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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

A RUMOUR has gone abroad, far beyond the confines of the scientific world, that some profound revolution has taken place in physical science which is destined to produce an immense change on our outlook on the universe as a whole, and on our views as to the significance of human life. Thoughtful people, who do not profess in the least to be able to follow the technical discussions of the physicists and mathematicians, are anxious to learn what bearing these discussions may be found to have on human thought and human life. Many, therefore, will welcome the contribution which so great an authority as Sir JAMES JEANS has made to this discussion in his book now published—*The Mysterious Universe* (Cambridge University Press; 3s. 6d. net). It is a sequel to his astronomical work, 'The Universe around Us,' but it may be read alone.

The feelings of primitive man, as he looked upon the world around him and compared its vastness with his own insignificance, must have been akin to terror. As science advanced and increasingly revealed the immensity of the universe, life appeared as a negligible and, it might be, an accidental by-product. The greater part of the substance of the universe was found to be too hot for life to exist, the infinite realms of space were deadly cold, and physical science revealed an evolution whereby life would inevitably be frozen out of the tiny spot where at present it maintains a precarious foothold. 'Is this, then, all that life

amounts to? To stumble, almost by mistake, into a universe which was clearly not designed for life, and which, to all appearance, is either totally indifferent or definitely hostile to it, to stay clinging on to a fragment of a grain of sand until we are frozen off, to strut our tiny hour on our tiny stage with the knowledge that our aspirations are all doomed to final frustration, and that our achievements must perish with our race, leaving the universe as though we had never been?'

To this all-important question Sir JAMES JEANS addresses himself and seeks to answer it, in so far as physical science is able to provide an answer. His general conclusion is that the new knowledge compels us to revise the impression that we had stumbled into a universe which either did not concern itself with life or was actively hostile to it. 'To-day there is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical side of science approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter—not of course our individual minds, but the mind in which the atoms out of which our individual minds have grown exist as thoughts.'

This is, indeed, a revolutionary conclusion for

physical science to reach, as any one who has the least acquaintance with the physical science of the nineteenth century must know. It is impossible here to give more than a glimpse of the evidence on which this conclusion is based. Heisenberg has shown that the concepts of the quantum theory involve what he calls a 'principle of indeterminacy,' and Sir JAMES JEANS agrees with Eddington that this 'destroys the case for absolutely strict causation,' and 'cuts away the ground on which the old determinism was based.' 'The picture of the universe presented by the new physics contains more room than did the old mechanical picture for life and consciousness to exist within the picture itself, together with the attributes which we commonly associate with them, such as free-will, and the capacity to make the universe in some small degree different by our presence. . . . To-day science can no longer shut the door on this possibility, she has no longer any unanswerable arguments to bring against our innate conviction of free-will.'

Again, the new physics has broken down the rigid distinction between matter and energy, finding them to be but two forms of the one mysterious entity. What is known as 'cosmic radiation,' that is, the permeation of space by rays of extremely high penetrating power, cannot be accounted for except by the annihilation of matter, and this transformation must be regarded as one of the fundamental processes of the universe. 'The whole of the available evidence seems to indicate that the change is, with possible insignificant exceptions, for ever in the same direction—for ever solid matter melts into insubstantial radiation; for ever the tangible changes into the intangible.' Probably radiation will ultimately prove to be merely matter moving with the speed of light, and matter to be radiation moving with a speed less than that of light. 'These concepts reduce the whole universe to a world of light, potential or existent, so that the whole story of its creation can be told with perfect accuracy and completeness in the six words: "God said, Let there be Light."'

At the same time physicists are deeply conscious that, with all their subtle analysis of matter, they are not in touch with ultimate reality. The completeness of the many-dimensional universe is as much beyond our comprehension as our world would be beyond the comprehension of 'a race of blind worms, whose perceptions were limited to the two-dimensional surface of the earth.' Physical science is simply dealing with symbols which do no more than point in the direction of the mysterious entity underlying all phenomena. 'The ethers and their undulations, the waves which form the universe, are in all probability fictitious.' The picture of the electrons circling in their orbits round the nucleus of the atom is just a piece of useful symbolism, and to say that the atom is a beautiful little model of the solar system is just as gross an error as to assert that the streets of the New Jerusalem are really paved with eighteen-carat gold. We were confidently taught that light was a rapid succession of waves, then more recently certain phenomena could be explained only on the assumption that light was of the nature of particles. Now science tries to combine the two by speaking of 'wavicles,' but what wavicles are nobody knows, and the essential nature of light remains a profound mystery. This, perhaps, needs emphasizing in view of the popular notion that the moral philosopher and the theologian are moving in a world of insubstantial entities, whereas the scientist is down on the bedrock of reality.

