

## \*THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

BY PROFESSOR J. H. FARMER, D.D., TORONTO, CANADA.

*I. KNOWLEDGE: The Approach to the Kingdom.*

INTRODUCTORY.—That, your attention should be invited, in this course of lectures, to things pertaining to the kingdom of God calls for neither explanation nor apology. For confessedly it is the main theme of the teaching of Jesus. It is, in His thinking, the highest good. He bids us therefore put it first and count all else as secondary.

1. *Different Uses of the Term, "The Kingdom of God."*—Not that the phrase always stands for the same thing. The heart of it, the central truth is the same always, but the content varies. One can detect at least five different uses of the term within the covers of the Bible. When the Psalmist says "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," or, "His kingdom ruleth over all," it is clear that he is thinking of the universal sweep of the divine sovereignty. When in Mt. 21:43 Jesus, speaking to the Jewish leaders, said "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," there emerges a single conception of the term but with a double reference. It refers first to that special relationship into which God received the Jewish people when He chose Abraham, constituted the people a theocracy, and gave them in "the living oracles," the special knowledge of His will. This involved a special blessing for them and special opportunity for becoming a blessing to others. Because of Israel's rejection of the Messiah that special favor was transferred from them to the Gentiles. Ever since, and this is its second reference in this sense, the kingdom of God has pertained to the Gentiles, and they have been bearing, in some measure at least, its fruits.

\*The Gay Lectures for 1907.

It is perfectly plain that the kingdom of God, thus understood, is not ideal. Certainly the Gentile nations are not what they ought to be. The darkness among them has always been greater than the light. The knowledge of God's will has been exceedingly imperfect and personal rebellion against His sovereignty in the life, has been the rule rather than the exception. It was the same with Israel. The most cursory glance over Old Testament history reveals the fact that among the chosen people it was usually the "remnant" only that welcomed the will of Jehovah. And when our thought travels beyond the world of man out into the far spaces of the Universe inspired writers make plain to us that there are other intelligences as well as men who dare to dispute with God and meet His wise will with resistance. It is clear that in these three uses of the term—the Jewish, the Gentile, the Universal,—the kingdom of God means something less than perfect obedience to Him. It comes far short of that.

There is a fourth use of the term—the one most frequent, I am persuaded, on the lips of Jesus—which meets you at every turn in the Gospels. It is found in the opening sentence of the Sermon on the Mount—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It is Paul's thought in Col. 1:13, when he speaks of the Father as having translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. John has it in mind when he speaks of himself as being "partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and patience in Jesus." This involves a personal acceptance of God's kingship and in this sense the kingdom of God includes only such as have personally accepted God as King. This antedates Abraham; it runs back to the first human soul that hailed the kingship of Jehovah and put its confidence in Him; and it has continued all down the course of history. The second and third senses of the term are mutually exclusive, the latter succeeding and displacing the former; the fourth, like

the first, antedates both, and also runs concurrently with them. While thus great in its time-reach it is the narrowest and most exclusive in its character. The first includes the universe; the second all Jews for a certain period, the third all Gentiles for a certain time. This includes only those, whether Jews or Gentiles, who truly commit themselves in confidence to God. Still it does not involve personal perfection any more than those involve national or universal perfection. For just as the kingdom in the first three senses includes not only the godly remnant but also the ungodly, so the kingdom in the spiritual sense, while it includes only those who have committed themselves to God's rule over them, yet boasts not one soul on this earth whose obedience is perfect.

It is not strange, therefore, that a fifth use of the expression should be found in Scripture. It would be distinctly disappointing to men and women now in the kingdom if there were not opened up to their vision a more perfect kingdom than they know as yet. We too, like Abraham, look for a better, and to that future kingdom the Scriptures frequently point. We need have no doubt about the answer coming some day to the prayer the Master taught us to offer, "Thy kingdom come." The day is coming when out of His kingdom He will cast all things that offend. Then not only shall we have been transferred into the kingdom of the Son of God's love, but all that is evil will have been cast out of us and every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Then shall be fulfilled the splendid dreams of prophets and apostles; then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father; then, in the New Heavens and the New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness shall the love of God be seen in His perfected kingdom.

2. *The one here considered*—It is to some things touching the kingdom in the fourth sense that I invite your attention. It means God's Kingship in the individ-

ual life. That Jesus attached supreme importance to this is clear from the whole tenor of His teaching. It is indicated not only by the proportion of His teaching devoted to it but also in many express statements.

