

THE
TRIAL OF OUR FAITH
AND OTHER PAPERS

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PREFACE

THIS little volume consists mainly of lectures delivered during the last forty years to my fellow-members of the Society of Friends. I have been frequently asked to publish them, and now that my lecturing days are of necessity drawing to a close, I decide to comply with that request.

I have also included a few articles contributed to a literary periodical of the same Society, the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*.

It will be seen at once that there is no pretence of unity of subject in these papers, which deal with the biographies of men so different in social position as a Syrian king and a Leicestershire shepherd, but in the process of revision I have found more than I expected of a certain unity of idea pervading them. Most of them deal with the question how Faith may be won, and how it has been fought for in old times by men who felt the heavy hand of the persecutor. There is almost inevitably a good deal of repetition in the book, the same thought and sometimes the same illustration recurring in different lectures, but I have not thought it necessary to attempt to correct this blemish.

As before said, in almost all these lectures I was addressing the members of my own Christian community. Should the book attract the attention of any who belong to other churches, I ask them kindly to remember that I was not primarily speaking to them. Some things which I have said will, I fear, give them pain; but such was not my intention, and I venture to hope that they may at least, from my pages, understand a little more than before the reason of so many of our strange divergences from the majority of our fellow-Christians. I have great faith in the maxim, "Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner."

THOS. HODGKIN.

BARMOOR,
7th February 1911.

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THE TRIAL OF OUR FAITH

IN the far-away ages of the childhood of our race, Greek philosophers and Hebrew poets spoke of God as Infinite and Eternal.

The world was then believed to be a flat disc, above which sun, moon, and stars (bodies small in comparison therewith) rose out of the ocean in the east and sank beneath the ocean in the west, loyal servants and dutiful torch-bearers to the central earth. The Greek's conception of the age of our universe was perhaps somewhat indefinite, but the Hebrew apparently thought that it had all come into existence in the year which we now call 4004 before Christ, or, let us say, about 3300 before the age of Isaiah. Seventy-six generations of mankind, according to the Hebrew genealogies, intervened between the days of Augustus Cæsar and the absolute beginning of all this visible universe.

Yet even then the philosopher, when he rose to the conception of one Highest God, declared that He is Infinite and Eternal (*ἄπειρος καὶ αἰδιος*), and the Hebrew Psalmist more beautifully said, "If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Hades, behold, thou art there. If I take

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the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me." That means that God is omnipresent. " Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." That means that He is eternal.

Like little children talking of " Father " and " Mother," but knowing nothing of the long train of events which brought " Father " and " Mother " together, of the slow process of the building of the home, of the daily cares which the government of the home even now brings with it : so these wondrous spirits in the childhood of the world named the names " Infinite " and " Eternal," understanding but faintly the overwhelming thoughts which those words convey or conceal.

We are children of a larger growth though still children, and we perhaps understand a little more of what those crushing words import. We know that if we could be started in an express train travelling night and day perpetually at the rate of 60 miles an hour, it would take us, or rather our posterity in the sixth generation, 177 years to reach the sun. And yet we are told that this tremendous distance is an almost inappreciable quantity when we come to deal with the distance of the nearest fixed star. Though it is the only measuring rod that we can use, this distance is as inapplicable to the purpose as if we had to measure the

length and breadth of Yorkshire with a draper's yard; and if we could continue our journey in an untiring express train travelling always at the rate of 60 miles an hour and never halting to stoke the locomotive, it would take the ghostly engine-driver 49,000,000 years to reach the very nearest of the fixed stars.

Of course the word Infinite means far more than that: but just pause for a moment to reflect that in this stupendous journeying you have only gone, as it were, from one square of black marble to another on the floor of God's great star-built cathedral. And then let us consider how our conception of past eternity is aided by what Geology tells us of the long aeons during which this earth has been in existence. Itself a mere speck in the boundless universe; the date when it sprang off from the parent sun, a spark from the anvil of creation, is no doubt a very modern date in the history of that universe; and yet if we can imagine a human spirit watching the various stages of the earth's existence from that hour to this, how like an eternity would the slow procession of the ages appear to such an one! Think through how many thousands or hundreds of thousands of years the sun sank into the west, looking forth upon a heaving waste of waters in which there was no life. Think of the slow but mighty change by which our own Cumbrian mountains were upreared, and remember that for ages after they had begun to battle with the frost and the rain-cloud, no mountain nor hill

was visible where now the Alps of the Swiss Oberland, as seen from the Plateau of Berne, raise their majestic forms, covered with the snow which we call "eternal." Think of the unnumbered years during which the trees of tropical forests rising, growing, dying, decaying, prepared the coal whose smoke hangs like a pall over the cities of to-day. Then of the monsters of the Saurian age; of the slow advance of the glaciers over Northern Europe and their slow recession; of the faint break of day when the animals, which are now the companions of man, appeared upon the scene, and at last, after such an eternity of waiting, let us behold in vision man's own appearance on the earth which he has so strangely scarred with his handiwork. Even these scattered hints of the teachings of the youngest of the sciences help us to listen with deeper reverence to the words of the Psalmist, "*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*"

Such thoughts as these may well fill our souls with an overpowering feeling of awe when we think of the Incomprehensible Creator. With an even more terrifying voice than that which thundered forth the law from Sinai, Astronomy and Geology seem to say unto us, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Yet in this very town all through the working day and the convivial night how many voices of men are heard blaspheming the name of the Infinite Maker? This

insect man : how contemptible he is in his insolent ingratitude, and how patiently the Eternal One bears with his folly !

And not in ribald profanity only do men take the name of the Lord their God in vain. Perhaps none have sinned more grievously against the third commandment than the men who call themselves theologians. When we think who He is and what we are, we shudder to remember the use which some of the theological system-mongers have made of the High and Holy name of God, how they have imagined that with their little line and plummet they could sound the depths of that unfathomable sea, how they have chattered about *Ousia* and *Hypostasis*, how even Milton, our own glorious Milton, has ventured on the presumptuous attempt to justify the ways of God to man by making the Eternal Father "turn a school Divine," and putting speeches into His mouth which we can hardly read without irreverence.

Verily, with veiled faces and unshod feet, should the sons of men approach the Holy of Holies. They should have the prayer "Hallowed be thy name" ever in their hearts, if not on their lips, when they dare to speak to one another of the things of God.

Yet let us not be cast down below hope by the thought of the almost infinite littleness of man. We are here but for a moment in God's eternity, and this earth which is our home is but a speck in His universe ; but a voice which does not lie assures

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us that we have a wonderful destiny, and that glorious possibilities are placed within our reach. After all the new vistas of truth which Astronomy and Geology have opened before us, this proposition remains true, and it must take an early place in our spiritual Euclid :—

Man, as far as we yet know, is a being unique in the universe. Neither in the heights above, with the telescope, nor in the depths beneath, with the geologist's hammer, have we found traces of any other being, able even in a small degree to imitate the works of the Creator ; to forecast far distant results, to store up the knowledge of the past and to make it available for the future ; to develop forms of beauty, the conscious reflections of some ideal of beauty within him : no one like man set in authority over a multitude of lower intelligences such as our servants in the animal world, no one able to form a thought of the mighty Maker, much less to aspire after communion with Him. As Tennyson sings :—

For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will :
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.

Even the long chain of delicate observations and abstruse calculations by which man has ascertained the fact of his infinite littleness is a

proof of his mysterious greatness. And yet more sadly must we confess that the depth of ruin into which man may fall bears witness to the existence within him of most strange spiritual possibilities. That the same race should produce the saint, the patriot, the hero on the one hand, the wife-beater, the child-starver, the dynamitard on the other hand, is a proof of the vast scale over which the notes of man's spiritual being range. "The corruption of the best is still as ever the worst," and this marvellous being who, by his mysterious gift of free-will, is meant to rise so high above the brutes, can, if he abuse that gift, sink far below them.

Thus then, even in the face of these newly discovered truths, we can still say that nothing that has yet been disclosed to us really alters man's spiritual relation to the universe. What secrets the other worlds may hide we know not, but we have seen nothing to shake our belief in the statement of the first chapter of Genesis that man was made in the likeness of God. Nor shall the starry heavens appal though they needs must awe us. They are the glories of a king's transcendent palace, but if that King is our Father we may pass through its courts with unfaltering footstep. Even when listening to the words of a Herschel, or reading the tidings of the latest discovery made at some great observatory, I seem also to hear the strong, consoling voice of Christ say, "Fear not therefore : ye are of more value than many nebulæ."

The mention of that name brings me to that which is the second proposition in my religious Euclid:—

Even as man is unique in the visible universe, so *unique among the sons of men is Jesus Christ of Nazareth.*

I have no proof to offer: I am not going to try to prove in words that the sun of Italy can warm me, or that moonlight on the sea is beautiful. In every assembly of men who have only the intellectual knowledge of the story of the Gospels, the vast majority will heartily accept this statement for truth, though many will say that it is nothing like the whole truth. But I want to get down to the facts which are accepted by the common spiritual consciousness of all of us. You will remember, perhaps, what was said by Charles Lamb, a man who made no high religious profession, and who was not, I suppose, what would be commonly called an "orthodox" believer:—"If Shakespeare were to come into this room in which we are now sitting, we should all rise up to do him reverence, but if That Other Person were to come in, we should all kneel down to kiss the hem of His garment."

Whoever so thinks about Christ, whoever can truly say, "He is to me unique among the sons of men, He brings to me a message from the Eternal One such as none other that I know of has ever borne,"—such a man seems to me to be my brother in the faith. I know that many, perhaps most of those who are called "heterodox," could come

as far as this: still it seems to me that all who have got thus far have at least their faces towards the light, and I would say to all these, "Let us live with this Man, Who is above all other men, as much as we can, let us imitate His spirit, study His words, and translate them day by day into acts, and then our understanding of Who and What He is will grow."

"Obedience is the organ of Spiritual Knowledge": that was the scientific formula by which Frederick Robertson expressed the truth contained in the words of Christ, "If any man will do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." Logic was the organ, the tool by which Aristotle sought to open the secrets of the world of mind. Scientific experiment was the new instrument, the *Novum Organon*, by which Lord Bacon invited man to explore the secrets of the world of matter. Obedience to the words of Christ is the tool by which His disciples are to open the doors of the kingdom of Heaven and learn as much as it is right for us to know in our present low estate of its mysteries. Counsels of wrangling bishops, hair-splitting Greeks, fanatic Egyptian monks have sought to define that which the Saviour Himself left undefined of His relation to the Eternal Father, and to my mind all that they have done is but "darkening counsel by words without knowledge." It is not by the argument of an Ecclesiastical Debating Society nor by Bill and Answer in a

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great theological Chancery suit that men are meant to arrive at Truth. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him ; and He will show them His covenant."

The clouded hill
Attend thou still
And Him that went within

is the advice of a modern poet.¹ And thus waiting in patience, but in obedience, some of us at least have found the awful mystery expressed in the words "God manifest in the flesh" grow bearable, and then more than bearable, cheering, helpful, life-giving. We see that all other human messengers of God have been careful to emphasise the fact that they were *but* servants. The more saintly they have been, the more they have dwelt upon their own weakness and liability to fall : the greater the power with which they bore witness to the truths of the unseen world, the greater has been their anxiety that those who listened to their words should believe, not in the teacher but on Him who sent him. But in this one Teacher the law of the series fails. His standard of holy living is the highest of all ; His spiritual insight is clearest of all. He is meek and lowly of heart ; yet He never makes that confession of failure which every other servant has made. On the contrary, He says, "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." He does not gently unfasten the clinging hands of His disciples and tell them to look away

¹ A. H. Clough in his poem "The New Sinai."

from Himself to Him that sent Him. On the contrary He says in His last tender leave-taking, when already "the anguish of the olive-garden" is all but overshadowing His soul, "Ye believe in God ; believe also in me."

I expect that most Christians whose religion is not a mere dead and formal thing would have to admit that they are not always equally able to accept this great central mystery of God manifest in the flesh in all its fulness. Perhaps contact with the ordinary commonplace world of selfish men and women puts us out of tune with the sublime self-sacrifice of Christ. Perhaps some fresh discovery of the marvels of the physical universe makes it for the moment harder to believe that its Maker stooped so low as to come in at the gate of birth, to live as a Galilean peasant, to pass out of human life again by a malefactor's death.

I might almost say that our power of accepting this great truth varies with the varying moods of our spiritual health ; but when this life is strongest within us, when soul mingles with soul, and we claim the fulfilment of the promise, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," or when temptation or sorrow, especially when the fear of unutterable bereavement comes over us, then we turn with renewed faith to Him who, as Son of Man, understands and sympathises with all our trials, who, as the Everlasting Son of the Father, can and will, in His own good time, "grant us a happy issue out of all

our tribulations and temptations whensoever they beset us."

And thus meditating, it seems to me that there is something in the doctrine of the Incarnation which makes it pre-eminently the message to these later scientific ages of the world. Even more than those earlier child-ages of which I have spoken do we in these latter days need the assurance that the Maker of this glorious but overwhelming universe is on our side and careth for us. We need to be lifted out of that abyss of pessimism into which the thought of our littleness, of the pathetic shortness of our life here might otherwise plunge us. In order that man may live rightly in the world and not in his despair lose all hold on God and goodness and throw away the spirit-life, living only for the pleasures of the senses, he needs to get a new and more vivid apprehension of the truth that the Maker has Himself been man and that His Spirit still dwells with us.

For this is the last point which I wish to emphasise:—

The Spirit of the risen Christ still dwells in the hearts of the children of men. It is not merely certain historical facts which occurred under the sway of Augustus and Tiberius Cæsar that we as Christians believe; it is a living and abiding Spiritual presence in the world to which we bear witness.

We agree with the champions of the so-called Catholic Church in this, that a theory which

represents the Eternal Maker as having spoken once by His Son some twenty centuries ago, and then, having relapsed into unbroken silence, is inadequate and unworthy, and does not correspond with the promises of God. But while the Romanist too often limits the promise of the Comforter to his doctrine of the Infallibility of the Pope, we believe that

Here amidst the poor and blind,
The poor and suffering of our kind,
In works we do, in prayers we pray,
Life of our life, He lives to-day.

The ecclesiastical theory of "the Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost" comes at last to this, that the Spirit who was to bear witness to Christ and to guide His disciples into all truth must work through one Italian bishop (chosen possibly by all the amazing intrigues of a Papal conclave), through some man like a Borgia or a della Rovere, who was not only no saint, but who would for his evil life be expelled in our days from all decent society. Through this man must the Spirit of the Holy One speak, and through him alone for the guidance and governance of the Church.

Wretched perversion of the great truth of the continual witness for Christ in the souls of men, this theory of a mechanical transmission of spiritual gifts has too long distracted the thoughts of men from the glorious truth of which it is the travesty. From the day that the Saviour withdrew His visible presence from His disciples, His spirit has been

waiting to dwell with all "holy and humble men of heart," clearing their spiritual vision, fashioning them into more complete conformity with the likeness of their Master, guiding them even in the outward affairs of life, and much more exerting His restraining and constraining power in all the stages of their spiritual career.

That official view of the gifts of the Spirit which prevailed too early in the Church, and which ruled almost supreme in the Middle Ages, may have prevented many a devout soul from seeing how it was being led, and from recognising the fulfilment of Christ's promise. Still He has not failed His believing people, and in every age, even the darkest, there have been many of whom it could be truly said, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

And now to us in this day when the *Zeitgeist* in one form or another presses heavily upon many minds, it is well that we should remind one another of the meaning of the words, "the glorious *liberty* of the children of God." Materialism, secularism, agnosticism bring to the soul no true freedom. They leave us with all these high aspirations of ours at the mercy of all the chances and changes of this physical universe. "These thoughts which wander through eternity" are to them mere mocking dreams. The love which feels instinctively that it ought to be stronger than death turns away from the irresponsive clay which was but yesterday so dear, baffled, beaten, broken-hearted. But still as

ever is it true that "if the Son makes us free, then are we free indeed."

But if the trial of our faith is a hard one, there is no reason why it should fail in the trying. Every age has had its own difficulties, and possibly our own seems so hard only because we know our difficulties best. In any case, let us stand firm, trusting in Him who knows all the conditions of our spiritual environment, and who will, with the temptation, make a way to escape that we may be able to bear it. Slightly paraphrasing the words of an Apostle whose own faith once utterly broke down under the trial of his Master's apparent defeat, I pray that the trial of our faith being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, though it too is tried in a very fierce fire, may be found unto praise and honour and glory at the end of this mysterious Age.

THE CENTRAL MYSTERY OF CHRISTIANITY

ON a beautiful summer morning, not long ago, I was journeying in company with a friend over the wide sands which at low water intervene between Holy Island and the Coast of Northumberland. A light mist hid both mainland and island from our view. We seemed to be surrounded on all sides by sea. Myriads of tiny sand-heaps told of the work of as many industrious worms burrowing at a little distance below the surface. Occasionally a gull or a tern flew over our heads, scarcely seeming to move its strong, beautiful, white wings. Only the long procession of telegraph posts told of the handiwork of man: and to increase the feeling of loneliness came the thought that in a very few hours all this wide expanse, including even the road along which our patient horse was dragging us, would be covered by the waves of the German Ocean, and our road would become a veritable pathway of death for any who dared to linger in it too long.

I said to my friend, "Does not such a scene as this make one feel the littleness of man? What

a small part we play in all this silent and wonderful world!"

"Yes," he answered, "it reminds me of the Arab name for a desert, 'the place where He is.'"

Why do I remind myself of this scene which will perhaps bring to the recollection of some of my hearers other similar scenes on the mountains or by the sea, or in the trackless forest when they have felt themselves alone with Nature or with Nature's King? I remind you of them because I cannot but feel that we, of this age and country, need more solitude than we generally obtain, in order to think right and true thoughts about God. Our life in towns is such an artificial and conventional thing that it enables us to forget the glory and the mystery of the universe. We live too much on telegrams and newspapers and magazines. The chatter of the world's Babel is ever in our ears. Even our religion is too much a thing of phrase and convention: not enough grounded on deep-heart converse of each one of us with the Eternal. "We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love"—O! truest words of the Seer of Rydal! But so many of us who have Love, and who are not altogether destitute of Hope, do in our snug, street-bounded lives, while wielding all the marvellous contrivances which Man has invented for the subjugation, almost for the effacement of Nature, lack that feeling of admiring awe in the contemplation of this visible universe from which some of the

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simpler and happier generations before us have derived their nobleness.

And yet, all the discoveries which the wise men of the last three centuries have made concerning the nature of that Universe should increase in us both admiration and reverence. The world which was supposed to have been created in the year 4004 B.C., and to be lighted and warmed by a not very large nor very distant sun, was a much more easily imagined, a much less stupendous, a much less awe-inspiring thing than this planet of which Science tells us, which, with all its vastness, with all its unimaginable antiquity, is but a speck of dust in the starry universe, but a thing of yesterday in comparison with the ages of past creation. For my part I do not find that the Christian Revelation has any mysteries harder for faith to accept than some of the things which Science has disclosed, and which I know that I MUST believe concerning the visible universe. The thought of that Sun, from which we derive all that makes organic life here possible—of course also all that makes human life delightful—that this Sun at such an unimaginable distance from us, is the scene of such awful fiery tornadoes as Milton did not dream of when he was describing Hell; that this tremendous elemental war has been going on for ages upon ages, and that, as I have said, our planet revolving round it for millions of years, day and night, summer and winter, century after century, millennium after millennium, has derived from that

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terrible conflagration all possibilities of life and happiness for her own children : all this I know must be true. I bow my head in awe and admiration and try to accept it, but it is with such a feeble and faltering faith that I hardly dare to say, "I believe it."

From one point of view it seems to me that Science, which has made some of the old theological positions untenable, has lessened at least one of our difficulties. In reviewing the course of human history, and seeing the vast changes brought about by even a single century, it is difficult to think that events which occurred nearly 2000 years ago can at this moment be of prime importance for the human race. "Where is the promise of His coming?" we are disposed to cry; "for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were since the foundation of the world." Thus we crave—I admit that I find something in me which craves—that if there be a revelation, it should be repeated as it were every century. In answer to this craving a Christian writer says: "Be not ignorant of this one thing that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." And here Science comes in with according voice and says that 1900 years is really but a very small interval in the history of Man; hardly more than a lightning-flash in the history of the World. And it suggests by analogy that if we are every day lighted and warmed, and all the commonplace operations of daily life are regulated by a body which we could

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hardly reach in 200 years though we were travelling with railway speed, it is not strange that words which were spoken and deeds which were done nineteen centuries ago should still profoundly modify the life of every one of us.

This fair face of Nature upon which we look may be likened to a picture. Now, there are two ways of looking at a picture. We may take a magnifying glass to it and enable ourselves to say: "This canvas is of such a composition and was probably made at such a place. Here is vermilion and there is cobalt. This little bit of colour is mineral and that is vegetable in its origin." Or we may study the picture from a little farther off and allow the beauty of it to work upon our souls, and try to enter into the meaning of the artist, to grasp the story which he wished to tell us. Surely the latter is the truer method; even though we may sometimes fail pitifully to do justice to the painter's secret purposes. While profoundly admiring the patience and even the humility with which some of our great men of science have explored the secrets of Nature, I think we must admit that sometimes they have been analysing the pigments when they would have done better to be studying the picture, and that upon us as human beings, endowed with a spiritual nature, there lies an absolute necessity to try to get at the mind of the great unseen Creator and to understand something of His purposes in making the world and giving us a place in it. That is,

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we crave and must crave for some Revelation of God.

The one mode by which above all others, as we believe, the Creator has revealed Himself to us His creatures has been by human lives. To the untutored heathen He may seem to speak in the thunder and the whirlwind. An eclipse of the Sun tells such an one of the anger of the Gods, and a meteorite is "the image which fell down from Jupiter." We know that all these things are but part of the great procession of natural events, and do not tell us more—perhaps not so much—about the Divine Nature than the joy of harvest and the fragrance of the rose. But the history of each human spirit, if we could read it right, would probably tell us something about the great Maker in whose likeness it was fashioned ; and certainly some human souls, athirst for God and righteousness, do seem to have been sent into the world for this very purpose, to bear witness to the mind of the Unseen. This revelation of God's Will through human lives we need not by any means claim as the exclusive privilege of the Christian or Jewish religion. I reverently believe that Socrates, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Buddha, and many another "prophet and righteous man" in every land and every age have been true messengers and revealers of the Most High. We can trace the effect of many of these lives in the religious thought of the human race : we can see that after some of them have been lived, whole nations have thought more worthily of the Maker,

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the standard of man's duty to his fellow-man has been raised, that stream in human affairs "which makes for righteousness" has flowed with a stronger and fuller current.

If this is true of the lives of prophets, philosophers, reformers, at various points of Man's history, it is pre-eminently true of the one life which began at Bethlehem and ended at Calvary. The Life of Jesus is central in the history of our race. I think if we look at the way in which the shadows fall, we shall feel how true it is that He is the central Sun of humanity. There was one nation, as we all know, which with many stumblings and many backslidings did attain to the great truth of the Unity of God, did learn the lesson that He is not "like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art or man's device." This nation of Israel had its spiritual teachers: the prophets who were perpetual witness-bearers on behalf of the "tendency which makes for righteousness." And how wonderful in their writings is the perpetual pointing forward towards One who is to come; One who is to reign, but also to suffer; One who is to be the full and perfect flower sprung from the chosen seed, but yet in whom the Gentiles also are to trust. I know that this argument has been sometimes too strongly pressed; that passages in the Old Testament have been claimed as "Messianic," which on all fair principles of interpretation have nothing to do with the expected Messiah. Still, after rejecting all these, there remain a number of passages in the

writings of the Prophets which irresistibly suggest the inquiry made by the Ethiopian eunuch—"I pray thee, of whom speaketh the Prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man?" and when we compare them with the known facts in the history of Christ, we cannot doubt Who was that "other man," Whose image, seen as it were through the telescope of prophecy, impressed itself so many ages before His appearance in history on the receptive retina of the Hebrew seer.

I ask myself, after all deductions have been made, after every concession has been yielded to the fair demands of a strenuous criticism, "Is there not something absolutely unique in the history of the human race, in this persistent anticipation by a whole nation through at least eight centuries, of a coming Deliverer who in the end does come and fulfil, though in an utterly bewildering way to some of them, the highest anticipations of the noblest spirits of the race?"

This is what I mean by saying that in the ages before Christ appeared the shadows fell backward from Him Who was to come, but Who was even then the central Sun of Humanity. Nor is this true only of the Jewish race. "The unconscious Prophecies" of Heathendom, as Trench has fitly called them, do sometimes, in a marvellous way, give us a hint of the character of the coming Deliverer. And yet, even these tell us not only of joyous victory but also of suffering and apparent defeat. I shall never forget the thrill of emotion

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with which I first read the great passage in Plato's *Republic*, in which Socrates, in discussing the character of the perfectly just and righteous man argues that he will not live a life of serene and sunny happiness, but will be opposed and insulted and wronged, and in the end will die by a shameful death—I am hardly paraphrasing the words of Socrates when I say—will be crucified.¹

Yes! the shadows fell backward through those long ages, when men were moving up to the appearance of Christ, and during the eighteen centuries which have since elapsed, while we have been moving in a certain sense, but, as I trust, only in that sense, away from Him, the shadows have fallen forward and He is still the Central Sun. If we think of the best and holiest men that have served their generation according to the Will of God, and have fallen asleep since Christ came, if we think of Paul, Augustine, Bernard, à Kempis, Francis, Fénelon, Fox, Woolman, we feel that all that is best in them comes from likeness to Jesus Christ. Where His light has fallen upon their characters all is radiant. The shadows of human weakness and sin are on those parts which are turned away from Him.

“I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw

¹ In the *Republic*, ii. 5:—Glaucón, who is painting the picture of a perfectly righteous man who loves righteousness for its own sake and not for the sake of the rewards which it might bring, says: “They” (the opponents) “will tell you that a righteous man with such principles will be scourged, will be tortured, will be bound, will have his two eyes burnt out, and finally after having suffered all these calamities will be impaled (or crucified, ἀνασχινδυνεuthήσεται).”

all men unto me.” Without attempting to explain why “Christ must needs have suffered,” we can feel that there is a drawing power in the thought of that Mighty Sufferer who “poured out His soul unto death, and made intercession for the transgressors,” a power which no merely serene and happy life, not grappling with this world’s sin, nor going down into sympathy with its deep anguish, could possibly have exerted. Even the corruptions of Christianity, the thought of which oppresses and saddens our spirits, bear witness to this mighty attraction. The title “Vicar of Christ” has bound a chain about the nations—a title falsely claimed as you and I believe, but, had it been “Vicar of Moses” or “Vicar of Socrates,” it would have long ago lost its power. It is the remembrance of the real tragedy enacted on Calvary which draws the kneeling crowds to witness the sacrifice of the Mass, wherein as they believe that great event is not only commemorated but in a mysterious way performed anew before their eyes. With my whole heart I differ from them, but I dare not deride them. I see even in what seems to me their utterly mistaken reverence to “the Host” a proof, though a melancholy one, of the truth of the words, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

It will be seen that in the fragmentary remarks which I venture to make on a great and solemn subject, I do not dwell on the miraculous side of our Lord’s history. This is not from any doubt

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in my own mind as to the miraculous facts recorded in the Gospels :—

“Declared to be the Son of God with power.”

“Whereof God hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

“To whom also he shewed himself alive after his suffering, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

I take these and many similar passages in their simple and literal meaning, and believe them to be true. Unimaginable they may be, not to be conceived of by our limited intellects, and yet less hard to be believed than some of those marvels of the visible creation to which I alluded at the beginning of this paper.

But that which helps one generation may be a hindrance to another. To the generation to which Christ spoke, miracle was the expected seal upon His divine mission; to our generation, or at least to many minds in our generation, that which was once a seal and an attestation has become a perplexity and a distress. The “offence of the Cross” we may almost say has ceased. It causes us no uneasiness that the Holiest of men should have died the death of a common felon, but that He should be said to have walked on the sea and to have multiplied the loaves is a cause of sore pain and doubt to many a truly seeking soul to whom I believe Christ Himself, were He now on earth, would say: “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.” And such souls will probably win their

way back to faith, not through the Supernatural but through the Spiritual, not through Paley-like weighings of the evidence for or against the miracles of the Gospels, but through a reverent contemplation of the character of our Master, meditating on the words which He spoke while He was on earth, and listening to the inward voice wherewith He still speaks to the children of man.

What, then, is the conclusion at which the mind arrives after it has thus waited reverently at the threshold of the Heavenly Temple and looked within for light? Was Jesus Christ of Nazareth a Jewish teacher of signally pure and holy life? Yes, but more,—Did he die a noble death, and set a splendid example of self-sacrifice to all the ages to come? Yes, but more,—Was he emphatically the Son of Man, the noblest offspring of the human race, *cui nihil viget simile aut secundum*? Yes, but more,—Was He the Word of God, the one transcendent expression of the thought of the Maker to the creatures whom He has made, the one voice, helpful above all others to break this awful silence of Nature, who seems so regardless of the sorrows and aspirations of her inmate, Man! Yes! and that thought, perhaps more than all others, seems to me to bring soothing and help to the men who face the problem of life at the end of the nineteenth century.

But, looking still towards the innermost recesses of the Temple, I feel that there may be courts even beyond this which we have reached. And, however

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far I look, I see no barrier to the veneration with which I may regard this Being, the embodied Thought of my Creator. I come across no protest such as the holiest of mere men would utter against the idolising love of his fellow-men. I come upon such words as these : " I and my Father are one " : " He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The dialectic propositions of the Athanasian Creed sound like a jangle of words. I know not whether they be true or false, but I can well believe that they are about as near to the truth as the guesses of a four-year-old child at the contents of the books in its father's library. Still I look towards the most holy place, and in thought I seem to see One issue therefrom whom I know to be my spirit's rightful King. He says to me : " Dost thou believe on the Son of God ? " " Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him ? " the soul of man makes answer. " Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee."

" Lord, I believe," let us all say with thankful hearts, and let us worship Him !

PREDESTINATION

“FOR we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”¹

It is in the light of this glorious and profoundly suggestive passage from the writings of the great teacher of the doctrine of Salvation by Faith that I propose to consider what is the real meaning of the many passages in the Bible, but especially in the writings of the Apostle Paul, which deal with the doctrine of Predestination.

It cannot be denied that this word and its cognate terms Election and Reprobation have lost much of the hold which they possessed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on the minds of many Christian men.

St. Paul, Augustine, Calvin—these are generally considered to be the great champions of the doctrine of Predestination, which they or their disciples have developed from one proposition to another, till at last in that severely logical book, the *Institutes of Calvin*, it assumes this startling shape:—

“All are not created on equal terms, but some are

¹ Eph. ii. 10.

preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation, and accordingly as each has been created for one or another of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or death.¹ We say then that Scripture clearly proves this much that God, by His eternal and immutable counsel, determined once for all those whom it was His pleasure one day to admit to salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, it was His pleasure to doom to destruction. We maintain that this counsel, as regards the elect, is founded on His free mercy without any respect to human work, while those whom He dooms to destruction are excluded from access to life by a just and blameless, but at the same time incomprehensible judgment.²

“Those, therefore, whom God has created for a life of scorn and a death of destruction, so that they may be the vessels of His anger, the examples of His severity—these, in order that they may come to their end, he now deprives of the capacity to hear His word, and now more and more blinds and bewilders them by its preaching.

“This cannot be brought into question that God sends His word to many, whose blindness He wills shall be more increased.

“Behold, He directs His voice to them, but that they may grow deafer. He sends light to them, but that they may be made blinder. He sets His doctrine before them, but that thereby they may be the more bewildered. He applies the remedy, but He does so lest they should be cured.”³

Such was the conclusion to which the Genevan reformer deemed himself irresistibly driven by the language of the Apostle of the Gentiles. It did

¹ xxi. 5.

² xxi. 7.

³ xxiv. 12 and 13.

not need the further expansion and exaggeration of the doctrine by Jonathan Edwards (who seemed to triumph in the thought of infants only a span-long doomed to agonise to all eternity in the ever-burning fire of Hell)—it did not need these blasphemies to outrage the conscience of Christendom, and make it impossible for thoughtful men to accept these statements of the actions of an All-holy and Righteous God. It is not, I think, too much to say that, even as stated by Calvin, the doctrine of Reprobation eternally decreed and inevitable was one which the moral sense of mankind made it impossible long to hold, and that had Christianity been inextricably bound up with this doctrine, Christianity itself would ere now have perished.

The doctrine of Election to Eternal Life was no doubt, as described in the English prayer-book, one, “full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ”; but “for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God’s Predestination” is there pronounced to be “a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.”

And in addition to this it has to be remembered that the doctrine of Reprobation, the terrible thought that it is possible for a human being to

be born subject by an immutable decree to the wrath of the Almighty Maker, and doomed to spend endless ages in a place of torment, is a doctrine extremely likely to lay fatal hold of minds like the poet Cowper's, already predisposed to the terrible mental malady of melancholia and to drive them to absolute despair.

For these reasons, then, I rejoice that the doctrine of Predestination as formulated by some of the great theologians of the Reformation has practically faded out of the minds of men, and is no longer insisted upon by any of the Churches. But it remains for us to ask, "What is, then, the meaning of the many passages in Scripture, especially in the writings of St. Paul, which use the word, and which seem to point to the doctrine; and what lessons for the conduct of our own daily life can we draw from these passages?"

I. In the first place, then, I think we may consider that it is now practically proved that St. Paul, when he wrote the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians, was not thinking or speaking of the admittance to Heaven, or the damnation to Hell, of individual men and women; but of the choice of nations, pre-eminently of the Jewish nation, to be fellow-workers with God in the setting-up of His kingdom upon earth; and of their rejection (or if we prefer to call it so, their reprobation) when they failed to put their free-will alongside of the fore-ordaining will of God, and to

co-operate in His gracious designs. To myself, personally, this view was first presented with convincing power by a dear friend and kinsman,¹ in a book published nearly half-a-century ago; and every re-perusal of the chapters of the New Testament from which the Calvinistic arguments are drawn has strengthened me in the conviction that his interpretation (not his only, but that of many other writers on the subject) is the true one.

When I say that St. Paul, in writing the 11th Romans and similar chapters, was not thinking definitely about the Heaven or Hell, of the individual, I hold that I am stating a fact of much wider application than to the present subject. I believe if any one were carefully to compare the books of the New Testament with the writings and sermons of almost all medieval and not a few modern divines, he would be astonished to find how vastly larger the subject of future rewards and punishments looms in the latter than in the former. That there shall be blessing for the righteous and punishment for the ungodly in the life to come is plainly and clearly stated in the New Testament, but it is not insisted on with the wearisome iteration of the seller of Indulgences or of some Revivalist preachers. I am not sure that Gregory the Great (good and noble man that he was) did not lead the way to this disproportionate kind of teaching, especially with regard to future

¹ See *The Doctrine of Election*, an Essay by Edward Fry, London, 1864.

punishment, by his four books of Dialogues, which are in fact a collection of ghost stories, meant to impress upon the reader the reality and the terror of Hell. Whoever set the example, it was abundantly followed throughout the Middle Ages. Monks and friars garnished their discourses with descriptions of the agonies of the damned : pious painters became familiar with the exact likenesses of devils : it is hardly too much to say that much of medieval religion consisted in a mere endeavour to wriggle out of the future torments of Hell without sacrificing too much of the earth-born pleasures of sin. And in the science of Salvation as thus understood, large gifts to monasteries and Cathedral Chapters bore an important place.

As century after century rolled by, this Hell-centred teaching of what was still called the Gospel became stronger, more definite, and more terrible, and it was on minds steeped in this teaching that the light of the Reformation broke ; a glorious light, but not one which could in a moment destroy the morbid tendencies of many generations. Hence it was, as I believe, that so many of the great Reformation teachers failed to grasp the real meaning of the Apostle of the Gentiles ; and instead of rising to the height of the great conception, " fellow - workers together with God," sank into the abyss of an attempted justification of hell filled with beings, some of them helpless babes, doomed to torment throughout eternity " all for Thy glory." But I repeat, it was of no such libels on the

righteousness of the Judge of all the earth that the Apostle Paul was thinking when he wrote these celebrated election chapters. The election of Israel, its fall from the place of privilege, the bringing in of the Gentiles ; these were the thoughts that filled that great and earnest soul even to overflowing. Let us just glance for a moment at the spiritual history of that wonderful man, for I am persuaded that most of the difficulties, the undoubted difficulties, which the modern thinker finds in his writings would disappear, if only such a thinker would study St. Paul's "personal equation" and train himself to look at history and human life from his point of view.

"Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law a Pharisee—touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless," the young Asiatic brought up in Grecian Tarsus continually said to himself, "I have a nobler birthright than all these conceited Greeks around me. I am an Hebrew: I am one of the seed of Abraham, the father of the faithful. Tarsus may have been my birthplace, but Palestine is my spiritual fatherland: the true home of my soul is that far-off mountain city, Jerusalem."

He came to the city of his fathers: the yearning of the long years of his boyhood was satisfied. He trod the courts of the Lord's house, and he sat at the feet of the most famous teacher among the Pharisees, Gamaliel. Possibly while listening to

his counsels of tolerance and moderation, the young enthusiast felt that this elderly Rabbi was not quite orthodox enough for him. "It may suit his calm temperament and his broad style of teaching to say, 'Wait and see what comes of this new sect of the Nazarenes.' I must set to work to destroy the pestilent heresy of the madmen who say that a Sabbath-breaker, a despiser of the law, condemned to death by the unanimous voice of our greatest ecclesiastics, was the Son of God." So he wrought, rooting up and pulling down, and "being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even unto strange cities." So this Grand Inquisitor laboured in his self-imposed task till that blazing noonday on the road to Damascus, when he heard the fateful words: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" That day and the baptism of fire which came with it turned him into an ardent lover of the Christ; but we are not to suppose that he at once rose to the full height of the revelation which was made to him concerning his future career. It was probably during those mysterious three years which he spent in the solitudes of Arabia that he learned his great lesson concerning the eternal purpose of God, that "the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews, and partakers of the promises of Christ through the Gospel." Then was made clear to his expanding soul the meaning of those solemn words which he heard from Ananias in the darkened chamber at Damascus: "He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name *before the Gentiles*

and kings and the Children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." And then at length came the Vision in the Temple and the Heavenly Voice—so strangely contrasting with the wonted utterances of the worshippers in that Temple of Exclusiveness—"Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." It would not perhaps give an inaccurate picture of the Apostle's life-history if we said that from that day onward the one great purpose of his soul was to blend that divine voice to himself with that other voice heard two thousand years before by his great forefather, Abraham: "in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

It is, of course, hard for us with so many generations of Gentile Christianity behind us to sympathise with the agony of the struggle through which this "Hebrew of the Hebrews" must have passed ere he wholly surrendered himself to the conviction—"The Messiah foretold by the prophets has come, and one result of His coming is that the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down for ever." We may faintly represent to ourselves the force of this spiritual revolution by imagining the case of a man imbued with high Catholic doctrine, Roman or Anglican, who shall, in fixed middle life, come to the conclusion that Churchmen and Nonconformists, Romans and Anglicans, Sacramentalists and non-Sacramentalists are all one in Christ Jesus, and that it is his duty

to proclaim this doctrine at church congresses and missionary conferences, and wherever the chief ecclesiastical leaders most do congregate.

