

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE second volume of THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS may be expected this month. It is already out of the hands of the authors and editors.

The volume contains articles by one hundred and sixty-nine different authors, of whom one hundred and twenty-five have written only a single article each. This will give some idea of the trouble that has been taken to make the work reliable. The purpose of the Encyclopædia is to enable preachers or teachers, who have to touch on subjects with which they are not at home, to obtain an account of these subjects written by experts, and, while succinct, sufficiently full for their purpose. By means of the scholarship of the authors and the work done by the editors and assistants, the attempt is made to reach a higher standard of excellence than has hitherto obtained in encyclopædias.

The number of articles is two hundred and sixty-five. The shortest article is probably not less than a column in length. For the subjects dealt with in this Encyclopædia are all subjects of importance, and require space for their treatment. Except the cross-references there is not a line in the volume that could be rudely described as 'hack-work.' Some one has said that every book is a nut with a kernel, the kernel being

usually quite small, and all the rest husk—the printers call it 'fluff.' Each of these articles is a book with the fluff omitted. If the subject is folk-lore, it would take a large volume with its fluff to say all that is said in the article on Bridges by Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Andrew LANG would write a considerable volume on Bull-roarer and say no more than he has compressed into his article here. Many volumes have been written on the Brahma Samaj, but there is nothing worth knowing about that modern and menacing movement that will not be found in Mr. FARQUHAR'S article. There is just one authority worth naming on the Babis, whose religion has attracted so much attention in the West, and Professor Edward BROWNE tells everything that can be told about them in ten pages. Professor Edward WESTERMARCK is astonished at his own self-denial when he gave up the opportunity of a great book on the history of Asylums throughout the world for the sake of a single article here.

Mr. Israel ABRAHAMS, having a name that deserves it, heads the list of authors. He writes on Blasphemy and on the Body. Among the other Jewish authors are Dr. GASTER, Chief Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregations in London, who writes a most interesting and original article on Jewish religious customs connected with the Birth of children; and Professor GOLDZIEHER

of Budapest, probably the greatest authority in our day on Muhammadanism. Many other religious professions are represented in the authorship. For now the student of Religion always prefers to read an article which has been written from within. If any discount has to be made on the ground of excess of sympathy, he can make it for himself. And the editors will see to it that accurate references are given for all the statements in the article.

Mr. ABRAHAMS has written two articles. One of them is an article on the conception of the Body found in the Old Testament. For, while the Encyclopædia presupposes the possession of a Dictionary of the Bible, and therefore does not deal with matters of geography or antiquities, yet it will contain articles on everything in the Old Testament that is of religious or ethical importance. And these articles will receive an enhanced value from the fact that they will be found side by side with articles showing how the same subject is treated in other religions. There could scarcely be a more instructive study than the comparison of the Hebrew conception of the Body with the Greek and Roman conception; though scarcely less striking is the comparison with the Egyptian ideas. One does not study these articles simply to discover differences. More instructive are the similarities. And it is well to recognize the fact that no one can discuss profitably either the Old Testament or the New Testament conception of the Body without first reading such an introductory article as Professor WHEELER ROBINSON offers here, and then passing to the contrasts and comparisons which are made with the ideas obtaining in other religions.

Who are the authors of Old and New Testament subjects in this volume? Professor BARTLET, of Mansfield College, Oxford, writes on Baptism in the New Testament. The article on the obscure subject of Baptism among the Jews in the time of our Lord is written by Professor BRANDT of Amsterdam. Dean BERNARD of Dublin writes

on Assumption and Ascension; and Mr. BISSEKER, of the Leysian Mission, London, on Brotherly Love. Professor SANDAY has written an article on the Bible, which is followed by an article on the Bible in the Church by Professor VON DOBSCHÜTZ of Strassburg. These two great scholars have worked in co-operation, or at least with a clear understanding of one another's position. Both articles will be found instructive and inspiring, perhaps beyond any others that the volume contains. And this being so, the difference in their style is astonishing. There is also an article on Bibliolatry by a man who inherits a great name—Professor August DORNER of Königsberg.

