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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

THE University of Pennsylvania Press has published a useful and interesting book by Professor George A. BARTON, Ph.D., D.D., who has the unusual distinction of being professor both of Semitic languages and of New Testament Literature and Language. It deserves its title, *Studies in New Testament Christianity* (Milford; 8s. 6d. net), for its chapters are real studies, careful, thorough, and well-informed. Dr. BARTON'S method is to take a subject and work his way patiently through each section of the New Testament, examining the relevant teaching of each section. The result is satisfying, for, even if you do not agree with the writer, you know that he has gone over the whole field carefully and honestly.

The subjects are the Fulfilment of Prophecy, the Person of Christ, God, Sin, the Death of Christ, the Eucharist, and the Christian Life. The chapter on the Death of Christ is perhaps the best in the book, and is in any case suggestive enough to repay reproduction here. We begin naturally with our Lord's own words, and of these there are two that deal with His death. The first is the 'Ransom' passage in Mk 10^{45} and Mt 20^{28}. This has given rise to a well-known theory of the Atonement, but Dr. BARTON does not find in it what Anselm did or even Calvin.

Dr. BARTON dives into the Septuagint of various passages in the Old Testament, and he concludes that the word denotes something precious which one surrenders either to gain something more desirable or out of a feeling of obligation or love to a kinsman. Jesus was probably thinking of the Suffering Servant of Is 53 and of Himself as suffering for the sins of the nations. Suffering atones for sin—that is the burden of the Servant prophecy, and, if we may go to it for a clue to the meaning of Jesus, we see in His words a suggestion of His kinship to humanity and the costliness of the offering He was making. By the costliness of that offering He would reach and soften the hearts of men everywhere. His suffering would atone for their sin inasmuch as it would lead them to repentance.

The other passage is Mk 14^{24}: 'This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many.' The important words are 'covenant' and 'blood,' and these words point to an ancient and world-wide method of attesting covenants. In some fashion the blood of the attesting parties is shared, and so the life is shared. Jesus speaks of His blood as the attestation of a covenant between God and man. His life and death mark a new epoch in God's relation to mankind. 'God so loved the world' is the heart of the New Covenant, and that Covenant is attested by our Lord's life-blood.

From the Gospels we pass to St. Paul. Now here the first thing to do is to grasp the Judaic background of Paul's thought. The key to that is in

Gal 3^{13}, 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' God's curse rests on every man who is hanged, and this curse is contagious. To prevent it affecting the land, the man who was hanged must be cut down before nightfall (Dt $21^{22f.}$). To Saul the Pharisee Jesus was accursed, and as the Christian heresy spread, this curse was contaminating the people. Hence his persecution of Christians. But when the Vision came to him on the way to Damascus his whole outlook was changed. God had honoured Jesus in spite of the curse, and therefore He must be Messiah and Divine.

But this meant a revolution in his way of regarding the Law. There was a region in which it was not in force. Jesus must be exempt from it. And therefore His followers must be so too. So man might be justified apart from the Law. To the Pharisee the Law was the one avenue of approach to God. But now Paul saw another avenue apart from the Law. This was Paul's startling discovery, and it accounts both for his gospel to the Gentiles and for his unpopularity with his own people.

Now when we read St. Paul's words on the death of Christ we must always keep this Rabbinic background in mind. There is in reality no doctrine of vicarious substitution in Paul at all. Take his famous words about 'propitiation.' The Greek word meant always a place, never an offering, and ought to be translated 'mercy-seat.' St. Paul's thought is that God, by permitting Jesus to be crucified and incur the curse of the Law, and then raising Him from the dead, had established a mercy-seat apart from the Law. Paul's thought moved in the region of the Law, the gibbet, and legal relations, not in the realm of sacrifice or altar. The idea of ritual sacrifice is wholly absent from Paul's mind about the death of Christ. His real gospel is his doctrine of the mystic union of Christ and the believer.

The other New Testament writers are treated less fully. Peter follows Paul in both aspects of his teaching, the rabbinic and the mystical. In the Epistle to the Hebrews Jesus is the great High Priest who offered Himself as a sacrifice, entering heaven, the real Holy of Holies, with His own blood. We are not told how Christ's sacrifice takes away our sins, but the writer lifts our thoughts away from earthly counterparts to the Eternal Priest, to His availing sacrifice and to heaven. With this Epistle the interpretation of Christ's death as a ritual sacrifice, which has since played such a large part in Christian thinking, definitely enters into Christian thought.

