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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

NOT the least of Professor Adam C. WELCH's services to the study and interpretation of the Old Testament is his persistent challenge of current critical opinion. It is by a whole series of such challenges, extending over a century and three-quarters, that we have reached that vivid and convincing conception of the development of Old Testament religion and the progress of Hebrew history which prevails among scholars to-day. The critics should be the last to resent criticism. It is only by the challenging of results, in the light of wider evidence or more penetrating study, that progress is possible.

It is now over four years since, in his 'Code of Deuteronomy,' Professor WELCH challenged the current views of the origin and the purpose of that much debated book. Now, in his *Jeremiah, his Time and his Work* (Milford; 7s. 6d. net), he compels a reconsideration of questions which had been customarily regarded as more or less settled. In the nature of the case, the later book could not be so startling as the earlier; but the same freshness, originality, and penetration are observable everywhere.

Incidentally it is worth noting that Professor WELCH has seen no reason to modify the conclusions he reached with regard to Deuteronomy. The criticism of the intervening period has in no way shaken his belief that that book is the code of a Northern shrine, that except in 12^{1-7} there is no demand for the centralization of the worship, and that the issue is not between central sanctuary and local sanctuaries, but between Yahwism and Baalism. It is important to remember this, as this is the key to Dr. WELCH's interpretation of the famous passage in Jer $8^{f.}$ about the false pen of the scribes, and to his view of Jeremiah's attitude to the reform of Josiah.

Among the conclusions which will be disconcerting to readers who are not familiar with the more recondite literature is that we must abandon our belief in the Scythian invasion which is supposed to have been the occasion of the early so-called Scythian songs. There is, it seems, little or no real evidence for this: it is difficult, he tells us, 'to believe in a Scythian invasion which over-ran Palestine in the period of Josiah.' The foe from the North, whoever he was, must be sought elsewhere; or, rather, he is not to be sought at all in any definite historical figure. These early oracles must be interpreted in an eschatological sense. The destroyer of the nations who issues from the North, which is not necessarily a point of the compass but some vague land of mysterious terror, is 'the first faint hint of the conception which gave rise to the figure of Antichrist,' and is the prototype of Ezekiel's Gog.

This refusal to regard these oracles as inspired by, or related to, any particular historical event is intimately connected with Dr. WELCH's general view of prophecy and its function. Here, again, he

strikes a note of challenge. The common view is that the prophets were stimulated to utterance by the political events of their time: when Jehovah was about to do something on the broad field of history, He raised up a prophet to reveal its meaning and so to interpret His secret. Dr. WELCH, while maintaining that the common burden of prophecy was the proclamation of a day in which Yahweh was about to manifest Himself and His purpose in judgment, argues that they did not begin from any casual event in history, like the emergence of Assyria or the growing power of Babylonia. 'They began from Yahweh, whose character and whose standards they knew.'

One of the attractive and genuinely illuminating features of Dr. WELCH's discussion is the skill with which he connects the reformation of Josiah with the political and the literary events of the time. That reformation was only possible through the decline of Assyria, and one of its objects was apparently to extend the influence of Judah, and more particularly Jerusalem, over the northern kingdom. Dr. WELCH makes the highly interesting suggestion that the combination of the documents J and E was part of the same movement. After the fall of Samaria, E (and, on Dr. WELCH's view, Deuteronomy also) would be brought for safety to Jerusalem; and 'it was natural that men who were seeking to reunite the divided people should combine the literatures of its two branches into one.'

Perhaps, however, the feature of most general interest is the discussion of Jeremiah's attitude to the reformation of Josiah, and the conception of religion which that attitude involves. It is commonly supposed that Jeremiah was at first friendly to the reform, but that afterwards, when he saw how ineffective it had proved, he turned from the thought of reformation according to an external programme to the great thought of a new covenant, the law of which would be written on the heart. Here, again, Dr. WELCH comes with his challenge.

He believes that 'Jeremiah regarded the centralisation of worship in Jerusalem as no real reform, but a false step in religion,' and the reform itself as a departure from the prophetic ideals in religion. He rejected it because it was false in principle and because of the falsity of the method in which it had been introduced; it had no higher authority than the pen of certain scribes ($8^{8f.}$). He rejected it, because it turned Yahweh into a local deity, and because it made temple, ritual, and sacrifice essential to religion.

Besides, this emphasis upon things unessential and even irrelevant to religion, as Jeremiah understood it, had fatal repercussions alike in the life of the community in Jerusalem who were spared the sorrow of the first deportation and in the life of those who were exiled to Babylon. In the former it generated a spirit of complacency, for they fancied themselves in possession of all the appurtenances of religion which guaranteed the continued presence of their God among them; among the latter it generated a spirit of despair, for in the foreign land and far from the Temple with its rites and worship, their God, as it seemed to them, must necessarily be far away, and the rebellion, to which some of their exiled prophets apparently instigated them, was thus no mere political rising but a movement with a profoundly religious motive—to return to the land where alone the worship of their God was possible.