There is an article by Dr. JEREMIAS of Leipzig which will attract attention. Its subject is the Book of Life. Professor NESTLE writes on Azazel, such an article as he alone can write, minute, indispensable. Beside it must be considered the articles by Professor BARTON and Professor PATON, articles dealing mostly with the gods that are mentioned in the Old Testament, a subject which no purely Biblical scholar has ever much confidence in handling. One of the two great religions coming within the scope of the volume is that of the Babylonians and Assyrians, a religion which affects the study of the Old Testament intimately. The article has been written by Professor ZIMMERN of Leipzig. The other great religion is that of the Aryans, on which Professor OTTO SCHRADER of Breslau has written the longest article in the volume. It is a study in religious development for which alone the price of this volume might have been charged if it had been published separately.

The number of foreign authors is inevitably large. There are eighteen from Germany, six from France, five from Holland, two from Spain, two from Belgium, two from Finland, and from Italy, Austria, Sweden, Japan, one each. These articles have had to be translated. And the translation of an encyclopædia article is not like the translation of an article for a magazine. The translator has to know the subject as well as the

language. He must render his author with the utmost accuracy; and the editor insists upon a translation being as easily read as an original writing.

There is no part of the volume that is likely to be of more value to the preacher than the ethical work. The ethical topics falling within this volume are more remarkable for their elusiveness than for their prominence, and reliable literature upon them has been hard to find. Professor DAVIDSON has written on Awe, Miss EDGELL on Association, Professor EHRHARDT on Autonomy, Mr. GASKELL on Attachment, the late Professor John DAVIDSON on Boycotting, Principal IVERACH on Attention and on Authority, Professor KILPATRICK on Benevolence, Professor MARVIN of Princeton University on Attraction and Repulsion, Professor CLARK MURRAY on Bigotry, Mr. Robert MURRAY of Dublin on Blackmail, Professor OMAN on Boasting, Mr. SCHILLER on Automatism, Mr. RUSSELL SCOTT on Boldness, Professor ARMITAGE SMITH on Barter, Mr. MACRAE TOD on Avarice, Mr. Benjamin WHITEHEAD on Brawling. And closely associated with these are the psychological articles, such as Professor STARBUCK'S article on Backsliding, and Professor Maurice DE WULF'S article on Beauty. Closely associated also, but on the physiological side, are the articles by Professor BLAND-SUTTON on Atrophy, by Dr. DRUMMOND on Blindness, by Professor J. Y. SIMPSON on Biology, and by Professor J. Arthur THOMSON on Atavism and on Biogenesis.

The Encyclopædia, we have said, presupposes a Dictionary of the Bible. It also completes it. It follows the ideas of the Old and New Testament throughout their fortunes in the history of the Church. It serves the purpose of a Dictionary of the Church. For there are articles not only on all religious and ethical ideas and practices, but also on all the customs and folk-lore that have been so important a part of the religious life of Christianity, and on all the persons who have made their mark on its history.

Professor Sanday has written a criticism of Mr. F. C. Conybeare's *Myth, Magic, and Morals*. He has written it, not as a reviewer of books, nor at the solicitation of any editor, but simply from his own sense of the situation which the book has created. He has published his criticism in pamphlet form, under the title of *A New Marcion* (Longmans; 1s. net).

Professor Sanday and Mr. Conybeare are both Oxford men. The situation which the book has created has been created in Oxford. It may not be confined to Oxford. Professor Sanday does not think that it is. But he knows that, if also elsewhere, certainly in Oxford, there is on the one hand a strong Christian movement, and on the other hand a good deal of quiet estrangement from Christianity. The Christian movement is not only hopeful but active. The estrangement is at the present time less realized, floating opinion rather than formed conviction. The danger is that Mr. Conybeare's book may do something to encourage that floating opinion to precipitate itself in forms of active opposition.