Has physical science, then, anything to say of the nature of this ultimate reality? Sir James Jeans has reached the conclusion that 'the universe can be best pictured, although still very imperfectly and inadequately, as consisting of pure thought, the thought of what, for want of a wider word, we must describe as a mathematical thinker.' 'Mechanics has already shot its bolt and has failed dismally, on both the scientific and philosophic side.' 'The laws which nature obeys are less suggestive of those which a machine obeys in its motion than of those which a musician obeys in writing a fugue, or a poet in composing a sonnet.' The entropy of the universe is still increasing

rapidly, and so must have had a beginning. There must have been what we may describe as a 'creation' at a time not infinitely remote. 'If the universe is a universe of thought, then its creation must have been an act of thought.' The old dualism of mind and matter seems likely to disappear, through substantial matter resolving itself into a creation and manifestation of mind. 'We discover that the universe shows evidence of a designing or controlling power that has something in common with our own individual minds—not, so far as we have discovered, emotion, morality, or æsthetic appreciation, but the tendency to think in the way which, for want of a better word, we describe as mathematical.'

So the physicist may conjecture, keeping strictly to the evidence before him. But his final word would be a caution that every one of his conclusions is frankly speculative and uncertain. 'We cannot claim to have discerned more than a very faint glimmer of light at the best. . . . So that our main contention can hardly be that the science of to-day has a pronouncement to make, perhaps it ought rather to be that science should leave off making pronouncements: the river of knowledge has too often turned back on itself.'

It is not so long ago since we talked complacently of the 'assured results' of Old Testament criticism, but any one who has been following the discussions of the last few years will be ready to admit that now a humbler and less confident mood is more befitting the facts. 'Assured results' there undoubtedly are: the keen criticism of one hundred and eighty years has not been in vain. There is no probability, indeed no possibility, that we shall ever again be able to believe that the Pentateuch came from the hand of Moses or half the Psalter from David. But in other directions confidence in results which were believed to be reasonably certain has been rudely shaken. Deuteronomy, for example, which has been called 'the pivot of Pentateuchal criticism,' and which for over a century has been regarded as a product of the seventh century B.C., has recently

been ascribed by competent scholars both to an earlier and a later period; and with that, much else that was regarded as practically certain will have to be reconsidered.

In this re-orientation of Old Testament criticism, perhaps no one has played a more effective, or at least a more conspicuous, part than Professor C. C. TORREY of Yale University. Besides being an unusually well-equipped Semitic scholar, he has an original and challenging mind. Twenty years ago he presented a very radical treatment of 'Ezra' and the post-exilic period; not long ago in his 'Second Isaiah' he ably argued that that prophecy had nothing to do with Cyrus or the Babylonian Exile, and now he comes forward with a strikingly original—and, to conventional opinion, sufficiently disconcerting—view of the Book of Ezekiel. He presents his case in a volume with the title *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy* (Milford; 9s. net)—a title which to the initiated will suggest the lines of his argument.

On every page the book is subversive of current critical opinion. Its aim is to prove that 'the original "Ezekiel" was a pseudepigraph purporting to come from the reign of Manasseh, but in fact composed many centuries later. It was converted into a prophecy of the so-called "Babylonian Golah" by an editor who accomplished his undertaking (in all probability) not many years after the original work had appeared.' To be more precise, the original prophecy purported to date from the thirtieth year of Manasseh, that is, from the year 663, while the actual date of its composition is about 230—a date which would explain the atmosphere of the book, which, it is contended, is that of Daniel, Joel, and the last chapters of Zechariah. Its mention of Persia (27¹⁰ 38⁵), which elsewhere is mentioned only in Daniel, Esther, and the Chronicler, ceases to be embarrassing the moment it is recognized that it was composed in the same period as these books.

If the argument be sound, the Book of Ezekiel, instead of coming from the Exile, belongs to the very latest stratum of Old Testament literature;

and the argument is based upon considerations drawn from the historical implications of the book, from its literary relationships, and from its linguistic quality.

The conclusion of the elaborately conducted linguistic argument is that the book is not only late but very late. The language is held to be not only later than the Priestly Code, but to have almost reached the stage illustrated by Daniel, Esther, and Ecclesiastes. The Aramaic element is pervasive. In this connexion Dr. TORREY throws welcome light on the obscure and famous passage 20²⁵, of which commentators have usually given singularly unconvincing interpretations. Reminding us that 'in Aramaic, interrogative sentences have commonly no introductory particle,' he treats the sentence rendered 'moreover also I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments wherein they should not live' as a question, 'Did I at all give them statutes?' etc. To all the questions in vv.²³⁻²⁶ the answer expected is negative. That, if correct, is a relief.