With these mighty thoughts concerning the apparently changed purpose of the Most High fermenting in his mind, what wonder that St. Paul's writings are full of references to the Election and Rejection of the Chosen People. I confess to having felt sometimes a certain weariness of those chapters in which *peritomē* and *akrobustia* (circumcision and uncircumcision) are terms perpetually recurring. Nor do I think that, unexplained and uninterpreted, they are likely to convey much instruction to a village audience. But when one has assimilated this thought of St. Paul's "personal equation," when one can look at Israel's Election through his eyes, and can carry over by analogy into the ecclesiastical questions of to-day, some of the hardly learned lessons of his bitter experience, one feels that there is not a word too much about Election and Predestination, and—though I will not say that all difficulties vanish—a load is lifted from the heart when one sees that no thought of the Eternally foreordained damnation of individual souls ever crossed the mind of the great Apostle.

II. Though without any exact warrant from Scripture, I think we may safely extend this thought of National Election to other nations besides the Hebrews.

I believe it was Prof. Ewald who was wont to

impress on the minds of his students the thought of a triple vocation of the nations—

- (1) Of Greece to Art and Philosophy,
- (2) Of Rome to Government and Law,
- (3) Of Israel to the knowledge of God, One, Invisible, and Eternal.

Probably this thought is more or less present to the mind of every Christian reader of history. We must think that the division of labour between the two great Mediterranean nations symbolised in the words of Virgil :

Others, belike, with happier grace
From bronze or stone shall call the face,
Plead doubtful causes, map the skies,
And tell when planets set or rise :
But, Roman, thou, do thou control
The nations far and wide ;
Be this thy genius, to impose
The rule of peace on vanquished foes,
Show pity to the humbled soul,
And crush the sons of pride.¹

was part of the Eternal Counsel of Him who did in an especial manner reveal Himself to the little Semitic people who dwelt in the highlands of Palestine.

Doubtless also even the great Oriental monarchies, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, had their part assigned to them by the Almighty Poet in His great drama of the Ascent of Man ; and in truth we are continually discovering more and more of the greatness of the debt which we owe to these early promoters and

¹ *Aeneid*, vi. 848-854, Conington's Translation.

guardians of civilisation, evil as their record may be in the books of the Hebrews, their age-long enemies.

A similar distribution of various gifts and a similar call to various duties are surely observable among the nations of the modern world. Notwithstanding the high-pitched words of Milton: "God would have no great design of His Providence in hand, but He would communicate some knowledge of it to His Englishmen," we have assuredly no desire to claim for ourselves the rights and privileges of the Chosen Nation, but we need not ignore or deny the fact that sometimes, notwithstanding all her follies and crimes, Great Britain has been a fellow-worker with God in causes which made for the uplift of humanity; nor that she had some special gifts of national character, of climate, of geographical position which, had she used them more faithfully and unselfishly, would have made her a far mightier influence for good in the hands of the All-Ruler.

So with France, with Germany, with Italy, with Russia. Everywhere we see special national capabilities, some work for God and for Humanity done by each nation, much more that might have been done, but which no other than that particular nation was fitted to accomplish.

But this brings us to the thought of what happens to a nation which persistently refuses to use the powers entrusted to it by God for the purposes for which He bestowed them. Such a nation becomes at last what St. Paul calls *adokimos*,

which is translated in our Bible "reprobate." Again I must repeat that we are not here talking about Heaven and Hell, but about service or the absence of service rendered to the rightful Master of us all.

When the coinage has become outworn through too long currency, and there is a panic among the public about "light sovereigns," you will perhaps see a clerk in one corner of the bank weighing gold. He slips one sovereign after another rapidly on to the plate of the machine ; many drop through being of sufficient weight : they will do : they are elect. But at last comes one which will not turn the scale ; it is turned off into another receptacle : it is *adokimos*—it will not pass muster ; it is, if you like to use the word, "reprobate." Similarly, I was hearing the other day about a workman in a factory, whose sole business it is to handle daily thousands of thin iron rods or pins, to see if they are of the right size for the holes into which they are meant to fit. Those which pass the test of his delicate fingers are *eklektói* (chosen), those which are found unsuitable are *adokimoi*.

Rome Imperial was thus rejected at the fall of the Empire. I will not inquire which of the modern nations, our contemporaries, has incurred or is incurring the same condemnation. In speaking of other nations the rule perhaps should be "*De vivis nil nisi bonum*" (speak only good of the living). But I think every true-hearted English patriot should very earnestly and constantly ask himself the question and press it home to the hearts of his

countrymen: "Are we falling in with the eternal counsels of God, who gave us this glorious nationality, or are we through sloth, or selfishness, or pride, or luxury, falling short of our high calling, and in danger of being rejected as *adokimoi*?"

III. May we not travel even beyond the wide circle of the Nation and say of the Race that it is "elect according to the eternal purpose and foreknowledge of God"?

If we could imagine a being of finite intelligence watching through the ages the slow development of animal life upon our planet, we may well believe that it would not have been the far-off progenitors of man that he would have selected, as likely to produce the being who should be

Heir of all the ages in the foremost files of time.

Even as the prophet Samuel said: "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him," when he looked on the stalwart frame of Jesse's eldest son, Eliab, and received the warning, "Look not on his countenance nor on the height of his stature, for I have rejected him," so our imagined spectator of the unfolding drama of the ages might have found many goodlier and nobler forms than the mean-looking "anthropoid" creatures whom it pains us and humbles us, when we look upon them in an anthropological treatise, to associate with the thought of our physical ancestry. Yet it was even these mean-looking beings, as Science teaches us, whom the helping hand of the Almighty Designer

gradually raised out of their low estate, preparing them, or rather their descendants, to be the recipients of the Divine gift of reason, "looking before and after," and to be such of whom it could be said in the striking metaphorical language of Genesis, that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." When we think of all that is involved in this immense development, of the chasm which separates even the Tasmanian savage, far more the anthropoid ape, from a Plato, a Shakespeare, a Napoleon, we seem to realise more fully the meaning of the words, "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," and we seem to perceive a deeper meaning in our Lord's special appropriation to Himself of the title, "The Son of *Man*." The incarnation of the Son of God in human form put the crowning stone on an edifice which had been slowly rearing through ages which our little human intelligence aches to contemplate.

But here, as always, the Divine Predestination involves and implies Human Responsibility. If Man, the ordinary man of to-day, especially a member of one of the races which have made the most advance in civilisation, be the product of so long and so arduous an upward struggle towards the light, what manner of person ought he to be in all earnestness and nobility of purpose, not frittering away these wonderful powers of his over frivolity and folly, still less living like his subjects the animals around him, merely to satisfy the lusts

of the flesh, but ever grasping the hand of the Almighty Helper and rising

On stepping-stones
Of his dead self to higher things?

IV. This last train of thought leads me back to the text with which I started, and which, as I understand the matter, should always now be for us individually the dominant idea in all our musings on the meaning of Predestination.

“For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, that no man should glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.”¹

It is now more than forty years since I heard in a town on the Riviera an eloquent and striking sermon on this text from a Pastor of the French Evangelical Church, M. Delapierre. It is not often, unfortunately, that sermons, however forcible, remain so long in the memory, but I have always retained the impression made on me by that discourse. The glory of the sunlit world outside, the cool shade and stillness of the church, the striking appearance of the young black-haired preacher, his evident earnestness and the power with which he (presumably a Calvinist clergyman) pressed home to the hearts of his hearers this text—never noticed by me before—a text which certainly presents to our view a somewhat different side of truth from that on

¹ Eph. ii. 8-10.

which the ultra-Calvinist loves (or loved) to dwell—all these things made that Sunday's sermon at Mentone a landmark in my spiritual experience.

The preacher dwelt no doubt on the important words "not of yourselves," and gave the usual Evangelical warning against supposing that any good deeds of our own can win us Heaven: but then he went on to describe "*cette carrière immense de bons œuvres*," which the acceptance of salvation by Jesus Christ opens up to every Christian.

"I know not, my brethren, what may be the good works foreordained for each of you. It may be the bringing home of the Gospel hope to some one of your invalid countrymen who has come out to Mentone to die; it may be a few words of sympathy and cheer to a poor tired servant at your hotel. Whatever it is, be sure that God has some good work prepared beforehand for you, and take heed that you do not miss of the joy which will come by the performance of it."

As the mind dwells on such a passage as this, which I have quoted from St. Paul, it is raised into a region where harmony with the mind of the Almighty Worker and obedient performance of the work which He assigns to each of us seem the crowning joy of life. Browning represents the Arab physician, Karshish, as saying of the risen Lazarus:

He loves both old and young,
Able and weak, affects the very brutes
And birds—how say I? flowers of the field
As a wise workman recognises tools
In a master's workshop, loving what they make.

And this thought of the Human Race as the toolbox of the Almighty seems to me infinitely more helpful and truer than the old theological schemes of Election and Damnation.

This man is fashioned in the likeness of a saw, that man of a plane, another of a chisel, another of a hammer ; each of the countless souls born into the world has, if he only knew it, his own proper and peculiar work assigned to him and prepared for him by the Maker. Joy to him if he finds it out, and, yielding himself to the hand of the Almighty Artificer, succeeds in doing it, however imperfectly. Sorrow to him, unspeakable sorrow even in this life—we need not here bring in the thought of the fires of Hell—if having had such a work assigned to him by the Maker he goes away and says, “ I will be no instrument in that Almighty Hand. I will take all the faculties and the possessions which He has lent to me and will use them for my own pleasure, amusement, aggrandisement. I will live my own life ” ;—“ and die thy own death,” says the voice of God, which cannot lie, in the oracular cell of that man’s inmost consciousness.

I will not by more words weaken the impression produced on our minds by this text so pregnant in meaning. I will only suggest how here, as in so many other cases, the systematised teaching of St. Paul is found when we dig deep enough to coincide with the picture teaching of the parables of Christ. Predestination rightly considered is implied in the parables of the Pounds

and the Talents. For the man who received five talents a different series of good works was prepared beforehand from that which was prepared for him who received two. The *adokimos* servant was reprobate, not because he failed to produce other two, but because, having received only one, he “was afraid and went away and digged in the earth”—hard labour wrongly applied—“and hid his Lord’s money.”

One of the master minds of Pagan antiquity, Aristotle himself, had a glimpse of the same truth. As I remember it, the finest passage in the Nicomachean Ethics is that in which he develops the doctrine of the *ergon*, the special work which every organ of the body, every faculty of the mind, every member of the State is meant to perform. And what is that doctrine but the confession of an Almighty Artificer who “hath foreordained us to good works which he hath before appointed that we should walk in them”: in brief, the doctrine of Predestination?

V. The contemplation of this eternal purpose of the Creator as to the work which each one of His creatures is to perform brings us to two other facts in the spiritual world—Stewardship and Divine Guidance. Of the great truth that in Human Life, if rightly understood, there is no such thing as absolute ownership, but only universal Stewardship: that every man is ideally a trustee of his health, his wealth, his intellectual powers for the benefit of Christ and his brethren; what more can we say

than that it *is* the truth, and that if it were universally believed and acted upon, the Millennium would be here, and the sorrow of the world would be a vanishing quantity.

But if we are really to *do* the good works which our Father has foreordained for each of His children, we must have some means of ascertaining what is His will concerning us. General laws will not suffice us. A man may keep all the Commandments and yet entirely miss his vocation, and be attempting though himself a plane, to do the work of a hammer, though an ear to do some other work than hearing. The necessity thus laid upon us as fellow-workers together with God involves the existence of a spiritual faculty by which we may understand so much of the will of the Eternal as it is necessary for each one of us to know. It is something more than and distinct from Conscience, for it means not the power to distinguish between Right and Wrong, but the power to decide which of two courses of action, each in itself harmless or even praiseworthy, it is our Father's will that we should choose. It is the continuance in our own day and the manifestation to the humblest and weakest of believers of the same Divine Guidance which in the days of the Apostles prevented Paul and Silas from going to preach in Bithynia and guided them to their world-important service in the cities of Europe. The churches have been slow to claim the benefit of this wonderful privilege. It might almost be said that they have put it from them and

judged themselves unworthy of Heavenly Guidance ; but now their eyes are being more and more opened to the truth that this which men have called mysticism is an essential part of the scheme of Christianity, and that the assurance which Isaiah¹ was commissioned to convey to the faithful among his countrymen still remains true for the spiritual Israel : “ Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, ‘ This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.’ ”¹

This, as I understand it, is part of the true doctrine of Predestination.

¹ Isaiah xxx. 21.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

FOR eighteen centuries the Christian Church has treasured and studied the Epistle addressed by the Apostle Paul to his Galatian converts: but the theory suggested by Sir Wm. Ramsay, and supported by him with many cogent arguments, lends great additional interest to the document.

That theory is, in brief, that the Galatia of St. Paul's day included most of that which is now marked in our maps as Phrygia and Pisidia, and that the Galatian converts, whose perversion into Judaism the Apostle deplores are none other than the men of Antioch in Pisidia, of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, the story of whose conversion to Christianity is told us in the 13th and 14th chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

With this theory in our minds, as at least highly probable if not yet actually proved, let us turn again to the document and try to read it, not as an "Epistle" solemnly divided into chapters and verses, but as an interesting letter from one of the greatest of his Christian teachers to some troublesome and weak-minded but much-loved friends. As they would certainly do so, let us read it, not a paragraph

to-day and a paragraph to-morrow, but straight through from beginning to end. And in order to get rid of the effect of our too great familiarity with the mere sound of the words, we will allow ourselves to condense some of the arguments, to modernise some of the phrases, and occasionally to expand some of the allusions.

The Apostle Paul is residing at Corinth or perhaps in Macedonia. The weight of his impending journey to Jerusalem, "not knowing the things which shall befall him there," hangs heavy on his spirit. It is probably the year 57 and his first missionary journey with Barnabas ten years before, notwithstanding at least one intervening visit, is growing somewhat dim and distant.¹ But suddenly all the scenes of that journey, and all the persons with whom it brought him into acquaintance, are brought vividly before him by tidings which are brought to him of the wholesale perversion of his Phrygian disciples to Judaism, or at least to a Judaising form of Christianity. The same thing has happened at Antioch and Iconium which happened ten years before at the Syrian Antioch. "Certain men which came down from Judæa" have bewildered the simple-hearted people, saying to them, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved": St.

¹ On Ramsay's theory the Epistle may have been written from Antioch four years earlier, in the year 53. But I do not think this early date for the Epistle is *essential* to his theory and the remarkable similarity in many respects between the Epistle to the Galatians and that to the Romans, which is generally admitted to have been written from Corinth about A.D. 56, makes a later date more probable.

Paul's own action in circumcising Timothy, the son of a Pagan father and a Jewish mother, an action which was confessedly prompted by fear of "the Jews that were in those quarters" has perhaps been quoted by the Judaising party as a strong precedent in their favour. And so we may imagine the healed cripple of Lystra and his fellow-townsmen, the ex-priest of Jupiter, and many another Gentile citizen of one of the four towns taking up solemnly with all the cumbersome ceremonial of the Jewish law, priding themselves on being no longer sinners of the Gentiles but circumcised sons of Abraham, keeping New Moons and Feasts of Trumpets, discussing learnedly about the meal-offering, and the peace-offering, and quoting the opinion of this Rabbi and that Doctor of the Law as to the precise weight of the packet which a man might carry in his pouch without violating the sanctity of the Sabbath. If some faithful souls like Lois and Eunice, loyal to the great preacher from whose lips they first heard the truth, venture to hint that this was not the kind of teaching which they heard from the Apostle Paul, the converts to Judaism shrug their shoulders, and, with a smile of superior orthodoxy, repeat the hints that have been delicately inserted into their minds by their new teachers.

"The Apostle Paul indeed: a worthy man in his way, but very ignorant or very careless on all points of ritual. Not at all a safe guide to follow, possessed as he is by his mystical theory of a

personal union of soul with Jesus the Messiah. Is it for this that we are to discard the grand ceremonial which was at first commanded by Jehovah, and has been practised by pious Israelites for a thousand years? A religion without sacrifices and vestments, and an altar and white-robed priests; how can it endure? How our bald and simple worship will expose us to the contempt of Jew and Gentile alike!"

"And then, how about the Apostleship of Saul of Tarsus? True, we took him at his own valuation and called him an Apostle because he called himself so. But our friends from Jerusalem tell us that the twelve Apostles were all chosen by the Lord Jesus himself in his lifetime from among his own personal friends. And when it became necessary to fill up the place of the traitor Iscariot, Peter expressly said that his successor must be chosen from among those who had 'compained with them all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them.' So his claim to Apostleship seems very doubtful, and our friends tell us that the real Apostles, the friends and kinsmen of Christ at Jerusalem, are by no means satisfied with Paul's conduct in breaking down the hedge and letting the Gentiles in such numbers into the Church."

Such probably were the kind of conversations going on in the Galatian towns when one day a messenger came over the ridges of Taurus, bringing with him a letter from the very man whose name had just been in all their mouths.

THE LETTER

“ Paul, an Apostle, by no human appointment, but by the will of Jesus Christ and the Eternal Father who raised him from the dead, writes thus to the churches of Galatia, and all the brethren who are present with me join in the letter.

“ Grace be to you and peace from God who is our Father, and from Jesus Christ who is our Lord, and who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this evil world, which presses so sorely upon us, thus fulfilling the will of our Father, God : to whom be glory for the ages of ages. AMEN.

“ I am amazed that you should so soon have deserted the teacher who first called you unto the grace of Christ, and have taken up with another Gospel. Another gospel, did I say? Another glad tidings? nay, rather another piece of most evil tidings. But there are some men who are unsettling you, and who want to subvert the Gospel of Christ. Now hearken to me while I say and say it again, ‘ If I myself or an angel from Heaven come to you preaching any other gospel than that which you have already received, let such teacher be anathematised.’

“ This is not a question of popular or unpopular doctrine. I do not seek to persuade men by plausible words. I do not seek to please men. If I did so I should become the servant of my hearers, whereas I am the servant of Christ.

“ Now, as to my message to you : you must know that I did not receive it from any man. I was not catechised into the truth by Peter or John or any of the other Apostles, but I received it straight, by way of immediate revelation, from Jesus Christ. You know how in my early days, when I was a Jewish persecutor laying waste the Church of God, I rose high above most of my coevals in the Jewish Church, being zealous beyond them all for the maintenance of the traditions of my fathers. The day on the road to Damascus changed all this. God had had another purpose for me ever since the days of my infancy, and when it pleased Him to reveal His son to me in my secret soul, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I kept that spiritual revelation pure, and conferred not with flesh and blood, nor went up to Jerusalem, but departed into the deserts of Arabia, whence after a time I returned to Damascus. It was not till three years after my conversion that I went up for one fortnight to Jerusalem, to make Peter’s acquaintance, and then I saw none of the Apostles but him and James the Lord’s brother. (I declare in the presence of God that this is the very truth of the matter.)

“ Later on I travelled through Syria and Cilicia, and became known to the Christians of Antioch and Tarsus, but I was still personally unknown to the Christians in Judæa, though they had of course heard the news that Saul the persecutor was now preaching the faith which ever he had sought to exterminate, and they glorified God on my behalf.

“Again, fourteen years after my conversion, I went up once more to Jerusalem accompanied by my fellow-labourer Barnabas, and taking Titus also with us. It was in obedience to a direct revelation that I undertook this journey, the object of which was to explain to the Christians at Jerusalem the gospel which I had been preaching among the Gentiles, but I did it privately to those who were of chief reputation in the Church, lest by any possibility I had been mistaken in my previous course.

“And what was the result? Did they ask me to order my young companion Titus, whom every one knew to be a Gentile born, to submit to the rite of circumcision? No [though I did once make this compliance in the case of Timotheus], not even this concession was asked of me to the scruples of those pseudo-Christians, Jews at heart, who have crept into the Church in order to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, to bring us back again into bondage. To these men none of us would yield subjection, no, not for one hour. We were fighting your battle that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

“As for those who seemed to be of high reputation in the Church of Jerusalem (I do not care to discuss the exact nature of their position towards me: that is a personal matter, and God is not an ‘accepter of persons’), when we met in conference they did not ask me to add ever so little element of Judaism to my previous teaching. On the

contrary, when they saw, by the effect produced, that I had as genuine a call to preach to the Gentiles as Peter had to preach to the Jews, then James, Peter (or, as they called him, Cephas), and John, the pillars of that Jerusalem Church, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship. 'Do you go forth,' said they, 'and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, while we continue to preach to our brethren of the circumcision. Only when you are winning converts among the rich provincials of the Empire, remember our poor brethren here in Jerusalem'—a thing which I myself have always been careful to do.

"There is one thing more that I must tell as to my relation to the older Apostles. Peter came down to Antioch, and I was forced to rebuke him openly because he was deserving of blame. At first he ate and drank freely with our Gentile brethren, but when there came down from Jerusalem certain of the disciples of James, he was afraid of their Jewish prejudices and withdrew himself from that friendly intercourse. His example infected the other Jewish Christians of Antioch insomuch that even my comrade Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.

"When I saw them acting this base part, so unworthy of the truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter openly in the presence of them all, 'If thou who art a Jew hast laid aside thy allegiance to the law, and livest after the manner of the Gentiles, why shouldest thou compel those who were born

Gentiles to adopt the customs which thou hast laid aside? We have been wont to call ourselves "Jews by nature," and to pride ourselves on not being "sinners of the Gentiles," yet we now do know that by the works of the Law can no flesh be justified, for it is not these, but faith in Jesus Christ, that justifies us in the sight of God.'

"Such were my words to Peter: but perhaps some of you who hear again these familiar words of your old teacher will raise this question. 'If, while we seek to be thus justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, do we not thus make Christ the minister of sin?' God forbid! That pure and holy One can have no fellowship with sin. Every one who, professing faith in Christ, is himself continuing in wilful sin is just so far and so long building up again that edifice of wickedness which was destroyed by his acceptance of Christ's salvation. I, indeed, who was keeping the precepts of the law died to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by my faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not, as you are disposed to do, frustrate the grace of God: for, if righteousness comes through the law, Christ died in vain.

"O ye foolish Galatians, what serpent-charmer has fascinated your souls: ye before whose eyes Jesus Christ was vividly set forth even as though he were crucified among you?

“I now set these two things in contrast before you,

THE WORKS OF THE LAW,

THE HEARING OF FAITH,

and I ask you which was the cause of your receiving the gifts of the Spirit, which was the signal for the working of the miracles which astonished you. Tell me honestly. Was it the practice of circumcision, the keeping of new moons, the dissertations of the Scribes, or was it the preaching of the crucified Saviour which thus changed your lives and brought you from darkness into light?

“Are ye really so without understanding? Having begun in the Spirit, do you think you will be made perfect in the flesh? Have you suffered so many things, such persecutions from the Jews in vain? I cannot bear to write the words ‘in vain.’

“Your new teachers are always magnifying the Law of Moses; I will take you back behind Moses to Abraham, the father of the faithful, and as to that noble patriarch, will ask the same question, ‘The works of the law or the hearing of faith?’

“What are the words of the book of Genesis when it describes God’s revelation of Himself to the Patriarch, and His promise to him of a seed as numerous as the stars of Heaven, ‘And Abraham believed God; and it was counted unto him for righteousness.’ That was the way in which Abraham was justified: by the hearing of faith, by believing that God would perform that which

He had promised. All who have the same faith are His spiritual children : and the Scripture, written by a man who foresaw that one day even the heathen would be justified by the same faith, records this universal promise, 'In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.' I repeat, therefore, that all who share this faith in God are blessed with faithful Abraham.

"Contrast with these promises of blessing the bondage and the curse which mark the dispensation of the law. Not 'The just shall live by faith,' but 'The man that doeth all these things commanded in the Law shall live by them': not 'blessed with faithful Abraham,' but 'cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' From this heavy, overhanging curse, Jesus Christ came to deliver us : yea, He took the curse upon Himself when He gave Himself up to be crucified by the Roman soldiers, for, as you will find, it is written in the book of the Law, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' So Christ voluntarily underwent that curse that He might set us free from the bondage that He might bring back the dispensation of blessing, that we all, Jews and Gentiles, might once more share the blessing pronounced on faithful Abraham, that we might, believing on Jesus Christ, receive the Spirit which He promised that His Father would send to those who loved Him.

"Let us look at the matter in the light of man's

dealings with his fellow-man. After a covenant has once been made and duly ratified, it does not lie in the power of one of the contracting parties to break it, or add to it.¹ Now here was a covenant made 'with Abraham and his seed'—not, that is to say, with all the millions who were to trace their bodily ancestry up to Abraham, but with that one pre-eminent child of Abraham, that 'seed' in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, even Christ. That covenant then made by God with Abraham, which prophetically included Christ, could not be disannulled and made void by the law which at least 430 years after was thundered forth from Sinai. If the spiritual inheritance of which we are speaking was to be 'of the Law,' it must be worked for, earned, given in payment; but if it was to be given to us as it was to Abraham, then it comes to us by the free spontaneous promise of God.

"You will say, then, 'What place at all is left for the Law in the divine economy?' I will tell you. On account of the weakness and wickedness of men it was given as a hedge and a restraint, to keep the Truth of God from being altogether trampled down and effaced from the hearts of men. But it was essentially temporary and provisional, and, though ordained by angels at the hand of a

¹ Ramsay brings forward some strong arguments in favour of translating the word *diathēkē*, which is used here, *will*, not *covenant*. But it is admitted that in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, with which the mind of St. Paul was saturated, *diathēkē* is always used with the signification of covenant.

Mediator,¹ it was only intended to endure till the promised seed, the destined Son of Abraham, should appear.

“Was the Law of Moses, then, an abrogation of the promises of God. No, by no means. It made for righteousness, and if any Law could possibly have given life, this Law would have done so. But the effect of it was to shut up all to whom it was imparted, as in a kind of prison-house of ordinances, where they tarried till the deliverer Christ should appear and should set them free by this one word, ‘Believe.’ Or rather, to change the metaphor, the Law was like the slave whose office it is to guide his master’s children to school. Even so did the Law guide us to Christ. But now that faith is reasserted in the world, that slave’s guidance is no longer needed. For by faith in Christ Jesus ye are all the children of God. As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. All the old barriers are broken down. There is now neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free man, neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ you are of the spiritual posterity of Abraham, and heirs of the promises made to the great Patriarch.

“Let me dwell a little longer on that word ‘heirs.’ You know that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ as far as freedom is concerned from a servant, though he is prospectively Lord

¹ I do not attempt to paraphrase the difficult passage, “Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one.”

of all, but is subject to stewards and tutors till such time as the father has appointed for the attainment of his majority. Even so we, when we were still in our religious childhood, were in bondage under the physical restraints of the Law, but, when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, subject by the circumstances of His birth to the Law of Moses, that He might redeem those who were under the Law, and that, instead of the tutelage of minors, we might receive the rights of full-grown sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Therefore thou art no more a servant nor in servant-like subjection, but a son : and if a son, then an heir of God through Jesus Christ.

“ I am speaking to men who once were heathens. There was a time when you were without the knowledge of the true God, and were offering your slavish adoration to beings that were not Divine. But now all this is changed, now that you have come to the knowledge of God, or I should rather say have awoke to consciousness of the fact that God knows you, what do you mean by turning back to the weak and beggarly elements and, under the name of Judaism, beginning again a slavish ritual like that of the heathenism. You are observing days and months and times and years. You make me fear on your behalf lest all the labour which I have bestowed on you be in vain.

“ O, my brethren, come up and share my freedom

as I have shared yours. It is for this that I contend, not for any personal advantage of my own. In throwing aside my teaching you injure yourselves, not me. But oh, remember those early days of my preaching to you, how I came in broken health, how you bore with me in all the humiliation of my bodily infirmity, and did not on that account despise or reject me, but received me as if I had been an angel of God or the Saviour Himself. Where is all that blessedness which you then spoke of, and which so filled your hearts that if it had been possible you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. Why should all that full tide of love be changed into hatred simply because I have told you the truth?

“These new teachers are desperately anxious to win, not your love as I had it, but your abject submission. Let them have their way and you will find yourselves barred out in the Court of the Gentiles, and with gracious condescension permitted to look reverently towards them who are ‘of the circumcision.’ Zeal, love, reverence—all these are good in a good cause, and should be shown when I am absent as they were when I was present with you.

“O! my own little ones, whom I once bore with the pangs of a mother’s travail, those pangs of the spirit are upon me again, that Christ may be formed in you. I long to be once more present with you and to change my style of discourse, for I am altogether perplexed by what I hear of you.

“Now then, you who are so anxious to come under the Law of Moses, open that book of the Law and learn the lesson which it teaches you in type. It is written in Genesis that Abraham had two sons, one by the bond-slave Hagar and the other by the free woman Sarah. Hagar’s son was born after the flesh, in the ordinary course of nature, but Sarah’s son was the child of promise. Now, these things may be taken as an allegory, representing the two covenants, that of the Law and that of Grace. Hagar the bondwoman, whose home was in Arabia, represents the Law given on Mount Sinai and tending to bondage, while Sarah and her seed represent the heavenly Jerusalem which is free, and the mother of us all.

“Long time was the covenant of grace in abeyance while the covenant of works was triumphant. Even so was Sarah barren while Hagar could boast herself of a son. But the time has come for the reproach of its barrenness to be removed, as it is written, ‘Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not ; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not : for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.’

“We, then, my brethren, are like Isaac, the children of promise, while the Judaisers are the children of the flesh. We are persecuted by them as Isaac was mocked by Ishmael. But ours, not theirs, the final victory, as it is written, ‘Cast out the bondwoman and her son : for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.’

“Remember, then, brethren, your and our high calling as children not of the bondwoman but of the free. Stand fast in that freedom wherewith Christ has emancipated us, and be not entangled again with any yoke of bondage. Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that, if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. And I testify once more to every (Gentile) man among you who is circumcised, that he is under obligation to keep the *whole* Law. Any of you who think to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ, have fallen from grace: while on the other hand we, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of that righteousness which comes by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith which is working through love.

“Ye were running well: who drove you back so that ye should not obey the truth? This new persuasion does not come from him who called you. The new teachers wielded no great power, but, as the proverb says, ‘a little leaven leavens the whole mass.’ I have confidence in the Lord concerning you that you will not really abandon my teaching, and that he who has troubled you (whoever he may be) will be left to bear his condemnation alone.

“Of course the path of the Judaisers is for the moment the easier one. If I were still preaching circumcision should I have to endure persecution at the hands of the Jews? No, indeed! all that makes the cross of Christ a stumbling-block would

have vanished. I wish that those who are thus disquieting you were even cut off from the Church.

“I have told you to stand fast in freedom. To freedom are ye called, my brethren: only use not that freedom as an excuse for fleshly indulgence, but, while free men in the Lord, let every man be his brother's servant for love's sake. For the whole law is contained in this one word, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ But if, on the contrary, ye are biting and devouring one another, take care that ye are not consumed one of another.

“Freedom, I say, the freedom of the spirit, Walk in the Spirit, and there will be no fear of your fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh struggles against the restraints of the Spirit, and the Spirit strives to subdue the anarchy of the flesh: and these two principles are contrary one to the other, so that their strife prevents you from doing the things that ye would. But if ye are led by the free Spirit of God, ye are not under the slavery of the law.

“Now the works of the flesh are well known, and they are such things as these—Fornication, impurity, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatreds, strifes, factions, sects, envyings, murders, drunken orgies, revellings, and all other things like these, as to which I solemnly warn you, as I also told you long ago, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. On the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,

temperance: against such qualities as these there is no law. But they who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh with all its passions and all its desires. If we are of a truth living in the Spirit, let our daily walk be in the same Spirit. Let us not become vainglorious persons provoking those who are below us by our ostentation and envying those who are above us for their wealth.

“The spiritual man is no harsh judge of his brethren’s actions. Even if a man does fall into some transgression, ye who are spiritual should pull him out of the pit and should restore him in the spirit of meekness, carefully considering your own steppings lest you, too, should be tempted as he was.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ [Who said, ‘He that would be chief among you, let him be your servant.’ ‘I am among you as he that serveth’]. If any man forgets that rule and, unmindful of his own nothingness, thinks himself to be some great one, he is self-deceived.

“But though ye are to bear one another’s burdens, ye are also to mind your own work. Let every man bring his own work to the test, and if it stands that test, he will have a rejoicing all his own. Thus, though I said just now, ‘Bear ye one another’s burdens,’ I now say in a different sense, ‘Every man must bear his own burden.’

“As to the maintenance of your teachers, let him that is instructed in the work of life share in all good things with him that instructs him. Be not

deceived : God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. He that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life. Say not that the harvest tarries long. Let us not be weary in well-doing : in due season we shall reap if we faint not. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, but especially to those who dwell with us in the same home of faith.

“Now see the big letters of my autograph post-script.

“All those who want to stand well with the world are trying to force you to be circumcised : but this is only that they may not themselves be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For these would-be circumcisers do not themselves keep the law ; but they want to have you circumcised, that they may glory in you as proselytes to Judaism. But far from me be any glorying except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is a matter of any account, but a new creation is essential. And for all that shall walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and on the Israel of God.

“Henceforth let no one molest me, for I bear in my body the scars of the Roman scourge, the marks of the Lord Jesus.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits, my brethren. Amen.”

70 EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

So spoke the Apostle of the Gentiles to his
back-sliding converts :

Souls that were over-free,
Sick with the weight of too much liberty.

Are there any in our day who, having had a glimpse
of the land of freedom, are now going back into the
house of bondage, and who think that they will do
God service by grovelling before a Judaising priest-
hood. Let such as these ponder the words of the
great teacher who won Europe for Christ.

BAMBURGH, 1896.

EARLY CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

THE subject on which I am going to speak to-night is one of those on which there are deep and wide differences in the Churches of Christendom, but I hope, if not altogether, to avoid controversy, at any rate not to make it the staple of my discourse.

It is patent to all of us that there is an immense variety of modes of ministry in the Churches of Christendom. I think it possible that if Christ returned to earth He would not altogether condemn that variety, but would recognise the fact that different races of men, different temperaments, different states of intellectual culture may require "diversities of helps" in their endeavours to reach out after the Infinite and the Eternal.

Christian Ministry and Christian Worship are two subjects that we can hardly separate from one another. If we trace the river of Church History to its source, and inquire what was Christian worship like in the very earliest age, we shall perhaps be surprised to find how little we know about it. We must always remember that our Lord and His apostles were Jews, and Jews who at any rate for one generation conformed to all the external rites

of the Jewish religion. Christ was circumcised on the eighth day: at twelve years old He went up to one of the Jewish festivals, and was with difficulty torn away from the precincts of the beloved Temple: He twice shewed himself jealous for the honour of "His Father's house" by casting forth the hucksters and the money-changers. Are we to suppose that He ever brought a sacrifice to be offered there? Perhaps that is improbable, but we know that the least Judaical of His apostles, Saul of Tarsus, was a sharer in certain "offerings" which were offered for "the four men which had a vow on them." I think we may say certainly that in the lifetime of our Lord, and for some years after, the chief worship that was offered by His disciples was Jewish worship, and thus it is only natural that we should find (Acts iii. 1) Peter and John going up into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Yet side by side with this continued Jewish worship there was certainly something else, far less stately, more intimate, more domestic, "And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and the prayers" (Acts ii. 42). In another passage, a few verses later, the two worships seem to be combined, "And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people."

I think we must recognise in these passages the

existence of a certain "breaking of bread," which has a reference to the last supper which Jesus ate with His disciples, though it is blended with the ordinary family meal, and its spirit is not far removed from the celebrated declaration of Stephen Grellet that he never sat down to eat without thinking of the body that was bruised, and the blood that was shed for him outside the gates of Jerusalem.

This, however, is not the main subject that is now before us. The worship of the early Christians would undoubtedly suffer some modifications, as the community spread to other centres than Jerusalem, and pre-eminently, as under the guidance of men like Paul and Barnabas, it opened its doors to admit others besides the children of the stock of Abraham into its fellowship. At Antioch and at Ephesus there could no longer be the "going up into the Temple to pray at the ninth hour." With Tychicus and Trophimus, sons of Greek parents sharing in the religious life of the congregation, its worship could no longer rest on Levitical sacrifices as its corner-stone.

