

## Contributions and Comments.

### Gideon and his Three Hundred (Judg. vii. 5, 6).

IN an interesting note in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for November 1921 (vol. xxxiii. p. 93), the Rev. Harry Smith of Old Kilpatrick draws attention to the very variant meanings which have been put into these two verses, and the shifts to which the critics have put themselves in order to get any consistent sense out of them. There is one point, however, which has apparently escaped their notice, and that is that the word *karā*, 'to bow down,' means strictly 'to drink by putting the mouth in the water,' as cattle do. The text states that three hundred lifted the water to their mouths in their hands, and lapped it as a dog laps, whilst the rest went down on their hands and knees, and drank, putting their mouths in the water, as, for example, a horse does. The story is quite plain. There are no 'glosses' or redactors or emendations required.

The critics are also puzzled to know to what 'water' it was that Gideon brought his men down. The answer is that it was rain-water, which had collected in pools. This also is implied in the word used.

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### Paul's Religion—Whence was it?

IN THE EXPOSITORY TIMES (Feb. 1922, p. 204) the real source of Paul's religion is not stated; but he tells us himself. Ten times he says it was by 'Revelation.' What did he mean?

St. Paul was converted to become a Christian by Christ revealing Himself by word of mouth on the road to Damascus. Within a few days he was ready to be baptized as a Christian.

He could not return to Jerusalem, so goes to Arabia (Gal 1<sup>17</sup>). How long he was there under the tuition of Jesus Christ, we do not know; but on his return he is not only fully equipped, but eager to preach 'My' Gospel, as he calls it, to the Gentiles.

He wrote to the Corinthians: 'If I come

again, I will not spare, seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me' (2 Co 13<sup>2f.</sup>).

So, God the Father was *in* Jesus, the Carpenter's son; as St. Paul asserts, 'God was *in* Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself . . . and committed unto us the word of reconciliation.'

Thus a spirit wrote through Rev. G. Vale Owen's hand: 'The Christ was One with the Father, and being One with the Father, was of the Father's selfhood. Jesus of Nazareth was the expression of the thoughts of the Father incarnated, as the Christ, for earth's salvation' (*Weekly Dispatch*, Dec. 18th, 1921).

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### The Parable of the Hidden Treasure, and of the Pearl Merchant (Matt. xiii. 44 ff.).

I HAVE never yet seen an exposition of these two little pictures that was as convincing as I should like; and the reason is that they have usually been taken as referring to two differing experiences—either the soul finds God after a long and arduous search, or God in His goodness reveals Himself to the soul—even while it is concerned with matters entirely foreign to Him. I find it difficult to believe that was the intention of Jesus. It invites the dangerous conclusion that indolence on our part does not greatly matter. If we are not prepared to seek, yet the truth will force itself upon us, while we are unambitiously going about the work of our farm.

My suggestion is that the two parables refer to the two sides of one and the same experience. The Spirit of God does break into the life of man in a thousand small and apparently accidental ways. But that happens—and can happen—only when men are very concerned that God should reveal Himself. The apparent accident is not an accident at all. That is a principle that may be noticed in things both small and great, and perhaps the smallest example may be recognized most easily. A friend wrote me some time ago that my

remarks 'brought home an incident which happened in the office here on Saturday last, and bears out your own conclusions. An important document required for a pending lawsuit was missing on Friday, and had been for some time. I told the clerk it must be found by Saturday at the latest. Next morning it was there on my arrival. When I asked for an explanation the girl said, "I was worrying about it so much last night that when I went to bed I dreamed about it, and in my dream went to a certain book and found it. When I came to the office I went straight to the book, and there it was." Readers of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES do not need to be reminded that is neither miracle nor accident. It was a revival of memory—a quickening of intellectual power—through emotional stress.

Jesus loved men to be serious; He loved men to be eager to understand the ways of God and to enjoy His gifts. He wished them to feel that God is so precious to human life that everything else can be surrendered in the search for God. And if a man be serious and determined as that, then God is able to disclose Himself—not in great and dramatic upheavals of life, but in a thousand gentle, small, and seemingly accidental ways. The great thing is—never to refuse the valuable gift because it is in an undistinguished setting. At the first turn of the road we may run into the arms of God Himself; but we shall not recognize Him unless we are the kind of men who have trained themselves to recognize Him. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; he is ready to go to the ends of the earth in search of the best. But he has gained, by his continual self-discipline, so sound an instinct for the beautiful that even the caked and common clay cannot hide from him the value of what is accidentally uncovered in his own field. S. TONKIN.

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### Divergences between the Peshitta and the Sinai Syriac Accounts of Jesus' Reception of the Children.

THE Syriac version of the Gospels discovered by Mrs. Lewis, and now distinguished by the letters SS, shows certain remarkable divergences in

Mk 10<sup>13-16</sup> from the readings in the Peshitta and the Textus Receptus.

