

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

Is it possible to hold communion with God in sleep? Dr. Marshall Talling has written a book on *Inter-Communion with God* (Revell; 3s. 6d. net), and in trying to cover the whole subject he comes, in the sixteenth chapter, to sleep, and takes it in also. He believes that it is possible to have communion with God in sleep. He is not quite sure that we can pray in sleep, though he would like to satisfy the apostle's command, 'Pray without ceasing,' as literally as that. But he firmly believes that if we are accustomed to hold communion with God during the day, God will continue it with us during the night.

We at once recall the second verse of the 127th Psalm. It is curious that Dr. Talling does not recall it. Perhaps he is satisfied with the old translation. And who will deny the beauty of the old translation, 'He giveth his beloved sleep'? But the new translation is more safe grammatically, 'He giveth it to his beloved in sleep.' And there is more to be got out of it.

There is this possibility of communion with God to be got out of it. The Psalmist is anticipating the Sermon on the Mount. He is addressing those who will take thought for the morrow. Lie down to rest, he says; He will take care of to-

morrow; while you are asleep the corn will be growing, the grape will be deepening to the purple. He will be preparing you your food in due season. And more than that. In your sleep He will be with you. He will make known His will to you. In the rest of sleep He will give you what you cannot receive in the bustle of the day.

'Certain it is,' says Dr. Talling, 'that often we lie down at night distressed, hemmed in, undecided, our way dark and obstructed; but we awake at peace, for the light has come. We are resolved what to do, and we go straight forward, forgetful of last night's distress, unthinking of the great change that has come over us, satisfied merely, or perhaps grateful, that we are no longer in doubt, but seeking no explanation; unconscious that God came to us, as to Jacob, and that the place is a Bethel.'

Is this our own doing? Is it the mere result of rest? Dr. Talling does not believe that. It was done for us, he says. It is more spiritual than physical. We laid us down and slept, He sustained us, He gave this to His beloved in sleep. Dr. Talling quotes from *The Mystery of Sleep*, by Bigelow: 'We are developed spiritually during our sleeping hours as distinctly and as exclusively as

we are developed physically and intellectually during our waking hours,' and he agrees with Bigelow heartily.

But if there is communion with God in sleep, is there never a more immediate result of it? Sometimes there is. Dr. Talling quotes from the *Personal Reminiscences* of Mr. Spurgeon. It was Saturday night, and the sermon would not come. He retired to rest. Awakened late, he thought the opportunity of preparing it was past, when he was told that 'he had preached the sermon during the night while soundly sleeping, and his congregation of one had acted as reporter.'

The Society of Friends held their annual meetings this year outside London. It is, we understand, the first time in their history that they have done so. They held their meetings in Leeds. Of all the speakers at these meetings, so far as those who are not members of the Society of Friends were allowed to listen to them, the most notable was Miss Robinson, of Liverpool. And the most notable thing which Miss Robinson said was this, 'The Old Testament has no authority over the follower of Christ.'

Did the Society of Friends accept that statement? They accepted it. Miss Robinson was pleading for a public opinion that would put an end to war. She suddenly remembered that in the Old Testament God commanded the extermination of the Canaanites. She remembered that in the Old Testament God is called a Man of War. She answered at once, 'We are not bound by what is contained in the Scriptures of the Old Testament; the Old Testament has no authority over the follower of Christ.'

The Society of Friends applauded. Will others applaud? If the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford had been present, it is certain that he would have applauded for one.

Professor Bigg's new book was noticed last month. But the most noticeable thing in it was held over. It is the repudiation of the Old Testament, the rejection of its claim to rule the conduct of the follower of Christ. Dr. Bigg says that the greatest error into which the Early Church fell was the error of placing the Old Testament by the side of the New and giving it authority over life and conduct.

Dr. Bigg does not mean that the Old Testament is not of God. He means that in all the ways of God with men there is adaptation and development. What is good for the days of Moses is not good for the days of Paul or Polycarp. The law was given by Moses for the very purpose of making men fit to do without it. It made them fit. And then, as a rule of conduct, it had to pass away.