What indications have we in the Acts of the Apostles as to the character of this Gentile-Christian worship in which we may suppose the Apostle Paul to have shared? They are very slight, but such as we have point to a very simple, and, as I have before said, domestic kind of worship rendered in the open air or in the upper rooms of private houses. Thus when St. Paul and his com-

panions find that there is a certain place by the river-side outside the city of Philippi, where prayer is wont to be made on the Sabbath, they sit down and speak—hardly deliver set sermons, but speak almost in conversational tones—about the message of Jesus, to Lydia and the other women who resorted thither. Out of that idyllic scene by the banks of the river Ganges grew, as the result of the labour and the sufferings of Paul and Silas, the noble-hearted, generous Church of Philippi. We hear nothing of their later place of meeting: probably the river-side may have ceased to be resorted to, but with all the generosity of the Philippian converts we may be tolerably certain that they did not in the first generation tax themselves for the building of a stately basilica. At Corinth the slight hint given us that Paul “departed thence [*i.e.* from the synagogue itself] and entered into a certain man’s house named Justus, one that worshipped God, and whose house joined hard to the synagogue,” will probably justify us in supposing that it was in this house, conveniently situated in the Jewish quarter of the city, that the Apostle taught for a year and six months, gathering in the “much people” who, as his Lord had told him, were waiting for His servants’ preaching in that city. If so, some room in the house of this Justus was the cradle of the great Church of Corinth. In the same way at Ephesus the lecture-room of the philosopher Tyrannus, which for two years echoed to the sound of the Apostle’s voice “disputing and

persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God" was, doubtless, also the place in which the company of believers would be gathered together probably on the first day of the week, when disputations and arguments with them that were without were hushed, and only the sounds of prayer and praise, with perhaps some rehearsal of the gracious words of the Master, and some telling over of His wonderful works, were heard in the sophist's lecture-room.

Then we come to the well-lighted upper chamber at Troas, where, on the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread. Here was sitting in a window a certain young man named Eutychus who, "as Paul was long preaching, sank down with sleep, fell down from the third storey, and was taken up dead."

How graphically the whole scene is described for us by that wonderful artist Luke: but also how domestic (I must keep to this word) is Christian worship as here portrayed! We do not feel that we are reading of what happened in a stately cathedral; we know that we are in the house of a provincial, probably a middle-class provincial, of the little Asiatic town Alexandria Troas. We feel at once that elaborate spectacular performances of worship, processions with gilt cross and banners, surpliced choirs, the swinging of censers, frequent robings and disrobings, are impossible to be thought of in such surroundings. To say this is not to say that a florid and ornate ceremonial is neces-

sarily wrong : only that it cannot be of the essence of Christianity, and that the nearer we ascend to the source, the simpler seems to have been the worship of the believers in Jesus Christ.

And now, from these intimations—confessedly slight as they are—respecting the character of Christian worship, which we find in the Acts of the Apostles, let us go to the Epistles of St. Paul and see what light these will throw upon the subject. We shall not be disappointed : there is one of these letters which gives us most valuable and copious information as to the manner of ordering Divine service within thirty years after the death of Christ. That letter is the first Epistle to the Corinthians. We all know that the eighteen months of toil which St. Paul spent in the rich and busy city by the two seas had resulted in the building up of a very powerful, very eager, but rather factious and very self-satisfied Christian community.

We can see that the Apostle was—in so far as he allowed himself to glory in anything—inclined to glory over the Church which he had founded at Corinth : but we can see, also, that he was not so thoroughly at ease with these restless, talkative converts of his as he was with his simpler-hearted Macedonian friends. He was rather like a rustic father, whose son, having gone up to the capital and achieved distinction there, comes back to the old home and scarcely hides his gentle scorn of the ways of the paternal household.

And they were not only self-satisfied and

disagreeable some of these Corinthian Christians. As St. Paul truly told them, "Knowledge puffeth up," and they in their vanity and inflation had not taken heed to their goings, and had, some of them, wandered grievously out of the way. They had got hold of the catch-phrase, "Salvation by Faith alone," and applying it, as so many misguided men have done since, without regard to "the analogy of faith," without reference to the counter-balancing forces in the spiritual universe, had toppled over into Antinomianism; were saying—in effect if not in words,—“Let us continue in sin that grace may abound,” and were therefore tolerating offences against morality which St. Paul said—perhaps rather too broadly¹—were not so much as named among the Gentiles.

About all these disorders the Apostle, when his friends "of the household of Chloe" brought him the grievous tidings of their existence, felt himself constrained to use sharpness, and he therefore wrote that First Epistle to the Corinthians, which stands to all later generations a monument of Christian outspokenness, and a model of fatherly rebuke.

Besides these graver matters, however, there were some things in the manner of conducting Divine worship at Corinth, which incurred the disapproval of the Apostle, though the general character of that

¹ My reason for making this qualification is that the particular scandal against which St. Paul remonstrates (I Cor. v. i.) "that a man should have his father's wife" was not only named but condoned when Antiochus married in the lifetime of his father Seleucus that father's wife Stratonice.

worship, as we can collect it from his Epistle, seems to have been entirely according to his mind, and we may fairly suppose that it corresponded to that which prevailed at Philippi, at Ephesus, at Thessalonica, and at all the other churches planted by St. Paul.

What, then, is the picture of a Christian congregation in the early ages of the Church that is brought before us by chapters xi.-xiv. of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. The first thing that strikes the reader is the large number of persons who evidently took part in the public service of the Church. Here we have no "one-man-ministry."

There are prophets both male and female, and these not only prophesy but also pray: for the Apostle gives directions as to the attire that is to be worn or not worn on the head of "every man and of every woman praying or prophesying." Then there are also those mysterious "tongues" whose utterances sometimes break in upon the worship.

In themselves startling and emotional they are accompanied, and in a certain sense justified, by another, more edifying, gift, "the interpretation of tongues." The Apostle does not condemn the exercise of these gifts: on the contrary he says, "I would that ye all spake with tongues," but he values the prophetic gift more highly: "but rather that ye prophesied, for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret that the Church may receive edifying. I thank my God I speak with tongues more

than ye all : yet in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

This gift of prophecy, then, to which the Apostle attaches such a high value, what is its nature? Certainly not mere prediction of future events, though the case of the prophet Agabus, who "signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world" (Acts xi. 28), and who by a symbolic action foretold the binding of "the man that weareth this girdle" by the Jews at Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 11) shews that prediction was sometimes a part of the prophet's office. But inasmuch as mere prediction could never make up the staple of a Christian Minister's work, the view which now generally prevails, that prophesying was a kind of inspired and fervent preaching is doubtless the correct one and entirely agrees with St. Paul's own words (1 Cor. xiv. 3), "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

Besides these two forms of utterance, tongues and prophecy, there must have been another less emotional and more intellectual than either, which was exercised by those who had the gift of teaching. We hear less about this than about the others, probably because as it was a humbler style of service, and lent itself less to excitement and spiritual exaltation than they, it had the less need of the Apostle's regulating hand.

These different classes of workers for the Church are all summed up by St. Paul near the end of the twelfth chapter of the First Epistle, "And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And a still more excellent way shew I unto you." And then he proceeds to give us that eloquent description of love which is the crowning glory of the whole edifice, and which makes us almost thankful that there were strifes and jealousies in the Corinthian Church since they forced out of the grieved heart of the apostle these noble words which were to be a precious inheritance of the Church universal for all ages.

The Corinthian Church was not perfect: far from it; but surely there is something in the ideal, present both to their minds and to their teacher's, which ought not to have perished out of Christian experience and which we are justified in striving to recover and to preserve. There is no distinction here between clergy and laity: no fencing off of certain members of the community in a beautifully decorated choir, while their humbler brethren are to worship in the nave. The words Bishop and Priest are unspoken: there is throughout an

abundant and undoubting reference to "gifts" bestowed by the Divine Spirit on various believers, no hint anywhere in this Epistle of a regularly graded hierarchy of office.

It has been truly said:¹ "From St. Paul's epistles it would appear that the Apostle expected that every Christian community would furnish from its own membership the teachers required to instruct the members, but it is evident, at least when we get beyond the apostolic period, that many gifted men, whose services were appreciated, went from church to church teaching and preaching, and that without having any pretension to the prophetic gift." These men were sometimes styled Apostles or Missionaries, the term Apostle being by no means confined to the Twelve at Jerusalem, even with the addition of Paul, and these missionaries, of whom Paul was by far the most eminent, but of whom we may take as representative types Barnabas, Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla, went the round of the Churches stimulating their spiritual life and sometimes setting in order things which, either through morbid over-excitement, or coldness and forgetfulness and the "leaving of their first love," had gone wrong during the years which had elapsed since the Church was first planted.

This Apostolic care and superintendence we must not leave out of sight, but still the fact remains, and it is abundantly proved not only by

¹ By Principal Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, p. 105.

the First of Corinthians but by all the Epistles, that St. Paul did look to the Church itself to provide its own prophets and its own teachers. So long as they remained faithful, so long as they had not grown cold and forsaken their first love, there was good reason for believing, that the Divine Spirit would bestow on one here and on another there the gifts of teaching, of ruling, of prophecy, of interpretation which were needed for maintaining the life and health of the Church.

That was the glorious ideal of the earliest Church. Why should it not be our ideal now?

Can we not see—I am persuaded that we can see—that just in so far as Churches in these later days have kept this ideal before them, in so far have they truly accomplished their mission and attained the object of their being. If the ideal of worship is that all the members of the Church have a duty to discharge regarding it, if the souls of all are reverently waiting on God, and if it is not absolutely known and arranged beforehand who shall pray or prophecy or teach, it is surely probable that some spiritual faculties will be trained and developed which are atrophied where one man stands between the congregation and God, taking on himself to lead all the praise, to guide all the prayers, to convey all the instruction that is needed. It will probably be said—the objection comes naturally from those who have all their lives been accustomed to an elaborately prepared and systematically ordered service—that any such

liberty left to the congregation must lead inevitably to anarchy and disorder. And yet the Apostle Paul did not think that the recognition of the diversity of gifts was fatal to good order in the Church. He says (1 Cor. xiv. 26), "What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." . . . "For ye all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted: and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets: but God is not the God of confusion, but of peace. Let all things be done decently and in order."

Doubtless even in the presence of this beautiful ideal, of a Church supplying its own needs by means of the gifts bestowed on its several members, some sort of guidance or even rule would be necessary, and though the earlier Epistles give very slight indications of the existence of these rulers, what they do say accords with the hints given in the later Epistles and the later chapters of the Acts in which we meet with "the elders of the Church," "them that are over you in the Lord," and "him that ruleth," who is exhorted to do so with diligence. Towards the end of the Apostolic age this ruling class comes into greater prominence and seems to be generally denoted by the words which are for a long time practically synonymous, "presbyters" and "bishops."

The equivalence of these two terms in the early

ages of the Church is not, I think, now disputed. As Jerome says, writing in the fourth century when the predominance of the bishop had been established for centuries, "The presbyter therefore is the same as the bishop, and before the Devil stirred up strife in the Church, and people began to say, 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,' the Churches were governed by a common council of presbyters. As therefore the presbyters know that by the custom of the Church they are subject to him who is set over them : so let the bishops know that they are superior to the presbyters rather by a Church custom than by the actual arrangement of the Lord, and that they ought to rule the Church for the common good."

However, I am not going to enter upon the long and weary controversy between Presbyterian and Episcopalian ; between those who hold that the Church ought to be governed by a committee of Elders and those who think that it should be governed by an Overseer. All that is away from my present object, which is to recall our minds from the official hierarchies of later days to the free, self-governed, self-supplying Churches of the earliest age.

It was in the second century that the Ministry of Gifts, the Charismatic Ministry as it has been called, gave way to the Ministry of Office. It was then that the order of Prophets once so powerful faded away out of the Church, and that in their stead an order of Priests began to appear. The

clergy are beginning to be differentiated from the laity: the community of Christian believers is losing its freedom. The freshness of the dawn is beginning to die away and to fade into the light of common, very common, and sometimes very squalid day.

I wish that some one would write the history of the second century in the Church. It would be a hard work, for the materials are scanty and confusing. It would be a dreary work, for it was to my apprehension chiefly a century of waning faith and lessening love: but it is, I think, a necessary work to be done as a part of that great and melancholy work, "The Decline and Fall of Christianity," which is a far sadder page in human history than the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." (Lest any be shocked by the words the Decline and *Fall* of the Christian religion, I would say that I see in Church History many grievous falls, but also many risings again. Throughout the long centuries Christ has been, as the aged Simeon foretold, "set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that should be spoken against.")

Yet though a sad century, from a religious point of view, it is also an interesting century. The keen intellect of the Greek, the mystically absorbed spirit of the Oriental came into contact with this new and wonderful phenomenon, the Revelation of God in Christ, and began the attempt to fit it into their own categories of thought. Strange and wild cosmogonies and theologies were the result.

All that jungle growth of Gnosticism, which amuses, appals, and wearies us when we read of it in Irenæus or in Neander, was sprouting everywhere throughout the Roman Empire in that strange century. The official hierarchy which then arose, and whose arising I partly deplore, did, let us admit, do battle bravely with many of these wild imaginings, and we probably owe it chiefly to its influence that Christianity finally emerged from the conflict a reasonable faith, and one not wholly at variance with common sense. It was then, may we not say, that the words "Catholic" and "Heretic" had a rightful sense, quite different from that which they mostly bear in the present day. But in the clash of opposing systems, in the war of speculative doubt and dour official conservatism, much of the charm of the early faith vanished, and Christianity emerged from the Gnostic controversy a very different system from that which had entered therein.

Moreover, other influences were at work and made for change, made for a colder and less enthusiastic belief than that of Aquila and Priscilla, of Lydia and the gaoler at Philippi. Pre-eminent among these influences was the mere fact that the first generation of believers had passed away without having seen their returning Saviour.

We cannot be blind to the fact that all the Christians of whom we read in the Acts and the early Epistles lived in the full expectation that at any rate in the lifetime of some of them Christ

Himself would come back in visible presence to the world. The effect which the gradual decay of this hope, the fading away of the last streak of red in the West, without any dawn streak in the East, produced on the minds of the last survivors of the Apostolic group has been admirably set forth in Browning's poem, "A Death in the Desert."

But then, besides this there was the simple fact that the generations were changing, that instead of the fathers were the children, and then the grandchildren, who, however they might imbibe Christianity as a lesson, had not received it as those before them did, with adult and fully persuaded minds, as the key to the mysteries of life and the deliverer from the life-long bondage of the fear of death.

It often occurs to me when we hear lamentations over the decline of this Church, or the changed mood of that Society, that we expect too much from the men who are now sitting in seats of old renown when we expect them to reproduce the spiritual lineaments of their forefathers. The words which we use to express identity veil an absolute diversity. Even as the river which flows under the arches of London Bridge is not in any one of its particles the same river Thames which we may have seen there six months ago, so the Society of Friends to-day is not really the same Society, nor the Church of England to-day the same Church that each was at the accession of Queen Victoria: and the marvel is not that there should be some points of difference, but that there

should be so many points of resemblance between them.

Whatever the cause may be, I think no one who carefully and impartially studies the question will deny that there are profound and wide-reaching differences between the Church of the first century and that of the third, between the Church as it existed at Philippi, or at Corinth, in the days of St. Paul, and the Church as it existed at Carthage, in the days of Cyprian. From our point of view that change was almost entirely a change for the worse. In those two centuries the community of Christian believers lost the freedom which was their birthright, and became the subjects of a hierarchy which was ever increasing its claims and its pretensions, till it perpetrated the crowning infamy of the tortures of the Inquisition and the *Autos-da-fé* of Philip II. of Spain.

At the Reformation some part, a large part, of the lost heritage of freedom was won back. Thank God for that. Some part, but not all. Our ancestors who founded the Society of Friends endeavoured to vindicate the liberty of prophesying for the whole congregation, as it existed in the days of the Apostles. Perhaps they have not realised the full beauty of their ideal: who does in this imperfect world? But I am persuaded that they have accomplished something. When I hear, as one often does hear, the expression of wonder that a body, numerically so small, should have exercised so large an influence on the minds and thoughts

of men, I always feel that the answer is that by their system of worship and ministry, leaving the responsibility of worship on the whole congregation, and refusing to delegate it to a single minister with his precentor or his clerk, they have in some measure trained the spiritual faculties of the whole body, and caused all its members to be exercised by reason of use. They have got away thoroughly from the official, hierarchical, sacerdotal view of the Church's ministry, and have taken at any rate some steps towards the charismatic view which St. Paul would have understood and owned. "For to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal—but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as he will."

If it be asked, how can you practically arrange that in the meetings of the faithful there shall be room for all, who feel themselves called upon to do so, to take part, our answer is, that we accomplish it by providing that at least a portion of every meeting shall be spent in silent, reverent waiting upon God. This silent worship, which has often perplexed and sometimes amused those who judge us from the outside, we feel to be a most precious possession. Something, I believe, of the same feeling which animates devout recipients of the Eucharist is often felt by us when we thus gather together, "with one accord in one place," for the worship of Our Almighty Father. We constantly feel that the Saviour Himself thus fulfils His promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there

am I in the midst of them." But the Silence is not only precious in itself, it also makes possible that many-sided, many-voiced Congregational worship and ministry of which I have spoken. No doubt "one good custom" here as elsewhere may degenerate into something useless or even harmful. There may be a form of Silence as dead as the prayer-wheels of Thibet. Nor can it in my opinion ever be right that the worship of a Christian congregation should be habitually and entirely a silent one. Where that is the practice there must be something wrong in the spiritual state of the members. In my conception of the matter, Silent Worship is a beautiful, still lake. It is studded with lovely islands, the vocal utterances of members of the congregation. In these islands grow the harvests of spiritual food: in them the forests of praise are waving: from them the fountains of prayer rise on high: but all are surrounded by the fair still water, and that water reflects in its surface the pure blue of the Eternal Heavens above. That is our Ideal. May we strive to bring our own, sometimes poor and mean Real nearer to this high conception of Christian Worship and Ministry.

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THE FEASTS AND FASTS OF ISRAEL

THE festivals of the Jewish people will always have a certain interest for us who have succeeded to so large a part of their spiritual inheritance. Some knowledge of them is indispensable to the student of the Old Testament; it is especially needful for him who would intelligently follow the discussions concerning the chronology of the Gospels; and, as we all know, it is upon the chief of these festivals, the Passover, that the Christian Easter, with its peculiar effect on every European Calendar, is based.

I propose to give in this Lecture a short popular account of the chief Feasts and Fasts of the Jews, and to indicate their bearing on the Life of Christ and His Apostles.

The central point of the Jewish calendar, the command around which all the other observances group themselves, is to be found in Exodus xxiii. 17, and is repeated in Deuteronomy xvi. 16.

“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose”; and these three General Assemblies were :—

92 FEASTS AND FASTS OF ISRAEL

1. The Passover.
2. The Feast of Weeks, or of Pentecost.
3. The Feast of Tabernacles.

The point which we ought most strongly to impress upon our minds is the vast influence which these national gatherings must have had in keeping the nation *one*, and true to one worship ; in counter-acting the dividing and “Gentilising” influences whereby Israel was assailed on all sides. There came to Shiloh in the days of the tabernacle, to Jerusalem while David and Solomon yet reigned, dwellers from the maritime plain of the South-west ; men who lived in sight of those strongholds of Ekron and Gaza, within the walls of which Philistian warriors worshipped the fish-god Dagon ; men past whose vineyards the caravans slowly wended their way into Egypt, that oldest and most idolatrous of empires ; there came Asherites from the borders of Tyre, and herdmen from Bashan, who dwelt almost in sight of Damascus, almost in hearing of the tramp of the armies of Nineveh ; Gileadites from Jabbok ; Reubenites from the salt solitudes of the Dead Sea ; Danites from the foot of snowy Lebanon—all came to this one spot at one time.

How strongly of all these were assailed by the temptation to break away from the commonwealth of Israel and the worship of Jehovah, to bow down before Astarte, or Baal, or Nisroch, or Osiris, their history shows us but too clearly. We can easily understand how mighty was the help towards national unity furnished by these periodical

gatherings at Jerusalem. The Psalms are full of it, especially those later ones (Songs of Degrees), which were sung during one, at least, of these Festivals: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: *whither the tribes go up*, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord" (Ps. cxxii. 1-4).

I. By none of the Jewish Festivals would this ardour of religious patriotism be more strongly excited than by that which gave to the month in which it occurred the title of "the beginning of months." The Passover, otherwise known as *The Feast of Unleavened Bread*, was celebrated throughout the interval between the 14th and 21st days of Nisan, or Abib, a month nearly corresponding with our April.

The leading incidents of the deliverance which it commemorated, and the chief characteristics of the feast itself, are so well known to all of us, that a brief allusion to them will suffice. There is death, death, death everywhere in Egypt—wherever the love of father or of mother in all that crowded land has gone forth towards a first-born son, *there* is now weeping and desolation.

Yet not *everywhere*; in the mean abodes of the land of Goshen a different sight is seen. There is no death-wail there; yet, though it is midnight, the dwellers are not asleep, but gathered round the

table, standing and equipped as for a journey. With shoes on their feet, and staves in their hands, they are partaking of an unusual but simple meal. A roasted lamb in the centre of the table, bitter herbs around it; by every guest a pile of thin wafer-like cakes, made without leaven; a cup of pure juice of the grape unfermented, in his hand;—such is the repast which they are sharing. Above, on the lintel of the door-posts, is sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice for the Destroying Angel to behold, that he may *pass over* them in his errand of death.

The two most prominent characteristics of the Paschal Feast—the sacrifice of the lamb, and the abstinence from everything of the nature of leaven—remained unchanged through all ages of the Jewish Commonwealth, down to the destruction of the Temple; but some smaller particulars seem to have been modified as time went on. The blood ceased to be sprinkled on the door-post; the prohibition to depart out of the house, lest the protection from the destroyer should fail, seems to have been in practice discontinued; the standing posture of the banqueters—the staff in their hands, the shoes on their feet—were all disused, and at the time of our Saviour they reclined on couches, as at all other feasts, their loose robes probably not girded up, and their feet unsandalled. *Now*, since the destruction of the Temple as the house of Israel has no longer a sacrificing priest in its midst, the Paschal lamb itself has vanished from

the ritual. Still, however, many singular observances connected with it are practised by them, and it is probable enough that the greater part of these have been in use for thirty-four centuries.

What was the exact nature of the connection between the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread it is not easy to say. My own conjecture would be, that the abstinence from leaven may have originally applied especially to the day of the great *Paschal Feast* (14th of Nisan), and that the abstinence for the *whole* of the seven following days may have been meant to commemorate a natural result of their hurried departure—the bread which they had for the feast being unleavened, and there being no time to leaven or bake any more.

However this may be, certain it is that the modern Jews are determined that, if human exertions can ensure it, no jot or tittle of this Mosaic ordinance shall be violated by them. No inquisitor ever scented out heresy with keener nostril than the devout Israelite does the least trace of leaven or *ferment* (for the word used includes both) that may lurk in his dwelling on the eve of the 14th of Nisan. Of course, not only whatever remnants of leaven itself may be left in the jar, but all bones and scraps of leavened bread remaining in the house, are at once thrown into the fire. Not only so, but the whole house has to be swept, and every pan and pitcher, every cup and saucer, every vessel of every kind, has to be plunged separately into

boiling water, the opinion being that if two are in the water at once, the purification is not complete, for the water may not have touched all parts of each. One old German, who enters very minutely into the subject of these purifications, after giving a number of details, which I will not enumerate, winds up by saying,

Hence the custom of cleansing the whole house and all the furniture a little before Easter has come down to the females of our nation, who practise it, however, without any superstitious feeling (Leusden, *Philologus*, p. 274).

I was not aware till I read this passage that our "Spring cleanings" could claim so august an origin.

The house thus purged of the old leaven, the family sets to work with great alacrity to make the new unleavened bread. The flour must have been ground at least three days previously, so that it may have had full time to cool; the sack containing it may not be thrown over the horse's bare back in the journey from the mill, lest the heat of the animal should warm it; the water must be drawn on the previous evening from a deep well, so that it may have been for twenty-four hours unexposed to the heat of the sun, and all this lest the subtle principle of fermentation should, through any nook or crevice, creep back into the purified abode. Then, in a cool place, the dough is kneaded and pricked, and spread out into thin wafer-like biscuits, which are placed in the oven, and emerge

thence as the Passover cakes, with which many readers will be familiar.

These preparations accomplished, at length, on the 14th of the month, "between the evenings," the Paschal lamb was slain. This was done, at any rate during the later periods of the observance, *before the altar*, and the priests sprinkled the blood upon the bottom of it. It was roasted whole (the command that "not a bone of it should be broken" appearing to have been religiously observed through all ages), and two transverse spits of pomegranate wood, in the shape of a cross, were passed through it—a mode of dressing the meat which is said to be even now expressed in Arabic by the same word as to crucify.

The number of guests was never to be less than ten nor more than twenty; and every one, however abstemious in his habits, was bound to drink four cups of the (unfermented) wine placed before him. This fourfold drinking was in memory of the fourfold deliverance wrought for Israel by Jehovah:

1. "I will bring you out of the land of Egypt."
2. "From out of the House of Bondage."
3. "I will redeem you with a high hand and with a stretched-out arm."
4. "And I will take you unto myself for a peculiar people."

II. The next great Feast was the Feast of Weeks, otherwise known as the Feast of Harvest or the Day of the First Fruits, but best known to us by its Greek name *Pentecost* or the Fiftieth. This was

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the essential element in the festival, that it was to be celebrated on the fiftieth day after the Passover. That was the festival of first fruits, while this was the festival of the ingathering of the completed harvest. Of course as Passover, which is represented by our Easter, fell in the month *Nisan*, which corresponds roughly with our April, and Pentecost, which is our Whitsunday, fell in *Sivan*, which corresponds with June, these agricultural features of the two festivals applied only to the climate of a country 20 degrees lower in latitude than ours. Still their symbolical character is well worthy of our remembrance, especially in the case of Pentecost, which yielded such an abundant harvest to the labours of the Apostles.

Our information as to the Feast itself is but small. Unlike the other two great festivals, this lasted not for seven or eight days, but for *one* only ; though the modern Jews, from some uncertainty as to the proper time for commencing it, celebrate it for two.

Its main characteristic was “ *Thanksgiving for the now completed harvest.*” Two loaves made of new meal and the tenth part of an ephah of grain were offered as the first-fruits of the harvest-field to “the Lord of the Harvest.” As Passover had marked the commencement of this gladsome time, so Pentecost marked its close : yet with all the gladness there was need for a sad remembrance to be made also of sin. Besides the “meat-offering,” —that is the offering of flour, and the “burnt-

offering for a sweet savour unto the Lord " of two bullocks, one ram, and seven yearling lambs—there was also to be offered "one kid of the goats to *make atonement for you*" (Num. xxviii. 27-30).

It was in harmony with the time of year and the harvest-associations of the day that the book of Ruth was, at any rate by the later Jews, read in the synagogues at this festival.

It seems to be thought that, besides "the joy of harvest," there was contained in this feast a commemoration of the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai, which must have occurred about fifty days, and certainly may have been on the exact fiftieth from the celebration of the first Passover.

During the four intensely hot summer months which followed the day of Pentecost there appear to have been no great gatherings or festivities of the Jews. During all this time the sky is absolutely devoid of clouds, no rain waters the parched ground, the streams dwindle into rivulets, the rivulets disappear. If it were not for the "dew of heaven," the "fatness of the earth" would soon vanish. It was mercifully ordained that, throughout this period of fiercest heat, there should be no necessity for a single journey connected with the worship of Jehovah laid on any inhabitant of Palestine.

On the first day of *Tisri* (October) it was ordered that there should be "a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation" (not, however, a gathering of all the people to Jerusalem), "Ye shall do no servile work therein, but shall offer

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an offering made by fire unto the Lord" (Lev. xxiii. 24, 25). Of this, which is generally known as *The Feast of Trumpets*, we have hardly any more information than what is contained in this text.

Let a little more than a week elapse from the Feast of Trumpets and we shall have reached the tenth day of Tisri, and shall be at that point of the Jewish year which corresponds roughly to the early days of our own October. We need not remark how little similarity exists between the crisp freshness of those autumn mornings which we associate with that name and the yet fierce heat (as our Northern frames would feel it) of a Syrian autumn. Yet indications are not wanting that the sceptre of summer is broken. A fine gentle rain is falling, borne on the wings of the west and south-west winds from the purple Mediterranean, falling mainly at night, but partly also by day, and occupying altogether a space of three or four days' duration. This is "the early rain" for which the husbandman waits with patience (James v. 7), for he knows that it is loosening the pores of the parched earth, baked as it is with the heat of an almost absolutely rainless summer, and that seed-time is at last now nigh at hand.

For this purpose he will have, to begin with, about twenty days of bright, warm, cloudless weather, during all of which the wind will be coming hot and dry from the Eastern deserts, or milder, but still devoid of moisture, from snowy Lebanon. Then, when the early wheat is all well-

sown, and the fruits of the earth are completely gathered in, will this "Indian summer" come to a close, and the drenching and well-nigh continual rains of winter commence, the skies weeping with the weeping husbandman as he goes forth "bearing precious seed" to his ungenial task, sowing the rest of his wheat, and all his barley, rye, and millet. And thus, attended by chilly north winds indeed, but otherwise marked by swollen streams, brooks magnified into rivers, thunderstorms and misty vapours shrouding the mountain-tops, rather than by the crystal clearness of the true winter of the North, will the next four months, the "rainy season" of Palestine sweep over the land.

But this is all by way of anticipation. We are still at the tenth of Tisri, probably in one of the few warning days of the early rain; seed-time is before us: the ingathering of the fruits of the earth is just coming to a close. Some grateful remembrance of the bounteous provision made for us by the Giver of all good things should surely be expressed. On the point of committing our seed to the ground in the faith that He will grant us another season of bountiful increase, we must thank Him for that which is drawing to a close; for the grapes and the olives, the figs and the pomegranates wherewith He is lading us, "crowning the year with His goodness while His paths drop fatness." So a devout Jew might naturally argue, and so it was ordained.

III. The last of the three great feasts, a festival

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of pious thankfulness and national rejoicing, is before us—the Feast of the Ingathering, or the Feast of Tabernacles. But that our joy may be perfect and unclouded we must be assured that our sins are forgiven by this all-loving Father: before the brightness of the Feast of Tabernacles we must pass through the solemn gloom of the Great Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was solemnised on the 10th day of Tisri.

The central idea of this most solemn of all the Jewish observances is contained in these words of the 16th verse of the 16th chapter of Leviticus: “And he (the high priest) shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the Children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins, and so shall he do for the Tabernacle of the Congregation *that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.*”

There are sacrifices, it might be said, appointed for the purging away of sin, and priests standing in the House of God, “daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices”; but how shall these priests, who are themselves sinful men, be purged from *their* iniquity? How shall even the Holy House itself be cleansed from the defilement brought thither by impure worshippers; “the iniquity of your holy things,” the taint of earth which clings to even your purest service of Jehovah, how will ye wash it away, O house of Levi; how wilt thou, even thou, Aaron, or the son of Aaron, who ministerest in the very office of the

High Priest, be just in the sight of the All Holy One? Thou wilt have to "bear the sin of many," of thy nation, of thy tribe, but most emphatically of thyself, and of thy father's house, alone into the presence of the Most High, and there, in acted prophecy, be it thine, as Mediator between God and man, to "make intercession for the transgressors."

This view of the meaning of the day of Atonement is well illustrated by its origin. From Lev. xvi. 1 it would appear to have been first instituted when Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, under the influence apparently of intoxicating drinks (see Lev. x. 9, and compare Blunt's *Undesigned Coincidences*, p. 61), presumed to go unbidden into the Holy Place, and "offer strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not." Some contend, I do not clearly understand upon what grounds, that it was instituted at an earlier period, by way of commemoration of "the Iniquity of the Golden Calf," but you will see that, on either hypothesis, the sin of Aaron, or of those very nearly akin to him, is conspicuous among the transgressions that have to be done away.

On the morning of the Great Day, having washed his flesh in water, the High Priest arrayed himself in "holy garments," not the gorgeous robes of purple and blue, the jewelled breast-plate, the fringe of bells and pomegranates, in which he appeared in the other great days of the nation. Not in that regal splendour must the High Priest

on this day present himself before the most High God, but dressed in mantle and girdle, and turban of fine linen, foreshewing, doubtless, the "*fine linen clean and white*, which is the righteousness of saints," wherewith the Church was seen arrayed in the Apocalyptic vision, and the cause of whose spotless purity was revealed to the same seer in the words, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them *white* in the blood of the Lamb."

Thus purified and thus arrayed, the High Priest proceeded to offer to the Lord the appointed sacrifices for his own sins, and for the sins of the people.

1. For the people, the appointed sin-offering consisted of two young goats (alike, the Talmud tells us, in colour, size, and age). The High Priest was to bring these to the door of the Tabernacle, and there cast lots over them, which was to be for Jehovah, and which for banishment (or as it is in the Hebrew, *La-azazel*, for Azazel). The goat which was for Jehovah was slain at once by the High Priest; the other was presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with Him, and to let him go for a *scapegoat* into the wilderness.

2. The High Priest then slew the sin-offering, which was for himself and for his house, and for which a bullock was the appointed victim; and now, armed with the blood of these two sacrifices, he prepares to enter into the Holy Place. But before

he enters in, all the assistants whom we may suppose to have helped in subordinate capacities during the previous ministrations must withdraw. In all the Tabernacle of the Congregation there must be no human being present during the actual atonement save the High Priest.

The Court of the Gentiles, the Court of the Women, have no worshippers in them ; in the inner courts the ceaseless hum of priests and Levites busied with the burnt-offerings and the thank-offerings of a nation of sacrificers is for one day hushed. Doubtless in order to point more distinctly to the one Mediator between God and man, it is ordained that in all that stately tabernacle there shall be but one beating heart ; the High Priest is alone with God. On this one sole day in all the year is he permitted and commanded to enter the Most Holy Place, where, over the outspread wings of the cherubim, rests the *Shechinah*, or visible glory of the God of Israel. It may be the first time that the priest is ministering in this holy office : the father or brother, who a year before made atonement there, has himself, perhaps, since then passed within the veil of the unseen world. And even if it be not so, and he has been many times upon this mysterious errand, it must ever be full of awe to the reverent Israelite, called thus to go with the iniquities and idolatries of a whole nation upon his head, into the presence of God—the holy and the jealous God.

With a censer full of burning coals from the

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altar of incense, and with two handfuls of "sweet incense beaten small," he passes within the cherubim-covered veil, and immediately places the censer between the poles of the ark, and "puts the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony *that he die not.*" He then brings in the blood of the bullock, and sprinkles it seven times upon and before the mercy-seat, so making atonement for his own sins, and those of his father's house, and returning once again with the blood of the slain goat, he makes the like atonement for the sins of the people ; and these things so accomplished, he passes for the last time outside the veil, and darkness and mystery settle down once more upon the silent sanctuary.

The same work is done in the Second Court, upon the golden altar there, and then, "When he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, he shall bring the live goat : and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited, and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

You have doubtless seen that wonderful picture

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by Holman Hunt, in which the death-scene of the solitary Azazel is set forth with such ghastly reality. There you have the rugged wall of the mountains of Moab behind, the waters of the lake which was supposed to cover the sinful Cities of the Plain in front, and on its margin, that salt-encrusted wilderness, through which the hapless bearer of the iniquities of a nation has been picking its painful way, and in which it is now about to perish alone. Yet though it is probable that this picture of forsaken misery is the one which will now always occur to the minds of men when the name of "the scapegoat" is mentioned, and though I believe that, in practice, "the tradition of the elders" did almost necessitate that the animal should suffer this lingering death, still death is not, if I rightly understand the meaning of the symbol, the essential idea connected with *this* sin-offering. Its *companion* is put to death by the priest, Azazel lives, but is sent away into the wilderness, far from the haunts of men.

Finally the High Priest, now no more in his character of a sinful man, but as the accredited representative of Jehovah, put off his linen garments, washed himself with water in the holy place, arrayed himself in his "garments of glory and of beauty," and offered the ram for the *burnt*-offering (not sin-offering) for the House of Israel.

And now, at length, on the 15th day of Tisri, began the *Feast of Tabernacles*, otherwise called the Feast of Ingathering, called also by the Rabbis

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The Feast, and by Philo the Greatest Feast. This, the most joyous of all the festivals of the Jews, appears to have been instituted with a double object :

(1) As before stated, to enable them to express to the Most High their gratitude for the goodness wherewith He had crowned the year, whose harvests and vintages were now all ended ; and

(2) As a continual remembrance of their forty years' march through the wilderness, of that period during which they were still dwelling in tents, having no abiding city, no land flowing with milk and honey, whose fruits they might gather in. To prevent their saying at this time of completed labour, like the rich man in the parable, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," they were to be reminded of those days in the dawn of their history, when they reaped no harvests, and built no enduring houses, but sojourned in tents, and received each day their daily bread from heaven. Again the character of the festival is illustrated by the portion of Scripture read in the synagogues during its continuance. *Ecclesiastes*—that book so rich in comments on the vanity of wealth, and the instability of all earthly possessions—was "the proper lesson" for these days.

For eight days, therefore, from the 15th to the 22nd of Tisri (inclusive), they abode in booths (*succoth*) constructed entirely of palm-branches, willow-boughs, and other trees of the thickest

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foliage they could find. In these booths they passed both night and day, eating, drinking, and sleeping in these green and pleasant bowers. I think there is a small "undesigned coincidence" in the very time appointed for this festival; for the eight days of its duration would fall almost certainly somewhere within those twenty days of clear bright autumn weather, the "Indian summer" of Palestine, which I have before mentioned as coming between the early and the latter rain. And thus, neither exposed to Jonah's calamity of seeing their sheltering bower scorched up by the fierce sun of summer, nor, on the other hand, to the discomfort of drenching rain pouring through the many crevices of their leafy dwellings, they ate their meat with gladness of heart, giving glory to the God of Israel.

We may be allowed, perhaps, to conjecture, that not the least share of "gladness" would fall to the lot of the children. How they would enjoy the expeditions to the Mount of Olives in search of palm, and willow, and olive branches, the twining them in and out about the roof and walls; how many busy little volunteers would crowd around the father of the family, eager to be employed in this impromptu masonry! And then the delight of living out of doors all day long, and sleeping all together, with only a few leaves between them and the stars! Cannot one well understand that not to those weary old Talmudists alone, but to many a happy little Hebrew boy, this would be

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the Feast, the memorable epoch of gladness for the whole year?

It must be remembered that the Feast of Tabernacles, like the Passover and the Feast of Pentecost, was an occasion on which all the males of the Jewish nation were bound to present themselves before the Lord in one place. Consequently under Solomon, Nehemiah, or the Maccabean Princes, by whom the law was studiously obeyed, Jerusalem would be the central scene of the whole nation's gladness. Tens of thousands of these green arbours would line the streets of the city, and cluster round its walls; and at every turn one would meet an Israelite bearing a palm branch entwined with willow and myrtle in the right hand, and a citron fruit in the left, for this, too, as they read it, was part of the ordinance of the Feast.