In v.<sup>13</sup> TR has *ἵνα ἅψηται αὐτῶν* and SP has *dn(e)krub lhun*, for which the RV gives 'that he should touch them.' Instead of this phrase SS has *ansim aidh alihun*, 'that he should lay his hand upon them.'

Then at v.<sup>16</sup> TR has *ἐναγκαλισάμενος*, represented in SP by *shkal anun al drav(h)i* and rendered in RV 'he took them in his arms.' Instead of this reading SS has *kra anun* '(he) called them (to him).'

The questions arise: (1) Which of the readings is true to the original text? and (2) How did the divergence come about?

One index as to the original text is found by a comparison with the parallel passages in Mt. and Lk., accepting the view that both of these were indebted to Mark for the substance of this particular incident. Corresponding to the word *ἅψηται* in Mk 10<sup>13</sup> in TR, Mt 19<sup>13</sup> has, in SP and SS, 'that he should lay his hand upon them and pray,' while Lk 18<sup>15</sup> has in SP 'that he should touch them,' but in SS 'that he should lay his hand upon them'—the same words exactly as in SS, Mk 10<sup>13</sup>.

In the parallel passages to v.<sup>16</sup> neither Mt. nor Lk. in SS has an equivalent of *ἐναγκαλισάμενος* of TR with its corresponding expression in SP 'took them up in his arms' (AV), but in SP Lk. has *ⲕⲣⲁ*, *kra*, the equivalent of *προσκαλεσάμενος*.

It would seem that the parallel passages in Mt. and Lk. indicate that SS is closer to the original than TR and SP. The story according to SS suggests that the children were not quite infants, but of an age perhaps up to ten or twelve, and that the parents desired Jesus not merely to touch them, but to place His hand solemnly upon their head and bless them, or, as Mt. puts it, *pray*. It suggests also that, while they were standing a little distance off, Jesus called them to come forward and then, as had been desired, put His hand upon their heads and blessed them.

The divergent readings in v.<sup>13</sup> may perhaps be accounted for if *ἅψεσθαι* be regarded as translatable into Syriac optionally either 'to touch' or 'to lay hands upon.' But the reason for the divergence in v.<sup>16</sup> seems to be that, while *προσκαλεσάμενος* was the word in the original Gk. text, an early transcriber inadvertently substituted for it *ἐναγκα-*

λισάμενος. The same kind of error might account for the occurrence of ἐναγκαλισάμενος in TR Mk 9<sup>36</sup> (represented in SS by ⲥⲟ ⲛⲁ, *chr bh* ' (he) looked on him'). The word occurs in the NT only in Mk 9<sup>36</sup> and Mk 10<sup>16</sup>. It seems unnecessary that Jesus should take a number of children up one by one in His arms, especially if not infants, and while embracing them place His hand on their heads individually, although we cherish the thought of Christ's tenderness implied in such action.

While lacking this tender touch, according to SS the narrative is self-consistent throughout. Jesus calls the children near to Him. They are old enough to respond. Then, with both hands laid upon their heads He blesses them, apparently two at a time, as Jacob did the children of Joseph.

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### Peshitta Syriac N.T.

MR. ALBERT BONUS, in his appreciative letter published in your last issue, calls attention to the reading of He 2<sup>16</sup>, in the Bible Society's new edition of the Peshitta Syriac N.T., and seeks information as to the authorities consulted for this edition. As stated in my preface, the text of the Gospels is that prepared by the late Rev. G. H. Gwilliam, as issued (with a full critical apparatus) by the Clarendon Press in 1901. The text of Acts, James, 1 Peter, 1 John, and the Pauline Epistles (including Hebrews) follows a critical revision prepared by Mr. Gwilliam on lines similar to his earlier work on the Gospels; this was completed by the late Rev. John Pinkerton, that brilliant Oriental scholar who fell in the trenches on the Salonica front. I also mentioned in the preface that Mr. Pinkerton assisted Mr. Gwilliam in the collation of the Peshitta manuscripts at the British Museum. The remainder of the N.T. text is taken by permission from Dr. Gwynn's editions of the Four Minor Epistles (1909) and Revelation (1897).

As Mr. Bonus rightly says, it did not fall within the Society's intention to indicate the MS. authorities more precisely. It may interest him and others to know that all the important Peshitta MSS. at the British Museum were examined by both Mr. Gwilliam and Mr. Pinkerton. In particular, Mr. Gwilliam collated for Acts and the Catholic Epistles, B.M. Add. 14,473 (fully), and

for Acts only B.M. Add. 14,472 and Add. 14,470 (partially). Mr. Pinkerton informed me that for the Pauline Epistles he had himself fully collated three of the B.M. MSS. and constantly consulted two others on all important variants. Unfortunately he did not specify these MSS. He also used 'the collation of a Bodleian MS. by A. Guillaume' for the Pauline Epistles and Acts and Catholic Epistles; and a partial collation by P. E. Pusey of 'a MS. not yet identified,' for Acts and the Catholic Epistles. For Acts, Mr. Pinkerton made a specially full collation of the B.M. Add. 17,120 and Add. 17,121.