I. *Some Misconceptions of the Relation of Knowledge and the Kingdom.*—The ancient Gnostics had exaggerated and mistaken notions of the relative importance of knowledge. They regarded it as something higher than faith and sought to set up an aristocracy of knowledge in the Church of Christ. Faith, they thought, would do for the vulgar crowd, but knowledge of the deep things would remain forever the privilege of the cultured few. Paul dealt that heresy sledge-hammer blows. Taught by him and other inspired writers, the masses of Christians came to see that those who so taught were not in harmony with the mind of the Master. It was contrary to true brotherhood and made for division, not unity, in the body of Christ.

The recoil from that position has driven many to the other extreme of belittling knowledge. This also has been away from the truth and equally fruitful in mischief. Faith has been exalted at the expense of knowledge, with the result that the so-called ages of faith were not such as bring any special credit to Christianity. The conception that faith is so great a virtue and so sufficient for the well-being of the masses, has made it easy for organizations like the Catholic church to be content with educating the few for leadership and leaving the masses illiterate, undeveloped and weak—an easy prey to lethargy and any form of political or priestly tyranny. New Testament writers denounce that extreme with equal emphasis and clearness, as the general tenor and particular statements of their letters show.

Others again have caused confusion by practically identifying faith and knowledge. In this way Christianity has been equated with creeds rather than with Christ, and the gladdening personal fellowship and holy

enthusiasm of New Testament churches have been supplanted by a compound of philosophy and morality, a formal and decent, but cold, lifeless and uninspiring moderatism.

II. *The True Conception—Knowledge is the Means of Approach to the Kingdom.*—In seeking the true view we shall take a great utterance of the Master's as our guide. It is found in Mark 12:34. A simple word it seems, and simple indeed it is. But like all the words that fell from those infallible lips it is laden with meaning and full of suggestiveness. The Bible is not formally didactic. It is a book of cases. The paragraph which closes with this verse is a sample. In it we may study the topic before us. A scribe had come asking which was the first commandment of all. Jesus answers that the Lord is one and to love Him with all the understanding, soul and strength is the first and greatest commandment, and adds that the second is like it "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The scribe endorses in words that lead Jesus to the utterance of the 34th verse: "And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly He said unto him, thou art not far from the kingdom of God." The key to its interpretation is the word discreetly. A better translation would be "intelligently." Discreet is nearer to 'prudent' in common usage, and touches character rather than intelligence. But the Greek word here employed compels us to think of the scribe's intelligence or knowledge rather than of his character.

What then did he know? That God is one, not many; that God had spoken to men and in the ten commandments given at once some revelation of His own character and a transcript of human duty. For the God who commands what is here commanded must Himself be a God of truth and goodness. Further, he saw beneath the mere letter of the law and caught something of its inner spirit. For when Jesus sums up the two tables in love to God and love to fellowmen, the scribe not only recog-

nizes the truth of what Jesus says but goes over the ground again himself in such a way as to show his own understanding and appreciation of the truth. He does not simply repeat the words of Jesus but recasts the statement and adds to it an equally free and independent rendering of Samuel's great utterance that "obedience is better than sacrifice" in the words "to love God with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength and to love one's neighbor as one's self, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifice." Can we say more? Are we to believe that in addition to this he manifested special earnestness of spirit? I find it impossible to affirm that. Indeed Luke's account rather looks the other way though Professor Noah K. Davis in his brilliant volume on "The Story of the Nazarene" supposes him to have been a venerable man of well-known piety. All we can be sure of is what I have already indicated. It is to his knowledge and not to his piety that Jesus calls attention by the term "intelligently." He has an intelligent apprehension of these things and in virtue of that Jesus declares that he is not far from the kingdom of God. Does this not teach that knowledge of revealed truth brings one near to the kingdom? To be learning these truths is to be drawing near to the kingdom; to know them is to be near it. In other words knowledge is the line of approach toward the kingdom.

Two or three other passages from the Gospels may detain us for a moment. For it may be that this very thought is involved in them. John the Baptist came preaching and saying "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus began His Galilean ministry with the same words: "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent ye and believe in the gospel." May I venture to suggest that the phrase "is at hand" may easily mislead. Does it not to the common reader in English suggest the idea that the kingdom is soon to come and per contra that it is not yet present.