The literary relationships of the book are also held to point with equal cogency to a late date. It is held to presuppose not only the Holiness Code, but the Priestly Code, and indeed the completed Pentateuch, also the Second Isaiah, which Dr. TORREY places about 400 B.C., and Jeremiah, which he regards as compiled in the middle of the third century. Of peculiar interest is his interpretation of Magog as the Macedonian kingdom, and his interpretation—in this following Nöldeke—of Gog as Alexander the Great, of whom he finds other traces in the Old Testament.

Every careful reader of the Book of Ezekiel has been struck by the fact that many of the appeals and threats addressed, according to the ordinary interpretation of the book, to the exiles, are in reality only relevant in an address directed to the people of Jerusalem and Judah. A certain unreality hangs about this indirect appeal to men separated by hundreds of miles from the speaker. Dr. TORREY explains this by maintaining that the original book had nothing whatever to do with

Babylonia: it dealt 'solely with the Hebrews of Palestine, almost everywhere in the form of direct address.' The allusion on the very threshold of the book to Jehoiachin's captivity is believed by many recent scholars to be an interpolation, and the few—they are astonishingly few—subsequent verses which imply an exilic background are also, according to Dr. TORREY, interpolations. The Judean origin, he argues, 'is sometimes as plain as words can make it, as in 12¹⁰, 'say unto *the people of the land*.' The dispersion which the book implies is a dispersion 'among the nations and among the countries' (11^{18f.}), but not specifically an exile in Babylon. The prophet's 'dwelling-place was Jerusalem, and his mission was to the people of the holy land, to warn and rescue those who should listen and repent.'

Dr. TORREY's view, if correct, would also necessitate a drastic revision of the current estimate of the personality of the author. Taking the book as it stands, the writer must be admitted to have had remarkable gifts of a psychic kind. There is more than one instance of clairvoyance, and of prediction with a definiteness which would amount to clairvoyance. In particular Dr. TORREY dwells upon ch. 12 as 'a staggering example of "second sight"'—it is the chapter which portrays in pantomime Zedekiah's flight after the breach in the walls of Jerusalem, and his subsequent blinding before his transportation to Babylon. Ezekiel stands indeed quite alone as a foreteller of future events.

These phenomena have gravely perturbed the commentators. They have driven them to explain Ezekiel as a pathological figure, of a nervous, passionate, excitable temperament, the victim of neurosis, catalepsy, and what not. But this, again, seems strangely inconsistent with the balanced and methodical plan of the book with its 'singularly definite plan and progress.' Dr. TORREY ingeniously cuts the knot by classing it among the pseudepigrapha. Like the Book of Daniel, to which it is akin, and to whose period it more or less belongs, its predictions are really prophecies after the event. Indeed, the book is built directly

upon the story of Manasseh's wicked reign in 2 K 21²⁻¹⁶; the idolatries it depicts and denounces are the idolatries of the period of Manasseh, not those of the years that followed the death of Josiah, whose reformation—Dr. TORREY argues in an interesting chapter—was thoroughly successful.

‘The author of the prophecy,’ he says, ‘apparently a man of priestly rank residing in Jerusalem, wished to set before his people, in full detail and with every variety of emphasis, the lesson to be learned from the past, in order that they might be aroused from their present condition of sin and indifference. He had at hand the best possible material for his purpose, in the record of the unexampled wickedness of the Southern Kingdom in the time of Manasseh, and the terrible calamity that had befallen the people. . . . He set himself to imagine what some one of the prophets referred to in 2 K 21¹⁰ would have said in describing the sin of the people and predicting the woes that were impending.’ The view of the book as a third-century pseudepigraph throws light on 38¹⁷, where the writer looks back upon the closed company of the prophets of old.

Dr. TORREY supports his startling contention with a wealth and subtlety of argument which cannot be ignored, and he has raised a new and unexpected problem for students of the Old Testament.

In his book, *Christ in the Gospels*, Professor B. S. EASTON discusses the results of a careful analysis of Gospel sources. At the close of his inquiry he gives us a chapter entitled ‘Jesus,’ in which he reconstructs in outline the ministry of our Lord, as the sources enable us to see it. Jesus, he says, began His ministry with the Baptist's proclamation, that the ‘Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ But this meant that Divine judgment was at hand, and only those who could survive this judgment might hope to enter into the approaching heavenly state.