It is interesting to notice the constancy with which up to the present time the Israelite, in every region of his world-wide wanderings, has observed this picturesque custom. Not only in the sunny lands which girdle the blue Mediterranean—the great sea of his forefathers; not only in the coasts of Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim; but in the far-off and unlovely regions of Gomer and of Meshech, in Lithuanian deserts, in Batavian marshes, under the uncertain skies of England, the Jew, still, on a certain day of October, constructs his little bower of laurel, poplar, and willow branches (alas! for the vanished palms and olives of his home), hangs from its wattled roof his store

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of melons and cucumbers, of gourds and oranges, of lemons and citrons (for which, two centuries ago, a special deputation of sixteen Jews from Holland and England were wont yearly to proceed to Spain to do what modern commerce doubtless now performs without their intervention); he spreads his richest carpets on the ground, puts his costliest plate upon the table, and in order that the Divine command for these observances may be ever before his eyes, he hangs up a number of little tablets, on which is engraved in Hebrew the 42nd verse of the 23rd chapter of Leviticus: "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are native-born Israelites shall dwell in booths."

We have now completed our account of all the Festivals *originally* instituted for the observance of the Jewish people. During the five remaining months of the year, when (as before stated) the streams would be often swollen by winter rains, and travelling would be rendered difficult and dangerous, it was wisely ordered that there should be no general gathering of the nation to the place which the Lord their God should chose. There were yet, however, two Feasts, instituted by themselves in memory of great events in their national history—the Feast of the Dedication, and the Feast of Purim.

IV. The Feast of the Dedication, in Greek *Encaenia* (called also by Josephus—Ant. xxi. 7-6—Lights, *Phota*), was a Festival held on the 25th day of *Chisleu*, about the time of our New Year's Day,

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in commemoration of the reopening and purification of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus, 164 B.C., after its three years' defilement, under Antiochus Epiphanes. Like others of the Jewish Festivals, it lasted eight days. It was celebrated with feasting and mirth, with sacrifices and general illuminations, the latter suitable enough for those long nights of the winter solstice. On each of the first seven nights, too, they lighted a fresh branch of the seven-branched candlestick in the Temple, and coupled with this ceremony a story of the miraculous increase of a cruse of oil, found by Judas Maccabeus in the Temple, in consequence whereof one night's supply availed for seven; the necessity for the miracle lying in the fact that the nearest repository for sacred oil was four days' journey from Jerusalem. They also chanted many times over the following benediction :—

Blessed be the Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who hath sanctified us by His precepts, and hath bid us light
the lamp of Chanuccah (consecration);
Who wrought wonders for our fathers in their days, and in
this time also;
Who hath revived us again, and strengthened us, and made us
continue, even unto this time.

V. The Feast of *Purim*, also called Mordecai's Day, was celebrated on the 14th and 15th of *Adar*, the last month of the Jewish year, corresponding nearly with our March.

The design of it was to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews from the massacre planned by

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Haman. Hence the name of the Feast, *Purim* (said to be a Persian word signifying Lots), to keep in memory the providential interposition by which the bloody counsels of Haman and his friends were postponed to as distant a period of the year as possible (see Esther iii. 7). “In the first month, that is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast *pur*, that is the lot, before Haman, from day to day, and from month to month, till the twelfth month, that is the month Adar.” The 13th day of Adar was the day originally fixed for the massacre, and afterwards used by the Jews, with the royal permission, for their own defence. “Therefore the Jews of the villages that dwelt in the unwallèd towns, made the 14th day of Adar, *a day of gladness and of feasting, and a good day, and a day of sending portions to one another*” (Esther ix. 17, 18, 19).

This seems to be, in brief, the description of both days. The religious observances of the Festival seem to have consisted mainly of assembling in the synagogue to hear the book of Esther read through from beginning to end. At this one time it took precedence even of the Law, and unlike all the other sacred books, it might be read in the vernacular, and not necessarily in the original Hebrew. Whenever the name of Mordecai was syllabled forth by the reader, there rose to the lips of all the approving murmur, “Blessed be Mordecai”; when the name of Haman came—there burst from the excited auditors a shriek of execration, “May his memory perish,” and withal the

grown-up men thumped on walls and benches with fists and hammers ; while the boys, jumping from their seats, sprang their rattles, hissed and screamed, and were encouraged to express in a hundred ways the energy of their boyish hate.

Through the whole observances of this Feast, the taint of a very human origin shows itself conspicuously. The Jews seem at this time to have gloried in playing the buffoon, not only in the streets of their cities, but in the synagogues themselves ; the Mosaic command against masquerading in the attire of the other sex was on these two days wholly set at nought ; drunkenness was not only permitted, but almost commanded, in order to keep alive the memory of those potations of King Ahasuerus which softened his heart to Esther's entreaties. There is a passage in the Talmud which says, "A man is bound to drink to that degree that he shall cease to perceive any difference between 'Cursed be Haman,' and 'Blessed be Mordecai.'" It was in fact, as has been remarked by many writers, the Jewish analogue to the Roman *Bacchanalia*, and it is no wonder that some of the Jews should (as is also stated in the Talmud) have been for this reason greatly opposed to its introduction.

In modern times, many of the less pleasing features of the Festival have been retrenched ; the service in most of the English synagogues is orderly and decorous ; drunkenness is discountenanced, and alms-giving to Christians, as well as

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Jews, is a conspicuous part of the day's employment.

The question which most interests us, as Christians in connection with these Jewish festivals is, "How many of them do we know that Our Saviour attended?" but the answer is not easy. In the first place we know that the memorable scene of "The Finding in the Temple" occurred at the close of a visit to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the Passover. His parents went every year, and when Jesus had reached the age of twelve years, which was regarded by the Jews as the boundary line between childhood and youth, they took Him with them. It is quite possible that He as the youngest person present may have been selected at this time to ask the question prescribed in Exodus xii. 26, "What mean ye by this service?" and may have received from the President of the Feast "the declaration" setting forth God's ancient mercies to Israel.

After that, whether the Lord before His Crucifixion attended one Passover only, at which He cast forth the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, or whether he attended three is a disputed point. As is well known, the question whether the Last Supper was strictly a Paschal Feast or not, and consequently, whether the Crucifixion took place on the 14th or the 15th of Nisan, is one of the most difficult in the whole range of New Testament chronology. There is apparent divergence on this

point between the Synoptic Gospels and that of St. John, and there is real and sometimes bitter controversy between modern interpreters.

It has been contended, but on hardly sufficient grounds, that *Purim* was the Feast of the Jews at which Christ healed the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda. We are expressly told that the Feast recorded in the 7th chapter of John to which Jesus went up not openly, but as it were in secret, was the *Feast of Tabernacles*. The streets of Jerusalem were then green with the countless bowers of Israelite visitors from all parts of Palestine; in the spacious Court of the Women candles blazed every evening in four golden candlesticks, 75 feet high, while the sons of Levi standing on the fifteen steps of the Inner Court sang the fifteen "Songs of Degrees," and the chief men of Israel bearing lighted torches in their hands danced to the tune of the sacred music. Every morning for seven days the priests went in joyful procession to the Pool of Siloam and drew thence in a golden vessel a gallon of water from the sacred brook, which with songs of thanksgiving they poured out at the south-west angle of the altar.

Then on the eighth day, "that great day of the Feast," the Psalms were still sung, but no water was drawn from Siloam. *Then* stood Jesus and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. I am the Light of the World: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life."

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Yet once more He was at Jerusalem at the Feast of the *Dedication*, when He walked in the Temple in Solomon's Porch ; and the Jews took up stones to stone Him for His imagined blasphemy.

Then came the Last Passover and the First Easter and soon after, Pentecost, and so our study of the Festivals of the Hebrews comes to an end.

BENWELLDENE, 1870 (Abridged).

THE EPISTLES OF IGNATIUS¹

PART I

THE discussion as to the genuineness of the Epistles of Ignatius is one which has attracted and perplexed many generations of ecclesiastical students. It is not surprising that this should be the case since those Epistles, if genuine, are among the earliest, perhaps the very earliest, Christian writings that have come down to us except the books of the New Testament. The evidence borne by them to the supernatural events which form the external attestation of Christianity is powerful and difficult for its opponents to combat; but, on the other hand, the tone adopted by them with reference to the Episcopal office is so decided—let us say at once so hierarchical—that the Puritan champions of the Christian revelation have hardly known whether most to welcome them for their witness to Catholic doctrine, or to suspect them for their zeal on behalf of the Catholic Episcopate.

For two centuries the discussion has been proceeding with various fortunes. It is perhaps too much to assert that the voluminous work recently

¹ Originally published in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, 1886-7.

put forth by Bishop Lightfoot, as the result of some twenty years of labour, will absolutely close the controversy; but it is reasonable to expect that nothing short of the discovery of a whole series of MSS., which can be proved to belong to the early part of the second century, will shake the conclusions which the Bishop has here arrived at.

The effect of the whole book is to re-establish the authority of what Dr. Lightfoot calls the Middle Recension of the Letters of Ignatius, and thus to defend a position which the scholars of the last generation were disposed to abandon as untenable. But in part of his argument—that which relates to the stories of the Saint's martyrdom which were long current in the Church, and which are still found in many of our standard Church histories—the Bishop's tenets are destructive. He holds, in common with most scholars of the present day, that the Acts of the Martyrdom of Ignatius—both those which he calls the Antiochene and those which he calls the Roman Acts—are spurious, though he thinks it *possible* that the former may contain some small nucleus of valuable and contemporary narrative. But by striking out these long and rhetorically expressed documents it is surprising how much of the popular history of the Saint is abandoned. We are left in fact, as far as external history goes, with little more than a few meagre sentences of Eusebius, which, however, are quite enough to illustrate and explain the allusions in the Letters.

The story of the life of Ignatius, when thus

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reduced to its most trustworthy form, is not too long to be told here. Dr. Lightfoot says :¹

Of the origin, birth, and education of Ignatius we are told absolutely nothing. The supposition that he was a slave is a very uncertain inference from his own language (Ep. ad Roman. 4). It may be conjectured, however, with probability, from expressions in his letters, that he was not born of Christian parentage, but that he was brought up a pagan and converted in maturer years to Christianity ; and that his youth had been stained by those sins of which as a heathen he had made no account at the time, but which stung his soul with reproaches in the retrospect, now that it was rendered sensitive by the quickening power of the Gospel. There had been something violent, dangerous, and unusual in his spiritual nativity. His was one of those "broken" natures out of which, as Zahn has truly said, God's heroes are made. If not a persecutor of Christ, if not a foe to Christ, as seems probable, he had at least been a considerable portion of his life an alien from Christ. Like St. Paul, like Augustine, like Francis Xavier, like Luther, like John Bunyan, he could not forget that his had been a dislocated life ; and the memory of the catastrophe, which had shattered his former self, filled him with awe and thanksgiving, and fanned the fervour of his devotion to a white heat.

He became a Christian, when and how we cannot say : and he assumed the epithet Theophorus, apparently in order to illustrate the doctrine which he rightly held to be a central one in the Christian system, that those who really come to God through Christ have a new and Divine life formed within

¹ Vol. i. p. 28.

them, and that Christianity is not a philosophy, nor a ritual, but a perpetual manifestation of this life of God in the soul of the believer to the world around.¹

It is admitted that he was chosen Bishop of Antioch, and that he was the second or the third who held that office, according as Peter is omitted from or included in the list. The common chronology, following Eusebius, assigns the beginning of his episcopate to the year 69, and its end to 107. For neither date does Dr. Lightfoot consider that there is any real historical evidence. He leaves the former date unfixed, and decides that the martyrdom probably occurred in one of the years between 100 and 118, but that it is hopeless to attempt to fix the year more precisely.²

"The pitchy darkness," he continues,³ "which envelops the life and work of Ignatius is illumined at length by a vivid but transient flash of light. If his martyrdom had not rescued him from obscurity, he would have remained, like his predecessor Euodius, a mere name and nothing more. As it is, he stands out in the momentary light of this event a distinct and living personality, a true father of the Church, a teacher and an example to all time."

Still, of that martyrdom all that is really known historically is contained in the following sentences of Eusebius: ⁴

¹ From this name Theophorus, which, according to the accent, may mean either "God borne" or "God bearer," probably sprang the utterly baseless tradition that Ignatius was the little child whom the Saviour set in the midst of His disciples, as related in Mark ix. 36, 37.

² II. p. 470.

³ I. p. 31.

⁴ *H.E.* iii. p. 36.

Tradition says that Ignatius was sent away from Syria to Rome, and was cast as food to wild beasts, on account of his testimony to Christ : and that being carried through Asia under a most rigid custody, he fortified the different churches in the cities where he tarried by his discourses and exhortations, particularly cautioning them against the heresies which even then were springing up and prevailing. He exhorted them to adhere firmly to the tradition of the Apostles, which for the sake of greater security he deemed it necessary to attest by committing it to writing.

In many Church histories we find inserted at this point a long and—were it true—interesting narrative of a conversation between Ignatius and the Emperor Trajan, who is represented as having come to Antioch on his way to a campaign against the Parthians. The conversation turns chiefly on the Bishop's epithet Theophorus, and ends with the Emperor's sentence, pronounced in these words : "It is our order that Ignatius, who saith that he beareth about the Crucified in himself, shall be put in chains by the soldiers and taken to mighty Rome, there to be made food for wild beasts as a spectacle and diversion for the people." The whole of this narrative, however, belongs to what Bishop Lightfoot calls *the Antiochene Acts*, the composition of which he consigns conjecturally to the fifth or sixth century. No visit of Trajan to Antioch nor campaign against the Parthians is recorded in the ninth year of his reign, to which the Acts assign this interview, nor can such visit or campaign easily have taken place at that time. The violent persecu-

tion described in the Acts is inconsistent with all that we know of the policy of Trajan: and neither Eusebius nor any other author till the close of the sixth century appears to have been acquainted with this story of the martyrdom. There can therefore be little doubt that the whole story of the interview between Ignatius and Trajan must be struck out of authentic Church History.

Even more necessary is it to dismiss from our view the account of the death of Ignatius contained in what Bishop Lightfoot calls *the Roman Acts*, "for internal evidence condemns this work as a pure romance. The exaggerated tortures inflicted on the saint, the length and character of the discourses attributed to him, and the strange overtures made to him by the Emperor, all alike are fatal to the credit of the narrative."¹ "On the whole we may say that these Roman Acts cannot well have been written before the fifth century, and probably were not written later than the sixth."² "Certain indications seem to point directly to Egypt, and therefore probably to Alexandria as their birthplace."³

A very short summary of these unauthentic Roman Acts will enable the reader to detect, and detecting to avoid them, when he meets with them in manuals of Church History. Ignatius is escorted by ten body-guards of Trajan, savage wretches with the temper of wild beasts. They travel through Asia and thence to Thrace and Rhegium

¹ II. p. 376.

² II. p. 382.

³ II. p. 380.

by land and sea. Having set sail from Rhegium they arrive in Rome and announce his coming to the Emperor, who orders him to be brought before him in the presence of the Senate. Trajan asks him if he is that Ignatius who has turned the city of the Antiochenes upside down and is drawing away all Syria from the religion of the Greeks to that of the Christians. Ignatius answers that he would gladly draw the Emperor also away from his idolatry and present him as a friend to Christ, thus making his Empire more secure to him. A long discussion follows between the Bishop and the Emperor, in which the Senate occasionally takes part. Trajan at first tries to entice him by offers of honour and preferment if he will sacrifice to the gods, and then inflicts upon him various tortures. His back is lacerated with the *plumbatae*,¹ his sides are torn with hooks, and salt is rubbed into his wounds, his hands are opened out and filled with fire, he is made to stand on live coals, and between each torture Ignatius, exhorted by Trajan to sacrifice to the gods, inveighs against the folly of the popular mythology, and taunts the Emperor to some fresh manifestation of his impotent power. At length the wearisome disputation ends. Trajan orders that he shall be taken to the inner prison, have his feet made fast in the stocks, be kept without bread and water for three days and three nights and then thrown to the wild beasts.

¹ Whips loaded with lead.

On the third day Ignatius is brought into the amphitheatre and, after one more ineffectual adjuration from the Emperor, the wild beasts are let loose upon him. The saint bears his final testimony to Christ, and then "the lions rushed upon him, and attacking him from either side crushed him to death only, but did not touch his flesh, so that his reliques might be a protection to the great city of the Romans, in which likewise Peter was crucified and Paul was beheaded, and Onesimus was made perfect by martyrdom."

On beholding this scene the Emperor rises up and is filled with wonder and amazement. At the same time he receives the celebrated letter from Plinius Secundus, Governor of Bithynia, informing him of the exemplary lives of the Christians and asking for directions as to their treatment.¹ The concurrence of these two events leads Trajan to issue a decree that the Christians shall not be sought out but only punished when accidentally discovered. He also gives permission for the burial of the reliques of Ignatius, which, according to the view of the writer of this document, remained at Rome.

All these details as to the martyrdom must then, as has been said, be dismissed from our minds if we wish to deal with ascertained fact. All that history has really to say about the death of Ignatius is that he was taken from Antioch to Rome and

¹ This statement alone is quite fatal to the authority of the Roman Acts. They themselves place the martyrdom of Ignatius in 106, and it is now quite settled that Pliny's letter was written in 112.

there suffered martyrdom in the amphitheatre at some time between 100 and 118. But what makes his name and his sufferings memorable to the Christian Church is the seven letters which, still following the guidance of Eusebius, we are able to assert that he wrote to various addresses during his long and, as it seems, leisurely journey from Antioch to Rome. These seven letters according to the enumeration of Eusebius,¹ and accepting his order, are :

- | | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 1. | To the Church of Ephesus. |
| 2. | Do. Magnesia. |
| 3. | Do. Tralles. |
| 4. | Do. Rome. |
| 5. | Do. Philadelphia. |
| 6. | Do. Smyrna. |
| 7. | Do. Polycarp, |
| | Bishop of Smyrna. |

It will be seen that we have in this list three of the Seven Churches in Asia mentioned in the Apocalypse, namely Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Smyrna. Magnesia and Tralles were two cities in the valley of the Maeander on the road from Ephesus to Laodicea, distant about fifteen and thirty-three miles respectively from the former place. The letters to Polycarp at Smyrna, and to the Church of Rome make up the number to seven.

It may be said at once that if Bishop Lightfoot's argument be sound, we are now in possession of all these seven letters of the martyred Bishop, and

¹ *H.E.* iii. p. 36.

that, as far as can be seen, we have them substantially in the same shape in which they came forth from his hand. But it has taken a long time and the labour of many lives before they have been disentangled from the mass of fictitious and unauthentic matter which in the Middle Ages was attributed to the pen of Ignatius.

1. In the first place, it was long supposed that the Church possessed a series of letters which passed between Ignatius on the one hand and St. John and the Virgin Mary on the other.

"This correspondence," says Lightfoot, "consists of four brief letters: (1) A letter from Ignatius to St. John, describing the interest aroused in himself and others by the accounts which they have received concerning the marvellous devotion and love of the Virgin. (2) Another from the same to the same, expressing his earnest desire to visit Jerusalem for the sake of seeing the Virgin, together with James, the Lord's brother, and other saints. (3) A letter from Ignatius to the Virgin, asking her to send him a word of assurance and exhortation. (4) A reply from the Virgin to Ignatius, confirming the truth of all that John has taught him, and urging him to be steadfast in the faith.

"These letters are found only in Latin, and internal evidence seems to show that this was their original language. As the motive is evidently the desire to do honour to the Virgin, we are naturally led to connect this forgery with the outburst of Mariolatry, which marked the eleventh and following centuries. The workmanship is coarse and clumsy, and could only have escaped detection in an uncritical age.

"Certainly the writer succeeded in his aim. The

MSS. of this correspondence far exceed even those of the Long Recension in number, and the quotations are decidedly more frequent. In some quarters, indeed, St. Ignatius was only known through them, the other letters not possessing sufficient interest for the age, and therefore gradually passing out of mind.

“At the first streak of intellectual dawn this Ignatius spectre vanished into its kindred darkness. In vain feeble attempts were made to arrest its departure. . . . It was held a sufficient condemnation of this correspondence, in an age when internal characteristics were not over narrowly scrutinised, that it is never quoted by the ancients, and accordingly it was consigned at once and for ever to the limbo of foolish and forgotten things.”

There still remained, however, after the exposure of this forgery, what are called the “Epistles of the Long Recension.” These were thirteen letters in all, purporting to be the seven mentioned by Eusebius, and in addition—

1. The letter to Ignatius.

Mary of Cassiobola. (The site of Cassiobola is unknown, but from the contents of the letter it must be placed somewhere in Cilicia.)

2. The reply of Ignatius to Mary.
3. The letter of Ignatius to the Church of Tarsus.
4. The letter of Ignatius to the Church of Philippi.
5. The letter of Ignatius to the Church of Antioch.
6. The letter of Ignatius to Hero (apparently addressed as deacon of the Church in Laodicea).

These six letters, wholly unmentioned by Eusebius in a passage in which he seems to be intent on describing accurately the true Ignatian literature, were looked upon with suspicion soon after the

revival of learning, and the defence of them seems always to have been of a faint-hearted kind.

Very different, however, was the case with the seven undoubtedly mentioned by Eusebius, and apparently existing in their genuine form, both in the original Greek and in the Latin translation. But there are circumstances calculated to arouse suspicion even as to these. The passages which Eusebius quoted did not correspond with those which were evidently meant to represent them in these letters. Heresies which first sprang into being after Ignatius's death were condemned by name in them. A much more elaborate system of Church organisation was presupposed by them than could be found from any other source to have existed at the beginning of the second century. And in later times it has been observed that there are in them evident marks of plagiarism from the so-called Apostolic Constitutions, which are themselves probably the work of an imaginative ecclesiastic of the third or fourth century. The question soon became complicated by polemical considerations. The strong bias of the letters towards Episcopacy, and some expressions in them which seemed to favour the supremacy of the see of Rome, made it a point of honour with Roman Catholic disputants to maintain their genuineness, while the Reformers of Geneva felt themselves equally bound to denounce them as impostures. Calvin declared¹ that "nothing was more foul than

¹ See Lightfoot, vol. i. p. 227.

those nursery stories which were published under the name of Ignatius"; and Milton called them, "the tainted scraps and fragments from an unknown table, and the verminous and polluted rags dropt overworn from the toiling shoulders of time."

Men of learning who were not touched by the bitterness of controversy were puzzled by the phenomena presented by the letters, and seem to have been inclined to accept the verdict of one of their number, "*Esse quidem epistolas hasce Ignatii, sed adulteratas, sed interpolatas.*"

Such was the state of the discussion when the critical genius of an English ecclesiastic and the diligent research of a Dutch scholar turned the suspicions of interpolation into a certainty, and by the discovery of what used to be called the Shorter, but what Dr. Lightfoot prefers to call the Middle¹ Recension, altered the whole aspect of the controversy.

James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, one of the first three students who entered at Trinity College, Dublin, and the friend of Camden, Cotton, and Selden, in the course of his controversies with Romanists on the one hand and Puritans on the other, was led into a very careful examination of the Epistles of Ignatius. At first he quoted the text of the Long Recension without doubt or misgiving, but somewhere between 1625 and 1628 he altered his tone and began to hint to his friends an

¹ The reason for this name will be explained hereafter.

intention of bringing out "a large censure of the Epistles of Ignatius," which was evidently meant to include a fresh recension of the text. The "large censure" was long in coming. The times were troublous, especially for a Primate of the Protestant Church in Ireland, and Ussher was also engaged in preparing his great work on the "Antiquities of the British Churches." However, after something like twenty years of labour (less, we believe, than his follower at Durham has given to the same author), his *Polycarpi et Ignatii Epistolae* was given to the world (1644), and soon was recognised by scholars as having changed the whole face of the battlefield in the Ignatian controversy. He produced overwhelming evidence in favour of what was called the Shorter Recension of the Epistles (now the Middle Recension), and since that time the Long has practically ceased to be of any authority.

Bishop Lightfoot thus describes the process by which Ussher was led to his discovery.¹

To the critical genius of Ussher belongs the honour of restoring the true Ignatius. He observed that the quotations in S. Ignatius in three English writers, Robert Grosseteste, of Lincoln² (*cir.* A.D. 1250), John Tyssington

¹ I. pp. 232 and 276.

² This is the celebrated Bishop Grosseteste, who, with a profound veneration for the claims of the Papacy, withstood the Pope himself (Innocent IV.) when ordered by him to confer a canonry on his boy-nephew. Frequently at strife with his Chapter, with other sees, with the King, or even with the Pope, he seems always to have acted under a strong sense of his duty to the Church, and to have been intellectually and spiritually one of the noblest prelates of the Middle Ages.

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(*cir.* A.D. 1381), and William Wodeford (*cir.* A.D. 1396), while they differed considerably from the text of this father as hitherto known (the Greek and Latin of the Long Recension), agreed exactly with the quotations in Eusebius and Theodoret. He therefore concluded that the libraries of England must somewhere contain MSS. of a version corresponding to this earlier text of Ignatius, and searched accordingly. His acuteness and diligence were rewarded by the discovery of two MSS. the *Caiensis* given to Gonville and Caius College, by Walter Crome, formerly a fellow of the College, and copied by Crome himself in the year 1440; and the *Montacutianus*, a parchment MS. from the library of Richard Montague, or Montacute, Bishop of Norwich.¹

When at length Ussher saw this Latin version he expressed a suspicion that Grosseteste was himself the translator. He noticed that Grosseteste's quotations were taken from this version. He found, moreover, in one of the two MSS. several marginal notes, in which the words of the translation were compared with the original Greek, and which therefore seemed to come from the translator himself. One of these marginal notes (on Polyc. 3) betrayed the nationality of their author. "Incus est instrumentum fabri: dicitur Anglice *Anfeld* [Anvil]." But if the translator were an Englishman, no one could be named so likely as Robert Grosseteste.

These two Latin MSS. then contained a text of which the Long Recension was directly an expansion, and agreeing exactly with the quotations in Eusebius, Theodoret, and others. There could be no doubt that this Latin translation represented the Ignatius known to the fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries. But the Greek text was still unknown, and Ussher could only

¹ These particulars are abridged from pp. 80 to 82 of Lightfoot, vol. i.

restore it from the Long Recension with the aid of his newly discovered Latin version, by lopping off the excrescences, and otherwise attempting to bring it into conformity thereto.

Not long, however, was even this top-stone of the edifice, the original Greek of the genuine Ignatius, to be left unlaid. There was a rumour of a MS. in the Medicean Library at Florence which would supply the deficiency: and two years after the appearance of Ussher's work, Isaac Vossius, of Leyden, a scholar and the son of a scholar, published this MS., which he had discovered in that library, and which, in all substantial particulars, entirely agreed with Ussher's text framed from the Latin version supposed to be made by Robert Grosseteste. It is true that this MS. was deficient in one of the genuine Epistles, that to the Romans, which apparently had once been written at the end of the volume, and had since been torn away; but the missing Epistle was discovered about fifty years later in the Colbert collection at Paris, and thus the original Ignatius was complete.

It will be seen that the chief merit of the discovery belongs to our Irish fellow-countryman Ussher: but as the actual text of the original was first published by Vossius, it bears his name, and "the Vossian text" is always that which is contrasted with "the Long Recension."

Before parting company with that recension, which for ten centuries or more imposed itself upon the world as the genuine presentation of the

thoughts of the martyred Bishop of Antioch, it is natural to inquire what can have been the motive of the author of such a forgery, and what was his probable date. The answer to these questions is not easy. The doctrinal differences between the forged and the genuine text have been thought to show a leaning towards Arianism on the part of the forger. Bishop Lightfoot, however, points out that some of his derivations point in the direction of the heresy of Apollinaris, the earliest of those teachers who confounded the Divine and the Human in the person of Christ, and who in later generations were called Monophysites. His final summing up, on the question of the interpolator's theological position, is as follows :

On the whole it seems impossible to decide with certainty the position of this Ignatian writer. Notwithstanding the passages which savour of Apollinarianism, the general bearing of this language leans to the Arian side. But if Arianism in any sense can be ascribed to him, it is Arianism of very diluted quality. Perhaps we may conceive of him as writing with a conciliatory aim, and with this object propounding in the name of a primitive father of the Church as an Eirenicon, a statement of doctrine in which he conceived that reasonable men on all sides might find a meeting point.

As to the time and place in which the interpolator lived, there appears to be a general convergence of opinion towards the latter half of the fourth century for the former, and Syria for the latter.

By the discoveries of Ussher and Vossius the

Ignatian controversy was practically set at rest for two centuries. It was generally admitted that the genuine epistles of Ignatius were now in the hands of scholars, and though still here and there a sturdy opponent of Episcopacy muttered the words, "but interpolated and corrupt," as this was a mere *a priori* judgment with no evidence from MSS. to support it, on the whole it did not find favour with impartial critics. The chief disputants at this stage of the conflict were M. Daillé (1666), against the Ignatian Epistles, and Bishop Pearson (in his *Vindiciae epistolarum S. Ignatii*, 1672) in their defence. This last work, "in England at least, seemed to be accepted as closing the controversy," though a more recent scholar, the one with whom we have next to deal, unkindly says, "In the whole course of my inquiry respecting the Ignatian Epistles, I have never met with more than one person who professes to have read Bishop Pearson's celebrated book."¹

Such was the position of the question when, a little more than forty years ago, the learned world was excited by the intelligence that the feat of Archbishop Ussher had been repeated, that an English clergyman named Cureton had discovered a Syrian MS. containing the genuine uninterpolated text of Ignatius, and that what had been known as the Shorter Recension, henceforth superseded by the Shortest, would have to take its place in the

¹ Cureton, *Preface to Corpus Ignatianum*, xiv. He goes on to quote Porson's opinion that it was a very unsatisfactory work.

pillory beside its discredited Longer brother. For many years this discovery, in Bishop Lightfoot's language, "dominated the field." Of later time there has been a reaction towards the seventeenth-century view of the matter, and this reaction is seen in every page of the great work now before us, but its author himself says :

It would not be easy to overrate the services which Cureton has rendered to the study of the Ignatian letters by the publication and elucidation of the Syriac texts. . . . It may confidently be expected that the ultimate issue will be the settlement of the Ignatian question on a more solid basis than would have been possible without his labours.

He adds :

But assuredly this settlement will not be that which he too boldly predicted ; neither his method nor his results will stand the test of a searching criticism.¹

William Cureton, D.D., born in 1808, took orders in the Church of England in 1832, and afterwards became successively sub-librarian of the Bodleian and (in 1837) assistant-keeper of MSS. in the British Museum.² He had studied Syriac, and had been for some years endeavouring to follow up a hint given by Archbishop Ussher that additional light would probably at some future period be thrown on the obscure and difficult subject of the Ignatian Epistles by means of a Syriac version.³ About 1840 a large collection of very ancient Syriac MSS. was brought to the

¹ I. p. 271.

² *Encyclopædia Britannica*—Cureton.

³ *Corpus Ignatianum*, xxiii.

British Museum, procured from the monastery of St. Mary Deipara in the Egyptian desert of Nitria, by the Rev. Henry Tattam, afterwards Archdeacon of Bedford. Cureton eagerly pounced upon this collection, and had the delight of discovering not only several extracts from the Epistles of St. Ignatius, cited by different ecclesiastical writers, but also the entire Epistle to St. Polycarp in a volume of great antiquity. Stimulated by this discovery and knowing that "there were still lying in obscurity in the valley of the Ascetics at least 200 volumes, of an antiquity anterior to the close of the ninth century," Cureton obtained from the Treasury, through the intervention of the trustees of the British Museum, a special grant for the purchase of these MSS. Mr. Tattam started again for Egypt, and returned thence in 1843, with between 300 and 400 additional volumes from Nitria, won for our great National Library. Among these, Cureton, to his intense delight, discovered three Ignatian Epistles—to St. Polycarp, to the Ephesians, and to the Romans—in a volume of considerable age. Four years afterwards the British Museum became the possessor of all the remaining MSS. from the convent of St. Mary Deipara; among them was found another copy of the same Epistles.

These MSS. were all in Syriac, and are all assigned to the sixth or seventh century. One of them has the following note in its first page :

This book belongs to the monastery of Deipara of

the Desert of Scete of the Syrians. Whosoever taketh this book and maketh any fraudulent use of it, or taketh it out of the convent, or cutteth anything from it, or eraseth this memorial, may he be accursed and estranged from the Holy Church of God. Amen.

Another has a long note giving the story of its acquisition by the monastery, and ending with these words :

It is not lawful for any one, by the living word of God, to use any fraud with respect to any one of these books in any manner whatever ; either that he should appropriate them to himself, or wipe out this notice, or tear or cut them. He who presumes and dares to do this, may the curse be upon him.

When Cureton came to examine these MSS. he found that they contained a far shorter recension than that which had hitherto been known as the shorter text.¹ The sense, as Cureton maintained, was wholly unimpaired by the omissions ; the Epistles ran on uninterruptedly from the beginning to the end, and each sentence adhered uninterruptedly to that which preceded it. Motives, he considered, could easily be imagined for the interpolations which had turned the Curetonian text into the Vossian, none for an abridgment which should have curtailed the Vossian into the Curetonian. In short, Ussher had been out-Usshered by Cureton ; and as he himself said in a somewhat arrogant dedication to Prince Albert :

¹ In Lightfoot's translation the proportions are as follows : The Curetonian text of the Epistle to Polycarp is to the Vossian as 2 to 3 : of the Epistle to the Ephesians, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 : of that to the Romans as $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 4.

I esteem it a peculiar happiness that my own humble researches should have been rewarded by a discovery which seems to throw a clearer light upon the writings of one of the companions of the holy Apostles, than the united labours of several of the highest and most distinguished Prelates who have adorned the English Church [Grosseteste, Ussher, Pearson].

Mr. Cureton, who had by this time been appointed a Canon of Westminster, published his "Ancient Syriac version of the Epistle of St. Ignatius," in 1845, and followed it up by his more elaborate *Corpus Ignatianum* (1849), and *Vindiciae Ignatianae* (1846). The sensation produced by his discovery on theological critics was extraordinary. The new text was welcomed by many of these as both less hierarchical and less dogmatic than the old. A crowd of adherents, among whom some of the most noteworthy were Chevalier (afterwards Baron) Bunsen, Lipsius, Pressensé, Ewald, and Milman, ranged themselves under his banner. On the other hand a violent attack appeared on his work in the English Review, which stigmatised his vaunted new Syriac text as "a miserable epitome made by an Eutychian heretic." As it became known that the author of this attack was Christopher Wordsworth, at that time fellow-canon of Westminster with Cureton (more recently Bishop of Lincoln), there were evidently here the materials for something very like a family quarrel.

Still, with the great majority of students, Cureton's star was in the ascendant. His discovery,

according to the already quoted words of Dr. Lightfoot, "dominated the field," and the Bishop owns that he "with many others was led captive by this dominant force." Even yet one, like myself, unversed in the controversy, glancing through the *Corpus Ignatianum*, is disposed to believe that either the long or the short text must be right, but that the middle cannot be. If you are in a mood for suspecting interpolation, the Curetonian text attracts you ; if abridgment, the old-fashioned Long Recension puts forward its claims ; but the Vossian text looks like an unsatisfactory compromise, and, to use a homely proverb, is in danger of "falling between two stools."

Not such, however, is the judgment of experts, especially of the chief expert whose work is now before us, and who having himself once believed in Cureton's discovery, now, after applying the microscope of criticism to the question for many years, has quite abandoned that belief and looks upon the vaunted Syriac MS. as a mere abridgment, a work of "careless, rough and capricious manipulation," made probably somewhere about the year 400, and possibly dictated by no higher motive than the desire to economise paper.

A scribe, having copied out the task which he had set himself, finds that he has a few leaves of parchment or paper still unfilled. It would be a sinful waste to leave his MS. so. How shall he cover the vacant space? A volume of Ignatius happens to be at hand. He will copy out just so much as there is room for. Of course

the historical parts must be omitted. Of the rest there are some passages which he does not understand, others which are blurred in the copy before him. As he turns over the leaves of the portions which he is omitting, a terse maxim here and there strikes him. They must have a place. He is desirous perhaps of finishing his volume before a certain time. The Ignatian matter is only a stopgap after all, and he does not care for completeness. So he breaks off the Epistle to the Ephesians abruptly in the middle of a subject. . . . This mode of procedure is not without parallels. The history of literature, Greek, Latin, and Syrian abounds in examples of abridgment and mutilation, ranging from the carefully executed epitome or the well-selected collection of extracts illustrative of some particular subject, to the loose and perfunctory curtailment, such as we have here, which is neither epitome nor extract, but something between the two.¹

It may be stated that in this judgment of the Bishop's the chief scholars of Germany who have examined the subject seem prepared to coincide; in fact it was in some degree anticipated by one of them, Zahn, whose work *Ignatius von Antiochen* (1873) went far towards demolishing the claims of the Curetonian Recension.²

It should be added that Lightfoot, while admitting that he has entirely lost faith in Cureton's *Recension* states that he still attaches a high value

¹ The arguments on which this judgment are founded are too detailed and technical to make it possible to give even a short summary of them here, but it may be stated that one of the chief of them is the evidence which exists of another Syriac text, coinciding with Cureton's in those passages which he supplies, but practically coextensive with the Middle Recension.

² I. pp. 311, 312.

in many places to the Curetonian *Readings*. The nature of the difference may perhaps be illustrated in the following way. In the old days of thirty or forty years ago, when the Summary of the Parliamentary Debates in the *Times* was a work of high art entrusted to a highly paid professional correspondent, I have heard it said that you would often get the very words of some striking sentence of Peel, or Russell or O'Connell better in the Summary than in the verbatim Report. That is to say, that just in these particular passages the reading, being the work of a high-class reporter who could appreciate the literary importance of each word in a highly finished sentence, was better than the reading furnished by the drudge who was employed on the full Report to be reproduced in small print. Still, as a Recension of the actual text of the speech of course the verbatim Report (the longer text) would have claims far superior to the shorter text of the Summary.