The early Christians did not see that. And so, when the pagan attack came and fixed itself upon the morality of the Old Testament, the early Christians were driven to take refuge in the weakness of allegorism. If the first Christians had recognized the principle of a development in the revelation of God to man, they would have answered the pagan and said, We have nothing to do with the morality of the Old Testament: it is not our morality, it is not the morality of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And it was not only in face of the pagan attack that the Early Church suffered by missing the principle of development. More lasting and more crippling was the loss to her own genius and power. For Dr. Bigg holds that under the mistaken notion that the beliefs and practices of the Old Testament were binding upon the Christian Church, many things were perpetuated which had served their day, and should forever have ceased to be. And he is bold enough to name one thing. It is the priesthood. As early, he says, as the end of the first century the Christian presbyter is compared by Clement of Rome to the Jew-

ish priest. In the course of the third century the idea struck deep root. But it was a mistaken idea, and who can tell the evil that it has worked and will work?

Professor Bigg says that we must apply the principle of development to the Old Testament. Does it stop there? He does not carry it farther, but we do not suppose he would hesitate to carry it farther if it lay to his hand to do so. It lies to the hand of another, and he does not hesitate.

There is a book, entitled *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament*, which has just been published at the Press of the University of Chicago. Its author is Professor Shailer Mathews, of the department of Systematic Theology in that University. The book is written on the understanding that in the New Testament, as well as in the Old, there are things which belong to the past.

The way in which Professor Shailer Mathews puts the matter is this. He says that every truth has its temporary form and its eternal content. We must separate the form from the content. And when we have separated the form from the content we shall probably see that the content is valid and applicable as ever it was, but the form is outgrown and obsolete.

Dr. Mathews takes his first example from some of the Epistles of St. Paul. 'Few teachers,' he says, 'would to-day assert that women should not speak in meetings, or that there was any divine regulation concerning the length of a Christian's hair. At the same time, these same teachers would assert that the general principles of orderly conduct and modest deportment which found expression in the apostle's directions to Græco-Roman Christians, are as applicable to the Christians of to-day as to those of nineteen hundred years ago.'

But his great example is the Messianic Hope, for that is the business of his book. And when, after a long and thorough investigation, every step

of which is guided by the principle of historical development, Professor Shailer Mathews gathers together his results, he holds it undeniable that certain purely Jewish and outworn forms of that Hope—which is itself indestructible—were accepted by the earliest Christian communities; and that these forms checked the growth of the Hope or misdirected it. The essential and eternal element of the Messianic Hope is the divine self-sacrificing love. The extraneous element, once good and necessary, is a special eschatology, a special method in which God's self-sacrificing love is to show itself, as well as a particular time. That is still the chief joy of the Messianic Hope to many ardent Christians. What would they do without their expectation of a Second Coming? But Professor Mathews holds that it is joy in a form of belief which served its end before Christ came, and should never have entered into Christianity.

The same thing is said in yet another way in a volume of sermons which the Bishop of Derry has published. The volume is mentioned on another page.

Choosing for text the words of Jacob in Gn 37³³, 'It is my son's coat, an evil beast hath devoured him,' Dr. Chadwick says, 'This verse is the earliest recorded utterance of a tendency which is rooted in human nature—the tendency to reckon that life is destroyed because the raiment which it used to wear is spoiled. Because the coat was torn, Jacob thought the son was dead. But Joseph was even then on his way to the second place in the greatest kingdom in the world.'

The Jews had woven for their Messiah the dress of a king, a conqueror, a giver-away of thrones. When He came, this dress was presented to them all torn and sullied. They were bidden to accept one who was meek and lowly, and sitting on an ass, instead of a warhorse with fetlocks deep in blood. They felt that if this were all, then all was lost.

We look back upon the Reformation. We look back upon that great time with gratitude and pride. We wonder how any honest man could have hesitated to choose his part. But the Bishop of Derry asks us to realize the agony of being swept out upon seas of questioning without a shore, with all the accustomed landmarks gone from sight. He bids us consider the horror of the average man, the average good man, who saw his old reverences outraged and his old certainties refuted. Priestly supremacy, ecclesiastical unity, penances, pilgrimages, sacramental absolutions—these were the robes of the faith. And when the robe was empty and bloodstained, was not the life gone, was not the faith subverted? But Christ lives on. He is nearer to His world-empire to-day because of that terrible crisis.

Then came science to our fathers, with a torn coat in her hand and little sympathy in her tones, asking whether they knew the wearer. Many were chilled to the heart. It is the coat in which they had clothed the Bible—creation at a stroke and only a few thousand years ago, seven literal days, and all the rest of it—the coat was all torn and stained; some evil beast had devoured their beloved Book. But the Bible is still with us, and it is more to us to-day because of the fright which our fathers got.

If we rigidly exclude mythology from the Book of Genesis, the passage that remains to give us most perplexity is in the sixth chapter. It is the narrative of the union of the 'sons of God' with the 'daughters of men.'