As to St. John, the death of Christ is not the vital problem to him. He has really no interpretation of it. It is the Incarnation, the New Birth, and Fellowship with Christ in life in which he is interested. But he uses five figures of the Lord's death, each one of which is suggestive. (1) 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' The meaning is that our Lord was the offering acceptable to God, but it seems probable that the writer was thinking as much of His purity as of His sacrificial work. (2) 'I, if I be lifted up,' and 'as Moses lifted up the serpent . . .' Both these passages interpret the Cross as the instrument whereby Christ wins men's faith to their salvation. (3) The Good Shepherd giving His life. There is no significance in this beyond the sacrifice of love or loyalty. (4) 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.' This, again, is the efficacious sacrifice. (5) 'He is the propitiation for our sin.' In John's use of this word there is no suggestion of propitiation in the sense of appeasing an angry deity. It is, again, a word pointing to the sacrificial meaning of Christ's death.

To sum up, these points have to be noted. In our Lord's teaching references to His death are a very small part of the whole. For St. Paul, again, the death of Christ opened up a way of escape from the Law. This is why Christ's death and resurrection are so prominent in his teaching. It is St. John that restores the balance of the different parts of our Lord's life, presenting the death in proper perspective

of the whole, but emphasizing above all the love of God in Christ.

There are many possible approaches to the Bible; there is the historical, the literary, the religious, the critical approach. And now we have the anthropological approach. Anthropology is a comparatively modern science. At any rate the material which forms its basis has been so greatly enriched in recent times, notably by the study of the tribes of Central Australia, that we are able to approach it with vastly deeper insight into such workings of the primitive mind as have left their traces in ancient literature or in mediæval and modern superstition. More particularly, new light has been thrown upon the Bible, especially upon the Old Testament, but also to a very real extent upon the New. In the accumulation of relevant material many investigators have rendered honourable service, but in relating that material to the Bible, no one has laid students under so heavy an obligation as Sir J. G. Frazer by his three massive volumes on 'Folk-Lore in the Old Testament.'

Resting in part upon his labours and in part upon independent investigation, the Rev. H. J. D. Astley, M.A., Litt.D., has presented us with a volume on *Biblical Anthropology, Compared with and Illustrated by the Folk-Lore of Europe and the Customs of Primitive Peoples* (Milford; 12s. 6d. net), which will be read with curious interest by those who have been accustomed to see nothing more in the Bible than the unfolding of the plan of salvation. The book forces us back upon origins. It is written in the conviction, for which it furnishes abundant proof, that to the discerning eye traces of savagery disclose themselves beneath the surface of the most refined civilization, that some of the ideas cherished among the most advanced peoples are survivals of more primitive stages of culture, and that to this rule the life and the ideas reflected in the literature of the Bible were no exception.

Every one is aware that the idea of sacredness attaches to certain objects, places, and persons in the Old Testament, to stones like that at Bethel or Ebenezer—and the pillars Jachin and Boaz at the Temple porch come within this category—to trees and wells, which figure in the patriarchal stories, to the ark, the tabernacle, the Temple, Mount Sinai, etc. This idea appears to be a survival of a stage of culture in which persons and no less things were believed to be possessed by a certain mysterious supernatural influence which is now commonly expressed by the Melanesian term 'mana.'

Dr. Astley shows that far more of this primitive world of ideas is present in the Old Testament than is dreamt of by those who know nothing of the anthropological approach to it. Even the great word Elohim, which is frequently explained as a plural of majesty, is believed to be rooted in very ancient animistic ideas. The Elohim of a place originally meant all its sacred denizens, viewed collectively as an indeterminate sum of indistinguishable beings, who became in time condensed or concentrated in the One God, and thus the use of the singular verb with the plural noun has behind it a long history of man's reflection upon the nature of the world in which he lives and moves.

Light is thrown by anthropology upon many an obscure phrase and passage. An interesting chapter, for example, on Women's Fashions in Jerusalem, based on Is 3^{16-24}, deals with the curious phrase in v.^{20} rendered by A.V. 'tablets,' and by R.V. 'perfume-boxes,' the literal translation of which is 'houses of the soul.' On this phrase, which is sometimes connected with the doctrine of the external soul and explained as referring to amulets in which the soul of the wearer was supposed to lodge, Dr. Astley makes the happy suggestion that it may refer to the soul of the flower, whose perfume or 'essence' may probably have been conceived as an accession to the life of the wearer.

