THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

WHAT is the difference between the Bible and any other book? There are many differences. Mr. Gilmour of Mongolia used to say that the Bible 'sets towards God.' He said that the stream was not so full or the current so strong in every part of the Bible. In the Psalms, he said, and in the Epistle to the Romans, he was carried along most swiftly. But the Bible as a book,—this was his way of expressing its difference from all other books,—'it always sets towards God.'

Professor Wendt of Jena has been trying to answer this question. What does he say is the difference? He says it is the Revelation that there is in the Bible. Perhaps that is the same answer as Mr. Gilmour's. Or rather is it not Mr. Gilmour's answer from the other side? In the Bible, Mr. Gilmour seems to say, man gets at God; Professor Wendt says that in the Bible God gets at man.

It was at the invitation of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association that Professor Wendt delivered a lecture on the Revelation to be found in the Bible. The lecture is published by Mr. Philip Green under the title of *The Idea and Reality of Revelation* (1s. 6d. net). The occasion may not be encouraging to everybody, the author may not be above suspicion. But if we find that in that lecture Professor Wendt discovers Revelation in the Bible, we shall all have joy in the discovery.

And Professor Wendt discovers it. Not certainly in the way that we have been accustomed to find it, perhaps not even the kind of Revelation that we have been accustomed to find. How different, indeed, is the way, how different is the Revelation! Is there anything within the whole range of knowledge which shows more conspicuously how our age has been moving than just this, the difference in the idea of Revelation held by our fathers and by us?

Our fathers found the Revelation of the Bible in its miraculous inspiration. Professor Wendt says it is not miraculous and it is not inspired. We have examined the thoughts of the Old and New Testament, he says, and we can trace a historical development in them, just as in other products of the human mind. We see advances and relapses, we find incompatibilities and contradictions. We have examined the sources of the narratives in the Bible, and the way in which they have come into being, and we see that, just as others, the writers of the Bible have employed literary sources and oral traditions, and have worked under the influence of individual motives and historical conditions.

But there is the Revelation through Christ. The Christology of our fathers emphasized the divine Sonship of Jesus of Nazareth. Every word He uttered, every deed He did, was a Revelation of God, for was He not God in flesh? Professor Wendt says that we have discovered Christ's human nature. Or rather, we have recovered it. For the Gospels 'awaken a strong impression of Jesus' simple human nature and development.' And that impression becomes the stronger the more we learn to separate the older from the later portions of the Gospels. We have taken pains also to comprehend Jesus in the conditions of the age in which He lived, and to trace the usual psychological and historical laws of development in His person and in His work. Our fathers saw God in Christ; Professor Wendt says we see man. Our fathers looked upon Christ Himself as the Revelation of God; Professor Wendt says God was in Christ revealing Himself to the world as He is in you or me.

Once more, our fathers separated the religion of the Bible from every other religion, and they said this is the separation, that the religion of the Bible is the Word of God, God's spoken, written, Word to man: other religions are the words of men to one another. Professor Wendt denies the distinction. 'The investigation of the history of religions has led more and more to the knowledge that the Israelitic and the Christian religions cannot be sharply separated as revealed from heathen religions.'

Are we mistaken then? Does Professor Wendt deny the Revelation of the Bible? We are not mistaken. He does not deny it. He only denies its occasional, by which he means its supernatural, character. He holds that our fathers' one mistake was in thinking that God only occasionally made Himself known to men, whereupon they called these occasional revelations miracles. God is always revealing Himself. Even that greatest occasion of all, the occasion which our fathers called the Incarnation, is not separable, says Professor Wendt, from God's ordinary working in any sense, unless it be by its intensity. For Professor Wendt does not deny that God reveals Himself more intensely to some than to others, and at some times than at other times. But so far is Jesus of Nazareth from being a separated revelation of God, that in Professor Wendt's judgment, if He were so separated, isolated, or miraculous, He would be no Revelation. We find the Revelation of God in Christ simply because 'we find in other men and in ourselves a higher life and higher powers analogous to what we have in Him.'

