

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

AN important book has been written by Mr. Harold BAYLEY on *The Lost Language of Symbolism* (Williams & Norgate; 2 vols., 25s. net). To the reader of the Bible its worth is more than to all others. For the Bible is full of symbols, and we have lost their language. We are very prosaic. The writers of the Old Testament and of the New were very imaginative. Between us there is a gulf fixed of which we are aware only in unquiet moments. How to bridge it when we see it, how to enter into the meaning of such phrases as 'the cup of salvation,' we do not know

The phrase, 'the cup of salvation,' occurs in the 116th Psalm. The words are in the thirteenth verse of the psalm, 'I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.' Mr. BAYLEY associates them with the words of the third verse, 'The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. . . . I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.'

Now, whether in the form of sea, river, fountain, well, rain, or dew, water has universally been employed as a symbol of the cleansing, refreshing, and invigorating qualities of God's Spirit. Mr. BAYLEY quotes Is 26¹⁹, 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers

upon the grass.' This invigorating power of the rain or the dew is found in the fairy tale all over the world. In Russia there is a Cinderella story in which the youngest of three girls is killed by her jealous sisters. The murdered maiden conveys a message to her father: 'You will not bring me to life again till you fetch water from the Czar's well.' When the water is brought, she is restored to life; the Czar marries her, and she freely forgives her unworthy sisters.

This invigorating, resuscitating power, says Mr. BAYLEY, is attributed to the dew in the Book of Isaiah. 'Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead' (26¹⁹). And this, he believes, is the meaning of the cup of salvation.

The Psalmist was in deep distress. The sorrows of death compassed him, and the pains of hell gat hold upon him; he found trouble and sorrow. Then came his resolve: 'I will take the cup of salvation.' It was the cup of restoring, reinvigorating dew which symbolized the healing virtue of the Spirit of God. In the days of mediæval Christian symbolism these cups were very plentiful, and assumed an apparently infinite variety of form and size. Their patterns are not always decipherable. But for the most part there can be no doubt that their wavy lines, sometimes

unmistakably forming an S, denote the dew of the Holy Spirit.

The forty-fourth volume of the *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* has been published, and may be obtained at the offices of the Institute, 1 Adelphi Terrace House, Charing Cross. It contains the papers read throughout the year, together with the remarks that were made upon them. Among the rest it contains a paper on 'Natural Law and Miracle,' by Dr. Ludwig von GERDTELL of Marburg; a paper on 'The Greek Papyri,' by Professor MILLIGAN of Glasgow; a paper on 'The Historicity of the Mosaic Tabernacle,' by Professor ORR of the same city; and a paper on 'Difficulties of Belief,' by the BISHOP OF DOWN. But the first paper of all discusses 'The Genealogies of our Lord,' and in that paper there is an exegetical note to which we wish to direct attention. The paper was read by Mrs. Agnes S. LEWIS of Cambridge.

The note has nothing to do with the genealogies of our Lord. It has to do with the Wise Men. In the narrative in St. Matthew's Gospel, which records the visit of the Wise Men to Bethlehem, there occur the words, 'We have seen his star from the east, and are come to worship him' (Mt 2²).

One day Mrs. LEWIS was transcribing these words. The phrase 'from the east' arrested her. What could it mean? If it meant that the Wise Men saw the star to the east of them, why did they go to the west? Why did they direct their way to Palestine? Why did they not go off to India? She looked at the Greek again.

When she looked at the Greek again, she saw that it was open to another translation. Now it happened, 'curiously enough,' that just at the time when she made this discovery, Professor DEISSMANN was on a visit to her house. She told him of the discovery which she believed she

had made. 'Give me a Greek Testament,' he said, and he went off to his room with it. When he returned, 'You are right,' he said; 'the passage may be read as you suggest.'

The discovery was that the passage may be read, 'We, being in the east, have seen his star.' It is a loose construction. But such loose constructions are found in every language. They are found especially in familiar speech, and the New Testament, as we know now for a certainty, was written in the familiar speech of its day. It is all the same as if one were to say in English, 'I have seen Brooks' comet in Cambridge.'

Now, if the Wise Men, being in the east, saw the star, they saw it to the west of them, and they naturally went west to find the place over which it was standing. They went west till they came to the sea, and could go no farther. And when they had reached the farthest west, they found the young Child and His mother.

Mrs. LEWIS's paper, we have said, deals with our Lord's genealogies. The words about the Wise Men are only by the way. Now in our Lord's genealogies there are many sore perplexities, but the sorest perplexity of all is that they appear to trace not the descent of Mary, who was our Lord's mother, but the descent of Joseph, who was not His father.