But the Greek perfect as the revered Broadus taught us, would be more closely translated by the words, "stands near." Now if the scribe's apprehension of the contents of God's earlier revelation to Israel through Moses and the prophets brought him near the kingdom of God, may we not reverse the statement and say that in that revelation the kingdom of God drew near to him? If so, does it not give a new appropriateness to this utterance of the last of the prophets when, in view of the presence of the Messiah among men, he says, "The kingdom of God stands near"? And what more natural than for Jesus Himself, conscious of His divine Sonship, conscious that He Himself is Israel's true King, to say as He stands face to face with the people, "The kingdom of God stands near." There stood God manifest in the flesh—unparalleled opportunity for men to get to know Him! That was a piece of good news, a gospel, which He might well bid them believe. The sad side of it is given in the traditional saying ascribed to Jesus: "He who is far from me is far from the kingdom." Later on, when He sends out the seventy men who had entered the kingdom and come into the fellowship of His life and spirit,—He bids them proclaim "the kingdom of God stands near," and even when men reject them they are to say, as they take their leave of them, "Yet know that the kingdom of God stands near." Never before in the world's history was the knowledge of God made so easy, for He had come not in dark hints, impersonal laws or the messages of prophets; but in person, epitomized in a man, God stood among them that they might see, hear and know Him. Advance upon that was only made possible by His death, resurrection and enthronement. Then the Holy Spirit used supremely the fact of His death and men were brought nigh by the blood of Christ.

### III. *Some of the Implications of this Truth.*

1. *Its Bearing on the Question of Creeds.*—You will perceive at once that it puts no light value upon a correct

creed. It is rather fashionable to-day to decry creeds. We Baptists have done our share to bring about both the feeling and the practice. We have been rather shy of them. Often we boast that as a people we have none but the Bible. Yet you could fill a large volume with Baptist creeds. As a matter of fact our Conventions, Associations and Churches usually have them. What we have meant in our protests against creeds was this:—That while we recognize the expediency of having them for purposes of mutual understanding and co-operation, we, at the same time, insist that these shall ever be held as subordinate, and not superior, to the Bible, which is our final court of appeal. This is wisdom for it recognizes the truth of the old Puritan's saying that fresh light may at any time break out of the word of God. Creeds old and creeds new must be held open to revision in view of that possibility.

Every man has his creed unless indeed he never thinks. What he thinks to be true is his creed, and it is very important that the creed be correct. If it is, to speak generally, it brings him near the kingdom; if it is not, it leaves him far from the kingdom. This is true no matter how sincere he may be. Sincerity is always better than hypocrisy. It is better to be sincere in error than to be insincere in holding the form of sound words. Better far do wrong because you think it right, than do right when you think it wrong. There was nothing under the sky that Jesus scorched with the hot blasts of His indignation as hypocrisy. Still sincerity is not enough. While it is better to be sincere in holding error than to hold the truth in unrighteousness, it is still better to be both right and sincere. It is easy just here to pass from a true liberalism to a false. True liberalism claims the right to do its own thinking and freely accords to all others the same right. But it refuses to say that all thinking is equally wise, that all creeds are equally good. That is not liberalism but latitudinarianism. And the latter is



to the former as mush is to muscle. The man who thinks all creeds equally good has no convictions at all. Neither charity nor liberty commends or commands that. I must be free to deny what I do not believe; and true charity forbids me to declare that to be good for a man which I believe to be evil. Nor does his sincerity in error relieve me from the obligation to point it out. For error will harm. Poison taken unintentionally will kill just as surely as when taken intentionally.

Nor is it to the purpose to set life over against creed, to exalt practice at the expense of doctrine. The fact is that a man's creed, if he be honest and earnest, steadily influences his life. Doctrine and practice naturally tend to fuse. These are not two insulated things. They cannot permanently be held apart. As gases or liquids in contact intermingle, and even solids tend to interpenetrate each other, so these. A man's creed, whether long or short, is a matter of immense importance because it means that the man is far from, or near to, the kingdom of heaven. Other things being equal, the man whose creed is right is nearer the kingdom than the man whose creed is wrong.