How did God reveal Himself to Jesus Christ? Professor Wendt thinks that the better way to put the question is, How did Jesus receive the Revelation of God? And he answers, Just as other men receive it. Other men receive all their revelations of God by intuition. Jesus received His by intuition also. Sometimes the occasion was a vision. For Professor Wendt accepts the historical accuracy of the account of Christ's baptism. Most frequently it was by meditation. 'His peculiar greatness and superiority to all others is to be found in the clearness and tranquillity with which He continually directed His inward glance on God and the heavenly life.'

Jesus was great. He was superior to all others. He surpassed all the men that went before Him in His knowledge of God, that is, in the amount and value of the Revelation of God which He received by intuition. What are the points of His superiority? Professor Wendt sees four points.

Jesus was the first to preach the Fatherhood of God. Other men had employed the name Father, or had recognized this moral characteristic in God, saying, 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' But no man had given precedence to the Fatherly love in the character of God, no man had seen that the whole relation of God to man is governed, not by legal regulations, but by those moral laws which subsist between father and child.

Jesus was also the first to preach everlasting life. Other men had caught the thought that there is a life beyond death, and they had spoken of it as a higher and heavenly life. But no man had seen that the higher life is the true life, and that everything turns upon it

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Again, Jesus was the first to preach that the demand made by God the heavenly Father is childlike trust. Other men had said that we should place our trust in God. But no man had seen that trust in God should be perfect, unhindered by difficulties on earth or demoniacal powers under the earth. No man had known that the perfection of trust includes utter lack of personal merit, absolute faith in forgiving grace.

Finally, Jesus was the first to preach the love of man to man. Other men had said that we should love our neighbour. No one had supposed that our neighbour included our enemy.

Those are the marks of Christ's supremacy, His originality, as Professor Wendt expresses it. Those are the signs by which we discern that the revelation of God to Jesus Christ was greater than to other men. But we must not make a mistake. He gained it all as other men may gain it. Even when Jesus speaks in the Fourth Gospel of that which He has seen and heard from His Father (is it not '*the* Father,' Professor Wendt, or is that nothing?)—even then 'He is not thinking of any miraculous knowledge of God brought with Him out of His pre-existence, but of an intuitive consciousness of God during His earthly life.'

Now, apart from the question of the divinity of our Lord, it really does not matter how the Revelation of God is obtained, if it is Revelation, and if we can trust to it. Can we trust to the Revelation of God in Christ? How do we know that it is Revelation?

On that also Professor Wendt is quite explicit. We know that it is a Revelation of God if it commends itself to our conscience. Jesus is no witness to Himself. Though He says, 'We speak that we do know,' His testimony is nothing to us. Simply because He says a thing is no assurance that that thing is true. We know that the preaching of Jesus is 'transcendental in content and tendency,' because it is confirmed by the facts of the world, by the facts of our inner life, and by the demands of our conscience. We perceive that God has been revealing Himself through Christ when we feel that the words of Christ are 'the proper key to the understanding of the natural world and human history.'

But Professor Wendt is not the man to think that he has explained Jesus Christ, when he has explained the Sermon on the Mount. If the words of Jesus are a Revelation of God much more is Jesus Himself. And He is the supreme Revelation of God, not only because His life was found to be in accordance with His preaching. His life had also its own value, it was itself a Revelation. For it does not seem to Professor Wendt possible that Jesus could have turned his back upon the earthly life and prosperity, and accepted with such whole-heartedness those moral and religious obligations which He proclaimed, even to the length of dying on their behalf, if He had not been supported by the possession of supramundane spiritual power. This supramundane power was itself a Revelation. It was a previous Revelation to the great ideas of Sonship and Love. He obtained these ideas through the ordinary avenues of intuition. But he obtained them in such originality because He felt that He was equipped with this spiritual power of God, and so could listen and receive where other men would have doubted and missed.

What does Professor Wendt mean by this supramundane power? He means no more than that possession of the divine life, that anointing of the Spirit of God, which we all receive by faith, but which none of us receive in such strength and purity. He calls it supramundane.

But he does not mean that its possession made Jesus supernatural. He only means that it is a power which comes from God. It is supramundane in us also if we have faith to receive it. 'When we interpret the significance of Jesus as Revelation thus, we do not in any way break with the acknowledgment of His human nature. The power of intuitive religious perception which we attribute to Him in the highest degree, is possessed also by others, and is in no kind of opposition to the ordinary development of human mental life. It is the same thing with His moral power. However free that power is from the limitations of mere natural forces, it is not foreign to the nature of man.'