That is Dr. Sanday's reason for answering the book. There are smaller reasons. Mr. Conybeare, he says, has 'one little rub against myself.' He has also some exceedingly trenchant things to say of the class to which Dr. Sanday belongs. 'We of the Church of England, especially the higher officers of the Church, have our portraits painted pretty plainly.' Dr. Sanday quotes two specimens. Of the last specimen this is the last sentence: 'When Anglican bishops meet together in council they talk and write as if religious life was impossible unless it be based on a quiet, but wholesale, suppression of truth.'

'This sentence,' says Professor Sanday, 'explains at once the whole attitude and temper of the book.' 'Truth,' he adds, 'is taken to mean not exactly what a man troweth, but what the particular author of this book troweth.' And then he says, 'It is not a rare phenomenon to find an author

identifying his own opinions with truth in the abstract, and those of all who differ from him with abstract falsehood; but I do not think that I have ever seen the identification made with such perfect *naïveté* and such serene assurance.'

There is one part of Mr. Conybeare's book which has given Dr. Sanday pleasure. It is his literary criticism of the New Testament. All the Epistles ascribed to St. Paul are accepted as genuine, even including the Pastorals. The Epistle to the Hebrews is regarded as clearly anterior to 70 A.D. The Book of Revelation was composed about the year 93, but an earlier document of 68 or 69 may be worked up in it. St. John's Gospel is placed about 110, to which Dr. Sanday demurs; but he knows that Mr. Conybeare has many scholars with him. The Synoptic question is handled quite judiciously.

Dr. Sanday finds that on the literary data there is very little difference between Mr. Conybeare and himself. The difference begins when Mr. Conybeare begins to draw his conclusions, and the difference is then very great. Professor Sanday calls it portentous. For he says it is a question of faith or no faith. It is not even a question of Christianity or theism. Mr. Conybeare's arguments are directed against both at once. 'It is in some ways a curious position. Twenty-five or thirty years ago similar doctrines were being preached by the late Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant with no small endowment of mother wit, but with a scanty equipment of special knowledge. Mr. Conybeare has no lack of this; and yet he carries on exactly the same line of succession.' And Dr. Sanday finds it significant, as we did, that the book is published by the Rationalist Press Association, the recognized agency of the iconoclastic propaganda.

'Naturally,' says Professor Sanday (and with this paragraph we send our readers to his pamphlet), 'we expect from one who occupies so high a pedestal, from a scholar who has so many

real qualifications for adding to knowledge, some permanent contribution to a philosophy of life, some enlightening conception which shall help to unify thought and solve its perplexities. I can only say that any one who entertains such expectations will be woefully disappointed. The positive outcome of the book is nothing, and less than nothing. It is the merest *Rationalismus vulgaris*, such as would have been in place in the early years of the French Revolution and at no other time before or since. The book leaves upon us the impression of a petulant child who has taken to pieces his toy and cannot put it together again. The only real interest in the writer's mind seems to be the exploding of what he considers superstition, the propagation of these purely negative beliefs which he labels 'Truth' in such large letters. In fact, he aims at doing just what the radicals of thirty years ago aimed at, with more of a scholar's knowledge, but with no more real insight and—must it not be said?—with no more civilized manners.'

The Rev. J. R. P. Sclater, M.A., is minister of the New North Church in Edinburgh. Dr. John Kelman was minister of the New North Church before him; and for a time, when Mr. Sclater was spoken of, he was spoken of as Dr. Kelman's successor. That was never necessary to those who knew him. It is no longer necessary to any one.

Mr. Sclater is a student of Meredith. He is a student of Meredith's poetry. The book which he has published through Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, and called *The Sons of Strength* (1s. net), is an exposition of Meredith's message, his message through his poetry, to the present time. Mr. Sclater accepts the message for himself, and passes it on.

