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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

It has long been the fashion to censure the Jews for their particularism, but in truth there is a good deal of the particularist in all of us, or at any rate in most of us. In religion we associate most readily with those with whom we agree, and we are apt to ignore a challenge, which might be for our soul's profit, from those from whom we differ. But we have everything to gain from cultivating generous sympathies, and he must be a richly endowed man indeed who has nothing to learn from other people.

More particularly have Jews and Christians persistently misunderstood one another. They have done this from the beginning, and it is much to be hoped that they will not continue to do it to the end. Much of this misunderstanding is undoubtedly due to ignorance. Not many Jews take the trouble to acquaint themselves with the New Testament; many Christians know little of the Old Testament, while most know nothing whatever of Rabbinical Literature. Indeed, this is a field which even to many Christian scholars has been till recently, and to some extent still is, practically a *terra incognita*.

If there is one man more fitted than another to mediate between these two groups and to create, if not a reconciliation, at least an understanding, that man is Mr. Claude G. Montefiore. His is a singularly rich and impartial mind. A devoted son of Judaism, he has made a study, not only minute but sympathetic, of the New Testament documents, and whether in dealing with the one literature or with the other, he always manifestly endeavours to be scrupulously fair: he has no desire to think more highly of the one, or less highly of the other, than an honest examination of the facts obliges him to think.

In his recently published book *The Old Testament and After* (reviewed in 'Literature') his powers of skilful presentation and sane and helpful criticism are seen at their best. True, he professes to be an amateur in Rabbinical literature, and inadequately equipped for the discussion of the literature in which Greek and Hebrew thought converge; but when we consider that there has been a continuous stream of Jewish literature for nearly three thousand years, who is sufficient for these things? To say the least, Mr. Montefiore is as competent as any, and we watch with more than interest his endeavour, as he puts it, to 'absorb the good and reject the evil, whether in the Old Testament, the New Testament, or the Rabbinical literature.' In a spirit the reverse of supercilious, he stands above them all.

No one could be more refreshingly frank in his criticism of the Rabbis. 'Much of their teaching

seems childish and absurd.' 'Much of the Rabbinic study of the Law was casuistic; much of it narrowing; much of it trifling; much of it an appalling waste of time and brain.' 'Legalism lays its rather coarsening and vulgarizing hands upon every conception in heaven and earth.' An impression is given in the Talmud as if those old Rabbis were men 'with a restricted outlook, and enmeshed in a study the great mass of which was of very doubtful advantage to the world.' That on the one hand; and of all that, Christian criticism has been well aware.

But there is another side which that criticism has not been so ready to recognize. 'On the whole,' the attitude of Rabbinic literature has been 'sane and simple and broad'; it is 'a mixture of delicacy and everyday practicality.' 'God is always in the thoughts of the Rabbis.' 'The study of the Law helps a man to meekness, fidelity, and charitableness; it keeps him far from sin, and brings him near to virtue; he ought to become a lover of God and of mankind, modest, long-suffering, and forgiving of insults. The study of the Law demands a measure of endurance and asceticism; and, for the rest, reverence and cheerfulness, contentment and resignation; the student must be long-suffering and claim no merit; he must love God and man; he must not boast, he must judge his fellows favourably; he must accept reproofs willingly; he must bear the yoke with his fellows. The virtues are gentle human virtues, tending to unite and not to separate. Moreover, these gentle human virtues did not, when occasion demanded, exclude the heroic virtues as well.' Again, God is no 'cold, distant, transcendent, unapproachable Deity'; this is a 'monstrous misunderstanding of the Rabbis which can only be retained by the ignorant or the prejudiced.' And all these claims are illustrated by a wealth of quotation which those who despise Rabbinical literature without knowing it would do well to ponder.