Has Professor Wendt explained Jesus? Has he explained why Jesus possessed this power so supremely? He holds that 'the historical development of Revelation reached its culminating point in Jesus Christ.' Has he explained why it reached that point in Him? He holds that though it reached its culminating point in Christ, it did not reach its end. He recognizes a continually widening Revelation within the Christian Church. Has he explained why no one has preached so originally or lived so divinely as Jesus did? Has he explained why he himself, who recognizes the Revelation as it is in Jesus by the testimony of his own conscience, does not preach and does not live as Jesus did?

When the new Life of Christ is written—surely some one is writing it now—a new interpretation is likely to be given to His Baptism. There is no event in all the gospel record that has so altered its significance to modern scholarship. Formerly its value was seen in the evidence of the Messiahship which it afforded to others. Now it is seen in the evidence it furnished to Christ Himself.

Up to the moment of the Baptism, says Professor Wendt, in the Lecture which has just been noticed, Jesus did not know that He was the Messiah. How could He know? He had been reared in the traditional idea of the people, that the kingdom of the Messiah was to be a kingdom of political power and glory, and that the Messiah Himself was to be a son of David, a prince and a hero. Jesus knew that He had none of these things. How could He suppose that He was the Messiah?

Then came the Baptism and the vision. In that vision He learned that He was the Son who stood in intimate connexion with the heavenly Father, the Beloved in whom the Father was well pleased. He saw at once that this was the essential thing to the Messiahship, this was the secret which should have potency to establish the Messianic kingdom. In comparison with the well-pleasing of the Father, earthly possessions and earthly power were nothing. He passed to the Temptation. And as He resisted every appeal from worldly ambition, the spirituality of the Messianic kingdom and His own call to be its Messiah became an unassailable possession for Him.

But if the vision at the Baptism was 'a Revelation for Jesus Himself and for Him alone,' how is it that the Gospels misrepresent it? They speak of it as mainly meant for others. Professor Wendt does not answer that. But we find an answer offered by Professor Johannes Weiss of Marburg.

The 'Freunde der Christlichen Welt' held their thirteenth annual gathering at Eisenach on the 27th and 28th of September, when, amongst other papers, one was read by Professor Weiss on 'The Messiah-Problem in the Life of Jesus.' Professor Weiss started with the disciples. That the disciples believed in the Messiahship of Jesus Professor Weiss has no doubt. How did they reach it? Not by the Resurrection alone. It does not seem to him possible that the Resurrection alone could have convinced the disciples that Jesus was the Messiah. For other men had risen

or had not died. Elijah had passed into the life eternal, yet no one had called him the Messiah. How should the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead make Him the Messiah when the glorious Ascension of Elijah gave him only the place of Forerunner?

Professor Weiss believes that the disciples were taught by Christ Himself to look to Him as the Messiah. He agrees with Professor Wendt that the moment of Christ's own realization of it was His Baptism. From that time He kept it as a sacred and secret possession. He dared not tell the Jews. He dared not directly claim the Messiahship even before Pilate. But He could share the secret with His disciples. He could prepare them for its preaching when the time came for that, by insisting on the necessity of the Messiah's death. So, though they understood not these things at the beginning, when the time came the disciples were ready to become His witnesses.

But though the disciples learned the secret of the Messiahship and proclaimed it, they never knew quite clearly how it came to Jesus. They never saw the significance of the Baptism. So rapidly rose the Sonship of Jesus in their minds that they could not conceive Him ignorant of anything, they could not imagine a moment when He first came to know. And when the record of the Baptism was written they missed its real meaning. They represented it, not as the supreme moment in His life for Christ Himself, but as an evidence of His Messiahship for them that stood by.

Next to Paul's 'thorn' there is no malady in the Bible that has been so often discussed as the malady of King Saul. We shall never know what it was. But if the search for truth, as Professor Drummond used to say, is better for us than truth itself, it will always be good to make another effort to identify it. Another effort is made by Mr. Edward M. Merrins, M.D., in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for October.