I have now ended all that I propose to say on this somewhat technical yet not uninteresting question of the genuine text of the letters of Ignatius. It was necessary to dispose of this before proceeding, as I hope to do in another paper, to some discussion of the results, as to discipline and doctrine in the Early Church, which may be drawn from these letters. For while every word of a Christian martyr who was probably for twenty or thirty years of his life a contemporary of some at least of the Apostles is interesting to us, we feel an

absolute indifference as to the thoughts and words of the Arian elongator or the Eutychian abbreviator who in the fourth or fifth century may have tampered with the text of Ignatius. But now, having put these questions behind us, we may proceed to consider in a future number the more important question, "What do the genuine Ignatian letters prove?"

PART II

IN a previous article on this subject I endeavoured to state the conclusions at which Bishop Lightfoot has arrived on the long-debated question of the original form of the text of the Ignatian Epistles. I now proceed to explain as briefly as possible the bearing of these Epistles:—

- (I.) On the history of Ignatius himself.
- (II.) On the state of Christian doctrine.
- (III.) On his teaching with reference to the office of a Bishop.

I. Now that both forms of the "Acts of Martyrdom" of Ignatius are discredited, it is the more important to treasure up every indication afforded by the letters as to the closing scenes in the life of their writer.

"It is clear," says Bishop Lightfoot,¹ "from the mode of his punishment, that he was not a Roman citizen. As a Roman citizen he would have been spared the cruel

¹ Vol. i. p. 33.

horrors of the Amphitheatre, and would, like St. Paul according to the ancient tradition, or like those martyrs of Vienna and Lyons of whom we read, have been beheaded by the sword. . . . The sword of which he speaks in one passage (Smyrn. 4) is not the guillotine of the executioner, but the knife of the 'confector,' who would be ready at hand to give him the *coup de grâce* in case the wild beasts did their work imperfectly.

"Thus condemned to the wild beasts he sets out on his journey Romeward in the custody of a 'maniple' or company of ten soldiers, or rather 'leopards' whose character he describes in the Epistle to the Romans quoted below."

Guarded by these ten "leopards" he probably was put on shipboard at Seleucia, the harbour of Antioch, and sailed thence to some Pamphylian port. Through the Pisidian highlands he would be conveyed into the valley of the Cogamus, a tributary of the Hermus. Here, at the city of Philadelphia, the sixth of the seven Churches of the Apocalypse, a city in which doubtless there were many still living who had read the message sent by the exile of Patmos from "him that is holy, him that is true," is our first undoubted evidence of the tarriance of the saintly prisoner.

His reception at Philadelphia was not in all respects satisfactory. From Philadelphia he would go to Sardis, where doubtless he halted, though this city is not named in his extant letters. From Sardis he would travel to Smyrna. At Smyrna he was hospitably received by Polycarp and the Church. . . . Of the members of the Smyrnæan Church, with whom he came in contact

during his sojourn there, the martyr mentions several by name. First and foremost is the bishop Polycarp—a prominent figure alike in the history of the early Church and in the career of Ignatius. What strength and comfort he drew from this companionship may be gathered from his own notices.¹

At Smyrna he received messages from three churches situated in the valley of the Maeander—Tralles, Magnesia, and Ephesus, which, as they had not been fortunate enough to welcome him personally amongst them, desired to express by these delegates their admiration and their sympathy for the destined martyr. Each Church was represented by a bishop, accompanied by a few presbyters and deacons. The Ephesian embassy headed by its bishop Onesimus—not in all probability the Onesimus mentioned in St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon—was especially refreshing and helpful to the soul of Ignatius.

While at Smyrna the traveller wrote letters to the three Churches which had thus communicated with him in his affliction, and also to that Church which was to witness his final confession, the Church of Rome. This last letter is the only one which is dated, having been written on the 24th of August. Unfortunately the year, the mention of which would have cleared up many controversies, is not given.

The Epistle to the Romans deals far less with doctrinal and ecclesiastical matters than any of the

¹ Vol. i. pp. 34-5.

others, and hence it has suffered less than they either from expanders or abbreviators; in fact much the largest part of it is absolutely the same in all the three recensions. It is chiefly occupied with expressions of his desire to be found faithful to the end of his sufferings, and earnest entreaties to the Roman Christians not to defraud him of the crown of martyrdom by interposing any influence that they might possess for his deliverance. I extract some paragraphs from this Epistle.¹

Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, unto her that hath found mercy in the bountifulness of the Father Most High and of Jesus Christ, His only Son, to the Church that is beloved and enlightened through the will of Him who willed all things that are, by faith and love towards Jesus Christ our Lord; even unto her that hath the presidency in the country of the region of the Romans, being worthy of God, worthy of honour, worthy of felicitation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy in purity, and having the presidency of love, walking in the law of Christ and bearing the Father's name; which Church also I salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father; unto them that in flesh and spirit are united unto His every commandment, being filled with the grace of God without wavering, and filtered clear from every foreign stain; abundant greeting in Jesus Christ our God in blamelessness. . . . I dread your very love lest ye do me an injury, for it is easy for you to do what ye will, but for me it is difficult to attain unto God unless ye shall spare me. For I would not have you to be men-pleasers, but to please God, as indeed you do please Him. For neither shall I myself

¹ Throughout this paper I quote from Bishop Lightfoot's translation.

ever find an opportunity such as this to attain unto God, nor can ye, if ye be silent, win the credit of any nobler work. For if ye be silent and leave me alone I am a word of God, but if ye desire my flesh [desire to save my bodily life], then shall I be again a mere cry. Nay, grant me nothing more than that I be poured out a libation to God, while there is still an altar ready; that forming yourselves into a chorus in love ye may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ, for that God hath vouchsafed that the bishop from Syria should be found in the West, having summoned him from the East. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise unto Him. . . . I write to all the Churches and I bid all men know that of my own free-will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me. I exhort you, be ye not an unseasonable kindness to me. Let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread [of Christ]. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my sepulchre, and may leave no part of my body behind, so that I may not, when I am fallen asleep, be burdensome to any one. Then shall I be truly a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not so much as see my body. Supplicate the Lord for me that through these instruments I may be found a sacrifice to God. I do not enjoin you, as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles, I am a convict; they were free, but I am a slave to this very hour. Yet if I shall suffer, then am I a freed man of Jesus Christ, and I shall rise free in Him. Now I am learning in my bonds to put away every desire.

From Syria even unto Rome I fight with wild beasts, by land and sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, even a company of soldiers who

only wax worse when they are kindly treated. Howbeit through their wrong-doings I become more completely a disciple, "yet am I not hereby justified." May I have joy of the beasts that have been prepared for me; and I pray that I may find them prompt; nay, I will entice them that they may devour me promptly, not as they have done to some, refusing to touch them through fear. Yea, though of themselves they should not be willing while I am ready, I myself will force them to it. Bear with me. I know what is expedient for me. Now am I beginning to be a disciple. May naught of things visible and things invisible envy me, that I may attain unto Jesus Christ. Come fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushing of my whole body, come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me. Only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ. . . . Now I write these things to you from Smyrna by the hand of the Ephesians who are worthy of all felicitation. And Crocus also, a name very dear to me, is with me, with many others besides.

As touching those who went before me from Syria to Rome unto the glory of God,¹ I believe that ye have received instructions. Them also apprise that I am near for they all are worthy of God and of you, and it becometh you to refresh them in all things. These things I write to you on the 9th before the Kalends of September (24th of August). Fare ye well unto the end in the patient waiting for Jesus Christ.

This letter brings before us the character of the Syria bishop in all its strongly-marked individuality. The style is not good. Considered as mere literary compositions, the Ignatian Epistles must rank far

¹ We have no other information as to this journey of Syrian delegates to Rome.

below the closely-packed wealth of the sentences of St. Paul or the sublime and pathetic simplicity of the exhortations of St. John. Neither can we feel that all this eagerness for martyrdom is quite in accordance with the highest ideal of character as disclosed to us in our Lord, or the approximation to it made by His most eminent apostle. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." There is a calm and quiet strength in these utterances, a perfection of resignation to the perfect Will, which is healthier, and therefore nobler, than these fervent entreaties that Ignatius may not be robbed of his crown, this half-hysterical talk about goading the wild beasts and provoking them to attack him.

Still there breathes through all these ill-constructed sentences a noble enthusiasm, an almost passionate loyalty to the person of the Saviour, and a power of "not counting the believer's life dear unto himself" which we, in these days of ease, and after centuries of rest from persecution, should find it hard to follow afar off. Every one of the noble army of martyrs was, in fact, fighting our battle, and by their blood and sweat we earned "this great quietness."

They met the tyrant's brandished steel,
 The lion's gory mane ;
 They bowed their necks the death to feel :
 Who follows in their train ?

Often when reading the not very wise or well-expressed utterances of Ignatius, and half inclined to smile at what Milton calls his "insulse and ill-laid comparisons,"¹ I have seemed to myself like a passenger in a ship listening to the garrulous talk of an old weather-beaten sailor. A feeling of something like contempt at the curious and crude fancies of the old man rises occasionally in the mind of the hearer, but is instantly checked when he remembers that it was by this man's courage and skill that he and his fellow-passengers, not many days before, were saved from peril of shipwreck.

From Smyrna Ignatius was led to Troas, and here he met Rhaius Agathopus, a deacon (apparently) of the Church of Antioch, and Philo, a deacon of Cilicia. From Troas he wrote the three letters which complete our present collection—to Philadelphia, to Smyrna, and to the Smyrnæan bishop Polycarp. The two next stages in his journey were Neapolis and Philippi, and with these our positive knowledge of his movements ceases. No doubt, however, he was conducted along the Via Egnatia, across Macedon and Epirus to Dyrrachium, thence by sea to Brundusium, and thence probably along the Appian Way to Rome.

Authentic information as to his actual martyrdom we have none. We must imagine for ourselves how the awful ruin of the Colosseum looked, within the first half-century of its age-long life, bright with gilding and with purple awnings; how the Emperor

¹ Quoted by Lightfoot, i. 231, n. 1.

Trajan, the best and noblest of all the rulers of Rome, decked, it may be, with laurels for some Dacian victory, took his seat upon the *podium*, and gave the signal for the bringing forth of the captives; how the base mob of Rome shouted "*Christianos ad leones*" when they saw the white hair and travel-stained garb of the Syrian bishop; how he may have tried in the midst of the roars and shouts of wild beasts and brutish men to utter some words expressive of his faith in Christ and joyful readiness to die for Him. Then the thunderous growl of the Numidian lion, the fatal spring, the crunching of the mighty jaws, and all was over. Another blood-stain in that oval space so often drenched with the blood of human victims, the noblest and the vilest. But the blood of martyrs was the seed of the Church, and at this very day the "stations of the Cross" in the Colosseum, and the sweet voices of the multitudinous church bells of Rome proclaim to eye and ear the victory of Ignatius.

II. I now proceed to consider the witness borne by the Ignatian Epistles as to the doctrine taught in the Christian Church at the beginning of the second century.

Upon the most important point of all, the teaching of the Church as to the Divinity of her Founder, we find already the same general characteristics which prevailed throughout the greater part of the Ante-Nicene period. That is to say, we find an entire absence of some of the terms

which became famous two hundred years afterwards as the battle-cry of the Athanasian champions:—neither the Trinity nor the Homoöusion¹ being once named by Ignatius—but on the other hand the doctrine itself, though not clothed in Athanasian words, is evidently Athanasian in its tendency. The following are the chief passages in which St. Ignatius alludes to the Divinity of our Lord:—

(1) (The Church of Ephesus) “Which hath been pre-ordained before the ages, to be for ever unto abiding and unchangeable glory, united and elect in a real suffering by the will of the father and of Jesus Christ our God” (Ephesians: title).

Upon this passage Lightfoot remarks, “Where the Divine Name is assigned to Christ in these Epistles it is generally with the addition of the pronoun ‘*our* God,’ or ‘*my* God,’ or else it has some defining words added to it. The expression just below, ‘in the blood of God,’ can hardly be regarded as an exception.”

(2) “I welcomed in God the well-beloved name which ye bear by natural right, in an upright and virtuous mind, by faith and love in Christ Jesus our Saviour, being imitators of God and having your hearts kindled in the blood of God”² (Eph. 1).

(3) “Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the mind (ἡ γνώμη) of the Father” (Eph. 3).

(4) “There is one only physician of flesh and of spirit, generate and ingenerate, God in man, true life in

¹ “Of one substance with the Father.”

² Compare Acts xx. 28, “To feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.”

death, Son of Mary and Son of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Eph. 7).

(5) "For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived in the womb by Mary, according to a dispensation, of the seed of David, but also of the Holy Spirit" (Eph. 18).

(6) "Assemble yourselves together in common, every one of you severally, man by man, in grace, in one faith and in one Jesus Christ, who after the flesh was of David's race, who is Son of Man and Son of God" (Eph. 20).

(7) "The deacons who are most dear to me, having been entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before the world and appeared at the end of time" (Magnesians 6).

(8) "Hasten to come together all of you, as to one temple, even God; as to one altar, even to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from One Father and is with One and departed unto One" (Mag. 7).

(9) "The divine prophets lived according to Christ Jesus. For this cause also were they persecuted, being inspired by His grace, to the end that they which are disobedient might be fully persuaded that there is one God who manifested Himself through Jesus Christ His Son, who is His Word that proceeded from silence, who in all things was well-pleasing unto Him that sent Him" (Mag. 8).

(10) "Be ye fully persuaded concerning the birth and the passion and the resurrection, which took place in the time of the governorship of Pontius Pilate; for these things were truly and certainly done by Jesus Christ, our hope, from which hope may it not befall any of you to be turned aside" (Mag. 11).

(11) "Be obedient to the bishop and to one another,

as Jesus Christ was to the Father [according to the flesh¹], and as the Apostles were to Christ and to the Father, that there may be union both of flesh and of spirit" (Mag. 13).

(12) "Be ye deaf therefore, when any man speaketh to you apart from Jesus Christ who was of the race of David, who was the son of Mary, who was truly born and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth: who moreover was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, who in the like fashion will so raise us also who believe in Him,—His Father, I say, will raise us—in Christ Jesus, apart from whom we have not true life.

"But if it were as certain persons who are godless, that is unbelievers, say, that He suffered only in semblance, being themselves mere semblance, why am I in bonds? And why also do I desire to fight with wild beasts? So I die in vain. Truly then I lie against the Lord" (Trallians 9, 10).

(13) "Pray that I may not only be called a Christian, but also be found one. For if I shall be found so, then can I also be called one and be faithful, then, when I am no more visible to the world. Nothing visible is good. For our God Jesus Christ being in the Father is the more plainly visible." (Lightfoot explains this to mean that during Christ's earthly ministry, He was misunderstood and traduced, but now His power is manifested and acknowledged in the working of His Church. The sentence is meant to sound like a paradox, "Christ Himself is more clearly seen, now that He is no more seen") (Romans 3).

¹ There is some doubt as to the genuineness of these words.

(14) "And Jesus Christ shall make manifest unto you these things, that I speak the truth—Jesus Christ the unerring mouth in whom the Father hath spoken truly" (Romans 8).

(15) "I heard certain persons [Judaizers] saying, 'If I find it not in the Charters [the Old Testament] I believe it not in the Gospel.' And when I said to them, 'It is written,' they answered me, 'That is the question.' But as for me, my Charter is Jesus Christ: the inviolable Charter is His Cross and His death and His resurrection, and faith through Him, wherein I desire to be justified through your prayers" (Philadelphians 8).

(16) "The Gospel hath a singular pre-eminence [over the Law] in the advent of the Saviour, even our Lord Jesus Christ, and His passion and resurrection. For the beloved Prophets in their preaching pointed to Him; but the Gospel is the completion of immortality" (Philadelphians 9).

(17) "I give glory to Jesus Christ the God who bestowed such wisdom upon you: for I have perceived that ye are established in faith immovable, being as it were nailed on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, in flesh and in spirit, and firmly grounded in love in the blood of Christ, fully persuaded as touching our Lord that He is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, but Son of God by the Divine will and power, truly born of a virgin and baptized by John, that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him, truly nailed up in the flesh for our sakes under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch (of which fruit are we—that is, of His most blessed passion); that He might set up an ensign unto all the ages through His resurrection, for His saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, in one body of His Church. For He suffered all these things for our sakes

that we might be saved : and He suffered truly, as also He raised Himself truly : not as certain unbelievers say, that He suffered in semblance, being themselves mere semblance. And according as their opinions are, so shall it happen unto them, for they are unsubstantial and phantom-like. For I know and believe that He was in the flesh, even after the resurrection ; and when He came to Peter and his company He said to them, ' Lay hold and handle Me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit ! ' And straightway they touched Him, and they believed, being joined unto His flesh and His blood. Wherefore also they despised death. Nay, they were found superior to death. And after His resurrection He both ate with them and drank with them as one in the flesh, though spiritually He was united with the Father " (Smyrnæans 1, 2, 3).

(18) " For what profit is it to me, if a man praiseth me but blasphemeth my Lord, not confessing that He was a bearer of flesh ? " (Smyrnæans 5).

(19) " I salute your godly bishop and your venerable presbytery, and my fellow-servants the deacons, and all of you severally and in a body, in the name of Jesus Christ and in His flesh and blood, in His passion and resurrection which was both carnal and spiritual, in the unity of God and of yourselves " (Smyrnæans 12).

(20) " Await Him that is above every season, the Eternal, the Invisible who became visible for our sake, the Impalpable, the Impassible, who suffered for our sake, who endured in all ways for our sake " (Polycarp. 3).

(21) " I bid you farewell always in our God Jesus Christ in whom abide ye in the unity and supervision of God " (Polycarp. 8).

Notwithstanding some turns of expression which sound somewhat strange to us, I think it will be

admitted that, upon the whole, the language here used with reference to the central mystery of our faith is very similar to that employed by orthodox Christians of the present day; more so, it seems to me, than the artificial language, and the subtle theological distinctions which came into use during the fourth and fifth centuries, after the Councils of Nicæa, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. Surely the fact that a Christian Bishop in the early part of the second century spoke always with calm and settled conviction of the divinity of Christ is one of no small evidential value. In some ways, that age must have been one of severe trial for the faith of the Church. The firm persuasion under which the Apostle Paul, at any rate, and probably most of his colleagues laboured, that Christ's second coming and the end of the world should happen in the lifetime of some members of the Apostolic company, must by this time have been dissipated. It must have been as clear to Ignatius as it is to us that *that* at all events was not the meaning of the difficult words, "This generation shall not pass till all be fulfilled." And then the reaction from the early fervour of faith; the sad discovery that tares would still spring up close to the very finest of the wheat; the impossibility of transmitting to the children the energy of conviction and the singleness of heart which had been possessed by the parents: all these causes, which in all subsequent ages have made the second generation of a Church or a sect or a religious order its time of greatest danger, were

doubtless present in the Christian Church in the hundredth year from the birth of its Founder. On the other hand there was not that rich gathered store of Christian experience, those multitudes of lives made holy and deaths made fearless by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which gives to our faith a support whereof we are ourselves often unconscious, and which is the one great counterpoise in the scale to the difficulty caused by the mysterious apparent delay in the fulfilment of the Divine purposes.

Still, notwithstanding all these temptations, the faith of those early believers stood firm. They had an invincible persuasion that the life which had been witnessed by Apostles, and recorded by Evangelists, was a life unlike any other that had ever been lived on this earth, and that in it the Creator had condescended to share the sorrows and to heal the diseases of the creatures whom He had made. Then, as now, the reason of man well-nigh fainted under this overwhelming thought, "God manifest in the flesh"; but the way of escape for feeble souls was not by denying the Godhead of Christ, but by doubting His true humanity. One of the earliest forms of heresy (as we see from the Epistles of St. John) was that adapted by the Docetæ, who maintained that the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord were only, so to speak, a glorious drama enacted on the stage of the world, and that it was destitute of reality, since Christ as God was exempted from the sufferings and death

incident to humanity. Against this alluring error, which with Antinomianism may be likened to two serpents threatening to destroy Christianity in its very cradle, Ignatius battles manfully. Among the passages from his Epistles quoted above, Nos. 4, 5, 10, 12, 17, 18, and 19 are all aimed at the doctrine of the Docetæ, and No. 17 especially, taken from the beginning of the Epistle to the Smyrnæans, is most full and emphatic in its protest against their perversions of the truth of the Gospel.

Unquestionably, the general character of the teaching of the Ignatian Epistles is *primitive*. It is hardly necessary to say that if we compare it with Medieval Christianity, wide tracts of thought and practice, which belong to the latter, are wholly absent from the former. For in the letters of Ignatius we have no invocation of saints, no doctrine of purgatory, no worship of the Virgin,¹ no penance, no Papal supremacy (though there is most courteous and respectful mention of the Church of Rome), no stated fasts, no dispensations, no indulgences. The absence of all these things from Ante-Nicene Christianity is one of the

¹ There is a rather curious passage in which allusion is made to the Virgin; but though it certainly goes beyond the cautious language of Scripture, there is nothing in it which really amounts to Mary-worship. "And hidden from the Prince of this world were the virginity of Mary and her child-bearing, and likewise also the death of the Lord—three mysteries to be cried aloud—which were wrought in the silence of God. How then were they made manifest to the ages? A star shone forth in the heaven above all the stars; and its light was unutterable, and its strangeness caused amazement; and all the rest of the constellations, with the sun and moon, formed themselves into a chorus about the star; but the star itself far outshone them all; and there was perplexity to know whence came this strange appearance which was so unlike them" (Ephesians 19).

commonplaces of Church history; but it is important also to note how many of the religious ideas even of the fourth century are unrepresented in this literary remnant of the early years of the second century. Let any one think how large a part of the writings of St. Jerome—and not an inconsiderable part of those of St. Augustine—are occupied with the praises of virginity, with recommendations to lead a life of celibacy, with praises of eremitic and monastic life. Of all this it is safe to say that we have scarcely a trace in St. Ignatius; in fact, it would be far easier to extract from St. Paul's letters than from his, passages appearing to exalt the unmarried above the married state.

On the other hand, we have in one of these letters (that to the Church of Smyrna) probably the first use of a phrase which has since "made the tour of the world"—THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. It is true that it is defined in a manner which all Christians would gladly accept, "Wheresoever Christ Jesus may be, there is the Catholic Church."¹ We have also, as we shall see under the next section, much emphasis laid on one particular form of Church organisation, the Episcopal. And though the general teaching of the Epistles is not perhaps highly sacramental—the *word* sacrament was of course not yet imported from the Roman army into the Christian Church—it is plain that both baptism and the eucharist held a prominent position in the life of the believers of that day, and there

¹ ὅπου ἂν ᾖ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία (Smyrn. 8).

are one or two passages in which, not of course Transubstantiation, but something like the Real Presence of Christ in the Supper, seems to be hinted at.¹

It must be admitted that the religious teaching contained in these Epistles is of a rather *jejune* kind. When we have read the passages in which the writer earnestly insists on the reality of Christ's manifestation and sufferings, and when we have also read those in which he insists to weariness on the necessity of obeying the Bishop, we have nearly heard his last word. Apparently the great controversy as to the eating of meats offered to idols, which raged so fiercely in St. Paul's day, and which gives animation to so many of that Apostle's pages, had burned itself out; at all events Ignatius has

¹ Some passages relating to the eucharist are :—

Ephesians 20 : " Breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ."

Romans 7 : " I have no delight in the food of corruption, or in the delights of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ, who was of the seed of David; and for a draught I desire His blood, which is love incorruptible." (Lightfoot remarks on this passage that as Ignatius is here contemplating his union with Christ through martyrdom, "the reference is not to the eucharist itself, but to the union with Christ which is symbolised and pledged in the eucharist.")

Philadelphians 4 : " Be ye careful, therefore, to observe one eucharist (for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, one cup, unto union in His blood; there is one altar as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery, and the deacons my fellow-servants), that whatsoever ye do, ye may do it after God." (Lightfoot observes that "these passages in Ignatius are the earliest instances of *εὐχαριστία* applied to the Holy Communion.")

Smyrnæans 6 : " They abstain from eucharist (thanksgiving) and prayer, because they allow not that the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins and which the Father of His goodness raised up."

Ibid. 8 : " Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop, or one to whom he shall have committed it."

nothing to say concerning it. On the mutual relation of faith and works, a subject of such deep interest to the Church in all ages, he is equally silent. The questions of man's free will, of God's foreknowledge, of the genesis of sin in the human heart, questions which go down to the very roots of our nature, which so profoundly interested St. Paul, and which three centuries later were to be so earnestly discussed by Pelagius and St. Augustine—these appear to be altogether beyond his range. Occasionally he takes an illustration from St. Paul, and amplifies it after his own peculiar fashion, as when he tells the Ephesians that they are "stones of a temple prepared beforehand for a building of God the Father, being hoisted up to the heights by the engine of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, the rope being the Holy Spirit, while their faith is the windlass, and love is the way that leadeth up to God." It is not often, however, that he rises even to this level. Upon the whole, if one were asked to give a practical definition of Inspiration, one might fitly reply, "That quality which is present in every one, even the least fervid and the least edifying of the Epistles in the New Testament, and which is absent from the Epistles of Ignatius."

III. We come, last of all, to that which assuredly did not occupy the last place in the thoughts of Ignatius, the question of Church order and government.

As has been already hinted, these letters are full of earnest exhortations to the receivers of them not

to despise the authority of the Bishop. I do not propose to extract all the passages in which this duty is insisted on, for in truth were I to do so I should have to transcribe more than half of the Seven Letters. But the general purport of them may be summarised as follows :—

The Bishop presides in the Church after the likeness of God, the Presbyters after the likeness of the Council of the Apostles, and under them are the Deacons who are entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ.¹ As Christ did nothing without the Father, either by Himself or by the apostles, so the believers are to do nothing without the Bishop and Presbyters.² The Presbytery, if it be worthy of God, is attuned to the Bishop, even as its strings to a lyre. By the concord and harmonious love of these and the Church a sweet chorus is formed by which Jesus Christ is sung, the key-note being given by God.³ If a believer sees that his bishop is silent, let him fear him all the more, for every one whom the master of the household sends to be steward over his own house ought to be received like him that sent him. Manifestly, therefore, the Bishop should be regarded like the Lord Himself.⁴

Believers are not to presume upon the youth of their Bishop. Ignatius is glad to find that at Magnesia where the Bishop is a young man, the Presbyters have not taken advantage of his youth, but give place to him as to one endowed with heavenly prudence—yet not in truth to him but to the Father of Jesus Christ,

¹ παραινῶ ἐν ὁμοιοῖα Θεοῦ σπουδάζετε πάντα πράσσειν, προκαθημένου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰς τύπον Θεοῦ καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων εἰς τύπον συνεδρίου τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν διακόνων τῶν ἐμοὶ γλυκυτάτων, πεπιστευμένων διακονίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς πρὸ αἰώνων παρὰ πατρὶ ἦν καὶ ἐν τέλει ἐφάνη (Magnesians 6).

² *Ibid.* 7.

³ Ephesians 4.

⁴ *Ibid.* 6.

even to the Bishop of all. A man who obeys with dissimulation deceives not so much the Bishop whom he sees, as that other who is invisible, and will have to reckon not with man but with God who sees the hidden things of the heart.¹

Some people have the Bishop's name perpetually on their lips, but in everything act separately from him. Such people have not a good conscience since they do not assemble themselves together lawfully according to the commandment.² Let all men respect the Deacons as Jesus Christ. Even as they should respect the Bishop as being a type of the Father and the Presbyters as the Council of God and as the College of Apostles. Apart from these there is not even the name of a Church. . . . He that is within the sanctuary is clean ; but he that is without the sanctuary is not clean, that is he that doeth aught without the Bishop and Presbytery and Deacons, this man is not clean in his conscience.³

I cried out when I was among you ; I spoke with a loud voice, with God's own voice, "Give ye heed to the Bishop and the Presbytery and the Deacons." Howbeit there were those who suspected me of saying this because I knew beforehand of the division of certain persons. But He in whom I am bound is my witness that I learned it not from flesh of man ; it was the preaching of the Spirit who spake in this wise : "Do nothing without the Bishop ; keep your flesh as a temple of God ; cherish union ; shun divisions ; be imitators of Jesus Christ, as He Himself also was of His Father." Now the Lord forgiveth all men when they repent, if repenting they return to the unity of God and to the Council of the Bishop.⁴

¹ Magnesians 3.

³ Trallians 3, 7.

² *Ibid.* 4.

⁴ Philadelphians 7, 8.

Shun divisions as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your Bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the Presbytery as the Apostles ; and to the Deacons pay respect as to God's commandment. Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the Bishop. Let that be held a valid Eucharist which is under the Bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it. Wheresoever the Bishop shall appear, there let the people be ; even as where Jesus Christ may be, there is the universal Church. It is not lawful apart from the Bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast ; but whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing also to God ; that everything which ye do may be sure and valid. . . . It is good to recognise God and the Bishop. He that honoureth the Bishop is honoured of God ; he that doeth aught without the knowledge of the Bishop rendereth service to the Devil.¹

Lastly, in the Epistle to Polycarp we read—the passage is important, because it is found in the very shortest form, the Curetonian, as well as in the Middle and the Long Recensions—

It becometh men and women when they marry to unite themselves with the consent of the Bishop, that the marriage may be after the Lord. Let all things be done to the honour of God. Give ye heed to the Bishop, that God also may give heed to you. I am devoted to those who are subject to the Bishop, the Presbyters, the Deacons. May it be granted me to have my portion with them in the presence of God.²

In reading over these passages we can easily

¹ Smyrnæans 8, 9.

² Polyc. 5, 6.

understand why many scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries struggled so earnestly against the admission of the genuineness of the Ignatian Epistles in any form whatsoever. To our ears they certainly *seem* to sound of an age much later than that immediately succeeding the Apostolic ; at first the mind can hardly refuse entrance to a suspicion that they are the work of some forger of the third or fourth century, intent, for reasons of his own, on bolstering up Episcopal authority by the venerated name of Ignatius. This kind of *a priori* criticism, however, though we are obliged sometimes to resort to it, is full of danger, and requires a very full and accurate knowledge of the times with which we assert a particular document to be out of harmony. We must admit that our knowledge of the state of the Christian Church for fifty years after the writing of the last Pauline Epistle is not, and probably can never be, of this full and accurate kind : and since upon the whole, after two centuries of eager debate, the judgment of the ablest scholars appears to be pronounced affirmatively on behalf of the genuineness of the Ignatian Epistles in the Middle Form ; since the more learned even of the opponents of their genuineness do not seem to contend for a later date for the forgery than about A.D. 150,¹ it is better and more consistent with the character of a seeker after

¹ I mention this date because it seems to be admitted that the Ignatian letters were known to Lucian (A.D. 165-170) and to Irenæus (175-190). It is true that we cannot prove that the letters then existing contained the strong Episcopal passages.

truth frankly to accept the fact of these, as they seem to us, exaggerated claims put forward at a very early date on behalf of the Episcopal office, than to try to argue the evidence out of court because it does not happen to accord with our own ecclesiastical sympathies.

Let us then ask ourselves what was the nature of the Episcopacy for which St. Ignatius so zealously contended. In doing this we may leave on one side the question whether he was right or wrong—though I apprehend that few of the most enthusiastic upholders of the Divine right of Episcopacy would like to be fastened down to the defence of *all* the expressions quoted above—and we may confine ourselves to the humbler attempt to understand his position and to read his thoughts, and his thoughts only, in his words.

To us, after more than eighteen centuries that the Christian Church has been in the world, the word Bishop suggests at once an immense variety of associations: some noble and venerable, some base and cruel and full of irreconcilable discord with the mind and character of Christ. When we hear the word we may think of Augustine, of Anselm, of Ken, and of Heber; or the dark forms of the Borgias, the Cossas, and the Bonners, may rise before us. The name covers saintly men who in our own day have willingly laid down their lives for their Lord in African deserts, Popes who have said, “What good things that old fable about the Galilean have been the means of procuring

for us!" and "Greek-play Bishops" who have conscientiously abstained from reading the New Testament lest they might injure their classical style. Visigothic prelates hugging the life out of the State which they virtually governed by their Councils; the mail-clad Bishops of Charlemagne; the great ecclesiastical Electors of Germany; the Episcopal parasites of Louis XV.; are all included in this one widely extended class, and would assuredly have been stared at with eyes of unbelieving wonder by Ignatius if they could have stood beside him and told him that they were even what he was.

Clearing away, then, as far as we can, all these accretions of later ages, let us try to look upon a Bishop of a Church in Syria or Asia Minor soon after Divus Nerva had given place to Trajanus Cæsar at the head of the Roman world, and see what manner of man he would appear to himself and his contemporaries. Not assuredly one of the great ones of this world: the Asiarchs at Ephesus would deem that they condescended if they favoured Onesimus, the Christian Bishop of that city, with their friendship, and the mighty Prefect of Syria may have administered his province for years without becoming aware of the existence of Ignatius. His Cathedral Church may be, and probably is, spacious, in such a city as Antioch, but it is assuredly unadorned, and erected at as little cost as possible in one of the humbler quarters of the city. The Bishop himself is not even in spiritual things ruler

of a wide extent of country.¹ His energies are confined to one city—certainly in the instance before us a populous and important city—and in that city he is, so to speak, queen-bee in the hive, centre of all the Christian activity of the Church, sustaining with reference to that one Church what St. Paul, in a pathetic moment of weariness, speaks of as “that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches.” Who is weak and the Bishop is not weak? Who is made to stumble and he burns not with righteous indignation? In the warfare which is being constantly waged with idolatrous practices around them—practices which by the banks of the soft Orontes are still exceptionally tainted with moral uncleanness—he must be ever ready to advise, to exhort, to admonish the mass of the believers. Even as to their marriages (as we see from the above-quoted passage in the Letter to Polycarp), Christian men and women are recommended to seek the consent of the Bishop, a recommendation easily explained by the danger of introducing a consort secretly inclined to heathenism into the midst of a Christian family.

¹ This is well brought out by Lightfoot, i. 383 :—“Of a diocese, properly so called, there is no trace. It is quite a mistake to suppose that Ignatius is called ‘Bishop of Syria’ (Romans 2). Episcopacy has not passed beyond its primitive stage. The Bishop and Presbyters are the ministry of a city, not of a diocese. What provision may have been made for the rural districts we are not told. The country folk about Ephesus or Smyrna were probably still *pagans*, not only in the original sense of the word, but also in its later theological meaning. This fact, however, can hardly be used as a criterion of date, as it would hold throughout the second century, and no critic would now think of assigning a later date than this to the Ignatian letters.”

In short, if we would truly comprehend the position of a Bishop in the days of Ignatius, we must think rather of a parish clergyman, or the minister of a large congregation, than of the best type of diocese-ruling Bishops. The late Dr. Hook, during his residence at Leeds; John Angell James, at Birmingham; Charles Spurgeon, at Southwark (I purposely choose my examples from different denominations of Christians), may probably not unfitly represent to us the kind of labours, and anxieties amid which the life of one of these early Bishops would be passed, except for one difference and that is an important one. There was always the possibility that the warfare between Christianity and Heathenism might pass out of the spiritual sphere into the material: that the Jews might excite a tumult against the Nazarenes, or that some Emperor or Prefect might deem that his duty to the State required him to extirpate by force this "novel and detestable superstition." Then the Bishop became more than ever the general of the army of believers. Then was it his duty to cheer the wavering, to restrain the rash, to comfort the bereaved relatives of those who fell in the glorious strife, to provide for their orphaned children, and finally, when he himself was summoned before the Prefect's tribunal, to die.

Around the Bishop were grouped "the fitly-wreathed spiritual circlet of the Presbytery,"¹ and "the Deacons entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus

¹ τοῦ ἀξιοπλόκου πνευματικοῦ στεφάνου τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου (Magnesians 13).

Christ.”¹ The duties of the Presbyters, as Lightfoot points out in his dissertation on the Christian Ministry,¹ were twofold, as pastors and teachers of the flock. With the growth of the Church the visits of Apostles and Evangelists to any particular community would become less frequent, and the Presbyters, the local officers of the congregation, would have a larger and larger share in the work of instruction. “There is no ground for supposing that the work of teaching and the work of governing pertained to separate members of the Presbyterial College. As each had his special gift, so would he devote himself more or less exclusively to the one or other of these sacred functions.”³

The office of the Deacons was probably still chiefly connected with the relief of the physical wants of the poorer members of the congregation, but upon this point the vague and rhetorical language of Ignatius throws unfortunately little or no light.

If we ask ourselves why had the Christian Church which “interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man,” and in which “each individual member holds personal communion with the Divine Head,”⁴ thus early assumed the form of a well-organised hierarchy, the answer is partly contained in the slight sketch already given of the Bishop’s functions. Christianity in the midst of the heathen world was still pre-eminently a militant

¹ *Magnesians* 6.

² Appended to his edition of the Epistle to the Philippians, p. 192.

³ *Ibid.* 193.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 179.

force, bound to fight, every day and every hour, for bare life against "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Now there can be no doubt that for fighting purposes a monarchical form of government is the best,¹ and the Order of the Jesuits, the Wesleyan Connection, and the Salvation Army, in their very different lines of movement, have powerfully illustrated the truth of this maxim with reference to spiritual warfare.

But in addition to this there was a special need why in the second century the Christian Church should close its ranks and submit to stern, almost martial, discipline. Already the nomad hordes of Gnosticism were in the field, ready with their spectral bands of Æons and Emanations, to lay waste the fair regions won for Christ from heathenism.² And to meet this foe what was there (speaking after the manner of men) within the Christian stronghold? If we put out of sight the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons (the officers of the garrison), the rank and file were composed largely of recent converts from heathenism, men and women

¹ How, it may be said, can this be asserted in the face of the victorious career of the Roman Republic? The answer is that republican principles were always in abeyance when the army was in the field. The recognised contrast between the *imperium* of the military officer and the *magistratus* which was exercised within the bounds of the City, is one of the most familiar features of the constitution of the Roman State.