Dr. H. A. Redpath excludes mythology. His book, which has just been published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, under the title of *Modern Criticism and the Book of Genesis*, is not a commentary. Dr. Redpath might therefore have skipped this story in the sixth chapter. But he does not skip it. He is too honest to skip it. He feels its difficulty to the full; he knows

that the best explanation which he can offer is a disconcerting one; but he offers it notwithstanding.

Who were the 'sons of God,' and who these 'daughters of men'? Dr. Redpath does not tell us which was which, but one he thinks belonged to the race we now belong to, the other belonged to a previous anthropoid race. He thinks that we may allow evolution to speak here. Now evolution tells us that out of the anthropoids came anthropos, man. But all the anthropoids did not develop into man; some of them remained anthropoids still. Perhaps those very inferior persons who have been found in the forests of Africa are not really men, but only anthropoids. Perhaps they belong to that earlier mammal which did not develop into man. Perhaps that is why they are gradually disappearing from off the face of the earth. Perhaps a union is possible between such anthropoids and genuine man. And perhaps, if it took place as recorded in Genesis, 'the influence of the *anthropos* was sufficient to make the resultant progeny rather of the *anthropos* type than of the *anthropoid*.'

Are we ready now to set aside the Old Testament? No, we are not ready yet. We need not speak for posterity. Posterity will not thank us. But for ourselves we must speak plainly. The time has not come for printing the New Testament by itself and calling it the Bible.

Why not? Have we not in the New Testament all that we want for our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace? We have. We have more than that. We have all that we want for the conviction of sin and for peace of conscience. But we have one thing in the Old Testament which we scarcely have in the New. And it is the deliberate judgment of Professor F. B. Denio that the Old Testament should be retained as part of the Bible for that one thing.

It is its theophanies. Professor Denio has written two articles to the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. They

appear in the issues for January and April 1905. He wrote the articles in order to utter the thoughts that arose in him as he studied the 34th Psalm. At first he read the Psalm quietly and comfortably. Then he was arrested by the words in the 9th verse—

Oh fear Jehovah, ye his saints :
For there is no want to them that fear him.

Is that true? He passed on to the 19th and two following verses—

Many are the afflictions of the righteous ;
But Jehovah delivereth him out of them all.

He keepeth all his bones :
Not one of them is broken.

Evil shall slay the wicked :
And they that hate the righteous shall be condemned.

Is that true? _____

It is not true. Professor Denio saw at once that it is not true. The experience of men and women all the world over, and apparently in all ages of the world, declares emphatically that it is not true. The psalmist no doubt had this experience, and out of his own limited experience he uttered quite sincerely what he believed to be a universal truth. But it is not a universal truth.

And as Professor Denio thought about it, he came to see that this is the way with the Old Testament throughout. The truths that are uttered in it are true for the man who utters them; and when their utterance is public, they are true for his time. But they are not always universal truths.

There is another psalmist who sings—

Behold I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin did my mother conceive me.

Is that true? No doubt the psalmist spoke the truth. As he uttered it he felt it to be true. Are we therefore entitled to establish a doctrine of Original Sin upon it? Are we entitled to use it as a proof text for such a doctrine, even when we

find the doctrine elsewhere? Professor Denio holds that we are not. For it is not a universal truth. It is this man's expression of his own experience. It was a vivid experience, and he expresses it in most vivid, and even immortal, language. But he had not thought of uttering a universal literal fact. He thought only of uttering his own penitence, his own deep self-condemnation for his own sin.

And yet both statements are true. They are both true universally when they receive the proper universal interpretation. Have we not, everyone of us, felt as this psalmist felt? Have we not taken his words and made them ours, as the best expression of our deep abasement on account of our personal sin and uncleanness? And has not our Lord interpreted the words of the other psalmist, and made them universal, when He says, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you'? Has not St. Paul given them a yet further unfolding when he says, 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God'?

But are we not taught that when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part should be done away? Yes. It is not for the sake of these individual limited experiences that the Old Testament must be maintained. It is for the sake of its theophanies.

For the unique thing in the Old Testament is not this prophet's or that psalmist's experience, but the conviction of certainty which every prophet and every psalmist possesses. In the form in which they are uttered, their utterances may be true only for their generation, or they may be true only for themselves, and we may have to look for their universal application in Christ and the apostles; but however limited their application, they know them to be true. How did they know? Professor Denio believes that they knew because they had a theophany.