Dr. Merrins tells us at once that he believes it was epilepsy. For epilepsy is a disease of the nervous system characterized by sudden attacks of unconsciousness, which may, or may not, be accompanied by convulsions. And all that we are told of Saul's malady agrees with that description.

There are three kinds of epilepsy. There is *le grand mal*, in which unconsciousness is profound and prolonged, and the convulsions are general and violent. There is *le petit mal*, in which unconsciousness may be momentary, and convulsive movements very slight or altogether absent. And there is psychical epilepsy, in which mental and emotional disturbances may appear in the intercallary periods, entirely independent of the convulsions. Dr. Merrins seems to think that Saul was subject to psychical epilepsy.

For while he quotes an example of the gravest form of epilepsy from the New Testament, he refers to the case of Saul only when he describes the form called psychical. The example from the New Testament is the 'lunatic' boy who waited our Lord and the three as they descended the Mount of Transfiguration: 'Master, I beseech thee to look upon my son; for he is mine only child: and behold, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it convulseth him that he foameth, and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him sorely.' It is an accurate description of *le grand mal*, says Dr. Merrins.

When he comes to psychical epilepsy, Dr. Merrins quotes the description given by Defendorf in his *Clinical Psychiatry*. 'The essential feature of psychical epilepsy,' says Defendorf, 'is the disturbance of consciousness. Patients are confused, move and act in a mechanical or automatic manner, and often present evidences of illusions, hallucinations, and delusions. They wander aimlessly about,

and do not appear to recognize any one, but will sometimes reply incoherently to questions. Occasionally they assume fixed or peculiar positions, or gaze steadily at one point. In some instances they display a heightened excitement, and again a gloomy stupor.'

Whereupon Dr. Merrins quotes Browning. And who will hesitate to say that Browning studied the madness of Saul before he wrote of it? David has found Saul's tent, and entered it—

At the first I saw nought but the blackness; but soon I descried
A something more black than the blackness—the vast, the upright
Main prop which sustains the pavilion; and slow into sight
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of all.
Then a sunbeam, that burst thro' the tent roof, showed Saul.
He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both arms stretched out wide
On the great cross-support in the centre, that goes to each side;
He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there as, caught in his pangs
And waiting his change, the king-serpent all heavily hangs,
Far away from his kind, in the pine, till deliverance come
With the spring-time,—so agonized Saul, drear and stark, blind and dumb.

In writing on Saul's malady or on anything connected with Saul, one has now to reckon with the critics. How much of the story is authentic, and what is the order of its parts? Dr. Merrins turns to Cheyne. He reads (*Encycl. Biblica*, iv. col. 4314): 'Was it a melancholy produced by a wild longing for battle? Was it but the morbid reflex of the prophetic inspiration of Saul's heroic period? Does the story of the witch of Endor suggest that it was a frenzied anticipation of evil for Saul himself and his people? Or is it historical at all? May not the statement be due to the influence of a widespread Oriental tale?' That will not do. Dr. Merrins will have none of the critics. He determines to take the narratives as they stand, and take them all.

And when he comes upon difficult places, he gets over them as best he can. The greatest difficulty is the failure of Saul to recognize David when he came to the battle against the Philistines. For David had, according to the narrative, been already much with Saul. Dr. Merrins says: 'As total loss of memory may occur for a variable period in all cases of epilepsy, Saul's failure to recognize David when about to encounter Goliath may perhaps be thus accounted for.' But he honestly confesses that Abner's lapse of memory on the same occasion is not so easily explained.

The three most outstanding events in which Dr. Merrins sees epilepsy play its part are Saul's prophesying, Saul's visit to the witch of Endor, and Saul's death.

Saul's prophesying was due to an attack of epilepsy. He had visited Samuel, and Samuel had been much drawn to the handsome, earnest inquiring young man. When he left, it was no official kiss but one of personal affection that Samuel gave him. Saul left in a state of strange emotional excitement. Had he ever had an epileptic attack yet? He was just at the age when they usually begin. He passed on, the greatness of Samuel's revelation growing greater within him as he had time to think of it. He met a band of prophets. What were they? The prophets of those days were not of the highest order. Dr. Merrins compares them to fakirs or dancing and howling dervishes. Like the Egyptian dervishes, of whom Gordon Cumming says, 'Some writhe in agony, some swoon, some are in fits, while still with foaming lips they strive to murmur the praise of Allah,' Dr. Merrins believes that many of the Hebrew prophets were epileptics. Samuel had told him he would become a prophet. It may be that for the first time the seizure came. In the words of Scripture, words with more meaning to Dr. Merrins than this investigation would seem at first to lead to, 'The spirit of God came mightily upon Saul, and he prophesied among them.'