Nor is Mr. MONTEFIORE blind to the imperfections, to what he calls the gaps and rough edges, of the Old Testament. In this connexion perhaps his most striking criticism is in his allusion to its 'comparative lack of high idealism,' 'a certain lack of *élan* and passion, of eager and redeeming philanthropy.' But Liberal Judaism, though it claims the right to be critical, is deeply rooted in the Old Testament, and there is more than one fine summary of its peculiar excellence—its conceptions of 'God's unity and righteousness, of the inseparable union of religion and morality, of social justice, pity, and love, of the love of neighbour and stranger, of the election of Israel for a religious mission and service, of the joy of communion with God.'

Of peculiar interest to Christians is Mr. MONTEFIORE'S criticism of the New Testament, and more particularly of Jesus. Often he speaks of its 'moving and wonderful words'—such words as we find in the First Epistle of John or in 1 Co 13. The Old Testament deficiency in 'eager and redeeming philanthropy' already alluded to, he finds 'most grandly filled up by the teaching of Jesus and Paul'; and he emphasizes the point that the mysticism of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John goes beyond anything we have in the Psalter. 'We have here a veritable New Testament supplement to Old Testament teaching.'

Perhaps the two most startling statements in the book occur in his estimate of Jesus. One is this: 'The universalism which we acknowledge, and for which we are grateful, in Paul, is not clearly to be found in the teachings of Jesus'—apparently not even in the story of the good Samaritan. Mr. MONTEFIORE is 'very confident that "Samaritan" formed no part of the original parable as spoken by Jesus.' The second surprise is: 'The beginning in the teaching of Jesus of a double morality.' 'It is implied that, in the fullest sense, not all men could be "disciples." Not every man could be expected to renounce all that he had, or to "hate" father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, "yea and his own life." There must be an inner and an outer ring.'

Here we must take leave to part company with the distinguished writer. The illustration which he adduces, of the young man who had great possessions, hardly proves his point. Has Mr. MONTEFIORE forgotten the 'occasional' nature of Jesus' utterances? 'If *thou* wilt be perfect, sell thy goods.' This particular demand tested the quality of that particular man's devotion to Jesus and the cause which He represented: in his case it was his possessions, as the sequel showed, that stood between him and the Kingdom: hence the demand for their renunciation. But the demand of Jesus upon every man was always for whole-hearted uncompromising allegiance, though the form it assumed would vary with the character of the man on whom the demand was made. But whether you agree with Mr. MONTEFIORE or not, you feel throughout his book that you are in communion with a gracious, friendly, and healing spirit.

One of the subjects of supreme interest to the present generation is what may be called, in a broad sense, Spiritual Healing. Christian Science, New Thought, Psycho-analysis (on its practical side) are aspects of the modern healing cult. But there is another movement that has much the same object but operates from a different standpoint and with a different equipment. Of this movement one of the most enthusiastic protagonists is the Rev. Claude O'FLAHERTY, M.B., Ch.B., Senior Chaplain at St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh.

Mr. O'FLAHERTY's degree is to be noted, for he is both a medical man and a priest. And it may be said at once that his attitude to the medical profession is entirely respectful and sympathetic. But he has a great message to deliver and a great mission to commend to the Church, and he does both these things in a book recently published, *Health and Religion* (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s. net). There is a great deal in the book that is interesting and valuable from a general religious standpoint. There are admirable chapters on 'Man's Relation to God,' 'The Healing Ministry of Jesus Christ,' and 'Grace and the Sacramental Principle.'

But we reach the message of the book when we come to the chapter on 'Sacramental Healing.' The author warns us, first of all, that the health of the body is to be sought not for selfish reasons but for more efficient service to God; and, secondly, that our nature is a unity. Body, mind, and spirit are so bound up with one another that a disorder in one affects the other; and Jesus came to be the Healer and Redeemer of the whole man. His healing ministry was part of a ministry of redemption and restoration for mankind.