2. *Its Bearnig on Comparative Religion and Missions.*—The passage in Mk. XII deals with an individual yet it states a general truth. There are similar passages that refer to nations and lead our thought into broader fields. On the day of Pentecost Peter in addressing thousands of Jews gathered together from all the countries whither the Lord had scattered them, says, "The promise is to you and to your children (i. e. Jews) and to them that are afar off (i. e. the Gentiles). Paul in his letter to the Ephesians—really a circular letter to Gentile churches—in like manner speaks of Christ as coming and preaching peace "to you that were far off and peace to them that were nigh." Thus the leader of the circumcision and the apostle to the Gentiles unite in describing Jews as in some sense near, and Gentiles as in some sense

far away. And in this they are probably just explaining what was in Isaiah's mind when that rapt prophet (57:19) represented the Lord as saying "I created the fruit of the lips—peace, peace to him that is far off and to him that is near." Does not the utterance of Jesus which we have been considering explain at once the meaning of these expressions, and indicate why Jews and Gentiles should be so described? Is it not simply because the Jew, taught by revelation of God through the prophets, knew that there is but one God, not many, that He is holy and demands holiness of men, that He is gracious and makes possible man's forgiveness and acceptance? This brought the Jews as a people nearer the kingdom of God than the Gentiles. Is that not substantially what Paul has in mind when in Rom. 3 he asks the question, "What advantage then hath the Jew?" and replies "Much every way." "First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God." That "first" is so supremely first that the apostle feels he may be pardoned for passing along in the main line of his argument without mentioning a second. Unquestionably the possession of the living oracles was the advantage of the Jew. It was that that brought him near to the kingdom as compared with the outlying nations which sat in darkness that graded from the cloud-wrapt blackness of mid-Africa through the star-light of the great East to the brighter but not more vitalizing moon of Greek philosophy.

As then, so now. The whole problem of Comparative Religions comes in here. When the Parliament of Religions met in Chicago it was vigorously criticized in many quarters. It was taken as an affront to Christianity that it should be put into comparison with others. But Scripture had not shrunk from the comparison of Judaism with the other great religions in the ancient world. No more, nay much less, need we shrink from the uttermost comparison of Christianity with the other great religions of the world to-day. As then the Jews, compared with all

others, were near to the kingdom of God; so, in the same sense, may we confidently affirm that Christendom is near the kingdom while heathenism is far from it. In the world of heathenism some nations will be found nearer the kingdom than others because they have more carefully learned what may be learned from the world of nature or caught more of the broken lights of God's special revelation than others. In Christendom in like manner some of the people are much nearer the kingdom than others because while the latter have hidden away the book of God from the people and instead of its bread given the people the stone of ecclesiasticism, the former have made the Bible an open book and published abroad that knowledge of God which is its glory.

The story of modern missions abundantly demonstrates this fact. Take for example some of our own Baptist missions. Carey goes to Serampore and, though Thomas had been there before him, seven years pass before he has the joy of baptizing Krishna Pal, his first convert. Judson goes to Burma and not until seven years of heroic service have passed was it his privilege to bury in baptism his first convert, Mounng La. Northern Baptists sent a Canadian, Dr. Day, to the Telugus in the Presidency of Madras. After three decades of work by him and others on that field only three or four converts could be counted. In the following decade they came to Christ in thousands. How can that be explained? Just in this way. When the missionaries first went there the Telugus were very far from the kingdom in their ignorance of God, their lack of any proper sense of sin, of any worthy conception of holiness. The missionaries had to give them the very alphabet of divine truth, line upon line, precept upon precept, slowly and patiently through those long years. Under their tutelage the people began a march toward the kingdom of God. But so far away were they that it required practically the life time of a generation to bring them to the confines of the kingdom.

Then, being near, it became possible for them to throng into it by thousands in the decade that followed. What was true of the old field of Ongole has been true in the Canadian sections of the field. Those of our fields that adjoin Ongole have shared in its fruitfulness. Those farther north and less touched by the influence of the early missionaries have shown even yet but small returns in actual conversions. But we doubt not that the teeming myriads of the Telugus are steadily drawing nearer to the kingdom of God as the word of life is being scattered among them; and we feel assured the day is not far distant when the great scenes of the seventies in the older stations will be repeated among the people of Tuni and Chicacole.