'Saul furnishes many illustrations of the strange instability of character which is one of the most striking characteristics of the epileptic.' Now he fights against his enemies on every side, and whithersoever he turns himself he is victorious. Again, when 'the hulking brute Goliath' defies him, he is apathetic, despondent, afraid. Now he rids the land of those who dealt in familiar spirits. Again, in a great crisis of his history, he seeks the services of the witch of Endor.

She did not know him. 'Whom shall I bring up unto thee?' she asked. The king named Samuel. Had she the power to bring him up? Dr. Merrins asks the question, but he cannot answer it. He is sure she did not bring him up. As the incantation proceeded the king's excitement grew more intense, and unconsciously he removed his headband. The woman knew him. For Dr. Merrins has no doubt that the true reading is not 'and when the woman saw Samuel,' but 'and when the woman saw Saul,' she cried out. She did not see Samuel. She pretended that she saw him. 'What seest thou?' said the king. And she vaguely described one whom Saul's excited imagination would easily take for Samuel. 'And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and did obeisance.' The nervous strain immediately induced the preliminary symptoms of an epileptic seizure.

Next day 'the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa.' When Saul fled and called upon his armour-bearer to thrust him through, Dr. Merrins does not think it was mere despair. He thinks the malady was returning. And the armour-bearer knew it. He would not kill, he did not dare to kill, one on whom an evil spirit had begun to exert his influence. And Saul fell heavily on his sword. He now appealed to a passing Amalekite. And as he made the appeal he dropped into a merciful state of unconsciousness. His life was yet whole in him. It was not by his own hand that Saul was slain. It was not even by his own conscious intention. For already the malady was on him, he was not altogether responsible. And the guilt of the Amalekite was the greater that he slew one who might have risen again and obtained safety after the fit had passed.

We shall never know what Saul's malady was. Dr. Merrins is not altogether satisfactory. But there is one thing in the paper which is worth some thought. Dr. Merrins hints that there is a subtle connexion between epilepsy and greatness. He remembers that Lombroso defines genius as a symptom of hereditary degeneration of the epileptoid variety, and that Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Napoleon, Peter the Great, Pascal, Petrarch, Muhammad, Molière, and Handel, all were epileptics. It is worth thinking about. That greatness and weakness should be so linked together is not unknown in human life. It is one of the unsolved problems, it is one of the things which our Father holds in the hollow of His hand.

It is a long time now since the first great battle was fought over the keeping of the Sabbath. It will come again one day in all its first fierceness. But why was the Fourth Commandment singled out for this attack? Does it differ in any essential respect from all the rest of the Commandments? The time was sure to come when all the Ten Commandments should be attacked. It has come now. There is an article in the current issue of the *Hibbert Journal* on 'The Ten Commandments.' The writer is Mr. Charles Bickersteth Wheeler. Mr. Wheeler smites and spares not.

We have been accustomed to divide the Decalogue into two parts, the first four Commandments declaring our duty to God, and the last six our duty to man. Mr. Wheeler divides into three. Between the first four and the last five comes the Fifth Commandment, which tells us our duty towards our parents. There is meaning in the division. For to the primitive Israelite his parents

stood in a relationship which brought them nearer God than man. The separation of the Fifth Commandment to a place of its own recalls the special circumstances under which the Decalogue was given. When the early Israelite was told to honour his father and his mother, did not the word 'honour' mean more than the mild and beautiful thing it means to us? In any case, Mr. Wheeler reminds us that the Ten Commandments were spoken to early Israelites, they were not spoken to us.

And so when we read the First Commandment and hesitate a moment to think upon its meaning, are we not at once plunged into a world of things that is wholly alien to us? 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' No other gods—who believes in other gods now? We do not. Mr. Wheeler passes from the First Commandment by saying that it simply has no meaning for us.