It was the inestimable service of Jeremiah that, by dissociating religion from its ancient local associations and from its ritual and ceremonial accompaniments, and by emphasizing prayer and penitence, which were always possible anywhere, as the only things essential to it, he pointed the way to the exiles of deliverance alike from thoughts of rebellion and despair. This conception of religion Jeremiah had held from the first; it was not thrust upon him by the deplorable and demonstrable inadequacy of Josiah's reform.

Dr. WELCH's whole treatment of the question of Jeremiah's relation to the reformers and the reform is a fine example of the impartiality so much to be desiderated in historical discussion. While he makes us feel how infinitely superior in point of

spiritual perception was Jeremiah to his contemporaries, he also makes it clear that the reformers, both in their political and religious ambitions, were inspired by no unworthy motives. But it was the prophet's fate to be all his life in opposition, because he saw so much more clearly than even his well-meaning opponents into the mind of God and the meaning of religion.

In the Preface Dr. WELCH expresses the fear that parts of the detailed discussion dealing with the authenticity of certain passages will seem tedious to many. This, we believe, is a groundless fear. It is in the interests of historical truth and of common justice to one of the greatest figures in the religious history of mankind to separate, if we can, from his own words the accretions of later editors, some of whom only half, if even half, understood him. Those who have studied the Book of Jeremiah most carefully will be those who will most gratefully welcome this searching and illuminating investigation. It is obviously the work of a man who has dwelt long with the prophet and who brings to the exposition of his words and ideas a singularly acute, penetrating, and sympathetic mind.

'During the last thirty years no change has been more noticeable in religious philosophy than the increasing use made of the conception of value. A generation ago, most of the leaders of thought looked at it askance, regarding it as a dubious eccentricity of the school of Ritschl. To-day, eminent Gifford Lecturers vie with each other in appealing to the experience of value—above all to the recognition of moral values as the main foundation of Theism.' Yet, in spite of this prominence given to the conception of value, little seems to have been done in the way of a systematic survey of the various values in their distinct phases and mutual relations. This very necessary piece of work has been undertaken in a book of modest dimensions but of very great excellence, entitled *Values*, by the Rev. ROBERT MACKINTOSH, D.D. (Independent Press ; 4s. 6d. net).

After what he calls 'a bird's eye survey' of the values of pleasure and feeling, which leads him to the rejection of Hedonism and Pragmatism, Dr. MACKINTOSH proceeds to a critical discussion of the higher values, and deals in particular with two outstanding problems, namely, the relation between knowledge and the higher values, and the relation of morality to religion.

Dealing with the former, he finds that 'in connection with the new affirmation that "religious knowledge consists in judgments of value," great misunderstanding has arisen ; not without contributory negligence on Ritschl's own part, but certainly not without widespread carelessness on the part of British theologians and philosophers who have criticised him.' There is no antithesis, according to Ritschl, between judgments of value and judgments of fact. They do not exclude each other. All the higher activities of the soul's life are irradiated with value. Value is everywhere present, though in the realm of pure knowledge it may appear negligible while of significance when we turn from knowledge to life. In a catalogue of the values—from animal pleasures up to beauty, goodness, and God—knowledge itself must be included. Knowledge, simply as such, is a value. 'It is a thing of great price to the mind of man. To be interested only in what is useful—or only in what is pleasant—or only in what in a narrow sense is morally improving—would be to forfeit a great part of the heritage of mankind.' Knowledge is never merely a cold and abstract thing, but it shines with a radiance reflected on it from the values of moral goodness and of æsthetic loveliness and, further—why should we fear to add?—from the sacred and holy.

On the other hand, all the higher values presuppose knowledge. 'As soon as psychical life emerges from mere instinct, it can take no single step without leaning upon intelligence. We *know* right from wrong ; we *know* beauty from ugliness.' Moreover, part of our abstract theoretical knowledge will consist of those sciences which deal with the various values. It would appear, therefore, that knowledge and the higher values cannot be

rigidly separated. When we attempt to draw the line, knowledge and value are found on both sides of it. Accordingly Canon Streeter's distinction between science on the one hand and religious and æsthetic knowledge on the other as being comparable to the difference between a ground-plan and a picture can hardly be considered as adequate or really helpful. It is right as a protest against the idea that knowledge is the only possible value, of which beauty, goodness, and religion are merely allotropic forms. We cannot suffer such a wholesale extinction of all the higher values as that would imply. But the kingdom cannot be divided. Life is a great and comprehensive thing, whose perfection is to be found 'not even in the philosopher's insight so much as in the experiences of the pious soul.'