This ministry was to be continued by His Church. 'The command to heal was as definitely and clearly given as the command to preach the Gospel and forgive sins.' And in His Spirit the Apostles continued to do the works of Christ. There is no ground for supposing that the healing of the sick by spiritual means was a temporary gift to the Church. On the contrary, there is definite and abundant evidence that for several centuries such healing was an everyday practice in the Church. And it is significant that the apologists of the early centuries cited as evidence of the truth of Christian doctrine, not the miracles of our Lord, but the contemporary works of healing which the ministers of Christ were performing in every place. It was only later, when the standard of faith and conduct became lower, that works of healing became fewer.

Out of many forms of healing in use in the early Church two persisted and are in use to-day, namely, the Laying-on of Hands and the Anointing with blessed oil. The first was enjoined by our Lord Himself, and the second is in accord with apostolic doctrine and practice. The ministers of healing were two, priests and laymen endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

It is, of course, true of sacramental healing, as of every other sacramental rite, that the grace of the sacrament is received by faith. If faith flags,

healing is delayed. If faith recovers, works of healing abound. Our Lord wrought cures on the sick by spiritual means which are open to us, but it was always on condition of a believing attitude.

There is a human basis for this ministry in the close connexion of body and mind. In point of fact there are three kinds of healers—the physical, the mental, and the spiritual. Mr. O'FLAHERTY recognizes the place and the use both of the doctor and the psycho-therapist, but the spiritual healer does what neither of the others can do, because he deals with the deepest roots of health and disease. 'Spiritual healing, when it brings peace and order and health to the spirit, also resolves complexes in the mind, removes fear and anxiety, and gives mental peace. And mental and spiritual peace produce the conditions under which the natural vitality of the body can reassert itself and throw off disease.'

The reconciliation of the doctrine of Salvation by faith alone with an adequate view of the necessity in the Christian life of good works is not easy. Many preachers have an uncomfortable feeling that they have to bring back surreptitiously with the one hand what they have ostentatiously thrown away with the other, and do it so skilfully that 'the plain man' in the pew will not notice. 'Saved by faith alone, but not by a faith that abides alone'—by some such mediating formula, the antinomy is plausibly if not quite successfully overcome.

As if this difficulty were not enough, the 'new thought' threatens to drag into clear light another antinomy. 'Salvation by right thinking' is proclaimed with enthusiasm. Not that it has never been heard of before. Far from that. Ancient Greece was familiar with it. But it is proclaimed in a new way and with fresh sanctions.

The difficulty, however, has been lying there all the time in Scripture itself. When we consult it on the topic of right thinking, we find a perplexity not unlike that which confronts us on the subject of good works.

On the one hand we have such passages as these: 'As he thinketh in his heart, so is he' (Pr 23^{7}). 'We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight' (Nu 13^{33}). On the other hand we have such as these: 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall' (1 Co 10^{12}). 'Be not wise in your own conceits' (Ro 12^{16}), and a multitude of others which inculcate humility in one's thoughts of oneself.

Both sides need careful consideration, for both are true. Experience proves it. If the Israelite rates himself as a poor grasshopper, the Canaanite will soon come to agree with him. Thoughts, even imaginations, tend to realize themselves. Men always knew that more or less clearly. St. Paul knew it well when he laid down his famous rule for right thinking (Ph 4^{8}). But modern psychology has given fresh and impressive force to the fact that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. What he aspires after, he tends to become. What he ardently desires, he in some measure, sooner or later, receives. The content and the 'tone' of thought react powerfully on physical health, shape character, and help to secure, or to lose, for a man such desirable things as popularity and business success.

Despite the harm done to such truths by quacks and charlatans they remain truths of experience, and they make such a hymn as 'O to be nothing, nothing' sound very silly, or, if anybody ever were to take it in earnest, suicidal.

But then there is the other side, upon which Scripture and experience are just as strong. The wisdom of all the ages condemns conceit, pride, and self-righteousness as the surest way to ruin. 'Humility,' as Principal Iverach pointed out, is 'the other side of greatness,' in such wise that without humility there can be no true greatness.