² Looking to the character of the Gnostic teaching, and the dissolving effect which it would inevitably have exercised on Christianity, we are justified in using these strong terms of condemnation of the system (or rather the many systems) of the Gnostics. Yet, withal, we may gladly recognise that many of these men may have been sincere seekers after God: only they were trying to solve a hopelessly insoluble problem, that of the existence of evil in a world of which God is the Creator and Governor.

in whose blood there still ran the inherited instincts of generations of idolaters, who had suffered from the fever of impure and unholy service rendered to "them that were no gods." Many slaves were to be found in every Christian congregation, many freedmen with all the thoughts and habits of the slave. The men of education among them were probably still few; copies of the Gospels and Epistles an expensive luxury, beyond the reach of the many. In these circumstances there can be little doubt that it was, under God's providence, the existence of a well-organised, disciplined hierarchy, possessing the sacred books and well instructed in their contents, which alone prevented the Christian Church from fading away into a fantastic Gnostic sect, or yielding to the temptations of a plausible Antinomianism, or taking up with some wild scheme of social regeneration, and, like the Fifth Monarchy men of a later age, dashing itself in its ignorance and its fury against the justly drawn sword of the Civil Magistrate.

Thus then, it seems to me, we can well understand why, in the Divine ordering of the affairs of the Christian Church, a man holding the position of Ignatius wrote as emphatically as he did concerning the absolute necessity of obedience to the Bishop, the Presbyters, and the Deacons.¹

¹ I have not space to do more than indicate the relation of the writings of Ignatius to the theory of "Apostolical Succession" in its fully-developed form. Bishop Lightfoot very clearly points out—

1. That "there is not throughout these letters the slightest tinge of *sacerdotal* language in reference to the Christian ministry" (i. 381).

The question what bearing these writings of an early Christian martyr have on the true form of Church government in our own day is one far too wide and too weighty for me to deal with here. As before said, my object has been rather to find out what Ignatius thought than whether he was right in thinking it. Three conclusions, however, I may bring before the mind of the reader.

First, not only the letters of Ignatius, but the later letters of St. Paul, certainly seem to prove that government by Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons (the first two titles in the earliest stages practically interchangeable) was at least a permitted—divinely permitted—form of government for the Christian Church. Now that the smoke of the seventeenth-century controversies has somewhat rolled away, I find it difficult to understand how any fair-minded man, examining the evidence afforded by the New Testament and the earliest post-

2. "Nor again is there any approach even to the language of Irenæus, who, regarding the Episcopate as the depositary of the doctrinal tradition of the Apostles, lays stress on the Apostolical succession as a security for its faithful transmission" (i. 382). In fact, as has been often pointed out, Ignatius seems to make the Presbyters, rather than the Bishops, the representatives of the Apostles, in order that he may claim for the Bishop the authority and position of Christ.

3. "There is no indication that he is upholding the Episcopal against any other form of Church government, as, for instance, the Presbyterial. The alternative which he contemplates is lawless isolation and self-will" (*ibid.*). This point is also well brought out by Canon Travers Smith, in the article "Ignatius," in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*; and it is the more noteworthy, because there is reason to believe that Episcopacy, though firmly established in Syria and Asia Minor, was not in the days of Ignatius universally adopted throughout the Christian Church. Indeed the Ignatian letters themselves make it doubtful whether there was even a Bishop at Rome (*ibid.* i. 383).

apostolic writers, can think the office of a Bishop to be in any sense Anti-Christian, or can allow himself to speak, as I have heard some do unadvisedly, in contempt of "the undrained bog of Episcopacy."

Secondly : Nor do I think that the view which has sometimes been advocated by members of the Society of Friends, that the appointment of a Bishop is in some way a usurpation of Christ's own right to govern His Church, is one which will bear investigation. The unseen Shepherd and Bishop of the Church rules and guides and feeds His flock, partly at least, through visible and human delegates ; and I cannot see why a Bishop, exercising his office in constant and prayerful dependence upon Christ, is any more truly a usurper of the functions of the Head of the Church than a Moderator of a Synod, or a Clerk of a Yearly Meeting.

Thirdly : It is one thing, however, to say that Episcopacy is a *permitted* form of Church government, and one which, in the good providence of God, has been blessed to the preservation of the very life of Christianity, and quite another to say that it is the *only* form under which a Christian Church may be lawfully administered. Here, I think, we must set against certain strong and rash sentences of Ignatius, the clear voice of experience throughout the last three centuries. He says, " Apart from Bishop, Presbyters, and Deacons, there is not even the name of a Church." But there have been since the Reformation, and are now many Churches

manifestly bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, and united to Christ by true and living faith, from which one or all of these classes of officers have been absent. The human mind loves these sharp lines of demarcation, these rough-and-ready ways of arriving at truth. "Have you an officer in your Church called a Bishop?" asks the controversialist. "Yes." "Then you are a true Church." "No." "Then you are no Church at all, but altogether outside of the fold." But God seems to apply more subtle and deep-searching tests, and to attach less importance to the forms and shows of things than these eager disputants. What happened at the close of the Apostolic era, and during the generation immediately following it, it is confessedly difficult to determine. But if we enlarge our scope, and endeavour to trace the course of the divine government of the Church through many centuries, we seem to see a continual adoption of fresh forms and fresh institutions according to the varying needs of succeeding ages. God causes the chosen people to be ruled by judges. They are dissatisfied with this form of government and desire a king. Even while rebuking their fickleness He grants their request, and makes with the second king thus chosen a covenant even more solemn and fuller of import for the world than that which He made with Abraham. The priesthood becomes corrupt: He raises up prophets as witnesses to His righteousness. The kingship comes to an end, and the Sanhedrin bears sway in Israel. Antiochus seeks to crush out

the religious life of the nation, and the Maccabees are raised up for its deliverance. The Maccabees lose the consciousness of their great mission, and are allowed to be set aside by an Idumean usurper. The Sabbath, once solemnly instituted by God, becomes the centre of a new and burdensome code of duty, and Jesus Christ comes to lessen, well-nigh to abrogate, the law of the Sabbath. For generations "the people" have been taught to consider themselves the chosen people of God, and to shun all intermixture with other nations as defilement. The Apostle Paul is sent to break down this middle wall of partition, and, at the cost of a life-long martyrdom, to proclaim that henceforth there is neither Jew nor Gentile, but all are one in Christ Jesus.

Through all the later ages it seems to me that we may see this same law of selection and rejection working. Looking to the necessities of a barbarised world we must surely admit that it was not without a Divine command that St. Benedict withdrew into the desert to prepare his code of laws for the regulation of monasticism. The monks became indifferent and corrupt, and the mendicant orders were employed in the great religious revival of the thirteenth century. Dominicans and Franciscans lost their first love ; the voice of Luther was heard, and the mission both of monk and friar was ended. Yet neither Luther, nor Cranmer, nor Fox, nor Wesley was able to replace the obsolete medieval Church by an organisation which fully expressed all the

response made by Christianity to the manifold needs of the human race. Thus still, not only at sundry times, but in the most diverse manners, does God continue to unfold to the world the meaning of that revelation of Himself which He made by Jesus Christ.

The thorough-going advocate of any form of Church-government, the Episcopal, or the Presbyterian, or the Congregational, holds himself bound to argue that it is the only true Scriptural scheme of administration. To me it seems more reasonable to suppose that all are lawful, and all have, in a certain sense, come into being in conformity with the will of God, but that all must prove their right to be, by their fruit-bearing. There is the Episcopalian with his monarchical system of government, so splendidly adapted for covering the whole ground, and for providing that the sound of the Gospel shall be heard in the remote country village as well as in the crowded city. There is the Presbyterian with that aptitude of his for bringing the doctrines of Christianity home to the intellect of a nation, and for interesting the taught as well as the teacher in the routine of Church government, which has so powerfully contributed to form the character of the Scottish people. There are the various sects of Methodists with their extraordinary power of planting vigorous churches in the midst of new and poor and scantily educated communities. There are the Congregationalists and the Baptists with their skill in discovering, and wisdom in using

great and impressive preachers. And, lastly, there is our own Quaker Church, less conspicuous than any of the others, but yet with a special message of its own to quiet and thoughtful natures, weary of doctrinal disputations, and longing for the reality of spiritual communion with the Most High. There may be different degrees of spiritual attainment among all of these ; but I cannot believe that any one of them has a right to say to another, "I forbid thee because thou followest not me." To each the Master of the household seems to have distributed somewhat according to his several ability, and the watchword, the weighty watchword, for each is, "Occupy till I come."

PAGANISM AND CHRISTIANITY¹

I

“THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIDES,” EDITED AND
TRANSLATED BY J. RENDEL HARRIS, M.A.

THIS book, which describes the recovery of an early defence of Christianity, after it had been lost for something like thirteen centuries, must excite a deep interest in the minds of all students of Christian antiquity. For me it has a peculiar and personal interest because I had the privilege of meeting the finder when he was just setting forth on the quest which has proved so successful.

It was on a hot March morning in Cairo that I heard from a waiter at Shepherd's Hotel the pleasant news that my friend Rendel Harris was waiting to see me. We found an unoccupied corner in the great square verandah in front of Shepherd's, which all visitors to Cairo know so well, and there we sat and talked for two hours, finding them all too short for what we had to say. A “khamseen” was blowing, and a dust-storm darkened the pure sky of Egypt. The ceaseless stream of wayfarers of all nations flowed past us; English officers in

¹ Originally published in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, 1891-2.

their dog-carts, preceded by their running footmen, bare-legged, but with splendid silver-embroidered jackets; veiled Egyptian women with the Nilometer ornament between their eyes; full-blooded negroes from the Soudan, carrying their heavy water-jars on their heads; long strings of camels, with that look of patient pessimism which the camel always wears—such was the picture, ever changing, yet unchangeable, which the visible world presented to us. Our talk was of many things, all deeply interesting to me. Jerusalem, which I had not yet seen, but where he had spent many months, and whose spell was strong upon him still. “Jerusalem,” he said, “is the place where men ought to worship.” We talked of Tatian’s Diatessaron, and its recently discovered MS.; of Syrian Nisibis, and the possibility of visiting it; of the Greek Patriarch at Jerusalem, and many more subjects of interest to us both; but most of all, of his impending visit to the Monastery at Sinai, for the sake of which he had come to Cairo. For he hoped that the memorable discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus did not exhaust the possibilities of finding hidden treasure in those venerable solitudes, and in that hope he was going to cross the desert and visit the monastery of St. Catherine, taking with him letters of introduction from the Greek Patriarch, and a photographer’s camera, at once the safest and speediest of all transcribers.

Some weeks after I heard to my great delight that the visit which he then spoke of as future had

been paid, and had been crowned with success. Besides other acquisitions which are not yet published, Prof. Harris told me that he had found and photographed the long-lost Apology of Aristides in a Syriac version ; and that is the book now presented to the world.

Perhaps some, when they see the name of Aristides at the head of this paper, may think that they are going to hear something about the sturdy old Athenian statesman, the contemporary of Themistocles. I therefore hasten to assure them that there is no need for them to renew the old sentence of ostracism : they are in no danger of once more hearing Aristides called "the Just." We have to do not with him, but with another citizen of Athens, who lived some six centuries later, and who, as Eusebius and Jerome inform us, was a most eloquent philosopher, who still preserved the philosophic garb after his conversion to Christianity, and presented an Apology for the Christians to the Emperor Hadrian, which Apology, says Eusebius, "is still preserved by many persons even until this day."

No professed extracts from the Apology had been handed down by any ancient writer, and the few lines in which these meagre notices of the author were contained were all that, three years ago, was known about Aristides. It was rumoured soon after the revival of Greek learning that a copy of the Apology was still in existence at the monastery of Mount Pentelicus in Attica, but Dr. Spon, the celebrated French traveller in the

Levant in the seventeenth century, sought for the book there without success.

All this has now been changed by Prof. Harris's interesting discovery. Among the Syriac MSS. in the Sinaitic Convent he found one, apparently written in the seventh century, and containing two columns to each page. The book is made up of a number of separate treatises or extracts, almost all of which are ethical in character, Lives of the Fathers of the Desert, an essay of Plutarch on the help which a man receives from his enemy, a discourse by a female Pythagorean, and so forth. Imbedded in this curious collection, and occupying about twelve pages of the MS., is "The Apology which Aristides the Philosopher made concerning the worship of God." When the Haverford Professor saw these words, he knew that he had found a prize, and calling on his camera for aid, he secured a faithful copy of the MS., which he afterwards deciphered, and translated at leisure in his library.

The Apology thus recovered for us is a most valuable document, and has an important bearing on the history of the development of Christian doctrine. But,—it is better to state the fact at once,—it is almost valueless as an addition to Christian Apologetics, and it shows very little insight into the nature of the religion which it undertakes to defend. Probably the feeling of most readers of the Apology at the present day will be that, had they been in the Emperor's place, they would have

listened to it quite unmoved, and would have found nothing in its arguments to induce them to inquire more minutely into this "new and strange superstition."

But who was the Emperor to whom it was addressed? The consentient voice of ecclesiastical tradition has hitherto declared that it was Hadrian; but the MS. now before us speaks on this point with uncertain sound. It has, in fact, a double title:—

"Again the Apology which Aristides the philosopher made before Hadrian the King concerning the worship of God.

"[To the Emperor] Cæsar Titus Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, from Marcianus Aristides, a philosopher of Athens."

Thus the first title seems to assert that the Apology was addressed to Hadrian, who reigned from 117 to 138, and the second, that it was addressed to his adopted son and successor, Antoninus Pius, who reigned from 138 to 161. The second title, which gives the other name of Aristides (Marcianus), and calls him a philosopher of Athens, looks the more authentic of the two, and as each Emperor at this time always took the name of his adoptive father, an error in the upward is more probable than in the downward direction, for Antoninus was really also called Hadrian, though Hadrian was not called Antoninus. The difference, which may perhaps amount to about twenty years, is of no great consequence, though,

of course, the earlier the date, in a certain sense, the more important the document.

If we wish to imagine the scene of the presentation of the *Apology*, the difference between the two possible hearers is of much greater significance. In the one case, it was Hadrian, the artistic, restless, highly cultured Emperor, who was for ever wandering from end to end of his vast dominions, like Solomon, a mighty builder, but, like Solomon, a slave to sensual lusts,¹ and in his later years an eloquent preacher of the vanity and weariness of the world. In the other, it was Antoninus, a man of grave, earnest, and noble character, of simple tastes and kindly nature, friendly to the Christians, and one whose maxim for life was well expressed by the watchword which he gave to his soldiers on his death-bed, "*Aequanimitas*." Even the saintly Marcus Aurelius, his successor and adopted son, was not more worthy to have sat down in the kingdom of heaven than the man who, as Emperor, bore the name of the Pious Antoninus.

The Apology of Aristides (who, we must always remember, speaks as a philosopher, not as a preacher) begins on this wise:—

I, O King, by the grace of God, came into this world :

¹ The immoralities of Hadrian are, I think, an important element in the question to which emperor the *Apology* was addressed. All the empire knew what was the chief stain on his private character, and it happens that this is the vice which meets with the especial condemnation, five times repeated, of the Apologist. Antoninus Pius was entirely free from reproach on this score ; and it certainly seems more probable that Aristides (who is not a Hebrew prophet denouncing sin, but an Athenian philosopher pleading for toleration) spoke these words before Antoninus than before Hadrian.

and having contemplated the heavens and the earth and the seas, and beheld the sun and the rest of the orderly creation, I was amazed at the arrangement of the world ; and I comprehended that the world and all that is therein are moved by the impulse of another, and I understood that he that moveth them is God, who is hidden in them and concealed from them, and this is well known that that which moveth is more powerful than that which is moved.

Now I say that God is not begotten, not made ; a constant nature without beginning and without end ; immortal, complete and incomprehensible ; and in saying that He is complete, I mean this : that there is no deficiency in Him, and He stands in need of naught, but everything stands in need of Him ; and in saying that He is without beginning, I mean this : that everything which has a beginning has also an end, and that which has an end is dissoluble. He has no name, for everything that has a name is associated with the created. He has no likeness nor composition of members, for he who possesses this is associated with things that are fashioned. He is not male, nor is He female : the heavens do not contain Him, but the heavens and all things visible and invisible are contained in Him. Adversary He has none, for there is none that is more powerful than He ; anger and wrath He possesses not, for there is nothing that can stand against Him. Error and forgetfulness are not in His nature, for He is altogether wisdom and understanding, and in Him consists all that consists. He asks no sacrifice and no libation, nor any of the things that are visible ; He asks not anything from any one, but all ask from Him.

The orator then proceeds to divide all mankind into four "races" : Barbarians and Greeks, Jews and Christians :—

The Barbarians reckon the head of the race of their religion from Saturn and Rhea ; the Greeks from Helenus, the son of Zeus ; and the Jews from Abraham. But the Christians reckon the beginning of their religion from Jesus Christ, who is named the Son of God most high ; and it is said that God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin took and clad Himself with flesh, and in a daughter of man there dwelt the Son of God. . . . This Jesus then was born of the tribe of the Hebrews ; and He had twelve disciples in order that a certain dispensation of His might be fulfilled. He was pierced by the Jews, and He died and was buried ; and they say that after three days He rose and ascended to heaven ; and then these twelve disciples went forth into the known parts of the world, and taught concerning His greatness with all humility and sobriety ; and on this account those also who to-day believe in this preaching are called Christians, who are well known.

He then deals with the various forms of error which have been held by each of the first three races. The folly of the Barbarians consists in worshipping the elements instead of God :—

The Greeks, though wiser than the Barbarians, have erred even more than they, in that they have introduced many false gods, and some they have represented as male and some as female ; and some of them have turned out to be adulterers and murderers, and jealous and envious, and angry and passionate, and murderers of fathers, and thieves and plunderers.

Aristides then goes through all the *chronique scandaleuse* of the gods of Olympus, Saturn's repasts of child's-flesh, the discreditable amours

and transformations of Jupiter, the lameness of Vulcan and the knavery of Mercury ; and has not much difficulty in proving that beings with such a record attached to their names could neither be gods nor goddesses.

These remarks about the folly of the idolatry of the Greeks are followed by an attack upon the Egyptians, whom the orator describes, not very appropriately, as "more ignorant than all other nations upon the earth," and whom he justly derides for their worship of animals, "the sheep and the calf, the pig and the shad-fish, the crocodile, the hawk and the cormorant, the cat and the dog, the serpent, the asp, the lion, and the leopard." As the Egyptians were not enumerated among the four races of men at the beginning of the oration, this long and ill-tempered tirade against them somewhat spoils the flow of the argument. There is reason to think that in the earliest copies there was "a triple division—worshippers of false gods, Jews, and Christians": and that "the first class was subdivided into Chaldeans, Greeks, and Egyptians, as being the ringleaders and teachers of heathenism to the rest of the world."

Aristides then devotes a short paragraph to the Jews, praising their monotheistic faith, and their imitation of God by acts of philanthropy, relief of the poor, ransom of captives, and burial of the dead.

Nevertheless they, too, have gone astray from accurate knowledge, and they suppose in their minds that they

are serving God, but in actual practice their service is to angels, and not to God, in that they observe sabbaths, and new moons, and the passover, and the great fast, and the fast, and circumcision, and cleanness of meats : which things not even thus have they perfectly observed.

Lastly he comes to the Christians, who, as he says, "by going about and seeking the truth, as we have comprehended from their writings, are nearer to the truth and to exact knowledge than the rest of the peoples." Their superiority consists in their pure monotheistic faith, which bears fruit in a holy and beneficent life :

On this account they do not commit adultery nor fornication ; they do not bear false witness ; they do not deny a deposit, nor covet what is not theirs ; they honour father and mother ; they do good to those who are their neighbours, and when they are judges, they judge uprightly. Their wives, O King, are pure as virgins, and their daughters modest. As for their servants or handmaids, or the children of such, they persuade them to become Christians for the love that they have towards them, and when they have become so, they call them without distinction brethren. They rescue the orphan from him who does him violence, and he who has gives to him who has not, without grudging. When one of their poor passes away from the world, and any of them sees him, then he provides for his burial according to his ability ; and if they hear that any of their number is imprisoned or oppressed for the name of their Messiah, all of them provide for his needs, and if it is possible that he may be delivered, they deliver him. And if there is among them a man that is poor or needy, and they have not an abundance of necessities, they fast two or three

days that they may supply the needy with their necessary food. . . . Every morning, and at all hours, on account of the goodness of God towards them, they praise and laud Him, and over their food and over their drink they render Him thanks.

In conclusion, the orator appeals to "the writings" of the Christians, as confirming his statements of their faith and practice. He says :

Truly this people is a new people, and there is something divine mingled with it. I have no doubt that the world stands by reason of the intercession of the Christians, while the rest of the world are deceivers and deceived, grovelling before the elements of the world, groping in darkness, and staggering like drunken men.

Let all those then approach to this gateway of light who do not know God, and let them receive incorruptible words, those which are so always and from eternity : let them therefore anticipate the dread judgment which is to come by Jesus the Messiah upon the whole race of men.

The Apology of Aristides the Philosopher is ended.

From the slight sketch here given (in which I have compressed the contents of sixteen pages into four), the reader will perhaps be able to form some idea of the strong and weak points of the Apology. Aristides is strong (as every Christian Apologist was strong) in his attack upon the immoral polytheism of the Greeks. Old myths which had once expressed with beautiful poetic imagery the thoughts of a young race in the childhood of the world, concerning the mysterious processes of Nature, had become degraded and sensualised under the handling of generations of ungodly men till the

mythological Heaven had become full of all manner of foulness and debauchery. So long as he is attacking these fables of "a creed outworn," Aristides wins an easy victory. And when he is painting the pure and beneficent life of the early Christians, he is also interesting, if not powerful; and we cannot help feeling that the picture which he draws is, in the main, probably a true one. There was still in the year 150 no material or social inducement to make a profession of Christianity, and we may fairly believe that though then, as always, there were some tares among the wheat, the character of Christians did for the most part correspond with that which is attributed to them by their Apologist.

But when we have said this, I think we have about exhausted all that can be said in praise of the oration of Aristides. Though professedly the work of a philosopher, it contains no clear philosophical statement of the relations of Christianity to the false religions which it proposed to overthrow, or to the incomplete Jewish religion which it proposed to develop. It would not, I think, be unfair to say that in one sentence of Butler's *Analogy* there will be found more fruitful thought on these subjects than in all the sixteen pages of our Apologist. Nor does the orator even give us any good popular statement of the scheme of Christian doctrine. Except the two sentences, apparently extracted from a creed, concerning the Founder of the Christian religion, there is really nothing to

explain to an intelligent inquirer what the new "race" of men believed. And how could a Roman Emperor, however willing to be taught, gather the purport of the new and strange Glad-tidings from a short and hurried statement such as this? Assuredly not thus would the Apostle Paul have wasted his great opportunity, had he stood before Hadrian or Antoninus to plead for "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Moreover, it is impossible not to feel that in his arguments against the anthropomorphic conceptions of the Deity held by the Greeks, the orator uses some expressions which might have been easily turned against his own position. He is not satisfied with denouncing the immoralities of the gods of the heathen; he also says that it is impossible to think of God as lamenting or having joy over corruptible beings; and the fact that Osiris was killed by Typhon is at once a proof that he could not be a God. It is easy to see how any one acquainted with the Christian Scriptures, and having read of the tears of Jesus at the grave-side of His friend, and of His violent and shameful death, would turn this argument of Aristides against his own clients.

But this very defect of the recovered Apology constitutes, I think, its peculiar interest and value. We can see from its pages how the essence of Christianity was being silently transformed, even in the second century, by the process of controversy with Pagan antagonists. In a certain sense I would

not shrink from confessing that the Bible, both Old Testament and New, does hold anthropomorphic language concerning God. Not only the words of Moses and the Prophets, which may be said to be accommodated to the childish nature of those to whom they are addressed, but even our Saviour's own words, through the human, figure forth for us the Divine. The prayer "Our Father which art in Heaven," is in a certain sense "anthropomorphic"; and I, who cannot worship a Force or a Stream of Tendency, am for ever grateful to the Teacher who, condescending to my weakness, has used the human image of a Father to help my flagging spirit "in its ascensions up to heaven." But language such as this is really condemned by some of the arguments incautiously used not only by Aristides, but also by other early Christian philosophers.¹

Thus we see in this work of Aristides, Christianity, which had been originally a revelation to a Semitic people, gradually becoming a Greek philosophy. This constitutes the importance of the book, and gives it a profound interest. I have not space here to indicate the many other literary questions which are raised by it; the connection with the "Teaching of the Apostles," and with

¹ Take, for instance, Clement's "appalling definition of the Supreme Being" as summarised in Dr. Bigg's *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*:—"We know not what He is, only what He is not. He has absolutely no predicates, no genus, no differentia, no species. . . . He is formless and nameless, though we sometimes give Him titles, which are not to be taken in their proper sense—the One, the Good, Intelligence, or Existence, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord. These are but honourable phrases, which we use, not because they really describe the Eternal, but that our understanding may have something to lean upon."

the apocryphal "Preaching of Peter"; or the probability that it may have been read by Celsus, the author of the "True Word," to which Origen replied. For all these points, as well as for the strange discovery that the Apology itself has been lying hid for centuries in an Eastern theosophical romance, called "Barlaam and Josaphat," I must refer my readers to Rendel Harris's monograph, and to the appendix by J. Armitage Robinson.

I heartily congratulate Professor Harris on the important addition which he has been enabled to make to our knowledge of the early history of Christianity, and hope that he may be permitted to make other journeys to the East, and bring back like precious spoil from the land of buried faiths and empires.

II

In a former paper under this title I gave a short sketch of the recently discovered "Apology" of Aristides, and suggested some reasons why the line of argument pursued by this early champion of Christianity seems unsatisfactory to us, who, coming into the world seventeen centuries later, ask ourselves, "What was the nature of the struggle between Christianity and Paganism, and how did that struggle terminate?"

The obvious, superficial answer to the last part of this question is, "Of course, Christianity was

the conqueror. From being merely a *religio licita* (and often not even enjoying that immunity), the religion of the Crucified One became the dominant faith of the civilised world. Roman Emperors caused the cross to be borne at the head of their victorious legions. Barbarian kings bowed their heads low at a signal from the Christian bishop, and over all the fairest portion of the globe, from the Euphrates to the Tagus, might be heard resounding the hymns of the Christians' worship."

Yes; the outward victory was complete; and if spiritual forces are accurately measured by the nation's statute-book, the fact that the laws which had once sought to compass the forcible suppression of Christianity were, in the fourth and fifth centuries, all turned against its foes, settles the question, and proves that the religion of Jesus obtained an absolute triumph over its opponents. Only, when we come to look a little closer into the matter,—when we apply to the wrangling bishops, the corrupt and sycophantic courtiers, the bloodthirsty and fanatical mobs of these very centuries, those texts by which St. Paul has taught us to distinguish between "the works of the Spirit" and "the works of the flesh"—we feel that the apparent victory masked a real defeat. The Pagan world seemed to accept the religion of the Nazarene, but, in accepting, transformed it into something wholly unlike its pure and beautiful ideal. "The light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." When it was turned into a dismal fog,

blotting out the light of the sun and of the stars, and causing men to stumble at noonday as in the night-time, then the darkness was willing to accept it, and in many pompous words to explain its comprehension of it.

The inquiry into the mutual reactions of Christianity and Paganism is not one of merely academic interest. If it be true (as I am persuaded it is true, and that men will more and more clearly recognise), that the nominal victory of Christianity was purchased at the cost of assimilating Christianity in some important points to the Paganism which surrounded it, we have at once an explanation—at least a partial explanation—of the cause of its comparative failure to purify and regenerate the world ; and we have also an indication of the purifying process to which it must itself submit before it can become a truly world-wide religion.

We are distressed, and rightly distressed, at the slow progress which the religion of our Saviour makes among the vast populations of Asia,—Mohammedans, Brahmins, Buddhists, Confucians. But who shall say if the slow rate of progress is not due to the fact that we have been presenting to them, not the pure, unalloyed truth, as the Saviour of men Himself presented it to the women of Samaria or to His disciples in Gethsemane, but that truth blended with foreign or even hurtful ingredients, derived from Roman jurisconsults, Greek philosophers, and Anglo-Saxon traders ? It may be that some of those spiritual conflicts

which our generation is sadly passing through, while

Still struggles in the Age's breast !
With deepening agony of quest,
The old entreaty, " Art thou He ?
Or look we for the Christ to be ? "

are in truth but the travail-pangs which shall bring to birth a deeper and simpler Christianity ; true, not for the Aryan races only, but for the Semitic and the Turanian also ; a religion which shall pour the new wine of the kingdom into the vessels of Confucian morality, and shall persuade the world-weary disciple of Buddha that there is something better in store for him than annihilation.

Should some future Aristides, in framing his Apology for our Faith, enter deeply and seriously into the consideration of " Christianity conquered as well as conquering," he will probably find that he has to contemplate the influence of Paganism on Christianity under three chief aspects :—

1. Greek Philosophy.
2. The State-religion of the Roman Empire.
3. The faiths of the barbarians of the West and of the great Oriental nations.

1. The bearing of Greek philosophy on the development of the Christian religion is far too vast a subject to be even hinted at here. I would only remark that it was through her philosophy and not through her mythology that the Hellenic mind was really influencing the world when the early Apologists were writing. It was natural and

it was easy for the Christian Fathers to point out the absurdity of supposing that Jupiter had transformed himself into a bull and galloped with Europa across the sea. The shower of gold that visited the imprisoned Danaë, the strained conjugal relations that existed between the King and Queen of Heaven, the rogueries of Mercury and the servitude of Apollo,—all these products of the myth-making faculty of

The lively Grecian in a land of hills,
Rivers and fertile plains and sounding shores,
Under a cope of sky more variable,

had long ceased to be believed by men of reflection and intelligence. They were like our stories of fairies and pixies, toys which remind us of the childhood of the world, and which may still retain a certain place in poetry and fiction, but do not really satisfy any craving of man's spiritual nature, and are not entitled to claim for themselves the great name of religious faith.

But the speculations of Greek philosophers exercised a very different influence on the minds and souls of men. All through the early Christian centuries, Plato, Epicurus, Zeno, were profoundly affecting the thoughts of the best part of the human race, on the great questions which lie at the root of all religion. Stoicism, especially, had formed for itself something very like a Church, and numbered among its members some of the noblest spirits of the time. It could point to its saints, Epictetus and Aurelius; to its martyrs, Cato and

Seneca. But having merely indicated this fact, that it was the Philosophy, not the Mythology, of Hellas which was the real rival of Christianity in the second century, I must pass on from that subject to consider the second great antagonistic influence, the State-religion of the Empire.

2. The religion of the Roman people was singularly unlike the poetical mythology of Hellas, with which it had been almost violently identified. It was easy to say that the goddess of the harvest-field, who was called Ceres at Rome, must be the same deity as the Demeter of the Greeks. "Jupiter, best and greatest," must be the Zeus who sat on the summit of Olympus. Vulcan must be Hephæstus, and Venus, Aphrodite. To impose upon the old deities of Latium these famous Hellenic names was as easy as to clothe a regiment of Turkish Bashi-bazouks in European uniform; but, after all, the heart of the matter remained unchanged. The "Dii Indigetes," the home-gods of Latium, were a colder, more abstract, but also more moral set of beings than the gay but lawless tribe who inhabited the Greek Olympus. The Roman of the early Republic was stern, selfish, and prosaic; he could also, when occasion offered, be pitilessly cruel; but he knew what Conscience meant, and he owned that he was under a Law; and such a man, who revered the sanctity of family life, could not make to himself utterly unmoral gods.

The general characteristic, however, of Roman

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indigenous theology, was its abstract and shadowy character, its utter lack of the charm of form and colour, which, with all their wickedness, was to be found in the gods of Greece. The tribe of lesser divinities, which, as Varro tells us, presided over the events of human life; the god *Vaticanus*, who gave the baby-lungs power to emit the first cry after birth; the god *Fabulinus*, who taught him to utter his first intelligible word; the god *Educa*, who enabled him to eat; the goddess *Potina*, who showed him how to drink; *Cuba*, who soothed him in his little crib at night;—all of them are, as one feels, abstractions, not living personalities; and it is no marvel if their worship failed to hold itself erect in presence of the vivid, poetical mythology of Greece, or the sensational, orgiastic worships of Egypt and Syria.

Still, if I am not mistaken, there was something in the old Roman religion which did communicate itself to the infant Christianity. The Romans had been accustomed for centuries to the sight of a succession of priests and *flamens* and supreme pontiffs, who possessed a purely official right to mediate between man and his Maker. The Pontifex Maximus was like the Minister of Public Worship under the present Republic of France, a man who need neither have, nor profess to have, any spiritual gifts or weight of religious character, but who was designated by the popular voice for the discharge of certain official duties. At Rome he might be even a professed Freethinker, as Julius Cæsar was when he

held this office; but all that was required of him was as much respectability of private character as was expected from any other public officer, and the faithful performance of certain ceremonies which the State, for the State's own sake, in order to avert the anger of the gods, without any thought of religious edification, ordered to be performed in the temples of Rome. Can we not see how easily, when faith was growing cold in the Christian Church, this official view of the members of the hierarchy was likely to prevail? "True," it might be said, "the bishop of this see or the patriarch of that Metropolitan Church is 'alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him'; by not one word or action does he remind us of the Master whom he pretends to serve; but after all he is the bishop, or he is the patriarch, and no one else has so good a right as he to offer 'the bloodless sacrifice' on behalf of our city." Of all the many evil lessons which Christianity has learned from Paganism, few have done her more harm than this notion of an official holiness, a right conferred by office to interpose between the soul and its Maker.

It is a less important resemblance, but I think we may also trace some influence of the religious mind of ancient Rome on the liturgical and ritualistic development of Christianity.¹ Here is the

¹ If any one should think it a fanciful suggestion that the Christian Church borrowed some elements from Pagan Rome, I would ask him to consider how much ecclesiastical literature has gathered round the one word "sacrament." And yet this word is, beyond all contradiction, taken over from Pagan Rome, being the word used to describe the oath of military fidelity which was taken by the Roman legionaries.

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description, which an inquirer (who is not thinking of any parallel between heathen and Papal Rome) gives of the character of the old Roman worship :—

The Romans supposed that the gods resemble the Prætor, and that before them, as before the judges, one will lose one's cause, if the request which is presented to them is not in the proper form. When you do not know what you ought to say to them, you go to inquire of the *pontifices*. These are the consecrated jurisconsults, instituted for the express purpose of watching over the scrupulous maintenance of all the details of worship. [How exactly these words describe a recent suit about ritual in the Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury.] They have books in which all is foreseen, and which contain prayers for all occasions. These prayers greatly resemble the formulæ of jurisprudence. Eastern nations, accustomed to abandon themselves to the impulses of their hearts when they pray, find them prolix and diffuse. "Use not vain repetitions," says Christ in the Gospel of St. Matthew, "as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." This abundance of words, which is especially remarkable in the ritual of the Roman religion, arises from the necessity of being clear. The Roman who prays is always afraid of not expressing clearly what he wishes to say; he is careful to repeat things several times over, in order to be perfectly understood. As he does not wish to leave any room for ambiguity, he does not hesitate to give precision to his thoughts by material means. When he dedicates a temple, he lays hold of the door; he touches the earth whenever he pronounces the word *tellus*; he lifts his arms to heaven when he speaks of Jupiter, and strikes his breast when the prayer refers to himself. If the gods

do not understand him, it certainly will not be the fault of the worshipper.¹

Who can read a passage like this, and call to mind many of the characteristic features of "Catholic" ritual, the reiterated prayers of the Litany, the use of the sign of the Cross, the bowing at the name of Jesus and at the "Gloria Patri," the turning to the East at the recitation of the Creed and so forth, and not feel that the wonderful race who conquered the world were not utterly beaten when they came in conflict with the religion of Jesus? Rome professed to bow the knee to Nazareth, but she succeeded in impressing something of her own character on the religion which came forth from Galilee. The voice of the Roman *flamen*—a voice of this world—still partially overpowers the deep, low voice of Christ, a voice out of Eternity, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him."

I might multiply examples of this kind of borrowing by Christianity from the rites of Pagan Rome. I might point out that the Emperor Claudius, on the day of his triumph, mounted the steps of the Capitol on his knees, just as pilgrims are this very day ascending on their knees the steps of the Scala Santa; that the processions, the dressings and undressings, the sittings down and risings up of the Arval brethren, seem almost like a parody of a High Mass performed in some cathedral on one

¹ Boissier, *Religion romaine*, i. 16, a book from which many of the facts used in this paper are drawn, and which I can strongly recommend to any one who desires to study the subject more fully.

of the great days of the Church ; that these same Arval brethren chanted a prayer in the ancient dialect, which had become as unintelligible to them as the Latin of the mass-book is to a peasant of Brittany ; that the lighting of candles in the day-time was a well-known rite of Roman paganism ; and that a ceremony resembling extreme unction seems sometimes to have taken place by heathen death-beds.¹ But the subject is one which has been often treated of by ecclesiastical historians, and probably no candid Catholic apologist would deny that many rites and ceremonies were thus taken over by the Christian Church from Paganism ; only he would say, as Keble does in one of his most beautiful hymns,² that this was an allowable, nay praiseworthy, "spoiling of the Egyptians," an adoption by the new and conquering faith of usages and practices which had been for many generations associated with thoughts of worship, and which, not being absolutely idolatrous, might lawfully be received into the service of the sanctuary.

There is still, however, one side of Roman Paganism to which no reference has yet been made, and which ought to be noticed, since it was that with which the Christian martyrs came most frequently into collision—I mean the worship of the deified Emperors. To a believer in the central

¹ A bas-relief in the Louvre shows us, by the bed of a woman who is at the point of death, and by the side of her weeping family, priests and the apparatus of sacrifice (Boissier, i. 345).

