

tion by White, being not found in his MS.) This reduces the testimony for the "not" to an inappreciable quantity, and renders the true reading still clearer in the light of the testimony.

Dr. Hall also remarked that for the new edition of the American Bible Society's Ancient Syriac New Testament and Psalms, the plates had been corrected in cases of errors discovered at Oroomiah, and here by himself, and in Europe by Dr. Nestle. But more important than this, the Society's Committee on Versions had consented that the text of the Antilegomena Epistles should be corrected from the Williams Manuscript in cases of *obvious error*; and, in consequence, this new edition presents the first instance of a printed New Testament with a tolerably correct copy of those Epistles. This permission could not, of course, be made to include all that would seem desirable to a critic; the "not" in 2 Pet. iii. 10, for instance, being not an "obvious error," though now proved a real one.

Dr. Hall also gave an extended notice of *The (Syriac) Book of the Bee*, of the bishop Shêlêmôn (Solomon) of Khilât in Armenia, edited by Ernest A. Wallis Bridge, with preface, notes, English translation, &c., and published by the Clarendon Press as Vol. I, Part II of the Semitic Series of the *Anecdota Oxoniensia*. Also a brief notice of Dr. Richard J. H. Gottheil's *A List of Plants and their Properties, from the M^cnârat^h Kud^hšê* of Gregorius Bar 'Eb^hrâyâ; the Syriac text and other matter being in autograph-lithograph. Also of the same editor's work on the Syriac Grammar of Elias of Soba; of Dr. Richard Baethgen's Syriac text of the *Vision (or Revelation) of Ezra*, from a Sachau MS., which was evidently a copy of the same archetype as the Union Theological Seminary's MS., of which a translation was published by Dr. Hall in *The Presbyterian Quarterly*, about a year since.

The Phrase "Children of Wrath."

BY REV. T. W. CHAMBERS, D.D., LL.D.

DR. SAMUEL COX in the first volume of his "Expositions" (1885) makes the following remark (pp. 48, 49) upon the phrase in Ephesians ii. 3, *children of wrath*: "It means simply men who give way to wrath, just as 'sons of disobedience,' in the previous verse, means 'disobedient men.' Or, if we take the connotations of the Greek phrase, children of wrath means men who abandon themselves to their natural impulses, cravings, lusts, just as the initiated Asiatics and

Hellenes did in the *orgies* with which they celebrated their 'mysteries.' It was against this unbridled, irregular, excessive indulgence of natural appetite and desire that St. Paul had been warning his converts at Ephesus. And, here, he simply reminds them that by nature they are as liable to these gusts of passion and excess as their neighbors, and must therefore be on their guard against them."

It must be admitted that so far as the meaning of the words taken separately is concerned this interpretation is possible. That is to say, *ὀργή* is used to denote the human passion of anger, and *τέκνον*, with the genitive of an abstract noun, may be taken subjectively to denote the possession of a quality; as in 1 Peter i. 14 *τέκνα ὑπακοῆς* means obedient persons, those actuated by a desire to obey. And so *τέκνα ὀργῆς* standing alone, might mean simply wrathful men. But that the phrase as used in the Epistle to the Ephesians does not have this meaning seems very clear.

1. As a presumptive argument it may be said that no mention of such a meaning, even for the purpose of denying or disproving it, is made in any commentary of note. Neither Meyer, nor Alford, nor Ellicott, nor Hodge, nor Eadie, nor Braune, nor Meyrick, nor Riddle make any allusion to it. Yet no portion of Paul's Epistles has been more thoroughly discussed or more vigorously contested than this one, it having long been claimed as one of the most decisive utterances of Scripture on the doctrine of original sin.

2. It is against the prevailing usage of the Scripture. *ὀργή* occurs more than thirty times in the New Testament. In five instances it confessedly denotes the human passion of anger, "Let all bitterness and wrath and *anger* &c. be put away" (Eph. iv. 21), and "Put ye away also all these; *anger*, wrath &c." (Col. iii. 8). So 1 Tim. ii. 8, James i. 19, 20. In all other cases it means the wrath of God, or of Christ, or of earthly magistrates shown in punitive inflictions. The nearest analogy to the use of *τέκνον* here is found in 2 Peter ii. 14, where "children of cursing" can hardly mean anything else than persons exposed or subject to a curse. It may be added that *ὀργή* by itself often denotes the wrath of God, as in the thrice recurring phrase, "the wrath to come" (Matt. iii. 7, Luke iii. 7, 1 Thess. i. 10), and also twice in the Septuagint (Eccles. vii. 16, xxiii. 16). It is, therefore, every way reasonable to refer the term here to a divine emotion.

