

learning of the unbelievers, and he can hold his own easily. His own is a firm assurance of the reconciliation to God wrought by the historical Jesus Christ.

Mr. Henry Clark, the author of *The Faith and the Book* (Thynne; 10s. 6d. net), is so convinced of the perfection of the Bible—its inerrancy, its inspiration, and its scheme of salvation, that he does not trouble referring to it. He goes forward at once with his wonderful diagrams, representing the construction of the Bible as a pyramid, the Revelation of God as the shield of David, the Unveiling of Salvation as a series of circles with intersecting triangles, the whole Bible as 'a simple cube'—one side man, one side God, one side sin, one side salvation, one side Revelation, and one side the Saviour. It is all quite impressive, and, if you accept the premises, quite conclusive. The letterpress is of less account. It is chiefly explana-

tion of the diagrams. There is an Appendix on 'Perilous Times' with three diagrams of its own—ingenious and instructive as all the rest—on the same conditions.

A British edition of Miss Margaret E. Burton's *Women Workers of the Orient* has been prepared and edited by Miss E. I. M. Boyd, M.A. (United Council for Missionary Education; 2s. 6d. net).

The United Council for Missionary Education has issued a new edition—the fifth, rewritten and revised—of Mr. W. H. T. Gairdner's *The Reproach of Islam*. The author has changed the title into *The Rebuke of Islam* (3s. net), for he has no wish to insult the follower of Muhammad, and 'the Biblical sense of the word "reproach" escaped him—namely, a thing so unspeakably vile that its very existence is a shame.'

The Parable of the Vine.

ITS PLACE IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

BY THE REVEREND J. E. ROBERTS, M.A., D.D., MANCHESTER.

IN the Fourth Gospel as now arranged, chaps. 13-17 are an account of the last evening in the life of Jesus, including the conversation which took place at the table before Jesus and His disciples went to Gethsemane. Thus a fourth of the Gospel is occupied with one evening; and very much of the most treasured teaching of Jesus was given on that single occasion, in a brief time. But every reader feels the difficulty of the present arrangement of the chapters. Chap. 14 closes with the words, 'Arise, let us go hence.' This is followed immediately by the words, 'I am the true vine'; and it is not until we reach chap. 18 we are told, 'When Jesus had spoken these words he went forth with his disciples.' Many attempts have been made to account for this apparent discrepancy. They have been chiefly attempts to deal with a literary problem; and the most frequent resort is to suggest a displacement of portions of the chapters. Dr. Moffatt in his *New Translation of the New Testament* boldly prints these chapters in

a different order. In the Preface he refers to this as illustrating the single exception he has made to the rule not to depart from the arrangement familiar to the reader of the English Bible. So, after 13^{31a}, he inserts 15 and 16. 16³³ is followed immediately by 13^{31b}. The footnotes are added: 'Chapters 15 and 16 are restored to their original position in the middle of ver. 31.' . . . 'The sequence of 13³¹ is now resumed.' In his *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, Dr. Moffatt refers to 13¹⁻²⁰ as 'the third part of the gospel,' which 'describes the conversation of Jesus at the last supper (13¹⁻¹⁷), the arrest, trial, and death (18¹⁻¹⁹), and the appearances after death (20¹⁻³¹).'¹ Then under 'Literary Structure,' (*f*), he says: 'The hypothesis that chs. 15-16 represent a later addition, either by the author himself (Becker, Lattey, Lewis) or a redactor (so, for 15-17, Wellhausen, Heitmüller), allows 14³¹ to lie in its original connection with 18¹ (ch. 17

¹ *Loc. cit.* p. 519 (2nd edition).

being spoken by Jesus standing in the attitude of prayer before leaving the room). The data in favour of another author are hardly adequate, however, except on the extremely precarious hypothesis that the gospel as a whole underwent a process of accretion which was largely due to theological tendencies. To strike out "Rise, let us go hence" is to cut the Gordian knot, and the only alternative is to follow the internal evidence which points to the conclusion that, by some dislocation, 14 has been displaced from its original position immediately before 17.' Of the three theories of the place originally occupied by 15-16—(1) to set them between 13³⁵ and 13³⁶; (2) to interpolate them between 13²⁰ and 13²¹; or (3) to restore them to their original position between 13^{31a} and 13^{31b}, Dr. Moffatt describes (3) as the most attractive and intelligible. As already pointed out, he adopts this theory in his New Translation, and prints the chapters in that order.

Evidently the question is not only one of literary arrangement. There is the further question as to the origin of 14-16. It is usually assumed that 13-17 are all concerned with the conversation at the Last Supper in the Upper Room. But may not the literary question be complicated by the attempt to introduce into the Upper Room, conversation which took place during a longer period and on other occasions? In particular, is it not possible that we have here not only the conversation in the Upper Room but also some of the conversation between Jesus and His disciples on their daily walks to and from Bethany? Suppose that these chapters contain a summary of the private talks which Jesus had with His disciples during the last days of His life. It may well be that the author cannot clearly distinguish between words spoken on any one day from those spoken at the Supper. Either the memory of them (if written down by a disciple) is indistinct, or the record has not indicated precisely when specific teaching was given. In such circumstances the literary problem was one that presented itself to the evangelist, and he had to do his best to include this wayside talk and the talk at the table in one brief narrative. Even the theory of an addition either by the author or by a redactor would in this case not be so invalidated by 'theological tendencies' as Dr. Moffatt suggests. For it might be that a separate account was available of some of the wayside talk of Jesus as He and His disciples trudged into

Jerusalem each morning and back again to Bethany in the evening. Then this account had to be fitted, as well as possible, into an account of the talk at the table, without any clear guidance as to when particular words were spoken.