Further, traces of an ultimate totemism may be observed even in comparatively late sections of the Old Testament. The superstitious rites briefly alluded to in two passages which have probably to

be assigned to a period as late as the fifth century B.C. (Is 65^{2-7} $66^{3.17}$) seem to imply a totemistic background. Indeed, there is a graphic picture of such a mystic, mysterious cult, practised within the Temple itself, from the pen of Ezekiel (8^{7-12}). The 'unclean' animals associated with these cults were unclean precisely because they had once been 'sacred'; and the members of these mystic guilds were in reality 'the successors, though perhaps unconsciously, of the old totemic clans.'

Thus Dr. ASTLEY pursues his way through the quaint and superstitious customs and ideas of the Old Testament—'superstitions' in the literal sense of survivals—such as the scapegoat ritual with its implied belief in the transference of evil; the trial by ordeal of a woman suspected of infidelity to her husband, with its resort to the drinking of 'holy water'; the wearing by the High Priest of golden bells upon his garment, probably for the purpose of scaring away demons—an idea which doubtless lies behind the ringing of bells at weddings, and the tolling of them at funerals; the dance in which religious feeling sometimes expressed itself; the mysterious potency of the Divine name. These and other phenomena and beliefs are considered in the light of primitive usage, whether in the ancient world or among such uncivilized tribes as exist at the present day; for it is an axiom on which Dr. ASTLEY repeatedly insists, that under a similar environment and at a corresponding stage of culture man is always and everywhere the same. But customs may live on for ages after their meaning has been forgotten. The Christmas tree and May-day revels have their roots in an immemorial past.

Valuable as Dr. ASTLEY'S book is for the light it throws on the tenacity of custom long after its primary meaning has been lost or transformed, it is very far from being a book of purely academic interest. The present is linked in the subtlest of ways with the very distant past, and it is still possible for the modern man to learn something from those remote ancestors of his. Even the idea behind the term 'mana' is a sort of anticipation or rather recognition of that mysterious quality of the universe of which the reverent modern scientist becomes daily more and more convinced. Dr. ASTLEY has therefore some practical suggestions to offer which the layman, the clergyman, and the missionary may profitably lay to heart.

Take, for example, tree-worship. We are in no danger of relapsing into such worship to-day, but is there not a permanent truth behind it which it would be worth our while to recapture and to which we might give some visible and valuable concrete expression? Dr. ASTLEY thinks there is. In imitation of the vernal festival of Arbor Day celebrated by the United States of America and reproduced with modifications by Italy and Spain, he suggests that a similar festival might be instituted in this country in the month of June, possibly on Midsummer Day, a day 'devoted to the planting of trees as part of a national and universal festival.'

In dealing with the perplexing problem of how Christianity should be presented to primitive races, he suggests that every missionary should be first and foremost an anthropologist. In the most primitive forms of religion there are—sometimes, indeed, to the accompaniment of customs that are definitely repellent—real analogies to the Sacraments of the Christian religion. Baptism has its analogy in the rites of initiation, and the Lord's Supper in the sacrificial feast, through which communion with the deity was procured. In the savage customs which the missionary seeks to transform he will look with sympathetic insight for the truth which, however fiercely and darkly, they express and will show how it is consummated in Christianity.

But the suggestions which will meet with most challenge are those which are offered to the clergy. Dr. ASTLEY is well aware that, if some of them have little inclination for study, others, overwhelmed by the cares of a parish, have little opportunity for it. But his most serious criticism is levelled not at intellectual inadequacy, but at practices which degrade religion to the level of magic. He points out that 'the crux of the whole matter of Prayer

Book Revision lies in Reservation,' and that this practice gives colour to ideas which are indistinguishable from superstition. 'Ideas as old as man, and still endowed with a living power among savages, are sublimated to the uses of the world's highest religion; while superstition, the surviving relics of these ideas of the antique world, still endows the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist with the actual Body and Blood of the crucified, risen, and glorified Christ.'

How deeply hostile Dr. ASTLEY is to this type of religion and to the sacerdotalism which is its almost inevitable accompaniment, will be evident from the following indictment: 'When Reservation is practised, not for the sick—that is, in many cases, a mere excuse—but for adoration and worship, we are landed in what is nothing less than fetishism and idolatry, although I yield to no one in my recognition of the deep religious feeling of those who practise it. The increasing prevalence of these beliefs and practices to-day is, however, a further serious indication of that recrudescence or revival of superstition in our age, which is so marked in other directions also.'