Here we are, then, shut up between two seemingly contradictory statements which are both demonstrably true. If we do not think highly of ourselves, we shall never be anything; if we do esteem ourselves highly, we are on very slippery ground and have probably put great attainments beyond our reach. How to do justice to both is a pretty problem. We have never heard such a mediating formula as helped us in the case of faith and works. He who can construct one will do a great service.

These remarks have been suggested by a book which seems to us quite worth consideration on one side of the antinomy, *Life's Practical Philosophy*, by Charles WASE (Rider; 4s. 6d. net). On the whole subject of right thinking it is not good, for it ignores the other side of the antinomy. As a practical philosophy of life it is sadly deficient. It has no place for salvation from sin in any real sense of either of the terms, and no place for Christ except as 'the Great Master.' Its salvation is essentially salvation of the individual by himself through his own inner resources, guided only by great examples. We have no manner of faith in that.

But if one is sound on the essentials of the Christian salvation and regeneration, and can in consequence pass on without misunderstanding to the working out of his own salvation as the Apostle enjoins, he will be helped by what our author has to say on the prime necessity of right thinking and on what manner of things should occupy one's thoughts. Many good quotations might be given. Let these suffice:

'Remind yourself continually of the presence within you and within others of the Ideal Self, which is a successful, happy, and healthy self. You are continually painting mental pictures. See that you paint the pictures of a happy, healthy, and harmonious life and its right attainment. Right desire will make these pictures real and living, when you follow it with right action.'

'Thoughts of health, confidence, strength, and intelligence will help to develop these essential qualities in you. You will never be able to do things if you think you cannot. With your thoughts concentrated upon reality—think and affirm—"I am such and such in the ideal, real world" and be it in actual expression. With this mental attitude you can trust . . . that all the forces of the Universe are working with you.'

There is a striking article in the June number of the *Church Missionary Review* by Constance L. MAYNARD, with the challenging title 'Are Missions to the East Needed?' In view of the difficulties, is missionary effort worth while? It is true our race is gifted with a love of adventure and a great power of endurance. We have also an exceptional power of dealing with the less civilized races; and our word is everywhere trusted and respected.

But consider the contra account. There are the by no means negligible physical troubles—malaria, fevers, dysentery, dangers. There are the indifference, hostility, cruelty of human beings. There is the constant strain of labour and disappointment and deprivation. There are isolation and exile, weariness, want of sympathy. And, amid all, the continual demand for courage, patience, and cheerfulness. Put what you like on the other side, yet let us not be under delusions as to what we have to face.

There is a great deal more. And the question puts itself in view of it all: Have we something to give to non-Christian nations that is of such supreme value that we are willing to pay a price which is heavy, however you look at it? There can be no doubt about the answer when we consider only uncivilized peoples. The terrors of magic and witch-doctors, the cruelty to infancy and old age, the degradation of women, the fear of evil spirits—all this has been swept away and the souls of men have been led into light and liberty.

But it is another matter when you look at the great organized religions. Why should not one form of religious faith appeal to one type and another form to another? The mental equipments of East and West are very different. So long as the religion of non-Christians has some control of a reasonable kind over conduct, so long as it satisfies *them* and gives them hope and inspiration, why should we disturb them? That is a question that is asked by many cool observers, travellers, and even residents in non-Christian lands.

Look at the four great religions. There is Muhammadanism. It starts from the opposite end of truth from Christianity, from the metaphysical. It emphasizes the transcendence of God and a sovereignty that is hard and unbending. Predestination is absolute; the future is as unalterable as the past. All that Christianity stands for is wanting in the God of Muhammadanism. Buddhism, on the other hand, emphasizes the immanence of God. It is nearly identical with pantheism. God is impersonal, and man is but a dewdrop that slips into the shining sea of the eternal life. His future is the stripping off of the shadow of personality which he possesses on earth.