In addition, Mr. Pinkerton carefully collated an important MS. of the Peshitta N.T. in the John Rylands Library, Manchester (Rylands Cod. Syr. 2, c. A.D. 900); and also another important MS. of the Peshitta N.T. now in the Bible House Library (c. cent. X. or XI.). In a description of this Bible House Library MS., I find a note which states that 'it follows the Greek at He 2<sup>16</sup>.' Dr. Alphonse Mingana kindly informs me that the Rylands MS. also gives the reading of Widmanstadt. It is evident, therefore, that the authorities on which the editors of our edition based their reading at He 2<sup>16</sup> were the MSS. to which Mr. Bonus refers.

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### The Fourth Cry from the Cross.

BOTH Matthew and Mark record this word, and only this word, from the Cross; both give the Aramaic, and then its interpretation, though with slight variations. It is always taken for granted that our Lord was quoting the 22nd Psalm. St. Matthew brings the word 'Eli' closer to the Hebrew than St. Mark's 'Eloi'; and St. Mark brings the whole of the interpretation closer to the Greek (LXX) of the Psalm. But *neither* of them represents our Lord as quoting the Psalm, for σαβαθθανι stands for a quite different word. In the Psalm the word used is עֲזַבְתָּנִי אֲזַבְתָּנִי (ἀζαβθανι, Azabthani).

(a) The Evangelists (or their informants) have jumped to the conclusion that our Lord was quoting the Psalm; and have so far imported into the cry an idea preconceived under the Psalm's influence. The Psalmist really felt, and could

with his limited idea of God believe, that God had turned away from Him.

(b) And so we have started from the same idea. Of course *if* our Lord said 'forsaken' in the sense which the word has for us, then we have to accept and interpret, in the best way we can, the fact that God *had* forsaken him.

But *ἐγκατέλιπες* need not necessarily bear that sense, even if the Evangelists intended it so; while *σαβαχθανι* need not imply (as *ἀλαβθανι* would) a deliberate leaving to trouble and misery. In Dn 4<sup>22</sup> and elsewhere it is merely colourless = 'leave.'

I cannot think, with Plummer, that 'for an awful moment . . . even the love of the Father seemed to have been withdrawn from Him.' Any seeming other than reality has a subtle touch of Docetism. Nor can I apply Plummer's quotation from the Testament of Joseph, that . . . 'God departeth for a little space, to try the inclination of the soul.' . . . God did not need to try Jesus Christ, He saw plainly enough.

My own belief is that in attaining the perfection which was God's eternal purpose for man, there must come a moment when the creature is so complete in fulness of life that its real existence could be independent of God (as presumably Satan's is) and that our Lord, being progressively made perfect through suffering even as He hung on the Cross, reached that point in the darkness, and cried out in realizing that He had, as man, to make the last supreme choice between self-existence apart from God, and self-existence resigned into the Creator-Father's hands.

This is, however, far past the initial textual point. Will any one explain how the Cry can be a quotation from Ps 22, when the main word is different? And has not the suggestion that it is a quotation brought a preconception into the discussion of this supremely important text from which it would be well to clear our minds?

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## Entre Nous.

### A TEXT.

Matt. xxiii. 8.

'The operation is finished, and in the hardly lighted dormitory I watch for the sick man's awaking. Scarcely has he recovered consciousness when he stares about him and ejaculates again and again: "I've no more pain! I've no more pain!" . . . His hand feels for mine and will not let it go. Then I begin to tell him and the others who are in the room that it is the Lord Jesus who has told the doctor and his wife to come to the Ogowe, and that white people in Europe give them the money to live here and cure the sick negroes. Then I have to answer questions as to who these white people are, where they live, and how they know that the natives suffer so much from sickness. The African sun is shining through the coffee bushes into the dark shed, but we, black and white, sit side by side, and feel that we know by experience the meaning of the words: "And all ye are brethren" (Matt. xxiii. 8). Would that

my generous friends in Europe could come out here and live through one such hour!'<sup>1</sup>

### SOME TOPICS.

#### The Rising Generation.

'So far as the rising generation is concerned, probably the happiest effect of prohibition will be that no new drunkards will be manufactured. The children will grow up without acquiring the taste for alcoholic drinks. A few old toppers of the present generation may be too far gone to mend their ways, and may, through indulgence in the deadly substitutes secretly sold by "bootleggers" in contravention of the law, get delirium tremens and die, but few young men are likely to acquire the liquor habit through drinking hair oil, or Jamaica Ginger, or Bay rum, or varnish or toilet water, or quinine tonic or any other of the sicken-

<sup>1</sup> A. Schweitzer, *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, p. 93.