Mrs. LEWIS overcomes the difficulty by believing that St. Luke's genealogy is really the genealogy of Mary. Her words are: 'Matthew, having received the story of the Nativity from Joseph, gave Joseph's genealogy, through which our Lord's claim to be the Messiah and the official descendant of David is asserted, for Matthew's aim in writing his Gospel was chiefly to convince his Jewish countrymen of this fact. Luke, on the other hand, gives us Mary's account of the Nativity, and therefore he gives us also Mary's genealogy. His chief aim was to convince his friend Theophilus

and other Gentiles that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God.'

At the meeting of the Victoria Institute at which the paper was read, there were several subsequent speakers who for the most part agreed with Mrs. LEWIS. But communications in writing from absent members were read, and they to some extent disagreed. Mr. E. J. SEWELL, in particular, threw doubt upon the leading link in the argument.

The leading link is this. In Matthew's genealogy, Joseph's father is given as Jacob, and that is to be taken as correct. But in Luke's genealogy, Joseph's father *seems* to be given as Heli: 'And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli' (3²³ A.V.). Now in the Talmud we are told that Heli was the name of *Mary's* father. How is that fact, if it is a fact, to be worked into Luke's narrative? The grandfather was often called the father—of that there is no doubt. Transpose the parenthesis in the verse quoted. Let it begin with 'being' and end with 'Joseph.' Now we read: 'And Jesus himself at about thirty years old (being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph) was of Heli.' That is to say, Jesus Himself is said to be sprung from Heli, Heli being His maternal grandfather.

Mr. SEWELL does not believe it. He does not believe that in the Talmud Heli is called the father of Mary. His reliance is on 'Dr. Gore, now Bishop of Oxford,' who says that the statement is based on a quite untenable translation. But unfortunately Dr. GORE has himself to rely upon some other authority, which he does not name. What he says is, 'I am assured that the only legitimate translation is: He saw Miriam, the daughter of Onion-leaves (a nickname of a kind not uncommon in the Talmud); and there is no reason to suppose any reference to our Lord's mother.' Mrs. LEWIS is unconvinced. In her reply, she says, 'I cannot see that Dr. Gore's authority, though great, is final.' And she gives

on her own side the names of Zahn, Laible, Vogt, and Bardenhewer.

We are thus left with at least the possibility that St. Luke's genealogy is the genealogy of Mary, and therefore the proper genealogy of Jesus. And Mrs. LEWIS is glad of it. 'I love to think that our Lord was not an actual descendant of the gorgeous Solomon, nor of any Jewish crowned head excepting David, the sweet singer of Israel, whose poetic gift seems to have been inherited by the most blessed among women. No. He sprang from a line of more modest ancestors, amongst whom we find no kingly names save those of Zerubbabel and Salathiel, names which may possibly represent quite different people from those in 1 Chronicles and in Ezra.'

But this is not the end. Mrs. LEWIS's paper was read 'among mine own people.' What does the unbeliever say?

Yrjö HIRN, Professor of Æsthetic and Modern Literature at the University of Finland, has made a study of the poetry and art of the Catholic Church, and has published it in English under the title of *The Sacred Shrine* (Macmillan; 14s. net). It is not Professor Yrjö HIRN's first book, nor his first book in English. His volume on the *Origins of Art* is known to students of primitive religion. And he has been brought before a still greater audience by his article in the first volume of the *ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS*. The new volume is written with the same mastery of its subject and with the same freedom from traditional control. He opens the second part of it with a discussion of the 'Dogma of Mary.'

He has not proceeded far when he reaches the problem of the genealogies. They are both genealogies of Joseph. 'Any one who has not previously committed himself to a definite attitude can never be convinced that, as modern commentators assert, the pedigrees really referred to Mary and not to Joseph.' These are his words.

What follows? It follows, according to Professor HIRN, that Joseph was the father of Jesus. At the time when these early chapters of the Gospels were committed to publicity, the belief of the Church was that Jesus was born of a virgin. But in stating that belief the writers of the First and Third Gospels incorporated each a pedigree, and these pedigrees, says Dr. HIRN, both of them, contradict the belief. To remove the contradiction one of them inserted the phrase 'as was supposed,' but he could not alter the whole genealogy. It is evident, therefore, to Professor HIRN that the genealogies belong to a period in the earliest history of the Church before the Virgin Birth of our Lord had become an article of belief.

Professor HIRN thinks he can trace the causes which called the belief into existence. The more Christianity spread among heathen peoples, the more it must have been influenced by the heathen way of looking at things. Now the ancient mythologies contained traditions of heroes and demigods who were born supernaturally of a divine father and a human mother. Why should these traditions not be made use of? There was Old Testament encouragement. Isaiah's prophecy of a Saviour Immanuel had, through a mistranslation of the Septuagint, come to be understood as declaring that He would be born of a virgin, and not merely a young woman. It was necessary, too, that something should be done to arrest the calumnious tales already in circulation against Mary's purity. The dogma of the Virgin Birth was easily adopted and proved effective.