The third of the great religions is Hinduism. It is a religion of rites and rules. At its heart is the passionate desire for an incarnation of the unseen God who is behind everything. This desire is satisfied by its 330 million gods, who are personifications of nature-processes. Morality does not count in this pantheon, and the Hindu faith leads to an utter confusion between good and evil. Its 'holy men' may be good; they may also equally be brutish, malign, and wicked. The fourth religion, Confucianism, is 'the religion of a gentleman.' It is good form. In point of fact it is more an ethic—a kindly, brave ethic—than a faith. It is so sound that Dr. John Mott has said, 'If you want to sow the good seed on paving-stones, go to South America; and if you want to sow it on ploughed land, go to China.'

What, then, have we to give to these peoples? The Muhammadan needs everything that is connected with the Incarnation. The Buddhist needs the conviction of personality, in both God and man. For him we have 'the gift of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' The undying thirst in Hinduism for a God who is near and real points straight to the central message of the Gospel, and India is crying out for this. In China the soil is open and prepared, and what China needs is a spiritual message, the evangel of the grace of God.

Christ is the desire of *all* nations. The four great religions we may surely regard as parts of the preliminary revelation of God, calling men to Himself. They are broken lights of Him, and in His truth and grace He is more than they. Each of them is 'a prayer for life,' and in Him is the life.

What doth the Lord require of thee? To a religious person no question can be more important than that. And already in the Old Testament comes the immortal answer: 'To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.' The answer is simplicity itself. Duty is defined in terms of social service inspired by religion. Justice, love, and a humble walk with God—that is all.

But is that really all? Yes, Micah seems to say, that is all. For his words are not merely a statement, they are a protest—a protest against the rivers of oil and the rams and the calves and the burnt-offerings, which seemed to his contemporaries so indispensable an element in the service of God. Emphatically these things formed no part of the divine demand. So at least thought Micah.

And he is not alone in thinking this. Prophets both before and after him thought the same. Indeed, two of them went further and maintained that animal sacrifice had never formed any part of that demand—not at any rate in the only period which for this purpose mattered, that is, in the good old days of Moses, when Jahweh had so signally

revealed His gracious will towards Israel. 'Was it sacrifices,' Amos asks, 'and offerings that ye brought unto me in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?' And the answer is most evidently, No. Then and now and evermore the divine demand is that justice roll like water, and righteousness like a perennial stream. A century and a half afterwards we find Jeremiah giving expression to the same view of history and of God. 'I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices.'

The evidence of the prophets on this supreme question is not extensive, but it at least seems to be explicit. Isaiah represents Jahweh as saying, 'I delight not in the blood of bullocks,' and Trito-Isaiah, pouring scorn on the ritual fasting of his day, asserts that the fast which is truly acceptable to Jahweh is the fast from social injustice, which will come to expression in clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, freeing the oppressed. To men like these it would seem as if the whole priestly way of life were simply an irrelevance. Their attitude is summed up most succinctly by Hosea when he says, in words which seem to have been specially dear to our Lord, 'I will have mercy, *and not sacrifice*.'

More wonderful still, this attitude is shared by some of the psalmists. 'Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in, burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.' 'Thou delightest not in sacrifice, thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offerings.' The psalmists, like the prophets, are not merely negative. If they can tell us what God has no delight in, they also know what He does delight in and demand. In the prophets, not sacrifice, but mercy; in the psalmists, not sacrifice, but 'a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.'

'I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.' It seems impossible to evade the simple force of these and the similar words already quoted. Yet many modern scholars hesitate to take them at their full face-value. It is urged, on the one hand, that the prophets, like many a public speaker, made occasional use of the language of hyperbole, in order to direct attention to an aspect of truth which their hearers were ignoring. It is urged on the other hand that, as children of their time, they could not have broken so completely with the traditions of their people, and could not have hurled so radical a criticism at institutions and practices universally accepted by the contemporary world. Professor J. M. P. SMITH of Chicago, in his recently published *The Moral Life of the Hebrews* (reviewed in 'Literature'), maintains, for example, that 'a religion without ritual would have been practically inconceivable to the Hebrew mind, and the prophets never ceased to be Hebrews.' The question is clearly then, in part, how much originality may be ascribed to the prophets.