Therefore the suggestion is put forward that instead of treating chaps. 13-17 as being an account only of what happened in the Upper Room, they should be treated as an account of the last teachings of Jesus during the closing days of His life, grouped inside the framework of the Last Supper.

There is one interesting passage which seems to gain in significance when treated thus. Chap. 15 opens with: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.' It is at this point the literary difficulty is most obvious. For chap. 15 immediately follows the words, 'Arise, let us go hence.' Now can we find any occasion during the last days when such teaching would be suitable? Dr. Moffatt's comment is: 'Jesus, in view of the wine at table, utters the parable of the Vine.' But is there not a closer parallel? The only incident of the daily journeys related in the Gospels is the Barren Fig Tree. It was 'in the morning as he returned to the city' that Jesus 'saw a fig tree, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And in the morning' (*i.e.* the next morning) 'as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.'

The incident is confessedly one of the most difficult to explain in the life of Jesus. It is inconceivable that our Lord 'cursed' the fig tree in any petulant mood or because it did not bear figs 'when the time of figs was not yet.' The only reasonable explanation seems to be that He seized upon the appearance of the tree to teach His disciples a very important lesson. The case was urgent. He was within a day or two of His death. In order to enforce a vital lesson, Jesus sacrificed the tree.

But do the evangelists give an adequate explanation in their account of what followed? Undoubtedly the lessons urged there are extremely important. To have faith in God, to be confident of faith's efficacy and of the power of prayer—these are lessons of vast value. But are they quite the lessons which the incident seems designed to

teach? One almost gets the impression of a lesson found after the event to justify it, rather than of teaching following naturally from the incident.

When, however, we turn to Jn 15, we do find ourselves in circumstances very parallel to those of the barren fig tree. The simile of the vine is used rather than the tree; but the phraseology is strongly reminiscent of the fig tree, and the lessons are precisely those taught by its cursing. The aim of 15 is to urge the importance of fruit-bearing: fruit, and yet more fruit, is the aim of the husbandman. No show of leaves can suffice. Branches which do not bear fruit are cast forth and 'withered.' Jesus uses here exactly the same word to describe the fate of the fruitless branch, *ἐξηράνθη*, as Matthew uses to describe the barren tree (cp. Mt 21¹⁹ and Jn 15⁶). Also the next verse in Jn 15, 'If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you,' seems to be reminiscent of words connected by Matthew and Mark with the withered tree (cp. Mt 21²² and Mk 11²⁴).

It seems, therefore, to be a feasible suggestion that the parable of the Vine was spoken by Jesus on the high road between Bethany and Jerusalem,

and that it emphasized the lesson taught by a tree with leaves but no fruit. If this be a true account of the origin of a part of chap. 15, it may also stand for other portions of chaps. 14 to 16. There is so much of importance in these chapters that one would be glad to believe the teaching was not all crowded into one evening, but was spread over several days. The literary problem is also explained; for here is a collection of the closing teachings of Jesus without any indication as to the particular day, and grouped (by a familiar device) round the Last Supper. Is it inconceivable that chaps. 15 and 16 were originally a separate document—a kind of summary of the wayside talk of Jesus during the last week of His life? If so, and the evangelist wished to insert it, perhaps he chose the point he did because he did not wish to interrupt the narrative of 13 and 14; and these words having been spoken whilst walking, it was not unfitting to put them after 'Let us go hence,' as if to suggest that Jesus talked thus as they walked away from the Upper Room. Anyhow, it is interesting to think that these memorable walks to and from Bethany were beguiled by such precious and valuable teaching as is contained in these chapters.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

A Famous Picture.

'Who against hope believed in hope.'—Ro 4¹⁸.

If you were asked to write an essay on 'Hope' you would find it a very difficult task.

All sorts of ideas would keep passing through your mind. You would remember how you had often hoped for fine weather, for the present of a cricket bat or a tennis racket, or it may be for something very much less expensive. If you wrote anything down at all I expect it would be a sort of story. Suppose you were asked to draw a picture of 'Hope,' you simply could not do it. Not even remembering all the pictures of 'Faith, Hope, and Charity' that you had ever seen would help you. No language or colour can make Hope visible.

How can it be described? It is not merely a

feeling like what you had when you longed for the cricket bat or the tennis racket. It grows out of something more than a wish; there is sorrow and disappointment at the back of it.

There was a boy called George who had a great ambition to become a University student. He had been a good scholar at school, for he loved getting to know things. But his father was only a poor tradesman who lived in the days of small wages, and who had never had time to think about books. He wanted to take George away from school and to apprentice him to a tailor, and he told him so very firmly. George's mother heard him say it, but she kept silent. She was a woman who occasionally went out to work by the day in order to eke out the income, and in this way had a little spare money by her. She always thought of George when she added a shilling or two to her store, for although very