There is an Arab proverb, Professor Denio quotes it, which says—

Men are four :

He who knows not, and knows not he knows not. He is a fool,—shun him.

He who knows not, and knows he knows not. He is simple,—teach him.

He who knows, and knows not he knows. He is asleep,—wake him.

He who knows, and knows he knows. He is wise,—follow him.

The Hebrew prophet was wise. He knew, and he knew that he knew.

This is a significant thing in the Old Testament. It is, in Dr. Denio's judgment, the most significant thing. Marvellous is the knowledge which the Old Testament prophet had of God. If we were to gather together the glorious things which are spoken of God in the Old Testament, we should find, says Professor Denio, that they cover nearly all that we know of God. Even our Lord Himself added little to what the Old Testament tells us about God. But much more significant than their knowledge of God is the Hebrew prophets' confidence that what they knew was true. This is the wonder of the Old Testament. How did they know that they knew? Professor Denio says they knew by their theophanies.

A theophany is a direct, physically miraculous, revelation of God. It differs from reflection. Professor Kittel thinks that the Hebrew prophet got at his knowledge of God by reflection. Professor Denio has great respect for Professor Kittel, but he cannot follow him here. He is ready to follow Professor Davidson instead. He believes that in those early ages God deliberately came down and made Himself known to men in the very same way in which one human personality makes himself known to another. The records say so. Dr. Denio sees nothing in psychology or experience that does not confirm the truth of the records. He knows of no other way in which

the Hebrew prophet could have been so sure that he knew.

St. Paul was certain that Jesus of Nazareth had risen from the dead. He got his certainty from a theophany. In the earlier time it was more necessary and more likely to occur. 'A man is in the desert caring for a flock. His eye is caught by an unwonted sight—an acacia tree is ablaze with flame, yet continues unconsumed. Out from the midst of that flaming acacia into the silence of the desert air come intelligible sounds to his ears. In that solitude the man has a long conversation with an unseen person. The conversation runs on into argument and expostulation. A course of conduct is urged upon him.' That is a theophany. Professor Denio, in close touch with modern thought, sees nothing to hinder him from accepting it. He believes that by means of that theophany Moses came to know that God was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; came to know that He was the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious.

The Bishop of Durham has contributed a paper to a volume which is edited by the Rev. A. R. Buckland, M.A., and published by the Religious Tract Society, under the title of *Words of Help on Belief and Conduct*. The Bishop of Durham's paper is an answer to the question, How can the individual soul approach God? It has the first place in the volume.

And it deserves that place. No clearer word of counsel has ever been spoken by Dr. Moule. He knows the delicacy of his topic. He knows its sacredness. But he knows also that we should think aright about this matter of the soul's approach to God, and that we should put our thinking into practice. For there is no doubt of the emphasis in the text which Dr. Moule has chosen. 'As for me,' he renders it, 'as for me, approach to God for me is good.' There is no doubt that the emphasis is on the

me. 'The whole stress of the sentence,' says Dr. Moule, 'lies upon the individual and independent decision.' That is why it is so delicate a theme; that is why it is so sacred.

But there is also a collective aspect of spiritual life, and with that Dr. Moule deals first. It is sometimes expressed in the word Humanity. Humanity is the object of Redemption, as it is the organ of Revelation. Sometimes it is the Kingdom of God that is the central idea. All is for the Kingdom; the individual must find his blessings, if he is to be blest, through its large mediation. And sometimes it is the great word Church. The Church is the true object and recipient of salvation. It is the avenue to Christ, the Shrine, the way to Christ the End. 'Nay, rather,' says Dr. Moule, very carefully, 'it, in its collectivity, is represented as so joined to Him, so filled, so impregnated with Him, that we cannot, as individuals, touch Him, with a sure touch, except through it; scarcely, on the other hand, can we touch it without therefore touching Him.'

There is truth in all these conceptions, in the conception of Humanity, of the Kingdom, of the Church. Especially does Dr. Moule feel the truth that lies in the thought of the Church as the Body of Christ of which we are members. Glorious things are spoken of the Church of Christ, he says. But the Church may become a usurper. Her place is not the highest. It is not even higher than the individual conscience. Two centuries ago the Roman community, ruled by the Jesuit school, strove to crush the protest of conscience among the Jansenists, and strove successfully. But Pascal and the Jansenists were right, the Church was never given to be the autocrat of conscience.