What is true of Teluguland is true of scores of other lands. Many peoples have been under similar tutelage during the past century. Not in India alone, but in China and Japan, in Africa and the islands of the Pacific, has the good seed of the word been sown and the knowledge of God spread. Let us be heartened and cheered by the inspiring fact that millions of our fellowmen are marching toward the kingdom and will soon be knocking at her doors. Statistics of conversions are but a poor indication of what modern missions have accomplished. The early converts are but the eager outrunners. If we would properly appreciate the achievements of the few hundreds of heroic souls who have gone out into the darkness on their mission of love we must get a vision of these unnumbered millions catching the new knowledge, waking from the stupor of centuries, wonderingly and wistfully following the new light that beckons, and tramping painfully toward the confines of the kingdom.

This tremendous fact lays upon this generation of Christians an enormous responsibility. For we must see to it that guides fail not; that the enemy be given no opportunity to turn them from the way; that the welcome be warm, wise and brotherly when they reach the gates;

and that the home and school and work be ready for them when they enter. None too soon are the men of our churches waking up to their duty as stewards and planning to turn into the treasury of the Lord for missionary purposes the means that heretofore have been lavished on selfish tastes and worldly ambitions.

This responsibility, if looked at in any selfish spirit, will seem dark and forbidding; but viewed in the proper light it becomes transfigured into an inestimable privilege, even as a mountain summit sombre with black clouds becomes glorified in the morning sun.

3. *Its Bearing on Work at Home.*—This word of Christ may be a well-spring of encouragement to all faithful Christian workers. They are more likely to underestimate than to overestimate what they themselves accomplish. Evil is so mighty; wrong triumphs still on so large a scale; the multitude still so commonly follow the ways of sin rather than the will of Christ that it is extremely easy for us to drift into discouragement and experience the paralysis of pessimism. There is in this teaching of Jesus a tonic for our faith.

For example. Here is an earnest-souled pastor who has been preaching the truth faithfully, and yet sees but few conversions resulting from his ministry. How natural it is for him to become depressed, to feel that his work has counted for nothing and to indulge in bitter self-recrimination. Or there is a Sunday-school teacher who for years has been teaching a class of boys. They are travelling their later teens and not one of them is yet a Christian. The teacher is losing heart and feels like resigning and abandoning the work in despair, as fruitless and useless. Or here is a mother, who from his early years, has sought to show her boy the need of a Saviour and to make plain to him the way of salvation. Yet he has grown to man's estate and is still unsaved. And the mother is full of self-chiding. A double sorrow is breaking her heart—sorrow over her unsaved boy and the

dreadful fear that she herself must have been unfaithful. But let pastor, teacher and mother all remember that just as surely as they have been making known to congregation, class or child, the truths that God has graciously revealed and set down for us in His word, just so surely have these truths been bringing the objects of their care near to the kingdom and making it possible for them to enter it.

We may take a broader survey and think of the immense amount of Christian work that is being done in Christian homes, Church and Sunday-school, in College and Seminary, in the vast output of the Christian Press, in individual effort and through a multitude of organizations, and then grow pessimistic and discouraged to find it a question of debate as to whether any progress is being made. And should we feel compelled to say with some that the former days were better than these, we may conclude that this manifold Christian effort is all for naught. But see how unjust such a conclusion would be in the light of the Master's great declaration.

For it means this for Christendom and especially for Protestantism: During the last thirty years a new generation has come on the scene, and all these millions have, through these varied Christian agencies, been taught the great facts of the Christian religion. Surely this is something worth while. It is a tremendous achievement in view of which we should thank God and take courage. For thus practically our whole population has been brought within reach of God's kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy.

That is the most anyone can do. The mother may love her boy with a fathomless love, but the most she can do for him religiously is by loving, patient, prayerful instruction in the things of God to bring him to the confines of God's kingdom. She cannot make him enter. All who have striven to do personal work know this that after they have said the last word, as they seek to make plain the way of salvation, there comes a moment when one can

only leave the soul with God and stand aside and pray. In the last analysis the soul must assume the responsibility of entering or refusing to enter God's kingdom. Inventive and resourceful as mother love is, it can never find a way in which mother can act for son in this matter any more than Joshua could choose for Israel. He chose for himself and threw on the people the unescapable responsibility of choosing for themselves. Instruct, one may; beseech, one may, but not even love can compel. Knowledge we may impart even in the face of indifference or opposition on the part of the recipient. There lies our responsibility. In that work we can bring our loved ones near to the kingdom of God.