It is a call to be strong. Being a preacher, Mr. Sclater takes a text to start from. His text is 'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence; and

the violent take it by force' (Mt 11¹²). We shall have to consider that text. Mr. Sclater takes it simply to start from. He says that the late F. W. H. Myers somewhere puts up a prayer after this manner: 'From the torpor of a foul tranquillity may our souls be delivered unto war.' George Meredith made that prayer his own. He will make it ours if we give him a hearing. We owe it to him that he has impressed upon us the need of strong effort; and yet more, that he has done this without appealing to the hopelessness of things, without portraying our present condition in a blackness which tends to breed despair. He has told us, as Browning has also told us, that life is good, 'the mere joy of living.' Or, as Chesterton is telling us still, that 'Life is already a very splendid thing. Let us, therefore, make it better.'

To Mr. Sclater this message is welcome. He is weary of the Cassandras who are born blind to existing good and to the reasonableness of gladness. And if he is weary of Cassandras, prophesying darkness, he is still more weary, and with a fuller justification, of the innumerable unnamed prophets who take no delight in strife.

Meredith rejoices in the strength that delights in strife. It is the battle-energy in him that is his first attractiveness. He loves strength, and welcomes occasions for the use of it. To him man is

A creature matched with strife

To meet it as a bride.

In the presence of death itself he would have us show the brave front. When the last shadow had begun to fall upon one very dear to him, it was her

Fortitude, quiet as Earth's

At the shedding of leaves,

that he noted and set in remembrance. And so, loving strength, and loving the occasion for the exercise of it, he loves those happenings that come to us from without and have a sharpening effect, all that

. . . may give us edging keen,
String us for battle, till as play
The common strokes of fortune shower.

Now, all this insistence on strength, and on the strife that breeds strength, is not unchristian. More unchristian, though it is so common in our hymn-books, is the conception that this present life is a vale of woe, and that fearfulness is an attribute of sainthood. Says Mr. Sclater: 'When a hymn-writer needs to exhort "fearful saints" to take fresh courage, when songs of devotion mourn, not sin, but the circumstances of living which are the expression of the Perfect Will, there is clear necessity for a recall to that attitude of joyous acceptance of hardness, which ought to be the natural outgrowth of Christian faith. Fearfulness, however excusable in many common circumstances, should be recognized as the mark of a state not yet perfectly sanctified. Indeed, the term "fearful saint" should be acknowledged to be as paradoxical as "irritable saint." It stands parallel to such a name as "distrustful believer."'

Well, this seems all right. It is worth saying, and it is well said. We beat our applause, and loud applause. But before the sound of our applause has ceased, Mr. Sclater has challenged us to put it into practice. And he has challenged us to put it into practice by entering life, by sending our sons and daughters into life, into society, by just running those risks, and allowing our children to run those risks, which so many good Christian people are telling us every day that we have no right to run.

Mr. Sclater is satisfied that the Church of Christ is not called to the use of negatives. The great commandment is 'Thou shalt,' not 'Thou shalt not.' 'The fact is,' he says, 'that when the Church begins to set forth what a man should be in terms of "thou shalt not" rather than of "thou shalt," it is whimpering to the world that it has lost its nerve. At the present time, part of the alleged detachment of youth from the Church may be explained simply on the

ground that the most vocal section of the Church, which is taken to be representative of it, is hesitating a doubt whether it is safe to dare to lay hold on life: a thing which our young, although they do not so phrase it to themselves, are most surely resolved to do.

But there is a distinction. There is a difference between the enjoyment of life of the Christian and the enjoyment of life of the man in the street. For the ideal of the Church is always strong in one respect: always it involves flesh-mastery by the spirit, whereas the ideal of the man in the street frequently involves no such thing. His ideal involves courage and honour certainly, but in a restricted sense. He need not show courage in the face of temptation that is hidden. He need have no sense of honour to God. For the matter of that, he need have very little sense of honour towards women. Provided that he does not run away when he is shot at, and that he does not cheat at cards, he has fulfilled the Law and the Prophets according to the teaching of the market-place.