Dealing with the problem of the relation of morality to religion, Dr. MACKINTOSH has many suggestive things to say. If no higher value can be conceived than pure goodness, what further need have we of religion? Does religion give us something more or higher than morality? Ritschl, who emphasized the contrast between religion and morality, expressed the phases of the contrast thus: 'Morality demands, religion bestows; morality conceives goodness as man's work, but religion as God's workmanship; morality unites us to our fellows, but religion to God.' Doubtless there is much truth in this account of the matter, but it must not be taken to imply that religion and morality are ultimately heterogeneous. 'If we are to have a serviceable philosophy of religion, we must not propose so crude a juxtaposition of separate spiritual values.'

It has been suggested that every ideal value—truth, beauty, or goodness—may, when intensely experienced, pass into the sphere of religion. The love of truth, beauty, or goodness may gain in ardour till it becomes a religious experience of the soul. There appears to be much that is suggestive in this. According to it 'morality *becomes* religion. At its truest and purest, religion is the radiant perfecting of moral goodness. A religious morality is, not only religiously but morally also, superior to a non-religious morality; a moral religion is not only morally but religiously superior to that ugly abortion, a non-moral religion.'

In support of this thesis it may be noted that in love, in friendship, in patriotism—'moral values all, yet forms of goodness incarnated rather than phases of goodness in the abstract'—we touch the eternal and enter upon our heritage as children of God. It is of the nature of religion to personify the unseen friend and lover of the souls of men. Moral values claim to mean personal relationship, and therefore stand for personality both in man and God. In the estimate of human experiences of value, how could we leave this out? 'How could we fail to speak the great name of God? It has become the habit of living writers to inquire whether "the Universe is friendly." In the judgment at least of the highest religions, if we have God on our side, then the attitude of the Universe apart from Him matters not at all. "God is our refuge and strength. Therefore will we not fear though the earth be removed." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" It is unfortunate if the high utterances of faith in God must be disguised in the *patois* of a cheap sentimentalism before modern minds will listen.'

But further, if we believe in a personal God, it is natural to believe that God has behaved as persons do, that He has spoken personal messages to the souls of men, nay more, that He has not only spoken but acted. 'A whole group of the higher religions of the world, to which the name "redemptive" has been given, have made the discovery that mankind is in evil case and greatly needs succour.' And in the gospel of Christ this need is greatly met. The objection is popularly made that concern about personal salvation is a sordid and selfish thing. But personal salvation is not a selfish thing. For the Christ of the Gospels, or of St. Paul, dedicates to a life of love every one in whose experience religion ceases to be a tradition, and becomes a reality full of grace and truth. 'In any case, however the present conceited generation may view it, salvation is offered by the highest of all religions as the highest of all values; in which every minor value will find its due place, or for which, if need arises, many a minor value may be joyfully sur-

rendered in favour of that "one pearl of great price."'

Principal John OMAN of Cambridge was recently invited to address a gathering of Scottish ministers belonging to both the big Presbyterian Churches, and took the opportunity of saying some things about the ministerial life which had been borne in on him by his observation and experience. His two lectures have been published in a small pamphlet under the title *The Office of the Ministry* (S.C.M.; 1s. net). The reflections of so acute and sincere a mind as Dr. OMAN's are bound to be suggestive, and we can point out at least some of the lessons that the teachable reader of these lectures can learn.

His first point is the change in the conditions in which a minister works to-day as compared with a generation ago or more. The change is not all for the worse. There is perhaps less churchgoing, but, on the other hand, churchgoing is probably more sincere. And, if people are less ready to take pulpit utterances as final truth, these utterances are more 'on the spot,' more practical, more level with the conscience.

In this connexion Dr. OMAN raises the question: What can make a man's ministry a growing influence, so that, if necessary, it could be carried on for a lifetime in one place? And he makes the remarkable statement that he knows of 'no congregation which has a character of its own and maintains its influence, which has not some man's long ministry at its foundation.' A ministry ought to make an impression on the community, and it is likely that one obvious shortcoming in this respect, compared with former days, is due to frequent changes in the pastorate. And if long ministries are desirable, so is long training of a minister. Perhaps for immediate popular effect it may mean loss rather than gain. But for abiding power and wearing quality the prolonged and thorough training of the ministry is indispensable.