4. *Its Bearing on Christian Colleges.*—Not a few Baptists demur to our undertaking college work at all under the conditions existent on this continent where so many States and Provinces have colleges and universities to which all have free access. Generally speaking our primary interest was in educating men for the ministry. Where, as in Nova Scotia, the literary work was first launched, it was due to special conditions. There, as in England until recent years, the University course was denied men who would refuse to sign the Thirty-nine Articles. And though the number of believers in literary as well as theological training has greatly increased among us, yet there is a widespread feeling that it is an unwarranted and unwarrantable expenditure, and that it would be better to use that money for more immediate missionary work at home and abroad. This is not the place for any general discussion of the matter. But it will be evident that the general fact which we have been considering becomes no inconsiderable argument in favor of Christian, aye, and Baptist, schools. For if they are true to their opportunity and give Christian truth the place they may in the general life of the school, they can bring the young people under their care nearer the kingdom than purely State institutions can do.

One observation further and I have done. *May we*

*extend the principle to all knowledge?* It will be observed that the knowledge we have been speaking of is specifically the knowledge of God. That certainly is the kind Jesus had in mind in speaking to the scribe. It is that also which made the difference between Jew and Gentile—not science, art or philosophy. In these latter Greece outshone Judea. Still the question may fairly be raised as to whether even that kind of knowledge does not tend to bring men nearer the kingdom of God. Take for example natural science, and call up the utterances of some of its leading exponents. Huxley, studying embryonic development, uses this language: “Watching the fashioning process stage by stage one is forcibly reminded of the modeller in clay,” and again: “After watching the process hour by hour one is almost involuntarily possessed by the notion that some more subtle aid to vision \* \* \* would show the hidden artist, with his plans before him, striving with skilful manipulation to perfect his work.” And Tyndall, speaking of the process of crystallization says: “Here there is an architect at work who makes no chips, no din, and who is now building the particles into crystals.” Does not this language indicate in very striking fashion the compulsion of such study toward a recognition of the personal God? Or take astronomy, “The undevout astronomer is mad” has become an adage. What does it mean except that in the glory and order of the heavens God thrusts Himself irresistibly upon the rational mind? Need we shrink from the assertion? Surely not in the face of such Scriptures as these: “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork;” “The invisible things of him are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his eternal power and divinity,” so that men are inexcusable who do not see. Or take the study of man himself. The Delphic oracle made it a primary duty to know one’s self, and Clement of Alexandria declares that if one get to know himself he will know God. It was in the same spirit that the same Father made his famous declaration that Greek philoso-



phy had rendered a pædagogic service in preparing men for Christ—a statement clearly resembling Paul’s statement respecting the law. Indeed may it not be that Paul himself recognizes in the term “law” a wider reference than the Mosaic and that to the moral law as known to the heathen Galatians he would ascribe some such pædagogic function as he asserts for the Mosaic? Does not conference with conscience drive thought Godward? Has not the personal feeling of dependence been to some of our greatest thinkers the shortest proof of the existence of a God on whom we depend? The fact is, all things are of God, and we can know no single object in nature fully without getting back to God as its final explanation. As Tennyson so happily phrases it:

“Flower in the crannied wall  
 \* \* \* \* if I could understand  
 What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
 I should know what God and Man is.”

If this be true, the Christian of all men should be most enthusiastic in the study of the Sciences, indeed in every sphere of learning. No man has an equal stimulus. One summer day I was walking along a country road in Northern Ontario with my honored colleague, Professor Smith, of the department of Biology. That walk was made doubly delightful by his knowledge of the flowers that decked the roadside. His interest in them was keen to the point of enthusiasm. I shall never forget the reverent tone and deep conviction with which, turning suddenly toward me, he said, “Do you know, I would lose most of my interest in the study if I did not believe in God.”

So believing we can join in the Laureate’s prayer:

“Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
 But more of reverence in us dwell  
 That mind and heart according well  
 May make one music as before,  
 But vaster.”

SOME NOTES ON HEBREW MATTERS,  
LITERARY AND OTHERWISE.

BY REV. T. WITTEN DAVIES, B.A., PH.D.,  
PROFESSOR OF SEMITIC LANGUAGES,  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NORTH WALES.

When in the summer semester of 1892 I asked the late eminent Old Testament scholar, Dr. Dillmann, of the University of Berlin, to tell me of important recent Hebrew grammars, he put in the first place the great grammar of Eduard König, then Hebrew Professor at Rostock, now of Bonn. He said that no other modern book gives so complete and accurate a conspectus of what the old Hebrew grammarians thought and wrote about their own language.