With the second Commandment he is greatly shocked. It is not in the command to make no images. That is merely a silly command to him. For what harm can there be in making images? Did the maker of an image think it was a god? That is incredible to Mr. Wheeler. 'To-day it is a shapeless trunk, to-morrow by a few strokes of the axe, and a little paint and feathers, it has become invested with life and divinity, both produced out of nothing by the workman himself!' Mr. Wheeler cannot suppose that even the most primitive intellect could believe that.

And if the Commandment means that the worshipper, though beginning to worship his god through the image, might afterwards transfer his worship to the image itself, Mr. Wheeler thinks it not less silly than before. It is as much as to say that a lover will transfer his affections from his mistress to her photograph—a sufficiently improbable suggestion. No, Mr. Wheeler sees no harm in making images. If the worshipper's prayer becomes more real through such externals —as millions of Catholics can testify that it does —the enlightened Lawgiver ought surely to have rather encouraged their use.

What shocks Mr. Wheeler in the Second Commandment is the description of God. He is called a jealous God. What does Mr. Wheeler say to that? He says that the Hebrew Lawgiver, 'entirely unconscious of his own impiety, dared to depict God as a jealous God, who would be angry if the worship which was due to Him was paid to another.' What a distance we have advanced beyond this God. We know that in love, as in all else, it is more blessed to give than to receive, and if our friend love another better than ourselves, we do not dream of resenting it. Jealousy in God! 'Jealousy,' says Mr. Wheeler, 'is a feeling which no man can harbour when once he is conscious of his own divinity, or even when once he has attained the far lower height of ordinary self-respect.'

To the Third Commandment Mr. Wheeler has little objection to make. He wonders that the avoidance of 'expletives' should be considered one-tenth of the whole duty of man. He does not think very ill of expletives. What more profanity is there in the Frenchman's 'Mon Dieu!' than in the schoolboy's 'By Jove!' He even thinks that life would be a little uninteresting did no one ever use such language. In any case, 'the custom of vain and rash swearing' denotes a want rather of manners than of religion.

With one of the Commandments Mr. Wheeler is wholly delighted. It is the Fourth. If any of us thought he was taking the other Commandments by the way in order to lead up to and confound the Fourth, we see that we were utterly mistaken. Mr. Wheeler does a hard week's work, and he needs a change at the end of it. A change? Well, he will say a 'rest' if you prefer that word. Only you must let him choose his rest for himself. He may choose to go to the theatre, he may choose to lie in bed. Either will be rest, because it will be change. And if you object to either,

he says that now the old Hebrew Lawgiver is better than you, for he simply forbade the continuance of the week's work; you dare to add and say how the rest-day is to be spent.

The Fifth Commandment is the weakest of the Ten. Mr. Wheeler thinks there is a certain meanness about it. The man who feels that he cannot gain the respect of his children in the natural way quotes the Fifth Commandment to them. And it actually holds out a bribe. In Mr. Wheeler's opinion children have no business to honour their father and mother more than any other person. Let each one try to see as clearly as possible the bad as well as the good in all with whom he has to do, that he may imitate what he admires and avoid what he condemns, leaving his respect and affection to find their natural level, regardless of relationship or any such tie.

When Mr. Wheeler comes to the Sixth Commandment he seems to forget what he is doing. He is abrogating the Ten Commandments. But we find him simply interpreting the Sixth. 'Thou shalt not steal.' One wondered what he could have against it. He has nothing against it. He only tells us that there is more in it than we think. A certain Royal Duke made audible response after each of the Ten, and said, 'Never did that.' Mr. Wheeler is not sure about the Duke. Was he a landowner? He would not under any temptation annex a square yard of his neighbour's land, but he would think nothing of taking a slice off a common if he could do it undetected.

The Seventh Commandment is, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' Mr. Wheeler sees no use for it. He is not able to say all he thinks, but he says enough. He says that if you do commit adultery, you should have good reasons for it, and be prepared to face the misunderstanding of your neighbours. But so far as the Hebrew Lawgiver is concerned, he has no respect for his law whatever. Why did he forbid adultery? Simply because the man's wife was part of his possessions, and so it was merely a form of theft. Mr. Wheeler approved of the general condemnation of theft, he disapproves of this particular application of it.