'This is the kind of religion which is being introduced into our English Church once more, with all its accompaniments of superstition and sacerdotalism and the consequent turning of the Christian ministry into a priestly caste, not far removed from, and but little above, the magicians, wirreenun, and priests of primitive man! Such is the circle in which ideas seem doomed to revolve!'

According to the late Archbishop J. H. BERNARD, whose long-expected Commentary on the Fourth Gospel was reviewed last month, the beginning of the Fourth Gospel, as distinct from the Prologue, consists of a detailed report of a momentous week. On the third day of that week, which was the first day of the ministry of Jesus, the first disciples were called. These were Andrew and the unnamed disciple of 1^{35}, who is probably to be identified with John, the son of Zebedee.

Now the Evangelist makes a remark about Andrew which has never proved simple and obvious in its meaning. He says, 'He (that is, Andrew) *first* findeth his own brother Simon.' If we adopt the reading, πρῶτος, for which there is good authority, the meaning would apparently be, that Andrew was the first to find his brother (Simon called Peter), implying that the unnamed disciple, who had also set out to find *his* brother (probably James, the elder son of Zebedee), took longer than Andrew. But, as Dr. Bernard remarks, if the sentence means all this, it is very obscurely expressed.

The reading πρῶτον instead of πρῶτος appears to be better attested, and has been accepted by most modern editors. It has the advantage of not overloading the meaning of the sentence. The meaning would then be that Andrew found Peter first, before he did anything else: 'he *at once* findeth,' etc. There would be no suggestion of John looking for any one. Yet some expositors, for example A. E. Garvie (apparently), in his 'The Beloved Disciple' (1922), and G. H. French, in his 'A Study of St. John's Gospel' (1918), find even with the reading πρῶτον the overloaded meaning to which we have referred.

It is sometimes even thought that the sentence under consideration contains the suggestion that Andrew found some other disciple named Simon, besides his brother Simon Peter: the emphasis on ἴδιον, 'his *own* brother,' would be consistent with this. First finding his own brother Simon, he afterwards found another Simon, whom he brought to Jesus.

But is there emphasis in the use of the word ἴδιον? Dr. BERNARD evidently thinks so. Professor B. W. Robinson in the 'Gospel of John' (1925) thinks otherwise. Here, in the case of this puzzling and seemingly superfluous word 'own,' we have one of many cases in which the papyri have altered our idea of the meanings of words. In the papyri, according to Deissmann, the word 'own' occurs frequently in colloquial dialect and is nothing more or less than a duplication corre-

sponding to the double negative or to such an expression as 'perfectly all right.'

If, then, we accept this interpretation, are we still to be content with the reading πρῶτον? On the face of it the meaning of the sentence is now simpler and more natural. Yet the fact still remains that a good deal of time elapses between 1^{39}, when Andrew and the *innominatus* are invited to come and see where Jesus dwelt, and 1^{43}, where occurs the reference, τῇ ἐπαύριον, seemingly the fourth day of that eventful week. The two first disciples have a full and convincing conversation with Jesus, staying with Him for the afternoon and night; Andrew goes out and finds Peter, who is brought back to Jesus, welcomed, and renamed Kephas.

Modern editors, as Dr. BERNARD tells us, usually try to find time for all this between 4 p.m. and the next morning (ἐπαύριον). But he thinks it would be easier to understand the sequence of events if we suppose 'that day' (1^{39}) to mean a full day of twenty-four hours, from sunset to sunset, and allow two nights, instead of one only, to intervene between ἐπαύριον of 1^{35} and ἐπαύριον of 1^{43}. This would be consistent, he adds, either with πρῶτος or πρῶτον, both being awkward on any hypothesis.

But there is another reading, πρωί, supported by certain Old Latin texts, which have *mane*, 'in the morning.' An original πρωιτοναδελφον would readily be corrupted to πρωτοναδελφον, which leads to πρωτοντοναδελφον. This reading, πρωί, gives excellent sense: 'he finds early in the morning his brother Simon,' having stayed the night at the lodging where Jesus was. Then ἐπαύριον in 1^{43} stands for the day after the finding of Simon, which occupies Day iv. of the 'spiritual diary' covered by this chapter. This is certain, says Dr. BERNARD, if πρωί be accepted as the true reading, and even if we read πρῶτον it is highly probable.