Since 1892, the learned and laborious author (who, at the Oriental Congress in August last, showed himself as vigorous as ever) has added two volumes to the one published in 1887, though on the title pages these volumes are called Part I, 1st and 2nd half, and Part II, the latter volume, issued in 1897, dealing with the Syntax. I have found this great work of extraordinary value, especially when searching for information on out-of-the-way points. I think I should add that for examples of Hebrew forms I find no reference book to touch Böttcher's immense Grammar, which devotes nearly 1,400 8-vo. pages to the accidence alone—the part dealing with syntax never came out.

The ideal elementary Hebrew Grammar has yet to appear. Though I get my first year pupils to buy H. B. Davidson's Hebrew Introductory Grammar, it is on account of the exercises mainly, as I find it necessary to deliver my own lectures on the subject.

The Germans, with the new Grammars of Steuernagel, Hollenberg, Budde, and the new editions of Strack,

<sup>1</sup> T. & T. Clark, 1892, page 4.

<sup>2</sup> 1895, p. 305.

and other recent works, are far ahead of the British in the matter of Hebrew Grammars for beginners.

König has now published a small Hebrew Grammar at the price of three shillings and sixpence (M. 3.50) containing the lectures delivered by the author, first at Leipzig, and subsequently at Bonn. In it he attempts to combine the scientific and the practical, avoiding matters that are abstract and doubtful. The chief merit of the book is that in a brief compass the principles enumerated and elaborately discussed in the larger work are here succinctly stated, with many additional hints suggested by the author's later studies and experience as teacher. Then there are well-graded exercises which teachers and students will find useful. All through when treating of the forms, Arabic (transliterated) is used, and at the end there is an admirable summary of the accident of Arabic, all in European type, just as much as an ordinary student needs to know for purposes of comparison with Hebrew.

Though the book is small (111 pages, with 88 pages of appendix—exercises, vocabularies, etc.,) the whole subject is discussed, including the Syntax. The treatment is quite original and interesting and those who have made a study of the language will find here a good deal to inform and stimulate. One misses the paradigms of nouns, verbs, etc., which other grammars contain and which students find convenient for reference; though the contents of these paradigms are found scattered throughout the volume.

Some things occur in the Syntax which are lacking in even such works as the excellent "Hebrew Syntax" of A. B. Davidson, as, for example, the brief statement about the Reciprocal pronoun. Other things are omitted here which should find a place, such as, e. g., the use of the "Inner Hiphil," which is so important for the understanding of the Hebrew Bible. There are here and there references to the larger work, for which readers who

possess the latter will be thankful. It is a pity, however, that there is no Index, though this lack is to some extent made up for by a good list of contents.

A NEW EDITION OF STRACK'S

*“Einleitung in den Talmud.”*

The fourth edition of Strack's very useful "Introduction to the Talmud" has just made its appearance, greatly enlarged and improved, and therefore more helpful than ever to students who wish to understand the contents of what has been called the "Mare Talmudicum" and the way in which they are arranged. It has always appeared to me a mystery that so invaluable a *vade mecum* to the student of the Bible and the Talmud has not been issued in English, for its equal is not to be found in our own or in any other language. Dr. M. Miehziner, an American Jew, published in English a similar work in 1894, but at three times its price, though it has not nearly its fulness or its accuracy. Any English publisher who issued an English edition of this admirable synopsis of what is knowable about the Talmud would confer an unspeakable boon on the English-speaking clergy and laity.

The useful work by Revs. W. O. E. Oesterley, D.D., and G. H. Box, M.A., entitled "The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue," touches on the subject, but necessarily in a brief way, and one has to guard against some inaccuracies in this interesting book. See review by the present writer in "Review of Theology and Philosophy," October, 1908; though I should like to qualify and modify some of my statements regarding the knowledge of Hebrew exhibited by the authors.

ANENT SOME TECHNICAL TERMS FOR OLD TESTAMENT  
SACRIFICE.

In the new and greatly improved edition of his "Hebräische Archæologie" (1907), Benzinger gives a classi-

fication of animal sacrifices mentioned in the Old Testament which, as far as I am aware, has not been suggested before: see p. 366f., and especially note 2 on p. 366.

