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# The Bible Student

UNIV. OF MICHIGAN,

AUG 6 1912

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

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# The Bible Student.

CONTINUING

## The Bible Student and Religious Outlook.

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The ideas of many are confused by the distinction between religion and morality. This confusion is sometimes aggravated by the stress the pulpit lays on the inadequacy of mere morality and its emphasis of the imperviousness of a moralist's self-satisfaction; a stress and emphasis occasionally expressed so incautiously as to be liable to the perversion of being interpreted as implication that morality may be a disadvantage and that, on the whole, it were better and more promising of a religious future to be immoral than to be moral. Of course it ought to be a commonplace that morality is always and everywhere better than immorality; perhaps it is the axiomatic character of this truth that occasions preachers sometimes to be unguarded in the impression they may make.

Religion is always moral, and immorality is always irreligious, wherever found. Obvious as is the truth, yet its statement is not superfluous; there is such a thing as unethical "religion," having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. There are not wanting instances to prove that one may be very scrupu-

lous in the observance of religious rites and even zealous in religious activities, with every appearance, too, of conscientiousness, and yet be anything but moral in life. A famous chronicler has been recently quoted as saying of a celebrated ecclesiastic "that he was far from truthful and naturally deceitful and covetous, but full of religion!"

But while *real* religion is always moral, morality is not always religious; there is a distinction between the two and one fitly called radical because it lies at the very root, indeed it lies nowhere else; so far as the visible expression is concerned, the difference is not easily discerned, in externalities morality and religion may well appear indistinguishable. The distinction lies beneath the surface and inheres in the motive prompting. No act is religious that is not rightly related to God, and none falls short of religion that is so related. Men distinguish between the sacred and the secular, but to the heart that really enthrones God nothing is secular, and hence we hear St. Paul saying, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Certainly there is nothing intrinsi-

## Current Biblical Thought.

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Prof. LEWIS B. PATON has been teaching the Old Testament in the

### **The Supernaturalism of Prophecy.**

Hartford Theological Seminary since 1892, first as Instructor and then as Associate Professor. He was formally inaugurated as full "Professor of Old Testament Exegesis and Criticism" on the Nettleton Foundation, however, only the other day (January 2, 1900). On this occasion he delivered an address on the appropriate theme of *The Origin of the Prophetic Teaching*, which is printed in full in *The Hartford Seminary Record* for February, 1900. In attacking his task he seems to have had very much the same purpose in view which GIESEBRECHT had in writing his *Berufsbegabung der Propheten—i. e.*, to mediate between the extremes on either hand; and the influence of GIESEBRECHT's treatment one fancies to be visible throughout Prof. PATON's address,—as indeed, Prof. PATON does not very much diverge from GIESEBRECHT's standpoint. Stated in its briefest form, Prof. PATON's discussion runs as follows: he takes his start from "the phenomena of the prophetic books," and points out first that there are in them phenomena which point to the origin of prophecy in God, and also phenomena which point to its origin in man; he then deprecates a one-sided explanation of it, whether it be attributed to God alone to the exclusion of the human factor, or to man alone to the exclusion of the Divine factor; finally, modestly decliming a complete theory, he insists that we must "recognize a union of both elements," and closes with a description of "the historical stages through which the

divine-human consciousness of the prophet passed until it attained its full development." As thus broadly stated, we are, of course, in the heartiest sympathy with Prof. PATON's position. We wish we could say as much of the filled up sl etch. In his enumeration of the elements of the problem, however, as well as in his construction of the prophetic phenomena, he seems to us to do much more than justice to the human element, and far less than justice to the divine—with the result that he presents us with a very largely desupernaturalized theory of prophecy, which is quite out of harmony with the consciousness of the prophets themselves, as they have recorded it for us, as well as with the general Biblical estimate of prophecy. Since Prof. PATON is a sturdy assertor of the supernatural in prophecy, we must presumably attribute this anti-supernaturalistic bias which colors his treatment, to the authorities on which he has relied in his study of the subject. His construction of the prophetic phenomenon postulates, moreover, a dualism in the factors which is certainly extreme and is sure to be misleading. He tells us at the close, to be sure, that the union of the divine and human activities in prophetic inspiration "must not be conceived as a mere juxtaposition of heterogeneous things, but rather as an interpenetration of the one by the other." But he has certainly done injustice to himself in his treatment, unless he means to set the Divine and human overagainst one another as mutually warring factors, each having its own way in this or that element in the product to the exclusion or injury of the other. So far as