No, there is one thing more. The man of the street must be genial. And geniality is good. But Mr. Sclater thinks that it may be overpraised. As a mark of ethical attainment he thinks that the praise of it may be easily overdone. For 'geniality and graciousness of bearing are a matter of temperament and endowment, and are not in the least inconsistent with a good deal of rascaldom. It is quite simple to smile and smile and be a villain. The Prodigal Son, I make no doubt, was the most popular person in his village; and many a scamp since him has made assemblies shine. The Sons of Strength cannot always command the gayest laugh.' Often, to their own sorrow, they may lack the faculty of easy sympathy. Nevertheless, it is they, and not those who are born popular, who are Earth's chosen offspring ever.

And the Christian who striveth for the mastery is to be distinguished from another. He is to be distinguished not only from the man of the world,

but also from the unclassed looker-on. Unclassed, because he may be within the Church or without it. And he is of many types: from the man who is too intelligent to consider anything definitely wrong and definitely requiring eradication, to the good-natured but futile person who, while sympathizing with efforts for the extension of the Kingdom of God, is too inert to do any of the spade-work himself. Within the Church, says Mr. Sclater, none tends more to the ineffectiveness of the society as a whole—not even those who stand in direct opposition—than the apathetic fringe. They are the murderers of the Church's enthusiasms.

Now when Mr. Sclater has vindicated the place of the Strong in the Church of Christ, he turns to consider their nature. And he finds (still following Meredith the poet) that they have three marks upon them: (1) the mark of Unity; (2) the mark of the Love of the Real; (3) the mark of Assent.

They have first the mark of Unity. 'All things are yours . . . life.' For man is a body as well as a mind, and must propose completion in respect of both. Meredith stands equally opposed to the sensualist and to the ascetic. Body and mind? There is spirit also. Mr. Sclater does not name it. But it is included in the quotation which he immediately makes from Meredith. For Meredith, not troubled with word-formations,—trichotomy dichotomy, and the like,—finds man composed of 'blood and brain and spirit,' and insists that to deny any one of these its place in his constitution is to expect disaster.

Blood and brain and spirit, three
 (Say the deepest gnomes of Earth),
 Join for true felicity.
 Are they parted, then expect
 Some one sailing will be wrecked:
 Separate hunting are they sped,
 Scan the morsel coveted.
 Earth that Triad is: she hides
 Joy from him who that divides;
 Showers it when the three are one
 Glassing her in union.

The passage is difficult; Mr. Sclater admits it. But whatever else it means, it means this, that when the body desires without the consent of the mind, or the mind covets without the consent of the spirit, or even when the spirit craves without regard to the mind and the body, then the thing so desired, coveted, or craved is a thing not wholly acceptable. It is a morsel, as Mr. Sclater puts it, which needs to be eyed carefully. If pursued to attainment, the chances are that there will be wrecking somewhere.

Mr. Sclater does not think that this is the time to start a crusade against the crucifixion of the flesh. In many respects, he says, this is an easy day. A little more asceticism in practice would do most of us no harm. But, for all that, let us keep before us the ideal. And the ideal is Meredith's 'blood and brain and spirit,' these three.

The next mark which the Strong possess is the Love of the Real. 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' For it is the imaginary that unnerves us. The real, when we have reached it, we are always able to accept. Meredith is an optimist, an optimist in feeling as well as in thought. But he looks fair and square in the face the darker facts of our living.

Overhead, overhead
 Rushes life in a race,
 As the clouds the clouds chase;
 And we go
 And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
 Even we,
 Even so.

