

in the narratives, but there is no analysis of it. Mr. Holborn describes the character of Peter and Thomas to show how different such description is from the Scriptural dramatic display.

F. *Simplicity and Sobriety.* There is no straining after effect. The greatest miracles of the O. and N. Ts. are related like ordinary events. When observations of wonder are made, they are those not of the writers but of the beholders. Mighty deeds, mercies and judgments, are narrated without comment, simplicity and reasonableness are found in the mighty deeds themselves, which preserve the due proportion of means and ends. No wild extravagance deforms the narratives, as in the apocryphal gospels, and the Brahman and Buddhist scriptures of India. Bible language and style of composition is exceedingly simple. Difficulties appear in Job and in some of the prophets, but no obscurity in the language. The simplest book in point of language ever written for grown people is John's gospel.

G. *Figurative speech.* The oriental mind delights in figures of speech and the Bible is our oriental book. Some are perplexing to the English reader, but he can admire the beauty of most, especially those of our Lord's parables, of the psalms and of the prophets. A common oriental figure is hyperbole, such as "the everlasting hills." This exaggerated speech, called the idiom of exaggerated contrast, appears in the N. T. in which Jesus appears to tell His disciples to hate their parents &c. These are not to be understood literally.

H. *Parallelism.* It is sometimes found in prose, but generally in poetry. Oriental poetry of the age of the Bible has neither rhyme nor rhythm; but the thought of one line is repeated in the next, and sometimes in a third. Example, Psalm II. verses 1, 3, 4, 5, each of which has 2 parallel lines, and verse 2 has 4. Sometimes contrast takes the place of repetition, as in Psalm I, verse 6. Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and other poetical parts of the Bible are thus written. This feature of parallelism makes it easy to translate Hebrew poetry without losing any part of the thought or delicacy of expression, which can hardly fail to be the case when western poetry of rhythmical metre and rhyme is translated.

III. THESE CHARACTERISTICS MAKE THE BIBLE A UNIQUE BOOK. There is nothing like it in any language. It combines oriental richness with the dramatic powers of the west. No history is so candid, impartial, simple and dignified. The voice of the eternal is through it all and the infinite difference between good and evil. It appeals alike to childhood and old age as the guide of one and the comfort of the other. M. Holborn cites Professor Huxley's tribute to O. T. stories; Sir Walter Scott's death-bed recognition of the *one book*; and Sir William Jones' exaltation of it over all the books in the world.

#### CHAPTER IV.

#### ON THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION AND SOME REMARKS ON SCRIPTURE DIFFICULTIES.

INTRODUCTION. The teacher must know more than he teaches. His teaching should be an appropriate selection from what he knows. His larger knowledge will enable him to be interesting to avoid errors and misunderstandings and to compel respect.

1. THE BIBLE IS TO BE STUDIED AS A BOOK OF HUMAN LIFE. Unlike the Zend Avesta, the maxims of Confucius, and the Koran, it deals with human life. It is not a code of laws, a directory of conscience, nor a system of theology; though all these may be derived from it. To view it as a string of texts is fatal. It is the record of God's Spirit in the hearts of men. Two thirds of it is history and the rest, such as the Psalms, can only be understood in its historical connection. The writings of the prophets exhibit the conflict of divine teachers with the sins and follies of their age. The epistles of Paul reveal active church life. Those to Corinth deal with scandal and discipline and obedience that evokes the apostle's joy; That to the Galatians reproves Ritualism; that to Philippi is full of mutual love and praise; That to Philemon over the once ungrateful but repentant slave is one of the best Sunday-school lessons. The teacher must realize the facts of all Bible history. He must put himself in the place of blind Bartimaeus, sinking Peter, shipwrecked Paul, runaway Onesimus. To succeed in this, he must carefully gather up all the mosaic of his story, and skillfully piece them together. Children will listen to a story, but not to preaching.

(To be continued.)