² "See Lucifer like lightning fall" (Hymn for the Third Sunday in Lent).

doctrine of Christianity it must ever be an astounding marvel that in the same age of the world such a truth and such a lie—the Incarnation of the Son of God and the Apotheosis of the Roman Cæsars—should have existed side by side. It seems as if then, as ever, when the good seed was being sown in the field of the world, the enemy was bent on sowing his *Zizania*, which should grow up alongside of the wheat and bear some strange resemblance to it; as if by some magical incantation a lurid fire had been kindled, which was to throw a ghastly and mocking shadow of the Eternal Verity on the wall of human life. Listen to the well-known words of “the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us,” as spoken to His sorrowing disciples on the eve of His departure:—

“And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing: verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” And now hear the words which the deified master of the world, Tiberius, from his delicious retreat in sunny Capreæ, addressed to the trembling Senate of his slaves:—“What I shall write to you, Conscript Fathers, or how I shall write, or what I shall not write at this time, may the gods and goddesses plague me yet worse with their torments (though

under those torments I feel that I am daily perishing) if I know." Strange and almost overwhelming thought! Each of these men was worshipped as God. He who had the calm outlook backward and forward into the Eternal World, and who with a soul that was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and almost under the shadow of the felon's cross, spoke with this serene assurance of the fulness of joy which lay before his faithful followers; and he who, at the very summit of the world, could not hide from those who trembled at his frown the utter and hopeless misery of his soul, the blackness of darkness which lay about his path.

Fearful as was the error involved in the deification of even the best of the Emperors, it is not difficult to see how the practice took root in the soil of Paganism. It had long been a favourite thought of the heathen world that great men, when they died, ascended to heaven, and shared in the banquets of the gods. The servile nations of the East, the Syrians and Egyptians, had anticipated this posthumous glorification, and offered divine honours in their lifetime to their kings, the Antiochi and the Ptolemies. To republican Rome this kind of adulation was odious; but when the great Julius fell under the dagger of assassins the popular grief and indignation at his murder demanded some such recognition of his greatness. Signs and portents were seen by the excited populace, and even the Senate, which had hated him when alive, was obliged to sanction the worship of *divus Julius*

after his death. Under Augustus the movement went steadily forward. The poets helped it by their lays. "Deus nobis haec otia fecit" (a god hath given us this rest) sang Virgil; and Horace says, with what seems to us amusing *naïveté*, "As we believe in Jupiter's godship when we hear him thundering from heaven, so we must look upon Augustus as a present divinity now that the Britons and the dreaded Parthians have bowed to his sway." Still, the prudence of Augustus, who saw how the Eastern adoration of the sovereign would jar upon the old republican spirit of Rome, kept the practice in some sort of bounds during his lifetime. The provinces, which were for the most part honestly desirous to express their gratitude to the wonderful statesman who had established the *Pax Romana* over nearly the whole habitable globe, were permitted to raise temples and altars to Augustus and Rome.

Cautiously and tentatively the new Emperor-worship was introduced into the other cities of Italy; but apparently, so long as Augustus lived, not into Rome itself. Upon the death of that Emperor the torrent of adulation, gratitude, enthusiasm, burst all barriers. He was at once enrolled amongst the gods as *divus Augustus*, and the eagle which soared up to heaven from his funeral pyre typified the ascent of the Imperial spirit to the stars. From this time onward the deification of the Emperors became almost a matter of course. A madman like Caligula would insist upon claiming

divine honours during his life. He had a gallery built from the Palatine to the Capitoline Hill, that he might, when he wished, pay a visit to his brother deity Jupiter of the Capitol, and he expected his courtiers to believe him when he averred that he was nightly visited by the goddess Luna. However, when the magnificent madmen of the Julian line had vanished from the scene, and sober common sense, in the persons of the Flavian and Antonine Emperors, ascended the throne, a somewhat less preposterous version of the Apotheosis prevailed, and the Emperor was not deemed to have "increased the number of the gods" till the spirit had parted from the body. Hence it was that the homely old Emperor Vespasian said (with a little touch of humour), as he felt his end approaching, "Already I perceive that I am becoming a god."

To us, who have lived for generations under the sway of the solemn words, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord," the actual deification of Emperors, living or dead, seems like the dream of a lunatic. But perhaps the Positivists' worship of Humanity may help us somewhat to understand the state of mind in which such a dream was possible, and it is also a little explained to us by the fascination which some of the great figures of history have exerted upon their contemporaries. Had Europe and America been for some centuries polytheistic, it might not have been a difficult matter to procure the

deification of a Washington, a Napoleon, or a Garibaldi.

But whatever was its origin, or its imagined justification, there is no doubt that the worship of the Emperor was the one element in Paganism most terrible to the early Church. The Roman State was not by its nature a persecutor, and it was extremely tolerant of diversities of theological opinion among its subjects. A mere speculative belief, that the Son of God had become incarnate, and had lived and died in Palestine, would perhaps have brought no martyr to the stake ; but when the holder of it refused, at the bidding of the Prætor, to throw a little incense on the flame as a sacrifice “to the Genius of the Emperor” (that modified worship was always rendered in the Emperor’s lifetime), then it was clear that the recusant was a disloyal subject, and that if the judge let such an one go unpunished “he was not Cæsar’s friend.”

The strange thing to notice is, that so deeply did the Apotheosis of the Emperors root itself in the political system of Rome, and so many harmless, or even beneficent, practices clustered around it, that it did not perish even with the triumph of Christianity. Constantine himself permitted, under certain conditions, the inhabitants of Hispellum to erect a temple in his honour, and, for at least a century after the publication of the Edict of Milan, a deceased Emperor—though he had been a fervent Christian in his lifetime, was always spoken of as *divus*. His palace was still “the divine house” ;

his charitable gifts were "the sacred largesses" : and everything about him bore a sacrosanct character. It is thus indirectly from the Imperial Apotheosis that the Churches of Christendom have derived the flattering titles which they apply officially to the head of the State, however unspiritual or unmoral his character may be. The sad necessity which lay upon a conscientious Anglican priest of speaking of " His most Sacred Majesty Charles II.," or "our most religious and gracious King George IV.," was derived by lineal succession from the determination of the Roman multitude that the mighty Julius should be enthroned above the stars.

3. Lastly, something must be said concerning those barbaric religions both of the East and West, which were jostling for precedence both with the old classical religions and with the new-born Christianity during the centuries from Augustus to Constantine. The religion of Rome was, as I have said, remarkably tolerant,—nay, more than tolerant,—anxious to conciliate the other religions with which it came in contact. When the legions encompassed a city to take it, one of the first cares of the general was to pronounce the *evocatio*, in which the gods of the besieged city were solemnly invited to quit its doomed enclosure, and to come and dwell in all-conquering Rome, where temples and sacrifices should be theirs. Again, when the legions found themselves quartered in newly conquered countries, they ever showed their earnest desire to conciliate the favour of the stranger gods

upon whose domain they were trespassing. Almost any museum containing Roman inscribed stones will furnish proofs of this assertion. In our Antiquarian Museum at Newcastle there is a little altar inscribed "DIS CVLTORIBVS HVIVS LOCI IVL VICTOR TRIB." "To the gods who foster this place Julius Victor the Tribune" dedicates his altar. Julius Victor, who is, as we should say, the Colonel of the regiment (quartered at Halitaneum, near the pleasant valley of the Rede), knows little about the gods who have a fostering care of "this place"; but whoever they are, he wishes to be on good terms with them, and accordingly has his little altar carved in their honour. Hard by is an altar dedicated by Julius Firminus, a Decurion, "DIS MOVNTIBVS," which is interpreted (somewhat, it must be confessed, in defiance of grammar) "to the gods of the mountains." Here is one dedicated by Audacus to the god BELATUCADER, in discharge of a vow for his safety. Here is one to COCIDIVS and the Genius of the garrison. And here—almost the finest objects in the whole collection—are two magnificent altars which were found, some five-and-twenty years ago, in making a new flower-bed in a gentleman's garden at Benwell. They bear long and easily deciphered inscriptions, recording that they are dedicated to the god ANOCITICUS or ANTENOCITICUS, for their witness is not quite coherent as to the spelling of the name. We know nothing more of the habits or characters of these strange and uncouthly named divinities, only that

the officers of the legion, who were living doubtless among their British worshippers, wished to be on good terms with them. The motive for the erection of these altars appears to be exactly the same which led the Cuthites and the Avites and the Sepharvites, who were settled in the land of Israel after the captivity of its inhabitants, to desire instruction as to "the manner of the God of the land, because Jehovah sent lions among them which slew some of them."¹ Even so these Roman soldiers in the long nights of winter, in the dark November days, when the dreary north wind was whistling through the vast primeval forests around them, were filled with ghostly terrors, from which they felt that the bright and joyous gods of the south land could not guard them, and sought to propitiate the unknown gods who have held sway in this desolate island for centuries, to make their peace with Belatucader and Anociticus (or whatever his name may be), and Cocidius, and all the gods who fostered this wild place.

In the same museum is to be found one of the most interesting religious monuments of the Roman Empire, the well-known confession of faith of a Roman centurion. The Iambics in which this curious creed is recorded may be thus translated :—

The Virgin by the Lion hath her throne,
 Bringer of corn, of laws, of cities free ;
 By all which gifts the blessed gods are known,
 Mother of gods, Peace, Virtue, Ceres, She,

¹ 2 Kings xvii. 25, 26.

And Syrian Goddess—all these names are hers
 Who weighs both Life and Laws in equal scale,
 Her star first shone on Syrian worshippers,
 Who thence to Libya spread the wondrous tale.

Thus, taught by thee, we all do understand.
 This faith, oh Goddess, I upon this stone,
 Tribune and Prefect, serving in this land,
 Marcus Caecilius Donatianus, own.¹

This curious little bit of religious autobiography reveals to us an officer of high rank, serving in Britain, who professes his boundless trust and veneration for the *Dea Syria*, whose worship had spread from Antioch to Carthage, and whom he identifies with Ceres and with Rhea, mother of the gods.² Moreover, he considers that she is the same being with the Virgin whose constellation stretches in the zodiac from Leo to Libra, and whose radiant ear of corn (*Spica Virginis*) certainly favours her identification with Ceres. But we are here upon the threshold of the Oriental religions,—a most interesting subject of inquiry, but one upon which I will not now

¹ The original runs thus :—

IMMINET LEONI VIRGO CAELESTI SITU
 SPICIFERA IVSTI INVENTRIX VRBIVM CONDITRIX
 EX QVIS MVNERIBVS NOSSE CONTIGIT DEOS
 ERGO EADEM MATER DIVVM PAX VIRTVS CERES
 DEA SYRIA LANCE VITAM ET IVRA PENSITANS
 IN CAELO VISVM SYRIA SIDVS EDIDIT
 LIBYAE COLENDVM INDE CVNCTI DIDICIMVS
 ITA INTELLEXIT NVMINE INDVCTVS TVO
 MARCVS CAECILIVS DONATIANVS MILITANS
 TRIBVNVS IN PRAEFECTO DONO PRINCIPIS.

² Since writing the above paper I have come to the conclusion that this inscription is probably in reality a sort of apotheosis of Julia Domna, herself a Syrian, and wife of the African-born Emperor Severus (see *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 1899, pp. 289-292).

enter. Meanwhile, however, I would remark that in the gallant devotion of M. Cæcilius Donatianus to his goddess, we already see how the soil is being prepared for the worship of another Virgin than her of the Zodiac or the Dea Syria. It may have been three centuries after Donatianus ordered his confession of faith to be engraved on stone, that another and more famous general (Narses) "used to propitiate the Deity with prayers and other acts of piety, paying due honour also to the Virgin and Mother of God, so that she distinctly announced to him the proper season for action; and he never engaged until he had received the signal from her."¹ If Narses, the Christian, had left us the true record of his religious convictions, they probably would not have been on a much higher level than the quaint creed of Marcus Cæcilius Donatianus.

¹ Evagrius, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 24.

ON THE PROSPECTS OF ENGLISH PROTESTANTISM

(Address at Cambridge, Free Church Summer School, 1907)

I HAVE undertaken to say something to-night about the prospects of Protestantism in our country. I cannot speak on this subject without explaining why I cling to the name—by no means so widely accepted in England as it once was—which recalls the great Protest made by the German Reformers at the Diet of Spire in 1529; nor can I defend that name without seeming to attack that which in the general usage of European nations is accepted as its antithesis, the word Catholic.

Much as I dislike polemics, there will therefore be somewhat of a polemical tone in the following pages. But I hope I shall be preserved from that bitter and acrimonious spirit which has sometimes spoiled the utterances of Protestant controversialists in past days. I remember, and for my own part I condemn, some of the language which was used about our Catholic fellow-Christians at the time of “the Papal Aggression” and throughout the middle of last century. The religion of some of our countrymen at that day seemed chiefly to consist in

chalking up "No Popery" on the walls, or shouting it at popular meetings, sometimes accompanying the anathema with terms of vulgar abuse, which one would gladly banish from one's memory. I need not say that this is not the spirit in which I or any of my audience desires that the question should be handled.

I think perhaps Tolerance comes more easily into our spirits from the daily increasing sense of our own littleness and ignorance. Here are we on this little island of an earth, living our short and precarious life, with thick mists hanging over the Whence and Whither of our being. What are we that we should anathematise and condemn? Our Catholic fellow-Christians are confident that theirs is the only way of Salvation. The Church is to them the one Ark of Safety riding over the stormy waves of a deluge-covered earth: and *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*. It is this very conviction of theirs which in past ages often made them cruel, causing them to drag with remorseless hands the heretic from his place of refuge, and to force him even by martyrdom into the only true Church.

We are persuaded that they were utterly mistaken, that their Church is no sole Ark of Safety riding on a pathless sea; but has often been an ill-found ship full of fever and pestilence, and that sometimes pirates have boarded her and, under the Banner of the Cross, have steered her to strange shores, where they have sold her unhappy passengers into cruel slavery. Still let us gladly recognise that

this has not always been her history, and that many a saintly soul has been borne by her over the ocean of life to the desired haven, to that "rest" which "remaineth for the people of God."

One of the most precious of the sayings of Christ, one of the most helpful for the needs of the present age, is contained in two verses of the Gospel of Mark (ix. 38-40).

And John answered and said, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us : and we forbad him, because he followeth not us." But Jesus said, "Forbid him not : for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part."

These verses I take to be our Master's standing order to His disciples through all succeeding ages, as to their relation one to another. By this truly golden rule ought the intercourse of the Greek Church with the Roman, of Catholic with Protestant, of Episcopalian with Presbyterian, of Congregationalist with Wesleyan, of Baptist with Quaker to have been regulated.

"This Eastern Patriarch," you say, "does not recognise the primacy of the Pope : these Scottish Churches have rejected the government of Bishops : these Methodists have a conference instead of a presbytery : these Quakers have disused the baptism by water." We will forbid them because they follow not with us.

"Not so," the Master seems to say to us, now in

this twentieth century. "Are those men with whom you are so grievously offended working spiritual miracles in My name? Are they casting out the devils of intemperance, of gambling, of lust? Are they bringing men in any way nearer to My likeness? Are they making the home sweeter, happier, fuller of My spirit of sympathy and love? Are they at all working for the coming of My Father's Kingdom of righteousness and peace? If so—I need not say, Do not burn them or torture them: only the devils which they have cast out would venture on such wickedness as that—but do not even 'forbid' them. In My Father's house are many resting-places; and you will find that there is room there for them as well as for you."

In the face of this mighty command I find it hard to understand how the upholders of what is called "The Apostolic Succession" can even dream of "unchurching" the Christian communities which do not accept the government by Bishops. But then let us always remember that the command is for Christians of this day a two-edged sword. If "Judah shall not vex Ephraim, also Ephraim must not envy Judah." With all our abhorrence of many of the methods of the Medieval Church we must not forget the services which she often rendered to Christianity and Civilisation; her Missionary zeal, to which we owe the conversion of our own forefathers; her preservation of the Scriptures, the protests which she often made against the immorality of kings; her efforts for the enfranchisement of

slaves ; her frequent endeavours to promote peace between Christian sovereigns. Throughout those ten Christian centuries she was constantly casting out devils in the name of Christ, and, therefore, we must not wholly ban her memory. And the Catholics of to-day : widely as we differ from them, we can only admire and reverence the work which thousands of them are doing to lessen the misery of the down-trodden ones in our great cities. We gladly recognise that at any rate in our own land their influence is generally thrown on the side of purity and of temperance. I would go even further and say that among the really devout and earnest Catholics a peculiar type of character has been evolved, fervid in its gentleness, strong and noble in its self-surrender—the type of character which was seen long ago in St. Francis, in Thomas à Kempis, and in Fra Angelico, and that this type, though not absent from the Protestant Churches, grows not so easily in our somewhat stiffer soil and amid the blasts of our theological controversies. Therefore while we say with St. Paul, “To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour,” we say also, “We would not if we could forbid you.” We are persuaded that in your Church and in ours there are a countless host who are really one another’s brethren in Christ, though a confusion of tongues like that of Babel prevents their recognising their common brotherhood.

I come back to the question concerning the name “Protestant,” whether we do well to retain

it on our banners. Fully admitting that the title of "Christian" should be sufficient for all believers in Christ, I still hold that so long as the Roman Church clings to the name of Catholic, and brands us as heretics for refusing her claim to rule over us, we cannot dispense with that word which recalls the great Protest made at the foot of the throne of the Emperor Charles V., that word which justifies and claims a share in the great liberating movement of the sixteenth century. The word Protestant, it seems to me, is in Church History very much the same as the word Metamorphic in Geology. Where certain stratified rocks, the result of the slow deposit of ages, have come in contact with the fiery streams of lava or basalt bursting upwards from the eternal fire beneath our feet, they undergo a change of texture which the geologist can at once recognise, and which he denotes by the word Metamorphic. Now, at the Reformation even such a change passed upon the Christianity of Europe. It affected even the countries which remained in the obedience of Rome. No careful student of history will deny that post-Tridentine Catholicism is a different thing—in some respects, I believe, a better thing—than the Catholicism of the Popes of Avignon. But as to England, the Scandinavian countries, and most of Northern Germany, the change is obvious. These nations can no more ignore the transformation which they have undergone than the Metamorphic schists can re-make themselves into the primitive sedimentary rocks out of which they have

been evolved. Can you imagine any of these countries submitting to that financial system which under the name of Annates, Reservations and so forth diverted large portions of the wealth of the nation—not as a matter of voluntary generosity, but as a persistently urged claim of right—into the coffers of the Roman Curia? Or the subordination of the common law of the realm to the canon law, founded as we now know the canon law to have been on the forged and fraudulent “Decretals of Isidore”? Or can you imagine even the Pope himself so utterly uninfluenced by the spirit of the age as to say with Boniface VIII., “Therefore we declare and pronounce that it is of the necessity of faith that every human creature should be subject to the Roman Pontiff.” “All persons of whatever rank must appear when summoned before the apostolical tribunal of Rome, since such is the pleasure of Us, who by divine permission rule the world.”

We have only to contrast the history of our own country for the last four centuries with the history of Austria or of Spain to realise the immense change in the national character—a change, I freely admit, not *all* for good—which has been wrought by the Reformation. What, then, is to be gained by ignoring that change? Why the word Protestant should be ruled out as unbecoming and ill-bred by the compilers of our latest ecclesiastical fashion-books, who have not as yet taken the last step and submitted themselves *toto corde* to the

authority of the See of Rome, it is not easy to understand.

But, undoubtedly, for the whole of this anti-Protestant movement we have chiefly to thank one man whose influence, with all our admiration for his saintly sweetness of character, we feel to have been most disastrous on our countrymen; I mean, of course, John Henry Newman. I have sometimes thought that if one were called upon to give the names of the two men (both of them sons of the nineteenth century), whose influence has been the most fatal to the true progress of the human race, one would have to name Bismarck and Newman. It will seem paradoxical to some of my audience thus to couple together the remorseless man of blood and iron and the delicate-fibred, almost over-conscientious doctor of theology; but my point is that the influence of both these men tended to bring us back into bondage. Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century had some aspirations after a reign of righteousness and peace; Germany had still an Ideal; when the Pomeranian squire, with his jack-boots and clanking sword, stalked on to the stage and said, "Brute Force is the only arbiter; down with the Idealists and their dreams; I am going to make Deutschland supreme; no matter how many millions of lives are sacrificed; no matter how many falsehoods I may have to tell; by Blood and Iron I will prevail." And thus, as I conceive, has Otto von Bismarck put back the clock of human progress for a century.

Now think what might have been the course of religious history in England had Newman never lived. If we may imagine a spirit from the other world looking forth upon our nation seventy or eighty years ago, he would surely have seen there much religious earnestness, but coupled therewith, no doubt, a good deal of superficiality and cant. But knowing, as such a spirit surely would do, that the thoughts of men were about to undergo a momentous change, that the stupendous discoveries of science, the freshly disclosed marvels of the telescope and the microscope, the more thorough and critical study of all the literatures of the ancient world, and the comparative anatomy of Religions were about to compel a new orientation in Theology, different from that which had prevailed for three centuries, would he not have perceived that wise and tender guidance *forward*, in the path of believing freedom, was the one great necessity for the religious mind of England?

Instead thereof a teacher arose, with marvellous powers of persuasion, steeped in the lore of the Early Fathers, ignorant of the real wants and tendencies of his own age, seeing only too clearly the superficiality and cant of much of the fashionable religion of the time, and rushing to the lamentable conclusion that the only way to eradicate these was "to un-Protestantise, un-Miltonise" his countrymen, and lead them back into Medievalism. We had struggled out into a land of religious freedom: and there seemed a possibility of at least all the

Protestant Churches in our land coming to a better mutual understanding and working together, in the spirit of Christ, for the elevation of their countrymen. Then the Oxford Movement began, urging us back towards the land of bondage, separating brother from brother, reviving once more the jargon of forgotten controversies: and (when I think of some of the absurdities of the Lives of the Saints which it put forth) erecting a calf in those days and saying, "These be thy gods, oh Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt."

To understand the meaning of "The Oxford Movement," one should of course study and re-study that great piece of religious autobiography, Newman's *Apologia pro Vita sua*, a book which I read with earnest interest when it came out in numbers forty-three years ago, and which I have always loved, while I have utterly differed from its conclusions. One sees from that book that it was the history of the Monophysite controversy of the fifth and sixth centuries which finally dislodged Newman from his cherished *Via Media*, and shunted him off into the Roman obedience.

About the middle of June [1839] I began to study and master the history of the Monophysites. I was absorbed in the doctrinal question. This was from about 13th June to 30th August. It was during this course of reading that for the first time a doubt came upon me of the tenableness of Anglicanism. I recollect, on the 30th of July, mentioning to a friend whom I had accidentally

met how remarkable the history was : but by the end of August I was seriously alarmed.

I have described in a former work how the history affected me. My stronghold was antiquity : now here, in the middle of the fifth century, I found, as it seemed to me, Christendom of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reflected. I saw my face in that mirror, and I was a Monophysite. The Church of the *via media* was in the position of the Oriental Communion. Rome was where she now is, and the Protestants were the Eutychians. Of all passages of history, since history has been, who would have thought of going to the sayings and doings of old Eutyches that *delirus senex*, and to the enormities of the unprincipled Dioscorus, in order to be converted to Rome ?

The Church then, as now, might be called peremptory and stern, resolute, overbearing, and relentless : and heretics were shifting, changeable, reserved, and deceitful, ever courting civil power, and never agreeing together except by its aid : and the civil power was ever aiming at comprehensions, trying to put the invisible out of view, and substituting expediency for faith.

What was the use of continuing the controversy or defending my position, if, after all, I was forging arguments for Arius or Eutyches, and turning devil's advocate against the much-enduring Athanasius and the majestic Leo ?

Be my soul with the Saints, and shall I lift up my hand against them ? Sooner may my right hand forget her cunning and wither outright as his who once stretched it out against a prophet of God.

Anathema to a whole tribe of Cranmers, Ridleys, Latimers, and Jewels ! Perish the names of Bramhall, Ussher, Taylor, Stillingfleet, and Barrow from the face of the earth, ere I shall do aught but fall at their feet in

love and in worship [*sic*], whose image was continually before my eyes, and whose musical words were ever in my ears and on my tongue.

There you have the secret of Newman's change and the *raison d'être* of the Oxford Movement. He is determined to get back into the fifth century and to rank himself on the side of the champions of the Catholic faith in the days of the dying Empire. Is it possible for any man, or, at any rate, for any great body of men, really to do this? Has not the whole horizon of our thoughts been changed by all the great discoveries of the intervening centuries? Monophysite and Monothelite, are they really words which even, by way of antagonism, stir now the souls of men? Is it desirable, if we could do it, to get back into the same state of mind, the same atmosphere of thought on things religious which prevailed under Theodosius or Justinian? I do not think so. I have studied pretty carefully the history of those times, and they seem to me, from the religious point of view, unutterably dreary: men taking the name of Christ perpetually into their mouths, but showing miserably little of the spirit of Christ in their lives: crowds of courtier-bishops galloping to and fro over the highways of the Empire to make and unmake creeds at the bidding of a sometimes blood-stained Emperor: armies of mad monks swarming forth from the desert into the cities, and often murderously assaulting their opponents who differed from them on some minute point of metaphysical theology.

Oh, no! Christ is not here, and when we go to that period of Church history in search of Him, we can only say, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

Some one, I know not who, has said of Newman that "he was always horribly afraid of being damned." It is a coarse way of putting it, but I think it is not far from the truth. I cannot read the *Apologia*, I cannot look at his portrait, with the face so furrowed by anxiety and distress, without feeling that his predominant emotion was fear, fear lest after all his searchings and strivings the Almighty should cast him into Hell because he did not belong to the true Church. Looking at that face, I cannot feel that the Gospel was to him really "Glad Tidings." I am sure that he knew something of the Spirit of the Lord, but, owing to a certain morbidness of his nature, not to him did the Spirit of the Lord bring the rightful liberty.

Of course the keynote of the whole of Newman's *Apologia* is the word "Catholic," as it is the one great battle-cry of all who have heartily thrown themselves into the Oxford Movement.

As he said in a letter published soon after Tract 90:—

The age is moving towards something, and most unhappily the one religious communion which has of late years been practically in possession of this something is the Church of Rome. She alone amid all the errors and evils of her practical system [the words were written, of course, before he had yet gone over] has given free scope

to the feelings of awe, mystery, tenderness, reverence, devotedness, and other feelings which may be especially called "Catholic."

What is, after all, the origin and the force of this word Catholic which is pronounced with such reverence by some, with such aversion and terror by others? It is, as we all know, essentially a Greek word, a word of Aristotelian logic, a word which distinguishes the General or the Universal from the Particular. When David said in his haste, "All men are liars," he was uttering a Universal or Catholic proposition. When St. Paul said, "There are some that trouble you," he was uttering a Particular proposition. There is in itself no special atmosphere of holiness about the word Universal.

Shelley has well said :—

Oh that the words which make the thoughts obscure
From which they spring, as clouds of glimmering dew
From a white lake blot heaven's blue portraiture
Were stripped of their false forms and varying hue,
And frowns and smiles and splendours not their own,
Till in the nakedness of False and True
They stand before their Lord, each to receive its due.

The Nicene Creed professes belief in "One Catholic and Apostolic Church." The word Apostle (admittedly not confined entirely to the Twelve) means a messenger or missionary. The word *Ecclesia* used in the Creed, which we have translated Church, was applied, as we all know, to the popular assembly at Athens, and is used as a translation of the Hebrew *Kahal*, a congregation. Stripping,

therefore, from the words the associations which, like a beautiful creeper, have grown over them in the course of seventeen centuries, we find that the Creed asserts belief in "one Universal Missionary Assembly." We may perhaps notice in passing how much this word Apostolic has changed its meaning and its associations in the course of the ages. His Apostolic Majesty is now the proud title of the Royal and Imperial Sovereign of Austria. Could James or John or Thaddeus revisit earth and behold all the pomp and splendour of the mighty Hapsburg Emperor, how greatly would those simple Galilean fishermen be surprised to learn that from them that stately potentate had derived his proudest title?

But the word Catholic or Universal, if I may go back to it for a few minutes, what does it really connote? Its use may have been justified, or at least convenient, in the second century after Christ, when it was employed to distinguish the general run of Christians from the over-subtle, imaginative manufacturers of strange theologies who went by the name of Gnostics. Already in the fourth century it was a term of controversy; a missile slung by the Arian at the Athanasian and by the Athanasian at the Arian: and now for many generations it has been claimed as the peculiar possession of those churches which are under the government of Bishops. But whatever it may be, according to the ideal of its votaries, Universal the Catholic Church is *not*. To deny the existence of large

bodies of Christians outside of it is simply to shut one's eyes to an obvious fact. Nor is it *one* even if you accept the definition of the Catholic Church which binds it fast to Episcopacy. The Anglo-Catholic Church is not yet one with the Roman, and probably no two religious bodies hate one another more cordially than the Roman and the Eastern: though in argument with outsiders they may each admit one another's title to the name Catholic.

I remember hearing of an English traveller to the monasteries of Mount Athos, who saw upon the convent wall a portrait of Garibaldi. He expressed some surprise at seeing the likeness of so great a revolutionary leader in that ecclesiastical atmosphere.

"Not at all," said his hosts; "we like to have the portrait of Garibaldi, because he is the enemy of that wicked man, the Pope of Rome."

We Protestants sometimes use the word Catholic as a term of praise for Christians whom we admire, meaning thereby that they are men of wide and liberal sympathies, men who are not intent on emphasising points of difference, but who would rather find out all that they can that is noble and Christ-like in the members of other Christian churches, and cultivate to the utmost brotherhood and sympathy with these. A beautiful and holy aspiration truly, and one, as I have already tried to explain, with which I entirely sympathise: but I am not sure that we deal wisely in labelling that aspiration by the name Catholic, a name which, as

I have said, is so innocent, so non-religious in itself, but which has gathered round it, in the course of centuries, such a cluster of bitter polemical associations: a name which is to some of us so painfully suggestive of martyrdoms and priestly tyranny, a name which after all, as it seems to me, has in it none of the promise of the future but is only a harking back to a disputatious and uncharitable past.

For this is surely true of the word Catholic in its real use in the present actual world in which we live, however different may be its ideal signification, that it is a term not of inclusion but of exclusion: that the chief charm of it, to most of those who use it, lies in the fact that it does *not* connote a universal Christian church: that it is as they conceive, their own special and peculiar heritage into which the multitude of heretics round them have no right to enter.

The condition of the so-called "Catholic" world at the present day is one which must excite the liveliest interest in Protestant minds. In Italy we see the Catholic Church and the National spirit permanently at war with one another, so that, as an eminent Italian scholar once said to me: "We are in this painful dilemma, that we must bring up our children either as bad Christians or as bad Patriots." For Pope they now have a worthy parish priest, personally one of the most saintly men that ever filled St. Peter's chair, but narrow-minded and (it is said) ignorant, a man, I should

fear, almost as little fitted to work and to control the mighty engine of Papal administration as poor Pope Celestine himself, the pontiff “Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto.” And, meanwhile, men’s minds are stirring; Loisy in France, Fogazzaro in Italy, Tyrrell in England, and, doubtless, many besides are raising the standard, I will not say of revolt, but of religious freedom, and claiming the right to think, the right to refuse a profession of belief in what is demonstrably absurd. Will they conquer or will they survive that fatal hug with which the all-embracing Infallible Church has crushed the life out of so many victims? None can say: and I will not pretend to prophesy, but this much I think we may say that if they do come forth victorious out of the prison-house, they will not be flying the colours of Protestantism. Protestantism, as we understand it, seems to be a system of belief and practice which the Latin mind cannot assimilate. To go back to my simile of the metamorphic rock, the Italian and the Frenchman may be igneous, or they may be sedimentary, but it seems as if they could not, in any large numbers, accept that peculiar blend of Faith and Free Inquiry which in the religions of the world goes by the name of Protestantism. Yet, if they do succeed in bursting the chains with which the Roman Curia has bound them; if they go forth into the wide pastures of Evangelical Christianity; if they study the Bible for themselves without the guidance of a confessor, and without *parti pris*; that they will thus reach a

place whereat their Catholicism and our Protestantism will be within easy speaking distance of each other, I for one do assuredly believe.

I have referred to the present position of the Roman Church in Italy. Her dispute with the French Government is in a much more acute state, and I am not sure that we Englishmen have the necessary materials for forming a judgment concerning it. Every one knows that after the ruin of the old Pre-Revolution Church, Napoleon I. made a concordat with the Pope, which, on the one hand, secured to all the Bishops and Clergy of the Catholic Church in France a tolerably handsome maintenance, but, on the other, retrenched considerably the old Gallican liberties and made Pope and Emperor joint masters of the situation. That arrangement which lasted under the Bourbons of both lines, under the Second Empire, and under the Republic has now been terminated by the will of the French Government. Everything seemed to call aloud for a compromise, for the establishment of a *modus vivendi* by which the Catholic congregations could at least retain possession or occupancy of the churches if they had to take upon themselves the burden, hitherto borne by the State, of the maintenance of the clergy. But a compromise or a *modus vivendi* are not things which commend themselves to the taste of the estimable, narrow-minded Pius X. How the dispute stands at present probably few Englishmen know: how it will eventually be settled, no one knows. But

meanwhile evidently no little hardship is being inflicted on many worthy men who find the career of a lifetime suddenly closed, and though the Minister of Public Worship has tried to execute the decrees with as much forbearance as possible, it cannot be denied that some of his actions have been harsh, and that things have been done which to our English minds wear the appearance of persecution. Also the professed and militant Atheism of some—I fear of many—of the French political leaders inclines one to say :

Oh, my soul, come not thou into their secret,
Unto their assembly, mine honour be not thou united.

We must wait and see how the slowly evolving drama shapes itself. Obviously we have no duty to interfere, no right even to offer advice. We can only hope against hope that the upshot of the whole debate may be the triumph of some freer and less venomous form of Catholicism than that which engineered the conspiracy against Dreyfus, and which inspires the writers of *La Croix*.

And, meanwhile, one indirect result of the struggle—not a pleasant one for us—is the horde of monks and nuns who have been driven over to our own country by the Suppression of the Orders, and who would not be “religious” if they did not improve the occasion by attempting to make proselytes.

But now, if we ask ourselves what are the prospects of Protestant Christianity in our own land,

and in the daughter nations which have gone forth from its shores, I think we may come to the conclusion that its greatest danger, after all, is not in Romanism. It will be seen from the tenor of my previous remarks that I do not underrate that danger, that I think it would be a lamentable thing were our free Christian churches to be once again entangled in the Roman yoke of bondage. But is there not a greater peril than this to be recognised by any one who with unblinded eyes looks at the course of the national life both here and in America? I mean the peril of sheer Paganism, not, of course, the noble Paganism of Socrates, of Epictetus, and of Marcus (I might almost say, "Would that there were any danger of such Paganism amongst us"), but the utterly anarchic, sensual Paganism which St. Paul described in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and the fruits of which are seen in the pages of Tacitus and of Juvenal.

I hate the spirit of pessimism, and I know that our querulous Elijahs are often ignorant of the existence of thousands like-minded with themselves who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. But unless all the pictures drawn for us in the daily papers are utterly out of drawing, the Christian religion is losing its hold on rather large sections of our countrymen, especially perhaps at the two opposite ends of the social system, among the selfish rich and the brutalised poor. Those sermons in which Father Vaughan denounced the

godlessness of "the smart set" (hateful phrase!)—was it not generally admitted that there was in them a large proportion of truth, and did not some of us feel a certain regret that the modern Savonarola should have had to be sought for within the limits of the Roman obedience, and that no Protestant minister had been sufficiently honest and fearless to utter that most necessary warning?

And then the atheistic misery which, as all our faithful witnesses report, hangs like a thick cloud over the slums of the great cities both here and in the United States. It may be called Secularism or Agnosticism, or some other scientifically sounding name, but it means the de-Christianisation of great masses of our people, and that, as I understand it, is Paganism, and Paganism of a poor and ignoble type, which, if it becomes dominant, will bring forth its old and deadly fruits.

Against this rising tide of Paganism, and in defence of the great spiritual truths of Christianity, all the living and loyal churches of Christ will have to strive, shoulder to shoulder, and it may be that—as is sometimes seen in heathen lands—the very necessity of facing one common foe may bring the long-estranged brethren nearer together, and may make a reunion of Christendom—on other lines than those which the English Church Union dreams of—seem less impossibly far off than it does now at this beginning of the twentieth century.

But always, when the word "reunion of the Churches" is mentioned, we are forced to remember

the gigantic obstacle to such reunion which is presented by Rome's proud claims to infallibility and immutability. There is a certain order of minds on which these claims exercise an irresistible fascination. To me, so long as they continue to be insisted on, they make the thought of reunion inconceivable. I feel that they bind down the champions of the Roman Church to the defence of all her greatest crimes, to the advocacy of all her most illogical propositions: that instead of allowing her converts to associate themselves with the Best in her history, they force them to homologate her Worst; and that for me at least to profess a belief that that church has always been infallibly guided by the Spirit of the All-wise and All-holy one would be to take a lie in my right hand.

It is not possible to forget the unspeakably wicked lives which, as all students of history know, have been led by some of the so-called Vicars of Christ sitting in the chair of St. Peter. "We grant you this," the honest Roman controversialist will say, "We do not ask you to believe in the impeccability of the Pope: we only plead for his Infallibility." To which I answer, "Where in the teaching of Christ do you find the warrant for the claim of knowledge of Divine Truth apart from holiness? If we were talking about teachers of Mathematics or Physics, we would grant you that the private life of the Teacher was irrelevant to the discussion, but in things of the kingdom it is otherwise. 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the

doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.' "

As Frederick Robertson has well expressed the teaching of Christ, "Obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge," or, as I think Savonarola uttered it, "Tanto sa ciascuno quanto opera."

Therefore, as I said, that claim which some find so magnetic, of Papal infallibility and ecclesiastical immutability, will always, while it lasts, fatally bar the door to the union of Christendom. But if it be possible, let us imagine the great historic church humbling herself in the dust before her Lord, and saying, "Oh Christ, we have sinned with our fathers and done wickedly : we have shed the blood of Thy saints, and made Thy name a byword among the heathen : we have stained Thy pure and beautiful Truth with all manner of inventions of our own, and have laid on the minds of consciences of men burdens heavy and grievous to be borne. But, oh Lord, Thou knowest that through it all we have loved, and now do Thou Thyself guide us whither Thou wilt, only leave us not to ourselves and take not Thy Holy Spirit from us."

With such a Church, fallible but penitent, laying aside her age-long pretensions, and only longing to do the will of her Lord, it might well be the duty and the high privilege of all other Christian churches to seek reunion.