So the Bishop of Durham passes to the individualistic aspect of spiritual life. 'Great is the place and formation of the Church. But that place is not between the conscience, not between the soul, and the Redeemer.' This was the gift

which the Reformation gave us. Bishop Moule recalls the words of John Stuart Mill, who took Comte to task for his complete misreading of Protestantism, as if it were merely negative or destructive. 'No,' said Mill, 'the feeling of a direct responsibility of the individual immediately to God is almost wholly a creation of Protestantism.' And Mill, standing himself outside all creeds, goes on to comment, as well he may, upon the power of this view of things to give stuff and fibre to character, wherever it prevails.

Messrs. Dent are the publishers of a volume of sermons just issued by the Rev. P. C. Purves, of Edinburgh, under the title of *The Divine Cure for Heart Trouble* (3s. 6d. net). One of the sermons is entitled 'Jesus Watching the Temple Treasury.' Mr. Purves points out that Jesus sat down deliberately to observe what the people cast into the treasury. Why? Mr. Purves's answer is, Because it is His own special business to look after the offertory, —the plate, as they call it in Scotland; because He has left the great matter of the propagation of the Gospel to the freewill offerings of His people, and no one but Himself has any right to interfere with it.

He sat down over against the treasury deliberately. He sat down to watch. He has a habit of observing closely. He observed how those who were bidden to a feast chose the best seats. He observed (though He was away on the mountain in communion with the Father and it was night) that the disciples were toiling in rowing on the Sea of Galilee. And He observed the rich casting in their offerings. He observed that many cast in much. He observed a woman cast in hers. He observed that she was a widow, that she was poor, that she cast in two mites, and that it was all her living.

Is He less observant now? He watches still. He knows what we cast in. He that searcheth the heart knoweth. He says Himself, 'I know thy works.'

What is His reason for observing what people give? No doubt because He counts the offering part of the service. The service, said the Scotch minister, begins at the plate,—for in Scotland they used to give as they entered. No doubt also because it is His own property, and He must attend to its administration. 'We give Thee but Thine own,' we sing. He has to see to it that we give as well as sing. He has come to receive of the husbandmen the fruits of His vineyard.

But the chief reason is that which Mr. Purves gives. Christ's act that day was a symbolic act. What He did then He does always. He is the guardian of the treasury. He is its sole guardian. No one has a right to ask us what we give; no one has a right to know. This matter of giving, though it is the means whereby the kingdom of God is to come, is under no compulsion. It is a matter of love or it is nothing. It is the freewill offering of His people's heart.

So He sits down over against the treasury, to observe what people cast into it. And not to condemn them if they cast nothing in. Only to commend them when they cast in much. His estimate also is His own. He saw many that

were rich casting in much, and He said so. But when He saw a poor widow cast in two mites, He said that she had cast in more than they all.

Can we understand the principle by which He estimates? Well, in the first place, it was two mites, not one. We speak of the widow's mite, but the widow cast in two mites. One is enough, we seem to think; but she gave two. Next, it was all her living. The estimate He made was by what she had left, rather than by what she gave. She had nothing left, and so she gave more than they all.

And then, she simply gave it. Some army man wrote recently to the *Times*. 'If the dear old women,' he wrote, 'who give their money for missions in India knew how it was spent!' This widow did not know how it would be spent, and she did not desire to know. Perhaps Caiaphas received it. Perhaps she gave all her living to maintain the state of this most worldly-minded high priest. She did not consider. She simply gave. The distribution? God will see to the distribution. God and the army men will see to it. It is your joy and mine to give, simply to give.

A Buddhist Preacher's Manual.

BY PROFESSOR ARTHUR LLOYD, M.A., THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO, JAPAN.

WAR has its good aspects as well as its bad. Here, in Tokyo, we see comparatively few of the horrors of the great war that is raging. A string of stretchers conveying sick and wounded from Shimbashi Station to the Red Cross Hospital at Aoyama, and now and again a gorgeous funeral procession or memorial service in one of the great Temples,—these are our sad reminders of the horrible actualities of war. Of the good side of war, on the other hand, we see a great deal,—the increased earnestness of the men, the heroic and at the same time the practical self-devotion of the women, the general bracing up that the whole

nation has undergone,—these we see daily and hourly, and they serve to remind us that there are good things in war as well as ills.

The general bracing up of the people covers every department of social life, and has been felt in religion as elsewhere. Buddhist and Christian, Protestant and Catholic, have all roused themselves to a vigorous life of well-doing, the needs of all the suffering portions of the nation, the wounded, the sick, the dying, the widow, and orphan, are all being attended to, and in a year so remarkable for charitable actions as the last has been, the religious life has also come into prominence, and both