3. This is rendered still more probable by the connection. The Apostle is emphasizing the greatness of the power which had been exercised upon the Ephesians in their conversion. He does this by contrasting the wretched state in which they had been before with

the amazing deliverance bestowed upon them through Christ. Their miserable condition is said to have been one of spiritual death, *i.e.*, total alienation from God, "dead thro your trespasses and sins." Consequently it was one of subjection to Satan, the prince of the power of the air, and to their own corrupt affections. They lived in the lusts of the flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, so that the whole man, body and soul, was sinful. Then the Apostle adds, "and were by nature children of wrath," *i.e.*, were, as a consequence of this total depravity, objects of wrath and justly exposed to the divine condemnation. Understood in this way, there is a natural progression in the account of men's spiritual condition; (1) alienation from God, (2) subjection to Satan and all the motions of sin, and (3) exposure on this account to God's righteous judgment. The view advocated by Dr. Cox interrupts this progress, and makes the assertion of men's depravity to be followed by a single specimen of that depravity, *viz.*, the giving way to angry passions. Surely this is neither natural nor reasonable. The clause thus understood adds nothing to what goes before. It merely gives a specification for the adducing of which no ground is apparent. Anger is indeed an evil passion, a work of the flesh, but it has no such pre-eminence of evil as would lead us to expect that it would be especially accentuated in any statement of human depravity.

Nor is there any weight in Dr. Cox's supposition that the Apostle is suggesting a warning to his converts against giving way to gusts of passion. The passage is in no sense or degree hortatory. The precepts Paul lays down are given in the latter part of the Epistle where he sets forth Christian duty with great precision and pungency. But here in the opening he is discussing doctrine, and stating the great truths of the system which underlie all holy living. There is no reason to expect any reference to practice, but rather the statement of what belongs to faith.

When, therefore, Dr. Cox says, as he does in the paragraph immediately following the quotation we made, "*That* is the simple and natural meaning of his words, as I suppose you can see the moment it is put before you," he makes a strong draft upon the confidence of his hearers or readers. His explanation is neither simple nor natural. It does not conform to usage; it does not suit the connexion; and it is wholly unlike the custom of the great Apostle, who first lays the foundation of doctrine and then builds upon it the precepts of ethics. Nor is there any gain in the supposed fact that by this explanation we escape the necessity of ascribing anger to God. For that ascrip-

tion is distinctly made in a subsequent part of this very epistle. "For because of these things cometh the wrath ($\delta\rho\gamma\eta$) of God upon the sons of disobedience" (v. 6). And as for the thing itself, the remark is as old as Lactantius, that "If God is not angry with the impious and the unrighteous, it is clear that he does not love the pious and the righteous. For in opposite matters it is necessary to be moved to one side or the other, or to neither" (*De Ira Dei*. cap. v.).

Further, in regard to what Dr. Cox calls the connotations of the original term, referring doubtless to the $\delta\rho\gamma\iota\alpha$, or secret rites performed in celebrating the mysteries, it may be said that such a reference is very far-fetched. Nowhere does the Apostle use this word, and nowhere does he refer to such excesses except in the most general terms. Nor is there any reason to suppose that *orgies* were present to his mind when he spoke of himself and his brethren as being, as well as the rest of mankind, "children by nature of $\delta\rho\gamma\eta$."

Ὁ Κύριος ἐγγύς, *Philip.* iv. 5.

BY REV. T. W. CHAMBERS, D.D., LL.D.

THIS phrase is rendered in the Authorized Version, "The Lord is at hand," and no alteration is made in the Revised Version. The question is whether the contiguity spoken of is one of time or of place, that is, does the sentence mean that the Lord will soon appear in his second advent, or that he is now near his people in order, as the Genevan version adds in the margin, "to succour you."

1. As to New Testament usage, the adverb occurs thirty times, in fifteen of which it denotes nearness of place, and in fourteen nearness of time, in all of which the reference is determined beyond question by the connection, as in John ii. 13, "the passover was at hand," or xix. 42, "the sepulchre was nigh at hand." It appears, then, that in this divided state of the *usus loquendi*, the question as to the verse before us must be determined by connection. The whole context runs thus: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: again I will say Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

2. Most commentators, beginning with Chrysostom and Theodoret, and including Bengel, Storr, De Wette, Alford, Meyer, Ellicott,