Then Dr. OMAN gets to his main question as to the secret of success in the ministry. First of all he deals with the Man, and then with the Message. Under the first head he makes two points. The two main defects of the clergy are that they are unlike their people in the wrong way, and that they are like them in the wrong way. How are they unlike their congregations in the wrong way? To begin with, in the way they do their work. The ordinary man goes to his office or his workshop at a certain hour and does his regular darg. The minister works when and as he likes. And it needs a sound conscience to work as hard and as regularly as the layman.

Dr. OMAN has some searching words on the use of time. He insists on breakfast at eight so as to be ready for work at nine, girt physically and mentally. Properly girt; for 'a man in his study in his bedroom slippers, unshaved and in his dressing-gown, is in about as perilous a state for his soul as a man who takes to secret drinking.' Dr. OMAN has no sympathy either with 'the midnight oil' superstition; the best work is done in daylight, in the early hours. You may write more easily at night, but extempore writing is an even more deadly gift than extempore speaking. Better lose your spontaneity than your critical judgment, which is easier to keep at midday than at midnight.

Then comes the question of the religious life. Ministers are apt to be too satisfied with the 'respectabilities' of their profession. But how about worry? Dr. OMAN evidently regards this as one of the deadly clerical sins, or at least clerical dangers. And how about the maintenance and sustenance of the spiritual life? Conducting worship may be a perilous thing and preaching may be a disaster unless the minister worships with his people and preaches to his own soul. What is really edifying in preaching is what a man is saying to his own soul. In this way Sunday may be for the minister himself a day of refreshing; otherwise it is an impoverishment as well as a drudgery.

As to the nourishment of the soul, Dr. OMAN has the courage to say that he has not been greatly edified by most of the devotional literature, 'even

by such classics as Augustine's *Confessions* and *The Imitation* and *Grace Abounding*.' And 'the mystical literature I have waded through leaves on me mainly an impression of auto-suggestion,' which may express the secret conviction of not a few. Dr. OMAN finds help, when his spirit is parched, in the poets, and most of all in Shakespeare, whom he does not find to be the purely worldly poet some people do.

Then Dr. OMAN goes on to deal with the wrong way in which ministers may be *like* their people. They ought not to be too busy. 'When a minister impresses the world as phenomenally busy, he should look to his ways with searching of heart.' Sir D. Y. Cameron, the artist, after attending ecclesiastical gatherings, said, 'the younger ministers are probably as able men as their predecessors, and are probably better equipped. But the older men commended their gospel of peace as men of peace, while the younger men look like business men running their show.' This Dr. OMAN considers a grave charge. He points to Jesus, who was never fussy, who had always leisure to attend to any one. He never hurried an inquirer away because He had so much to do. He tried to get men to think of God and to see what it meant to be His children. Anything less He would not try to do. 'He never started any anti-anything campaign.' He knew, what a minister ought to know, 'that the work of persuading men to true and high beliefs is the job best worth doing in the world.'

About the Message Dr. OMAN says a good deal, but it is not so quotable. He dwells on the importance of belief as the root of character and action. Also on the importance of preaching truth as distinct from preaching doctrine. He devotes all he has to say to an enlargement of Paul's guide for the preacher—'By manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God.' Here are three rules for preaching—in the sight of God, appealing to every man's conscience, making clear the truth. Dr. OMAN'S great contention is that the gospel is not a series of doctrines, and that you cannot do any good by preaching a 'doctrine.' He takes four examples, the Fatherhood of God, the Kingdom, the Forgiveness of Sin, and the Life Everlasting. You can preach on any of these vital truths and leave nothing in the mind at all or something that may be largely erroneous. They must be treated as experience first of all, or they have no life in them.

That is the main thing, and ministers will learn something of what true preaching of truth means from Dr. OMAN'S fine discussion. It ought to be added that he speaks with good-natured contempt of the fads of the modern pulpit, psycho-analysis, and 'social reform,' not of these in themselves so much as of the amateurs who play with them. But the ideal presented here is both high and possible. And if Dr. OMAN'S words were addressed to Scottish ministers they apply equally to ministers of every church and they are weighted with wisdom.

Books that have influenced our Epoch.

John M'Leod Campbell's 'The Nature of the Atonement.'

BY THE REVEREND J. H. LECKIE, D.D., EDINBURGH.

JOHN M'LEOD CAMPBELL was born in 1800. His youth and early manhood were passed in a Scotland where the ecclesiastical atmosphere was charged with electricity, the antagonism between the two great parties in the Church of Scotland being very acute. And this state of things proved very hurtful to Campbell's ministerial fortunes. For when, in 1831, he appeared at the bar of the General Assembly accused of heresy as to the extent of the Atonement, the long-standing bitterness of factional enmity was nearing its climax. The state of feeling resembled that which in national life attends the beginning