It may be that to recognize facts as facts does not carry us far. Still, it is wise to recognize facts as facts. It is the imagination, we say, that unnerves. The presence of the fact braces us for the conflict with it. 'When a man bares himself to the truth, and permits it to grip him, the act of so doing makes him strong for any circumstances. It is the lesson,' says Mr. Sclater, 'which another

taught us when He said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." A text this for all who are engaged in moral teaching to ponder. Get a man convinced of the great facts—of Sin, of Pardon, of Christ, and of the Indwelling Power—let it come upon his mind one day that these things are true—and behold! he is set free.'

The third mark of the Strong is the mark of Assent. 'Thy will be done.' This is the step that succeeds the acknowledgment of the truth. It is its acceptance. And the acceptance of the truth, that is to say, of the will of God—never mind whether Meredith would say God or not, we say it—the acceptance of the will of God, we say, is not resignation. At least, it is not resignation in the weakened meaning to which that fine word has lately fallen. Meredith emphasizes resignation. But it is not the acceptance of the will of God because we cannot help it. It is making the will of God our will. It may at the beginning be, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' But at the end it is, 'I delight to do thy will, O my God.'

And how is this splendid power of Assent to be reached? Here Meredith gives us an entirely Christian word. It is to be reached by the slaughter of self. In the emphasis upon self he finds the primal source of all the world's fears. If our experience is sore, it is God (Meredith says Earth) that is wrestling
 with our old worm
 Self in the narrow and wide.

And now we come to the Encouragements. This is the third part of Mr. Sclater's book. His own word is 'Inspirations.' For Meredith does not teach us that we can scale the heights of goodness unaided. There are inspirations, of which it may be more truly said that they seize the man, than that the man seizes them. And what are the inspirations to the achievement of worth? Mr. Sclater discovers two—the Companionship and the Forward View.

There is the Companionship. 'I have called you friends.' 'Lo, I am with you alway.' Now, to those who know not Meredith it will seem strange that he should find his companionship in Nature, his companionship first and last. But Earth (with its capital letter) is to Meredith the visible presence of that which we call God. So when faith's keenest ordeal came upon him, in the loss of one who made the world glad,

The changeful visible face
Of our Mother I sought for my food.

And in any wise, it is the man in whom the Spirit has so far gained the mastery who finds sustenance there. The flesh-controlled are not at home in Nature. Mr. Sclater says it is not pressing the thought too much to quote the old words with this emphasis: 'Who shall ascend into the *hill* of the Lord? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.'

Moreover, communion with Nature demands effort. Meredith definitely sought Nature in his distress. 'Our Mother I *sought* for my food.' And behind that particular effort referred to in 'A Faith on Trial' there stood a whole lifetime of purposeful communion. In his moment of need, he tells us, he had but one asset left, and that was his 'disciplined habit to see.' As it proved, that was sufficient; but apart from that disciplined habit, the inspiration which finally came to him would not have been his. He contributed his share to the Companionship by deliberately *attending* to the word of God in Earth.

But there is also the Forward View. 'The things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' Here at last there is in Meredith not only some surprise but much defect. He has hope. His religion does not rest in the present; it reaches into the future. But his hope is for the future of the race. He has no hope for the individual. He even wages war upon the desire for individual immortality, holding it to be a desire essentially selfish.

Nevertheless, even Meredith will have man live in the light of the everlasting, and in that light do his work. Even if the immortality is only in the race, it is an immortality of inspiration.

'The young generation! ah, there is the child
Of our souls down the Ages! to bleed for it,
proof
That souls we have.'

And what is the kind of work that the forward view inspires us to do? Meredith puts emphasis upon it in three directions. First, it is work that is *effective*. 'Nought writ on sand.' Second, it is work that has effect on the *living*. What we are and what we do is perpetuated in lives. Third, it is work which fits in to a great process of *development*—belief in the increasing purpose that runs through the ages translating itself into act; or, in Meredith's own language, 'the dream of the blossom of good' shaping its own fulfilment.

'Full lasting is the song, though he,
The singer, passes: lasting too,
For souls not lent in usury,
The rapture of the forward view.'