It proved more effective, Professor HIRN says, than its promoters could ever have hoped. It opened the way to ideas of purity and sublimity being attached to the Virgin which gradually lifted her to a place far above that which she occupies in the Gospels, a place above that of all other mortals. The day came, though not till 431 A.D., when by a great and universal Church Council she was solemnly declared to be worthy of the title *theotokos*, 'Mother of God.'

The Council took place at Ephesus. It was not a mere coincidence. Had not the Evangelist John lived in Ephesus during the latter part of his life? And had not the mother of Jesus found a home with John after the crucifixion? Before the Council met there was a church in Ephesus which was devoted to the worship of the Madonna. It was the only church in the world so devoted yet. For the Ephesians could not forget that once the glory of their city was the great goddess Diana. How easy to turn the name into Madonna and transfer their devotion! It was in that very church that the Council met.

When DARWIN came he brought many disturbing things into the life of the preacher of the gospel. But he brought one thing that was of immense utility. He showed how mighty was the influence in the world of good or evil conduct. If a man lived well, he said, his children would be the better for it. If he lived ill they would be the worse. We knew already that acts make habits in the individual. Now science seemed to say that habits in the individual would appear as acts in his offspring. It was a powerful weapon on the side of morality, and the preacher was not slow to make use of it.

But then came WEISMANN. The doctrine of 'acquired characters' was really as old as ARISTOTLE. It had been reasserted both by LAMARCK and by DARWIN, the latter seeming to set it on an unshakable foundation of fact. But when WEISMANN came the theory was declared to be untrue. It was quite wrong scientifically to say that the fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge. Every man was left with his own sin. And so confidently did WEISMANN argue, that, although it is only some thirty years since he came, the great majority of biologists now tell us that DARWIN'S theory of inherited characteristics is altogether a mistake.

And so, throughout these years, the preacher of

the gospel has been denied this useful persuasive to good living, and the teacher of morality has scarce known what to do. But the end is not yet. The Professor of Mental Philosophy in the University of Cambridge has delivered the Henry Sidgwick Memorial Lecture, and has given his whole strength to prove that WEISMANN is wrong, and the majority of biologists with him.

Dr. James WARD calls his Sidgwick Lecture *Heredity and Memory* (Cambridge: At the University Press; 1s. net). For his purpose is to show that the way in which progress is made in the world is by remembrance. Primitive man builds a house; the house is destroyed by flood or fire; he proceeds to build another. But in the building of the second house he has not to go through all the painful processes that he experienced in building the first. He remembers how, after some fruitless efforts, he at last succeeded in arching the roof or hanging the door. He makes progress by remembrance.

Now this is all very well for the individual. But if the man dies, and then his house comes down, will his son benefit by the father's experience? There are elements to be taken into account which prevent the answer from being quite a simple Yes. Still, the answer is a Yes, said DARWIN. And now, after knowing all about WEISMANN, Professor WARD says Yes again.

The first argument which WEISMANN used against the theory that personal acquirements may be transmitted, was that there is no decisive evidence for the transmission. To which Dr. WARD replies that there is no decisive evidence against it. He admits that WEISMANN and his followers swept away a vast mass of worthless cases of hereditary transmission. But he agrees with DELAGE, 'that singularly fair-minded and acute biologist,' that the evidence which remains is formidable.

We do not deny, say WEISMANN and the Weis-

mannians, that there are cases, and that appearances on the whole point in the direction of transmission, but we decline to believe that they are more than appearances, for the *modus operandi* of the transmission is altogether inconceivable. This is their second argument. To which Dr. WARD replies that 'inconceivable' is not the same thing as 'impossible.' That a thing is not because we cannot conceive how it is—that is not argument, he says, but assumption. We are utterly ignorant of the process which gravitation involves, but we accept gravitation.

Why is the manner of the transmission of hereditary characters inconceivable? Chiefly because the body of the parent and the germ of the offspring which it nourishes are anatomically distinct. How, it is asked, can one tissue affect another which is entirely distinct from it? Dr. WARD answers, as COPE did years ago, that there is at least one case of a very precise connexion between two distinct tissues, which is perhaps quite as wonderful as the connexion between body-plasm and germ-plasm, and hardly less mysterious. He means the adjustment of skin-coloration to ground-surface brought about through the organs of sight.

Of this power to change colour the chameleon is the most familiar but not the most impressive instance. Says Professor WARD, 'I came the other day across an account of some experiments that seem clearly to imply the intervention in some way of consciousness in bringing about this adjustment—an intervention which COPE surmised but could not prove. Into a tank of flat fish, whose colour matched its sandy bottom, a number of pebbles of a different colour were introduced. As seen by the fish the mosaic so produced would appear more or less foreshortened; but presently, for all that, the fish became mottled like the bottom, not as it appeared to them at rest, but as it would appear to an observer looking down from above, like the enemies the fish had to elude.'