appears on the face of the discussion the prophet in his native endowment stood over against God, as a somewhat intractable instrument with which God must needs do as well as he could. Prof. PATON never seems to realize vividly the fact—which the prophets themselves are deeply conscious of—that God made the prophet as well as the prophecy; and he even criticises even so low a view of the interaction of the external and internal activities of God as ROTHE or LOTZ presents without betraying any sense of the underlying truth. Does Prof. PATON really believe that Providence is wrought by one of God's hands and inspiration by the other—and that he does not let his left hand know what his right hand is doing? Of the real significance of *concursum*, on the lines of which all such coöperations must be conceived, he does not exhibit any thorough comprehension. The consequence is that he gives us, as we have said, a desupernaturalized view of prophecy; it is not a divine phenomenon exhibiting itself in the sphere of the human, but a human phenomenon elevated by divine coöperation—"the divine shows itself not in displacing, but in transfiguring the human." The prophet, according to Prof. PATON, was a man of high natural endowments,—“of gifted and sanctified intellect,”—who had induced in himself a hypnotic state in which “his powers of reasoning and of prevision were supernaturally heightened so that he was able to discern things that he could not have learned through the natural exercise of his faculties,” and who, farther, as a man of prayer, had come into intimate communion with God—just as all men of prayer do, though doubtless in superior measure—and thus had received an insight into the divine interpretation of history.

Would Isaiah have recognized himself in this portrait? On the contrary, to the prophets themselves, a prophet was, as Hosea says, specifically a “man of the Spirit;” who had not sought God but been sought of God; who had not thrown himself into a trance by “auto-suggestion,” but had been seized upon by the Most High; who was not a man of mark but a man of stammering lips that dwelt, perchance, among the herdsmen. And the words that the prophets spoke were not their own words but God's words, which they “spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost.” Peter has certainly not misunderstood the prophets' own account of their own inspiration. We think Prof. PATON has. While we thank him, therefore, for his defence of the uniqueness of the prophetic phenomenon, and of a real supernaturalism as the only satisfactory account of it, we cannot profess to believe that his view of prophecy does justice to either its uniqueness or its supernaturalism.

In the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for April there appears the first of three articles  
**A New** first of three articles  
**Study of Ezra.** by JAMES OSCAR  
 BOYD, D. D., devoted to a fresh study of the book of Ezra. The three articles will cover the ground with some elaborateness, and the work has been prosecuted in full view of the more important of recent studies on the subject, but with independent and sober mind. In this first article, the literary side of the criticism of the book is presented, under the title of “The Composition of the Book of Ezra.” After an analysis of the book as it now stands, into the simpler elements which compose it, these elements are examined in their mutual relations, with the purpose of ascer-

taining the literary sources of Ezra. Three separate literary undertakings are thus brought to light, each distinguishable from its fellows in character and purpose. The third of these, the one which produced the book as we now have it, is found to have made use of the two earlier ones, to present a complete picture of the Jewish community in its outward and inward struggles during the successive crises of the Reformation period. For the sake of completeness, there is appended to the results thus reached, a theory of the probable date and authorship of each of the sources. The whole is designed to prepare the way for the historical criticism that is to follow in the succeeding articles. The results attained by the discussion thus far, vindicate the literary merits of the book, and its contemporaneity with Ezra—although Mr. Boyd does not feel justified in ascribing it to Ezra's own pen. B. B. W.

It is no small matter that commentators, even those not engaged in the defense of the truthfulness of the Old Testament, tell us that the account in Gen. i. is in substantial agreement with the findings of modern science. And there do not lack scholars, eminent in the scientific world, who most thoroughly defend the statements of this wonderful chapter even in detail. Sir J. W. DAWSON, LL. D., F. R. S., whose death we were so recently called upon to deplore, makes some remarks in the *Expository Times* for January, 1900, which are well worth careful thought.

The statement that the first two chapters of Genesis contain different accounts of creation, between which are several irreconcilable discrepancies, is so often thrown at us, that it

is refreshing to see how a scientific man apprehends the real state of affairs. The first chapter, he tells us, is the general account of creation—the poem as it were of the whole book, and indeed we may say of all God's revelation to man. "It has no note of geographical locality except the general distinction of land and water." It presents an ordered progress in time and rank. In time, by its division into days, not human days, to be sure, but days of God, as may be seen from the terms used in respect to them, and by the work said to have been done in each of them. The progress in rank is seen in the transition from dead unorganized matter to the plant and the animal in its lower and higher classes, and in the appearance of a rational and spiritual creature, capable of understanding nature, and of entering into conscious individual relations with the creator himself. His relationship to the higher brute animals is recognized by his incomming on the same creative day, and by his being governed by similar laws as to food, reproduction and geographical extension (I. 22-29); but both this narrative and the rocky layers of the earth's crust tell the same story—that man was the crowning work of the creator and ever the lord of all other creatures. Now such a chapter cannot be either history or the result of inductive reasoning, but rather a revelation from God, communicated to the earliest human beings in order to place them in relation to the other parts of the great and complicated system, in which they were placed, and over which they were to rule.

In the second chapter we pass to the domain of history. Here the general is dropped, and the particular emerges. Man is the subject—not the species as in the first chapter, but