The apocalyptic promise, therefore, was indis-

solubly bound up with an ethical warning, and those unready to face the coming sifting are bidden to repent. Yet a demand for repentance is meaningless until given concrete content, and so the apocalypticist is necessarily an ethical prophet as well. It is in this way that, for example, the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins and the Sermon on the Mount are integral parts of the same message. Yet the apocalyptic element did not intrude into the ethical so as to distort it. It did not become an interim ethic, a series of emergency rules for the brief time that this earth will continue. When Jesus said, ‘Be not anxious for your life,’ the motive given is not the nearness of the Kingdom when all human lives cease, but God's unflinching care for the birds and the flowers. There are many other examples of the same thing.

How did Jesus know this truth that He taught? We cannot clearly say. So far as He was concerned, what He said was final and inerrant, ‘I say unto you.’ But we can guess so far that it came to Him through His own experience. The consciousness of God's universal Fatherhood came to Him through His own vivid sense of God's Fatherhood in relation to Himself. None the less, it remains strange that He kept silence till His thirtieth year. Why? Probably because He was not quite sure as to His commission or the authority with which He could speak. Perhaps the confirmation came to Him with the Baptist's preaching. He must have recognized many of the Baptist's thoughts as His own. The way was now open for the Messiah when John had come preparing a people for the Lord. And Jesus came forth from the baptismal water unshakably conscious that He Himself was the Messiah. All the intimations of His past life were now explained.

From the beginning the apocalyptic message was present. But the ethical message was not defined by that. At the most the approach of the world catastrophe gave an added solemnity to warnings that were perpetually valid. We must think, then, of Jesus' teaching at the opening of His ministry to be such as we find in the Sermon on the Mount with a background of somewhat general

apocalyptic warnings, such as the Parables of the Talents and the Virgins, all pervaded by Jesus' doctrine of forgiveness based on the Fatherhood of God.

It is this apocalyptic element, however, that shows us that Jesus was conscious of being more than a mere reformer of the current misinterpretations of the Law. He was aware that part of His teaching was wholly new. This was the result of the apocalyptic hope. What the Baptist had initiated He was carrying on to completion. His power, shown in the healing acts, was nothing less than the first workings on earth of the coming Kingdom. It was from this conviction, based on His experience, that Jesus developed the second part of what we may call His 'double soteriology.' He Himself and the Kingdom were inseparable. And so He could bring His disciples within its present influence. His life of sonship and His Messiahship were the two parts of His saving power. 'All things have been delivered to me by my Father.' The Kingdom was already victorious, the Father's love was already transforming men, in Himself.

Jesus knew what all this involved for Himself—an early death. And with this fatal prospect in sight His conception of the Messiahship reached its fullest development. The work of the Messiah could not possibly fail. Death, therefore, would not interfere with Jesus' personal completion of His appointed task. If success in this world was

incomplete He must look for His final victory beyond this world. And since death would exalt Him out of this world into heaven, the final Messianic achievement would be from heaven. So from this point onward 'Son of Man' appears as a self-designation of Jesus. And it is obvious that to Jesus His death had a definite redemptive significance. It was vital to God's plan of salvation. Only by violating everything we know about Jesus can we conceive that He did not think of His body as given for human beings, or of His blood as poured out for many.

Were the disciples plunged into despair by their Master's death? In some cases, doubtless. But this can hardly be true of them all. For Jesus had fully prepared them for it. He had shown them that it was a necessity, and that it would only transfer His Messianic work from earth to heaven. He had gone to the Father, and in a few years He would return as the glorious Son of Man. And to preach His doctrine and Himself as the Messiah was their urgent duty. But, as a matter of fact, far more than this was to be their message, when they knew that He had risen from the dead. And the doctrine of an enduring relation between heaven and earth through the Son of Man, which was now proclaimed, was a wholly novel thing. At this point Messianism ceases and Christology begins. The visions of the risen Christ were visions of reality, and those who throughout the centuries have shared the faith of the disciples have found themselves in contact with the same source of power and life.

National Contributions to Biblical Science.

VII. The Contribution of France to Old Testament Science.

BY THE REVEREND DR. ARTHUR R. SIEBENS, OHIO.

IN the history of Old Testament criticism the appearance of the *Conjectures sur la Genèse* in 1753 by the French physician, Astruc, marks the dawn of a new era. Thus it has become customary to divide the course that Old Testament study has

taken into two periods, that preceding Astruc and that following him.

And yet, strangely enough, the advent of the *Conjectures*, while marking a new beginning in international criticism, constitutes a climax in the