The evidence, as we have said, however meagre, seems explicit, but apparently it is not unambiguous, judging by the various interpretations put upon it by modern scholars. Let us hear some of them. Professor Smith, whom we have just quoted, says: 'It will hardly do to make Amos wholly discard ritual and put ethics in its place. . . . He was not consistently hostile to ritual. . . . It is safer to assume that he is protesting not against ritual *per se*, but against making ritual do service for character and right conduct.' Let us hear Professor T. H. ROBINSON. While admitting in his *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel*, that 'Hosea and Jeremiah had no use for sacrifice,' he goes on, 'Pre-exilic Prophets would not, perhaps, have swept it away altogether; their concern was to see that men realized that religion was a moral and spiritual thing, and not merely a ritual one.' And again, 'The attitude of the earlier prophets might have been different had the ritual been of that purer type which the Law maintained,' though Dr. ROBINSON frankly adds that 'they would never for an instant have endorsed the contention that ritual of any kind was among the absolute demands of Yahweh.' Similarly the late Professor R. A. AYTOUN in his *God in the Old Testament*: 'At first

sight,' he says, the prophets 'appear to advocate a purely ethical and spiritual religion from which all outward forms in worship are banished as utterly irrelevant and valueless.' But 'it did not necessarily follow that if the heart and life were right even then there was no place for the outward and visible in worship; but what value these might have they did not suggest.'

Now let us hear the other side. In *Altar, Cross, and Community*, Professor W. F. LOFTHOUSE in a striking paragraph argues: 'The prophets do not say, "No rite is of use while the heart is wrong." They never imply that it will be of any use when the heart is right. What they would have said if they had been discussing pure and untainted sacrifices we do not know. But the fact that in discussing debased sacrifices they spoke of sacrifices as a whole suggests the answer.' Emeritus Principal SKINNER takes the same line. 'It is commonly held,' he remarks in *Prophecy and Religion*, 'that the prophets' repudiation of sacrifice was not absolute, but relative to the prevalent delusion that cultus apart from morality has an inherent value in the sight of God. That is to say, they did not reject sacrifice as such, but only as offered by a people that had lost the true knowledge of God. It seems clear, however, that the prophetic principle goes further than that. Not only is sacrifice of no avail as a substitute for righteous conduct, but a perfect religious relationship is possible without sacrifice at all. . . . They never demand a purified ritual, but always and exclusively the fulfilment of the ethical commands of Yahwe.' Finally, let us hear Mr. C. G. MONTEFIORE. In *The Old Testament and After*, he defines 'the great prophetic achievement,' which he describes as 'of deathless importance,' thus: 'That the worship and the offerings which God asks and likes, demands and cares for, are not sheep and goats and incense and oil, but justice, confession, contrition, and the pure heart.'

Where doctors differ, what is the plain man to do? Two things he may do. He may say that the prophetic conception of religion is not exhaustive: the priest must be heard too. Or he may say that the prophets are the supreme interpreters of religion and that they mean what they say, without mitigation or modification. If it be argued that so bold a challenge of the universal ritual customs in which they had been brought up is simply inconceivable, it may be answered that with men of their insight and calibre, it is precisely the inconceivable that is possible. Isaiah and his brethren in prophecy were very bold. And it may well have been that their conception of animal sacrifice as an irrelevance and a futility—if that was indeed their conception—rested upon profound conceptions of the ultimate nature of God which they would have been prepared to defend by argument, had argument been their province. For did not even a psalmist represent the God he worshipped as saying:

> Will I eat the flesh of bulls,
> Or drink the blood of goats?

The Structure of St. Paul's Hymn of Love.

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THE following is an attempt to show that this famous hymn was originally written in metre. It would seem that the apostle had before his mind in the pleasant hours of composition such lyrical passages as the choral odes in the later plays of Euripides. He appears to have noticed the skill with which that dramatist and others blended and varied their metres. The ode seems to fall naturally into four divisions, with points of transition between each—each of the four having again three parts