How, then, are the incidents of the week to be arranged? Day i. is taken up with the Baptist's witness as to the Coming One (1^{19-28}), Day ii. with the Baptist's designation of Jesus as the Christ (1^{29-34}), Day iii. with the meeting of Jesus and the two first disciples (1^{34-39}), Day iv. with the call of Peter (1^{40-42}), Day v. with the call of Philip and Nathanael (1^{43-51}). Nothing is told of Day vi., but Day vii. is the day of the marriage at Cana, where Jesus arrived on 'the third day' after the call of Philip and Nathanael.

'Which of these days,' asks Dr. BERNARD, 'was the Sabbath? Most probably it was the day of the call of Andrew and John, who *abode with Him that day* (1^{39}). There was no travelling, such as there was on the days of the journey from Bethany to Cana. If this be so, we reach an interesting coincidence, for then the day of the marriage at Cana would be the fourth day of the week; and a Talmudical direction ordained that the marriage of a virgin should be on the fourth day, or our Wednesday. Marriage feasts in Palestine were, and are, generally held in the afternoon or evening.'

The idea of revelation is one on which fresh light is always welcome. It is a difficult idea in itself, and it has been a source of much doubt and difficulty. Accordingly we turn with interest and no little measure of hopefulness to the chapter on the Idea of Revelation which forms a sort of appendix to the recent volume (reviewed in another column) on *The Interpretation of Religion* by that able and competent theologian, Professor John BAILLIE of Toronto.

In this volume the whole process of religion is represented as one of progressive discovery, under the guiding principle of faith. But religion stands for a dual relationship, and to the activities of faith and discovery, which are essentially activities of the human soul, there must correspond Divine activities. Religion cannot all be a giving, but must also be a receiving. To our human activity of faith corresponds the Divine activity of grace; to the human activity of discovery corresponds the Divine activity of revelation.

A glance at the history of the idea of revelation

should help us to conceive of it aright. In the early days the theory of religious knowledge was that the gods revealed the whole body of the tribal tradition to the great inspired men of the race, who received it in ecstasy or in sleep. But the Greeks virtually put aside the idea of revelation altogether, definitely substituting discovery on man's part for revelation on God's part. In the Early and Middle Christian Ages the conception of revelation was rehabilitated, but Nature, which the Greeks regarded as the one source of religious knowledge, remained alongside of revelation, natural religion being, however, conceived as carrying us only a certain way. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the principles of Nature and revelation were in conflict. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century the opposition between the two has been transcended. We have come to believe that 'on the one hand an entirely unaided reason can discover nothing about God at all, while on the other hand it is only to the keen and patient seeker that any aid from Heaven ever comes.' Thus 'human discovery and Divine revelation, instead of dividing the field of religious knowledge between them, hold the whole field of it in common and are but complementary sides of the self-same fact of experience.'

But to say, as some recent writers seem to do, that all truth, and not merely religious truth, is both discovered and revealed, is to run the risk of taking all meaning out of the idea of revelation. The fact is that 'while none of our knowledge stands wholly unrelated to God's self-disclosure of Himself to our souls, yet that knowledge which we regard as being specifically religious possesses the character of revelation in an altogether different degree from the rest.'

What is the logical basis of the distinction here involved? Why should we, in speaking of this insight that comes to us through our human values, through our nature as moral personalities (for our writer lays the emphasis upon the ethical approach to religious knowledge), feel it necessary to pass beyond the language of discovery to the new category of revelation? The answer, says Professor BAILLIE, must begin from the consideration that goodness is not in the first place something that exists in us, but something to which we are called, that our values are felt by us to belong to some wider order of reality, as indeed Plato taught.

That is why the world's great men of faith represent their religious insight as having its deepest origin in the activity of the Divine Spirit. St. Augustine even went the length of saying that faith itself is not an act but a gift. And if we would know where in our experience the Divine Spirit is most unmistakably manifested, this is the answer: 'In the voice of conscience wherein His law is written in our hearts, in His Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are His children, in deeds of love and mercy and heroic self-sacrifice, in the souls of good men in which such things as these are most manifest to our eyes, and supremely and finally in the soul of Jesus Christ wherein they all shine with a new and matchless radiance.'

A standpoint is thus provided from which to view the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, and to find it expressive of the profoundest religious truth. The doctrine is truly based on 'the perception which came long ago to the Galilean villagers and fishermen that, while Jesus was in one regard but a man like themselves seeking God, yet somehow also in His words to them and His deeds and presence among them God was seeking man; a perception which after His death on the Cross deepened itself into the realization that not merely had one man triumphed, but high Heaven had spoken.'