According to him the Hebrew word *zebakh*, which in the P code denotes animal as opposed to cereal (meal) offerings, is a generical term embracing under it two other terms as species, viz: *olah* (whole burnt offering, lit. what goes up), and *Shelamim*, compensation offerings (wrongly translated peace offerings. The idea of peace is not in the root in any of its forms, nominal or verbal). The '*olah* denotes an animal offering which is wholly consumed, i. e., wholly devoted to Yahwe; the *Shelamim* are such animal sacrifices as are shared by the offerers. The author refers to Hos. 3:4; 1 Sam. 2:13; 6:15, as proof passages, but they hardly bear out what he maintains. Indeed, he is bound to admit that in actual usage *zebakh* is more commonly contrasted with '*Olah*, perhaps in the sense above ascribed to *Shelamim*; see Num. 15: 3, 8; 2 Kings 10:24; Jer. 7:21; Amos 5:22, etc. In Leviticus (3:1, etc), *zebakh* is frequently prefixed to *Shelamim*, as if meaning animal sacrifice (generic) of the compensation kind (specific). In his excellent article on "Sacrifices and Offerings" in the new one-volume Hastings' Bible Dictionary, Professor A. R. S. Kennedy, D.D., of Edinburgh, makes no reference to the above view of Benzinger.

It is the usual thing to say that the distinction of *zebakh* (animal offering) and *minkhah* (cereal offering) is a peculiarity of the Priestly Code and of contemporary writings; but it is to be seen in our oldest prophetic writings and in a passage which is universally allowed to be genuine: see Amos 5:22.

On the other hand *minkhah* is used in its early general sense of "offering" throughout Malachi (see 1:13; 2:12f.; and 3:3f.) and I think also in Neh. 13:5, 9. This means of course no more than that these writings ante-

date the introduction of the Priestly Code. Yet it can hardly be held that this Code, usually dated about B. C. 440, did more than systematize and legalize customs which slowly came to be recognized.

#### THE SMALL KETHUBIM OR HAGIOGRAPHY.

Bishop Ryle and Professor F. Buhl on the canon contradict each other; which is right, if either?

In his "Canon and Text" (English Translation, Sec. I), Franz Buhl (now Professor of Arabic at Copenhagen, formerly successor of Franz Delitzsch at Leipzig), says that the Kethubim Qetanim, or small writings (hagiographa) embrace Canticles, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations. Professor (now Bishop) Ryle, in his valuable work on the Canon of the Old Testament<sup>2</sup> says, on the contrary, that the expression stands for "Canticles, Ecclesiastes and Esther." Both rest what they say on the Talmud (Bab) *Berakok*, 57 B. Now the Danish Professor and the English Bishop cannot both be right. Which, if either, are we to believe?

The only way to answer this question is to consult the Talmudic passage to which both refer, and this is what I have done. I give below as literal a rendering as I can.

"These three are the small writings (hagiographa). He who sees the Song of Songs (Canticles) in a dream will hope for great piety. (He who sees) Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes) will hope for wisdom. (He who sees) Qēnoth (Lamentations) is concerned about chastisement: and he who sees the roll (book) of Esther, for him a miracle will be performed."

It will be seen from the above that the Danish scholar is right and the British one wrong, if, as I think we must, we follow the letter of the passage, though the appended reference to Esther may give come support to the view that this book formed also a part of the Small Kethubim (hagiographa), which in that case will have four, not

three, books, neither of the scholars named being right. But I think the context is against this interpretation. In the preceding paragraphs several triads or groups of three are mentioned; three Kings in Israel, three Prophets, three large *Kethubim* (Psalms, Proverbs and Job) and three small *Kethubim*, (see above). About each unit of each triad some remark is made (see the extract above for examples). Now there are more than three of the things enumerated in the several triads, but three only are mentioned in each case. The reading of the three great hagiographs has certain effects, different in the different books (Psalms, etc.), and the same is true of the reading of the three small hagiographs—the word three being used in each case.

What is said of the roll Esther is added as applying to what is outside the triad and apparently the class. This is suggested by the fact that the words “He who reads” are repeated; in the second and third cases they are simply understood and in my translation above are bracketed. As a matter of fact there are eleven (not six or seven) books in the *Kethubim*. (Hagiographa) see Talmud (Bah) *Baba Bathra* 14 B. I do not know of any Talmudic passage or of any other Rabbinical passage in which the small hagiographs are discussed or even named; but there may be such for all that.