The Eighth Commandment is too short. The Hebrew Lawgiver should have told us what killing means. We have all been pleased to read it with the gloss 'in a private capacity.' And then we have been most zealous to put the murderer to death. Mr. Wheeler thinks we have been too zealous. We are coming at last to doubt if any criminal is reformed by his execution. We are coming to see that crime is a physical disease. And instead of putting the murderer to death we are going to confine him in some home for incurables. But we have missed the meaning of the commandment. We go to war gladly, reciting the Ten Commandments as we go.

The Ninth Commandment is, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.' Why only 'against thy neighbour'? That is very well, and a very necessary commandment. But why not mention the lies one tells against oneself? Most lies, says Mr. Wheeler, 'are told not about one's neighbour but about oneself, and can generally be traced to moral cowardice; this is almost always the case with children, who, like the young lady in the play, thinks "it is better to lie a little than to suffer much."' Still it is a good Commandment. Mr. Wheeler's way of keeping is, instead of talking about other people, to talk about himself. Foolish moralists call that a fault. It would be a better world if the fault were commoner.

But of all the Commandments the one that astonishes Mr. Wheeler most is the Tenth. It is not that it is the only Commandment which reaches the thoughts and desires of the heart, though that is astonishing enough. It is that when the great Legislator was forbidding evil thoughts at all he should have stopped short at

covetousness. No doubt he was somewhat limited in his choice. He could not well forbid Jealousy or Anger, seeing they were attributes of God. But still there remained Hatred, Pride, Envy, Malice, and all Uncharitableness. It may be that the Lawgiver prohibited that fault to which his people were most prone. It is more probable that 'his selection was due to that strong respect for property which is a characteristic of rudimentary minds—their own property, that is to say, for they do not usually hold equally strong views about other people's.'

And when we had finished Mr. Wheeler's article we turned to Kautzsch (*Dict. of the Bible*, Extra Vol., p. 634b): 'The religious and moral significance and the germinal power—we might almost say the power of expansion—of the ideas of the Decalogue are not lessened if we must place it, not at the first beginnings but in the later stages of development of the religion of Israel. Even then, in view of its aims, and above all, in view of its structure, which in the first table shows an advance from the general and more spiritual to the more concrete and external duties, while in the second table the opposite course is followed, it remains a religious document which has a good title to be regarded, even by the Christian Church at the present day, as a kind of *Magna Charta* for the guidance of the religious life.'

On the Translation and Use of the Psalms for the Public Worship of the Church.[1]

By the late Professor W. Robertson Smith, D.D., LL.D.

I.

It may, I suppose, be taken as axiomatic that no translation of a poetical composition can be perfect. If words were mere arbitrary logical marks corresponding to precisely defined ideas, translation would be as easy as the substitution of x for z in an algebraical formula. But were this the case, there would be no poetry; for poetry is the language of the imagination and the emotions, and deals with elements of man's life which refuse to be precisely measured and expressed by mathematical signs. Thus in all ages poetry has had a language of its own, or rather, since poetry is far older than science, all language that goes beyond the expression of man's daily material wants was originally the creation of the poetic faculty. All early speech is, as it were, the crystallization of an early poetry, and the developments of language among different nations are as various and as incomprehensible as are the developments in different ages, climes, and historical conditions of human imagination and human emotions. In all languages and in all poetry, the fundamental notes are the same, but the shades of expression and feeling on which the total effect depends are infinitely various. In poetry, as in every work of art, it is impossible to separate the artistic thought from the form in which it is incorporated; and the impossibility of precisely reproducing the form in another language is equivalent to an impossibility of reproducing the thought. Every translation, then, must lose something of the effect of the original; and the skill of the translator, as distinguished from the insight and sympathy required to understand the original poem, consists mainly in two things—(1) in such a familiarity with the poetical capacities of the language into which he is translating as shall enable him exactly to reproduce the poetic effect where that is possible; and (2) in the power of judging what part of the effect is to be surrendered, when

[1] The above, which formed a lecture delivered by Professor Robertson Smith, at the close of the session in Aberdeen Free Church College in 1872, is now reproduced (with some slight abridgments) from the notebook of Rev. G. Williams, Thornhill, Stirling, an old student of Professor Smith's, who has kindly placed at our disposal his *verbatim* report of the lecture.—Editor.