3. It was necessary for the disciples for the enlargement of their knowledge and the discipline of their character. Sense must give place to faith. They must no longer cling to Him, but be thrown upon their own resources. As the breaking up of home-life makes the child a man, this crisis of their spiritual life developed and educated the disciples.

### III. *That He might send the Comforter.*

The coming of the Spirit depended upon His going away. Before He could send the Spirit, He must Himself be glorified. His glorified humanity involved the full reception of the Holy Ghost. Then he could send the Spirit as His own; and, free from the limitations of this life, He could impart His Spirit unconditionally. He should come as Intercessor or Advocate; as a permanent indwelling power and presence in the hearts of men; as their great Teacher, to bring to remembrance the words of Christ; and as a Witness to Him as the Son of God.

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

It is difficult to think of any privilege greater than the personal presence and fellowship of Jesus Christ. No wonder that it needed the unwonted asseveration of their divine Lord to convince the incredulous hearts of the disciples that there would be a greater. However others might have regarded Him, cast Him out, sought to stone Him, crucified Him, these poor disciples had learned to love and worship Him. They had found His bosom a pillow for their cares, His heart a sanctuary for their affections. He had taught them the divinest truths; He had filled them with spiritual strength. His life had been to them a luminous glory, a pattern for their piety, a sure ground for their faith. He had wrought miracles for their need; He had knelt for them in prayer. He had inspired them with human love and brotherhood. He was to them both earthly friend and heavenly guide. They had seen Him tempted of the devil, refusing earthly glory. He had been transfigured before them, and they had worshipped Him as the Son of God; they 'beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' They had seen His works of power and blessing, His life of sanctity and love. 'Blessed were their eyes, for kings and priests and righteous men had desired to see what they saw.' And through all they had found Him the most thoughtful, tender, patient friend. Had He not loved

John, and taught Peter, and gratefully said of them all, 'Ye are they who have continued with Me in My temptation?' Was ever such tenderness poured forth from so full a heart, as on this night when He was betrayed; were ever such words uttered by human lips? It is the Holy of Holies of the temple of His teaching. No wonder that sorrow should fill their hearts. Wonderful must the blessing be that could overpass the presence of their Lord. What is it?—HENRY ALLON.

THE great truths are never apprehended while the great teachers of those truths are living to expound them. The death of a great teacher deepens and disseminates the knowledge of the truth. It was so with the death of Christ. It has been so with the death of every great teacher since Christ died. And the death of a great teacher not only deepens the knowledge of the truth, it disseminates that knowledge. The Reformation is a great deal broader than Luther; and Calvinism is a great deal larger than John Calvin; Methodism is immeasurably more than Wesley; and, in a true sense, Christianity is more than Jesus of Nazareth—not more than Christ, but more than Jesus of Nazareth. There are some persons who look forward with hope to a second coming, in fleshy and visible presence, of Christ. They want to see Jesus of Nazareth descend again to earth, enthroned and crowned, sitting at Jerusalem. This would limit Christianity instead of broadening it, weaken instead of strengthening it, decrease instead of adding to its power.—LYMAN ABBOTT.

ALL bodily presence is weak. No man in the flesh has ever attained to universal conquest or ever will. Cæsar?—

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,  
May stop a hole to keep the wind away.

Alexander?—When all was told he lay dead under his supper-table. Napoleon?—In lonely friendless exile he wore away his life. If a man is going to lift the world, the fulcrum of his lever must be set outside it.

So long as Jesus dwelt amongst His disciples, they were wholly dependent upon His bodily presence. One night while rowing across the Sea of Gennesaret the storm fell upon them, and they were overwhelmed with fear. What at that moment was their Master's power to them? Yet He was only three miles away. Their faith was so sensuous it reached only to their finger tips. He must therefore vanish out of their sight; for their sake, for the world's sake, He must leave them.

Lycurgus, who, about 900 B.C., prepared a code of laws for Sparta, believing that his personal presence was a hindrance to the just observance of that code, mysteriously disappeared, and was never seen or heard of. In like manner, to secure the legitimate fruits of His ministry, Christ must go away.—DAVID JAMES BURRELL.

It is perhaps not too much to say that the disciples never loved Christ aright till He became invisible. Their love had much of the intensity and selfishness of passion, co-existed with much self-seeking and jealousy. Perhaps the

lying upon the Master's breast at supper had something to do with John's love—perhaps, too, something with the apostasy of Judas; it may have caused in the others heart-burning, and a little criticism of the ungenerous sort. There was certainly much of the instinctive in Mary's affection, and possibly it mingled in the love of the other women. But when Jesus ascended, all this was changed. Their affections were enlarged and clarified. Jealousy perished for ever; love celestial and serene was born in their hearts, each man feeling that he who loved most was best.—A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

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