GEORGE FOX

THERE are two great classes of rocks, so geologists tell us, in the crust of this globe on which we dwell. There are the sedimentary rocks which have been deposited at the bottom of primeval seas, and have been built up by the slow labour of the ages into what were once horizontal strata, however now contorted and broken by subsequent dislocations. And there are the igneous rocks, the prime causes of these dislocations, which have come up hissing hot from the heart of the earth, have broken through the orderly regularity of the sedimentary rocks above them, and have changed the face of our Planet.

A difference somewhat like this the historical student may discover among the persons whose names are landmarks in the history of our race. There are the men who have gone on quietly building on the old foundations, the generals who have fought the battles of some ancient state, the rulers who have administered her laws, the poets and artists who have produced beautiful works while obeying the rules of Art handed down to them by the greatest of their predecessors, the

divines who have cheerfully devoted the toil of a lifetime to the work of expounding and illustrating the sacred books of their religion. Most useful work has been done by many of these toilers ; and the Human Race would not stand where it does to-day but for their patient labour.

But, then, there is another class of men whose most remarkable characteristic is that they seem to fit in to nothing that has gone before them. Without being themselves necessarily of a violent character—in fact some of them are proverbially gentle and forbearing—the thoughts which possess their souls, and to which they are compelled to give utterance, have such an upheaving and disruptive force that the world upon which their dying eyes close is utterly unlike that which heard the cry of their infancy. A brief enumeration of some of the chief of these transforming characters will best explain my meaning. Such I hold to be a true description of Moses, who broke up that bondage of his people which had lasted four hundred years ; of Buddha, who substituted a democratic unceremonial religion for the rigid caste-system and costly sacrifices of the Brahmins ; of Socrates, who by his terrible dialectic shattered the superficial systems of the Sophists ; of Paul, who broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile ; of Mohammed, who turned the degraded idolaters of Arabia into enthusiastic missionaries of the One Unseen God, most mighty and most merciful ; of Luther, who in his monastic cell heard the liberating

voice, "The Just shall live by Faith"; in our own day, of Thomas Carlyle, who, to a self-satisfied, talkative, and somewhat hypocritical age, preached his hard Gospel of Work, Silence, Reality.

From whence came to these men the strange volcanic force which enabled them thus to revolutionise the world of Thought I will not now pause to inquire, but will only record my own conviction that some, at any rate, among them did truly hear that Divine Voice which Moses, Socrates, and Paul declared that they heard summoning them to their great enterprises.

Now, without comparing the work of the great Quaker Prophet with the achievements of the men whom I have just named, in respect of the magnitude and importance of the results which they may have respectively attained, what I wish to express is that as a matter of classification he belongs to the same family of men; that his work like theirs was fresh, unprecedented, disruptive of the pre-existing order of things; in a word, that he was an original thinker. Born at an age and in a country in which all things were tending towards the mighty struggle between Cavalier and Roundhead he gave unquestioning allegiance neither to king nor parliament. In the sphere of religious thought the same struggle was represented by the antagonism between the Catholic and the Puritan conceptions of Christianity. The first he persistently ignored, the second he often bitterly opposed, and in consequence Anglo-

Catholic and Puritan when they agreed in nothing else could always find one ground of common action when it was a question of repressing by the strong arm of the law the pestilent heresy of the Quakers.

I feel that this last assertion as to the antagonism between George Fox and the Puritan party will sound paradoxical to some of my hearers who have been accustomed to look upon the Society of Friends as the most intensely Puritan of all the Churches that owe their origin to the seventeenth century. In a certain sense this is true. As far as externals went, in the plainness of their attire, in the measured gravity of their speech, in their antagonism to the world of fashion and frivolity, it may be truly said that the Quaker out-Puritaned the Puritan. But these things were, after all, but straws on the stream of Puritanism. With that which constituted the essence of that mighty current, Fox and his followers had no sympathy. The Puritan derived most of his elements of religious thought from Calvin's Institutes, and looked with more or less of longing approval towards the great Church-State of Geneva. Fox had not the slightest sympathy with Calvinism, and the ablest work in defence of his position—Barclay's *Apology*—is a scarcely veiled attack on the Westminster Confession. The Puritan attached immense importance to preaching, and sermons for him could hardly be too long, too elaborately divided, too minute in their microscopical examination of the

letter of Holy Scripture. For all this kind of preaching Fox had only condemnation ; it was not, he averred, the office of the true minister of Christ to take a text of Scripture and try to beat it out thin for the people.

The Puritan called the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the Word of God, and held them for "the Primary Rule of Faith." Fox refused to give to a book the title which he considered to belong to Christ alone, and, with all his reverence for the Bible, strongly insisted that not it but the Holy Spirit's voice to the individual Christian was the Primary Rule. Lastly (though many other points of difference might be enumerated), the Puritan was always ready to wield "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" in defence of his creed, while Fox held that war, in even the most righteous cause, was utterly forbidden to the Christian.

After this general indication of that which I conceive to have been Fox's position in the religious history of England I proceed to lay before you the chief facts of his life. You will easily understand that my picture can be only an outline sketch. Time would quite fail me to fill in any of the details. He was born in July 1624 at the little Leicestershire village of Drayton in the Clay, a few miles from the battlefield of Bosworth. His birth-year preceded by one year the death of the "British Solomon," King James I. : he was twenty-four years old at the time of the execution of Charles I., and he lived till two years after the "Glorious Revolu-

tion," the flight of James II. and the accession of William and Mary.

His parents were fine specimens of the honest industrious English cottager. As he himself says :

My father's name was Christopher Fox : he was by profession a weaver, an honest man, and there was a seed of God in him. The neighbours called him Righteous Christer. My mother was an upright woman : her maiden name was Mary Lago, of the stock of the martyrs [doubtless in the Marian persecution].

Born into this quiet, religious family he was always of a grave, serious turn of mind, untouched by the frivolities as well as by the vices of youth, astonishing his elders by his questions and his answers concerning Divine things ; intensely truthful and stable in his purposes, so that it was a common saying among his acquaintances, "If George says Verily, there is no altering him." I am afraid it must be admitted that he was also somewhat inclined to self-esteem, and was deficient in the saving grace of humour. It should be added that though he was a diligent student of the English Bible, large portions of which he had committed to memory, he was not what we should now call an educated man, both the writing and spelling of his letters being those of an illiterate person.

As he was growing up to manhood there was some talk among his relations of making this grave and devout lad a minister, probably in the Presbyterian Church, "but others," as he says, "persuaded to the contrary." He does not appear at this time to

have had any invincible repugnance to the clerical profession. Eventually he was apprenticed to "a man that was a shoemaker by trade, and that dealt in wool and used grazing and sold cattle," and a great deal "passed through his hands." Apparently the only secular occupation that he ever practised was that of a shepherd or agricultural labourer. As his friend William Penn said of him: "As to his employment he was brought up in country business; and as he took most delight in sheep, so he was very skilful in them, an employment that very well suited his mind in several respects, both from its innocence and solitude; and was a just figure of his after ministry and service."

I am not able to say whether Leicestershire was in the seventeenth century as renowned for its breed of sheep as it has since become, but there seems a certain fitness in the fact that one of the most famous of Leicestershire's sons should have been a shepherd. But the young peasant of Drayton in the Clay was not to develop into a prosperous grazier. Apparently the circumstances of his parents were such that it was not absolutely necessary for him to work for a livelihood—as he says, "I had wherewith both to keep myself from being chargeable to others and to administer something to the necessities of others"—and all the years of his earliest manhood, from his twentieth to his twenty-fourth year, seem to have been a time of unsettlement and spiritual depression, as, "having left his relations and broken off all familiarity or fellowship

with old or young," he wandered from place to place, often in great distress of mind, seeking for some light on the spiritual enigmas which troubled his soul. He spent some months apparently in lodgings in London; then again he was in the country, fasting much and walking abroad in solitary places, and often taking his Bible and sitting in hollow trees and lonesome places till night came on, and frequently in the night walking mournfully about by himself, for (as he says) "I was a man of sorrows in the times of the first workings of the Lord in me."

These years, which are represented by so many sad, strange pages in George Fox's wonderful *Journal*, were years during which England was passing through an agony of conflict, such as not even the great struggle with Napoleon or the Indian Mutiny can have equalled in intensity, for then her own sword was turned against herself, and at Edgehill, at Naseby, at Marston Moor, the whole portentous problem of her future was being decided by thrust of pike and discharge of culverin. But of all this (though Fox must often have been moving about in the track of the warring hosts) there is not a hint in the pages of his *Journal*. As the Romans and Carthaginians fought on at Lake Thrasymene, while

An earthquake rolled unheededly away,

so the roar of the great Civil War seems to have passed unnoticed by the wandering Leicestershire

shepherd, so intent was he on the mighty conflict between Hope and Despair in his own tribulated soul.

As we might naturally have expected, the young man went to one clergyman after another seeking counsel as to his spiritual distresses. None of them, however, were able to help him. Priest Steevens (the minister of his own parish) asked him a question about Christ's cry of forsakenness on the cross and approved his answer; but "what I said to him in discourse on the week-days, that he would preach on the first days, for which I did not like him." An "Ancient Priest at Mancetter" bade the young anxious inquirer take tobacco and sing psalms; unseasonable advice, "for tobacco was a thing I did not love, and psalms I was not in a state to sing: I could not sing." At the next interview the old clergyman became angry and pettish, and after it was over he violated the young man's confidence and told his troubles to his servants, so that they became the talk of the milk lasses, which grieved him that he should have opened his mind to such an one.

At another time Fox went to "one called Dr. Cradock, of Coventry," and asked him "the ground of temptations and despair." Cradock began catechising him as to his belief in the Gospel history, but while the conversation was going forward, they walked about in his garden, and the young man, intent on the deep questions which they were discussing, accidentally set foot on a

flower-bed. The doctor of divinity's un-Christian rage at this trifling offence quite destroyed any chance that he might have had of helping the young pilgrim out of the Slough of Despond.

"I saw they were all miserable comforters," says Fox, "and this brought my troubles more upon me." But the men whom he thus vainly consulted, though he calls them Priests, were evidently, in fact, Presbyterian ministers, who had obtained their benefices under the new ecclesiastical settlement made by the Long Parliament. When we find that most, if not all of them, figure in the list of Calamy's "Ejected Ministers," having given up their livings for conscience' sake on Black Bartholomew's Day, 1662, we feel that they hardly deserve the odium which has fastened upon their names by reason of the mention made of them in the great *Journal*. They were probably very dry preachers, but good men. They were painfully elaborating the "fifteenthly" or "sixteenthly" of their discourses for next Sabbath, when this strange young man came into their rooms desiring to pour forth the troubles of his soul. Sedimentary rocks themselves, they were bewildered and exasperated by his disruptive, volcanic energy. They could have held forth to him by the hour on the subject of effectual calling, or the Number of the Beast in the Apocalypse, but he, the spiritual descendant of Job and of Asaph, was wrestling with the dark problems of the Universe, and on these they could give him no help.

I must here transcribe a few sentences from the *Journal* to indicate the nature of the struggle which was going on in Fox's mind and the source of his final victory.

Now, though I had great openings [Fox's favourite expression for revelations of God's purposes], yet great trouble and temptation came many times upon me: so that when it was day I wished for night, and when it was night I wished for day: and by reason of the openings I had in my troubles I could say as David said, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." When I had openings they answered one another and answered the Scriptures, for I had great openings of the Scriptures, and when I was in trouble one trouble also answered to another.

Though my exercises and troubles were very great, yet were they not so continual but that I had some intermissions, and was sometimes brought into such a heavenly joy, that I thought I had been in Abraham's bosom. As I cannot declare the misery I was in, it was so great and heavy upon me, so neither can I set forth the mercies of God unto me in all my misery. O! the everlasting love of God to my soul when I was in great distress: when my troubles and torments were great, then was his love exceedingly great.

Now after I had received that opening from the Lord, that to be bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not sufficient to fit a man to be a minister of Christ, I regarded the priests less and looked more after the Dissenting people [probably the Baptists and Independents]. Among them I saw there was some tenderness, and many of them came afterwards to be convinced, for they had some openings. But as I had forsaken the priests, so I left the separate preachers also, and those called the

most experienced people: for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. When all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do: then, oh then, I heard a voice which said: "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition"; and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy. Then the Lord let me see why there was none upon the earth that could speak to my condition, namely, that I might give Him all the glory, for all are concluded under sin, and shut up in unbelief, as I had been, that Jesus Christ might have the pre-eminence, who enlightens and gives grace, and faith, and power. Thus when God doth work, who shall let it? and this I knew experimentally.

I was still under great temptations sometimes, and my inward sufferings were heavy, but I could find none to open my condition to but the Lord alone, unto whom I cried night and day. I went back into Nottinghamshire, and there the Lord shewed me that the natures of these things which were hurtful without were within, in the hearts and minds of wicked men. The natures of dogs, swine, vipers, of Sodom and Egypt, Pharaoh, Cain, Ishmael, Esau, etc.; the natures of these I saw within, though people had been looking without. I cried to the Lord, saying, "Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils?" and the Lord answered, "That it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions: how else should I speak to all conditions?" and in this I saw the infinite love of God. I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love which flowed over the ocean of darkness. In this also I saw the infinite love of God, and I had great openings.

Thus, then, from the conflicts and the despairs of those four troubled years Fox emerged with a faith and confidence which never afterwards left him, and which supported him through many a conflict with visible foes, the "rulers of the darkness of this world": but which, though based on the great facts of the Christian Revelation, was quite unlike the stereotyped conventional creed of either Cavalier or Roundhead. For Fox, though he would probably not have accepted, perhaps hardly have understood, the designation, was now, and remained to the end of his days, a *Mystic*, and one of the most strongly marked specimens of his class.

The larger part of the Christian world, as we know it, has been for centuries divided between two great schools of thought, the Catholic and the Evangelical. But there has also been ever a third school marked off by less definite boundaries, and, in fact, often claiming its secret adherents among the other two, which is most fittingly denoted by the word *Mystical*. A word, this, which has been often used as a term of contempt, and which, from mere similarity of sound, is often supposed to imply a cloudy mistiness of thought, and a general weakness of intellect, but which students know to have a noble origin, and to have been borne by some of the greatest thinkers that the human race has produced.

The best thing, probably, that could be found in the old, bewildered world of Greek Paganism

was the so-called mysteries of Eleusis, wherein certain selected souls, after undergoing ceremonies of probation and cleansing, were admitted into the inner circle of the initiated, and learned, apparently, a higher and a purer doctrine concerning the Divine Nature than was set forth by the poets and traded upon by the priests. As he who was admitted into this inner circle of believers, whose eyes had been opened by purifying knowledge, was called a Mystic, the same word has been used for near two thousand years to denote all those thinkers who yearn for a spiritual intuition of the unseen kingdom of God.

In this, the true and historical sense of the word, the Christian religion is undoubtedly mystical. Whoever seeks by faith to penetrate ever so little way behind the veil of visible Nature; whoever believes that "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," is in so far forth a Mystic. Whoever believes that Jesus of Nazareth, once lifted up on the cross of Calvary, is still, by invisible cords, "drawing all men unto Him," is a Mystic. Whoever believes that the Holy Spirit, the Promise of the Father, still warns, reproves, comforts, guides the believers in Christ is a Mystic. Though the mystical habit of mind be rare, a certain half-conscious element of mysticism must surely be admitted to exist in the mind of every Christian man and woman whose Christianity is not a mere name. If we would seek for a man who may be pronounced altogether clear from

this weakness (if weakness it be), we shall find him in the thorough-going Agnostic. For the true Agnostic, if I understand his position, is willing to learn all that the educated senses can tell him concerning the material universe, and to accept the conclusions which mathematical science deduces from the facts thus observed, but is determined to stop there. As to anything which a supposed spiritual faculty whispers, of the Nature of the Almighty Maker, and the possibility of communion with Him, the Agnostic is resolutely ignorant. Therefore, he, at least, is quite free from the reproach of mysticism.

The strength of mysticism is in the courage and elevation imparted to the soul by its conviction of being the receiver of a message from the Almighty. Its weakness lies in the difficulty of bringing the conclusions, which the soul has thus arrived at, to a practical test, and of finding some common measure of truth between one Mystic and another. In Mathematics, in Logic, in Physics, there are means of detecting fallacies and of forcing the utterers of them to confess their mistakes: but if a man says he has been caught up into Heaven, and heard unspeakable things, who can disprove his assertion? Socrates says that he has a *Daimōn*, a Divine Monitor within him, restraining him from a certain course of action: George Fox says that he has had an opening concerning the qualifications of a minister of Christ: who shall affirm or deny either proposition? From

this impossibility of arguing with the Mystic, he is no doubt in danger of becoming what we call "positive" or "wrong-headed"; in danger of mistaking the suggestions of a heated imagination for the voice of the Most High God. We admit the danger; we allow that it has in all ages been the besetting sin of the mystical temperament: yet, believing as we do that all that is best and happiest in the history of the human race has been the work of the Divine Spirit acting in a mysterious manner on the spirit and soul of man, we cannot consent to anathematise the Mystic as such, or to deny his claim to be listened to by his fellowmen. Probably when such a man, not obviously of unsound mind, appears in the world, professing to have received a message from the Most High, our wisest course is to adopt the attitude of Gamaliel, and say, Let us wait and see what comes of this man's teaching. If it tends towards greater holiness of life, towards the development of the Christian virtues, towards the lightening of the burdens and the disentanglement of the perplexities of human life, we will thankfully accept it as a message from the Eternal. If, on the other hand, it tends downwards towards immorality, unreason, and spiritual anarchy, we shall know "that the Lord hath not spoken by this man."

Behold then this new mystical teacher setting forth on a life-long journey, intent on imparting to his fellow-countrymen the thoughts wherewith his soul has been filled during the four years of his

spiritual travail. His life from 1648 till 1691 was one of almost incessant locomotion except for the intervals, the long and frequent intervals, which he spent in the loathsome dungeons of England in the seventeenth century. In the earlier part of his mission he generally travelled on foot, in later years on horseback. Sometimes he spent the night in the country house of a squire, more often in a little village pot-house, or the cottage of a peasant. Not unfrequently we find such entries as this in his *Journal*:—

When it grew dark I spied a haystack, and went and sat under it all night till morning.

The next day we travelled on, and at night got a little fern or bracken to put under us, and lay upon a common.

One fact which people have heard of, who know nothing else about Fox, is that he was clothed with leather: "partly" (as the Quaker historian Sewel says) "for the simplicity of that dress, and also because such a clothing was strong, and needed but little mending or repairing, which was commodious for him who had no steady dwelling-place, and everywhere in his travelling about sought to live in a lonely state." Fox himself records, not without some self-satisfaction, how his preaching "shook the earthly and airy spirit in which the priests and professors held their profession of religion and worship, so that it was a dreadful thing unto them when it was told them, The man in leather breeches is come." Let me give you one

extract from his *Journal*, a somewhat long one, but containing a sort of *résumé* of his teaching, and a sample of hundreds of others which I am unable to bring before you.

He goes one Sunday (1652) to Firbank Chapel in Westmorland, where two of his disciples have been preaching in the morning to a crowded audience. Some of the congregation disperse for dinner, but many remain in the chapel waiting for the afternoon service.

Now John Blakelin [apparently a clergyman and afterwards one of Fox's converts] and others came to me not to reprove them publicly, for they were not parish teachers but pretty tender men. I could not tell them whether I should or not (though I had not at that time any drawings to declare publicly against them), but I said they must leave me to the Lord's movings. While the others were gone to dinner I went to a brook and got a little water ; and they came and sat down on the top of a rock hard by the chapel. In the afternoon the people gathered about me with several of their preachers. It was judged there was above 1000 people, amongst whom I declared God's everlasting truth and word of life freely and largely for about the space of three hours, directing all to the Spirit of God *in* themselves, that they might be turned from the darkness to the light, and believe in it, that they might become the children of it, and might be turned from the power of Satan, which they had been under, unto God, and by the spirit of Truth might be led into all truth and sensibly understand the words of the prophets and of Christ and of the Apostles ; and might all come to know Christ to be their Teacher to instruct them, their Counsellor to direct them, their Shepherd to feed

them, their Bishop to oversee them, and their Prophet to open divine mysteries to them ; and might know their bodies to be prepared, sanctified, and made fit temples for God and Christ to dwell in. In the openings of heavenly life I explained unto them the prophets, and the figures and shadows, and directed them to Christ, the substance. Then I opened the parables and sayings of Christ, and things that had been long hid, shewing the intent and scope of the Apostles' writings, and that their epistles were written to the elect.

When I had opened that state I shewed also the state of the apostacy since the Apostles' days, that the priests have got the Scriptures, but are not in that spirit which gave them forth, and have put them into chapter and verse to make a trade of the holy men's words ; and that the teachers and priests now are found in the steps of the false prophets, chief priests, Scribes and Pharisees of old, and are such as the true prophets, Christ and His Apostles, cried against, and so are judged and condemned by the Spirit of the true prophets, and of Christ and of His Apostles ; and that none who was in that spirit and guided by it now could cure them.

Now there were many old people who went into the chapel and looked out at the windows, thinking it a strange thing to see a man preach on a hill or mountain and not in their church as they called it, whereupon I was moved to open to the people that the steeple-house [George Fox's favourite word for a church : he will not admit that the building has any right to be called a church] and the ground whereon it stood were no more holy than that mountain, and that those temples which they called the dreadful houses of God were not set up by the command of God and of Christ ; nor their priests called as Aaron's priesthood was, nor their tithes appointed

by God as those amongst the Jews were, but that Christ was come who ended both the temple and its worship, and the priests and their tithes, and all now should hearken unto Him, for He said, "Learn of me," and God said of Him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."

Very largely was I opened at this meeting, and the Lord's convincing power accompanied my ministry and reached home unto the hearts of the people, whereby many were convinced, and all the teachers of that congregation (who were many) were convinced of God's everlasting truth.

This specimen of one of Fox's sermons may give us an idea of the purport of most of his utterances during the forty years of his career as a preacher. Various consequences were deduced by him from his central doctrine; the non-necessity of baptism and the communion; the inconsistency of a Priesthood, or even of a separate class of paid ministers, with the spirit of the Gospel; the unlawfulness of all war under the Christian dispensation; the literal acceptance of the command, "Swear not at all": but these and many other features distinctive of Quakerism were all in Fox's mind subordinate to his one great principle, obedience to the Light of Christ kindled in the human soul. "Come to the Light; wait in the Light that you may grow up in the Life that gave forth the Scriptures; dwell in that Life in which you will know dominion over evil; witness the Seed, Christ in you that you may be heirs of the promise": these are the exhortations

which are perpetually repeated in his sermons and in his manifold epistles to his disciples.

Without entering into the large and difficult questions connected with Fox's disuse of Sacraments, and his "testimony" against Oaths and War, I may here allude to two points at which his teaching seems to touch the circle of modern thought.

I. As to the Universal and Saving Light. In opposition to the dominant Calvinistic teaching of Election and Reprobation, the Elect Few and the Reprobate Many, Fox strongly and earnestly insisted on the text, "Who will have *all men* to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the Truth" and others like it: and, in further illustration of the same thought concerning the largeness and universality of God's purposes of redemption for sinful man, he and his friends strenuously contended that even in the wide domain of Heathendom, where the outward knowledge of Christianity had never penetrated, still some of the Divine Seed was sown, and that though these dwellers in heathen lands had never heard the name of Christ, still some measure of Christ's light was kindled in their souls, which they could either nurse to greater brightness or quench to extinction. When he was in America he had a discussion with a certain doctor in the house of the Governor of Carolina. "And truly," says Fox, "his opposing us was of good service, giving occasion for the opening of many things to the people concerning the Light and Spirit of God,

which he denied to be in every one, and affirmed that it was not in the Indians. Whereupon I called an Indian to us, and asked him whether or not, when he did lie or do wrong to any one, there was not something in him that did reprove him for it? He said, 'There was such a thing in him that did so reprove him, and he was ashamed when he had done wrong or spoken wrong.'"

Obviously Fox was here dealing rather with what we should call Conscience, as concerned with Morals, than with any strictly religious illumination of the soul of the heathen. But his readiness to acknowledge religious instincts and aspirations in minds which have never come under the influence of the Christian Revelation, distinguished him favourably from almost all the theologians of his time, and is in harmony with some of the best and most hopeful teaching of our own day.

2. The authority of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Though Fox and his disciples were men deeply versed in the Scriptures (of which, as I have said, he had committed a large part to memory), and, though practically in all their discussions with opponents they based their arguments chiefly on Scripture texts, they protested from the outset against calling the Bible "the Word of God," maintaining that this title should be reserved for Him of whom the Evangelist wrote that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Deeply as the other usage has worked itself into the habitual language

of the Christian Church, I think it cannot be doubted that the protest was one which, in the interests of truth and clear thinking, required to be made, since in loose popular usage there is a danger of language being used concerning the message which, in the mysterious depth of its meaning, can only be applied to the great Messenger. We in our generation can see more clearly than most of the seventeenth-century disputants, the peril to faith itself which results from representing the Almighty as the author of the Bible, in the same sense in which we speak of Milton as the author of *Paradise Lost*: and, therefore, we might have some hesitation in accepting even Fox's position, "The Bible is not the Word, but the words, of God"; but in that day no such need for caution was felt. The Bible, especially in the hands of Protestant Divines, was the Infallible Book wherewith one might batter down the Infallible Church, and the disputant who stated its perfection in most uncompromising terms was the most certain to win popular applause: and thus the unjust but easy accusation, "George Fox denies the Scriptures," was often the means of exciting the fury of the mob against the itinerant preacher in that fierce theological England over which the Long Parliament bore sway.

I have dwelt long enough on the teaching of George Fox and on the experiences of his inner life. Let me now very briefly describe the events of his outer life, a life of perpetual storm and turmoil, almost to the very end of his career.

The preachings which marked these missionary journeys of his, however diffuse to our modern notions, were evidently no ordinary pulpit platitudes. Sometimes hundreds of hearers would be brought into sympathy with the preacher ; sometimes, more often probably, they would, by some unwise or uncomprehended word, be “ stirred up to sudden act of mutiny,” and would be ready to stone the audacious blasphemer. Thus sometimes one finds such an entry in the *Journal* as this :—

There came a great lady from Beverley to speak to Justice Hotham about business, and in discourse she told him that the last Sabbath day there came an angel or spirit into the Church of Beverley and spoke the wonderful things of God to the astonishment of all that were there and when it had done it passed away, and they did not know whence it came nor whither it went, but it astonished all, both priests, professors, and magistrates of the town. This relation Justice Hotham gave me afterwards, and then I gave him an account how I had been that day at Beverley steeple-house and had declared truth to the priests and people there.

Here there was an admiring if somewhat puzzled audience, but far commoner are such entries as this :—

Now, while I was at Mansfield Woodhouse I was moved to go to the steeple-house there and declare the truth to the priest and people, but the people fell upon me in great rage, struck me down, and almost stifled and smothered me ; and I was cruelly beaten and bruised by them with their hands, Bibles, and sticks. Then they haled me out, though I was hardly able to

stand, and put me into the stocks, where I sat some hours; and they brought dog-whips and horse-whips, threatening to whip me. After some time the magistrates set me at liberty; but the rude people stoned me out of the town for preaching the word of life to them. I was scarce able to go or well to stand, by reason of the ill-usage I had received, yet, with much ado, I got about a mile from the town and then I met with some people that gave me something to comfort me because I was inwardly bruised, but the Lord's power soon healed me again. That day some people were convinced of the Lord's truth, and turned to his teaching, at which I rejoiced.

He was a young man of twenty-five when he received this harsh treatment.

Take again this entry :—

At Warmsworth in Yorkshire as soon as I began to speak, the people violently rushed upon me and thrust me out of the steeple-house and locked the door on me. As soon as they had done their service and were come forth the people ran upon me, and knocked me sorely with their staves, threw clods and stones at me, and abused me much: the priest also, being in a great rage, laid violent hands on me himself.

And again a little while after, at Tickhill :—

I was moved of God to go to the steeple-house, and when I came there I found the priest and most of the chief of the parish together in the Chancel. So I went up to them and began to speak, but they immediately fell upon me, and the Clerk up with his Bible, as I was speaking, and struck me on the face with it so that my face gushed out with blood and I bled exceedingly in the

steeple-house. Then the people cried, "Let us have him out of the Church," and when they had got me out they beat me exceedingly, and threw me down and over a hedge ; and afterwards they dragged me through a house into the street, stoning and beating me, as they dragged me along, so that I was all over besmeared with blood and dirt. They got my hat from me, which I never got again. Yet when I was got upon my legs again, I declared to them the word of life, and shewed them the fruits of their teacher, and how they dishonoured Christianity.

It was certainly a somewhat boisterous and turbulent England, but also an England very zealous for the maintenance of doctrinal orthodoxy, in which Fox fulfilled his life-long mission. It will be observed that these scenes of violence frequently followed some address delivered by Fox in the parish Church, and it may be said that they were the mob's coarse way of punishing the offence, technically known as "brawling in Church." But, on the other hand, as we are dealing with the time between 1650 and 1660, we may safely say that the authorised occupant of the pulpit was almost always a Presbyterian minister, who had himself very recently ousted the Episcopalian incumbent ; and the laxer notions which prevailed as to the order to be observed in the parish Church are sufficiently shown by the fact that Fox himself was often invited to address the people from the pulpit. After the Restoration all this free discourse in the Churches came to an end, and I believe it may

be safely said that after that date (1660) we have no instance of Fox's committing the offence of "brawling in Church."

But for one reason or other he and his friends were constantly coming under the lash of the law. If no other offence was committed, Fox's refusal to stand bareheaded in the presence of the magistrate (which, he maintained, amounted to rendering to man a homage due only to God) was itself enough to exasperate the Judges against him, and then his conscientious refusal to take any oath, whether of fidelity to the Parliament, of allegiance or supremacy, completed the case against him. "Take him away, gaoler, take him away," shouts the offended Judge of Assize or Justice of the Peace, and for the next year or two the earnest Preacher's voice is heard no more in the market-place, and we have instead the recital of his sufferings in the unutterably foul, fever-haunted dungeons of seventeenth-century England.

His chief imprisonments were at Derby, Carlisle, Launceston, Lancaster, Scarbro', and Worcester.

At Derby he was immured for about a year (1650-1651), the committal being made under the Blasphemy Act, which had been recently passed by the two Houses of Parliament. Undoubtedly there must have been something in his discourse, delivered in the Church, which sounded wild and blasphemous in the ears of the preaching Colonel (Barton) who committed him to prison, but as Fox himself reports his utterances, and probably as

he himself intended them to be understood, he said nothing more than had been said by the Apostle John when he wrote, "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." This assertion of the Divine Immanence in the Human Soul was that which generally brought Fox into trouble with the authorities on the charge of blasphemy.

Prison regulations at Derby in the year 1650 must have been strangely unlike those of the present day. After this he says :—

The Justices gave leave that I should have liberty to walk a mile.

I perceived their purpose and told the gaoler if they would set down to me how far a mile was, I might take the liberty of walking it sometimes, for I had a sense that they thought I would go away. And the gaoler confessed afterwards that they did it with that intent, to have me go away to ease them of their plague, but I told him I was not of that spirit.

At length, partly because of some calamities which had befallen the town, and which they interpreted as Divine judgments upon them for keeping him in captivity, partly because of a genuine change in their opinion concerning the man whom they had at first looked upon as a seducer and blasphemer, but now held for an honest and virtuous man, the magistrates turned Fox out of the gaol about the beginning of winter in the year 1651.

If not the longest, yet quite the most terrible of Fox's imprisonments (January to September 1656)

was in Launceston Castle, where to this day is shown a little chamber about twelve feet square which local tradition identifies with Doomsdale, "a nasty stinking place, where they used to put murderers after they were condemned. The place (he says) was so noisome that few that went in ever came out again in health." It was reputed to be haunted by the ghosts of the prisoners, who had died there, but Fox told the "wild people" who thought to terrify him by this kind of talk that, "if all the spirits and devils in hell were there, he was over them in the power of God, and feared no such thing." The cruelties, however, the physical hardships which he and his friends suffered at the hands of a ruffianly gaoler in that unutterably foul dungeon, might well have tamed the boldest spirit and undermined the strongest constitution. Let whoso will read the sickening pages of the *Journal* which record the horrors of Doomsdale, and thank God that no such scenes can now be enacted in any English (I hope, we may say, in any European) prison.

The imprisonment in Launceston Castle was not on any theological ground, but on account of Fox's refusal to take the oath of Abjuration. The same pretext availed for the abrogation of his liberty when the Cromwellian rule was over, and the Merry Monarch was enthroned at Westminster. Whether it were the reign of the Saints or the reign of the Sinners made little difference to the hard-pressed Quaker. "Men might come and men might go,"

but it seemed as if his calamities were to go on for ever.

The Launceston imprisonment took place when Fox was still a young man. His imprisonment in Lancaster and Scarbro' Castles—practically one captivity, for he was transferred under guard from one fortress to the other—lasted nearly three years (January 1664 to September 1666), and, coming as it did in middle life, left ineffaceable traces on his weakened constitution. The hardships which he endured at Scarbro' Castle were especially severe though perhaps the result rather of carelessness on the part of his gaolers than of intentional cruelty. He says :—

Next day they conducted me up into the Castle, put me into a room, and set a sentry on me. I being very weak and subject to fainting they for a while let me go out sometimes into the air with the sentry. They soon removed me out of this room and put me into an open room, where the rain came in and the room smoked exceedingly, which was very offensive to me. One day the governor, who was called Sir John Crossland, came to see me. I desired him to go into my room and see what a place I had. I had got a little fire made in it, and the room was so filled with smoke that when they were in they could hardly find their way out again, and he being a Papist I told him that was his Purgatory which they had put me into. I was forced to lay out about fifty shillings to stop out the rain and keep the room from smoking so much. When I had been at that charge, and made the room somewhat tolerable, they removed me out of it and put me into a worse room, where I had neither

chimney nor fire-hearth. This room being to the seaside, and lying much open, the wind drove in the rain forcibly, so that the water came over my bed and ran about the room so that I was fain to skim it up with a platter. And when my clothes were wet I had no fire to dry them, so that my body was benumbed with cold, and my fingers swelled that one was grown as big as two. Though I was at some charge in this room also, yet I could not keep out the wind and rain.

What was the crime for which this man, in delicate health, was subjected to hardships such as no burglar or ravisher is now subjected to in an English prison? Simply the crime of interpreting literally the words of Jesus Christ, "Swear not at all," and being determined to obey them. This enabled a county magistrate who had a spite against Fox to tender to him the oath of allegiance, and, when he refused it, to procure his condemnation to a captivity which might have been life-long under the terrible statute of "Praemunire." It is true that this statute was originally passed with the intention of guarding the English Church against the encroachments of the Papal court, and that Fox's persecutors, in all their rage against him and all their ignorance of his religious belief, knew perfectly well that he was at the opposite pole from the emissaries of the Roman Curia. No matter; the words of the Statute were that if any person not noble, above the age of eighteen, should refuse the oath of allegiance, when tendered by a bishop or a magistrate, he should be liable to the penalties

of a Praemunire—that is, to confiscation of all his property, and imprisonment during the king's pleasure. At last the pleasure of the king, who by some means was informed of the real character of the man imprisoned in the windy turrets of Scarbro' Castle, was signified in favour of his release.

A few years after his liberation (October 1669) came the one event which sheds a gleam of romantic light over the life of the tribulated Apostle, his marriage to Margaret Fell, widow of Judge Fell, of Swarthmoor Hall, in the north of Lancashire. This noble-hearted woman had become a convert to Quakerism in the early days of Fox's mission (1652). Her account of the effect produced on her mind and the minds of almost all her household by the preaching of the Quaker Missionary, and his debates with the parish Minister, "Priest Lampitt," is one of the most interesting pages in the history of the Society of Friends, and I regret that I must pass it by here with only the briefest reference. Her house became for some years thereafter a sort of Zoar, to which Fox and his fellow-preachers could flee when persecution waxed hottest, her husband, though not actually joining the new sect, viewing them with some measure of approval, and extending to them his protection. But Judge Fell himself had been a Commonwealth Judge, a colleague on the bench of the great "Regicide" Bradshaw, though no sharer in his most celebrated performance, and, therefore, his patronage would probably have been

of no great value after the Restoration. However this may be, he died little more than two months after the death of Cromwell, and his widow had consequently to fight her battles with the persecutors alone. Under the infamous juggle of the Praemunire statute she spent four and a half years in prison (January 1664-June 1668), and not long after her liberation (October 27, 1669) she and George Fox, in the meeting-house of Broad Mead, Bristol, "took each other in marriage, the Lord joining them together in the honourable marriage state in the Everlasting Covenant and immortal Seed of Life."

Very quaint is the husband's description of the marriage offer; of her acceptance, "feeling the answer of life from God thereunto"; of his letting the thing rest while he went on in the work and service of the Lord, travelling up and down in this nation and through Ireland, till at last, "being in Bristol, and finding Margaret Fell there, it opened in me from the Lord that the thing should be accomplished." Very honourable also to him is the sedulous care he took that Mrs. Fell's large family by her first husband should suffer no pecuniary loss through their mother's re-marriage, and the steadfast friendship which existed ever after between the daughters of the family and their mother's husband.

A renewed imprisonment of Margaret Fox, as we must now call her (1670-1671), a long and severe illness of Fox, probably due to the hardships

of his imprisonment, and then a long journey to America (1671-1673) were grievous interruptions to the wedded happiness of the elderly couple. And then, when at last they were journeying down to Swarthmoor, hoping for rest and happy days, there came the last of Fox's imprisonments, by which he was detained in Worcester gaol for fourteen months (December 1673-February 1675). After this, the fire of persecution somewhat abated. The two Stuart brothers, Charles and James, were beginning to show some favour to the Protestant Dissenters in order to obtain toleration for the Roman Catholic faith which they both held, one secretly and the other openly, and for the sake of which in November 1688 James went forth a crownless exile from his native land.

During these later, comparatively quiet, years, Fox was chiefly engaged in the work of legislation and administration for the little church which he had, one may almost say unintentionally, founded. He had perhaps come to see that his preaching, and that of his friends, though successful to a degree which we find it hard to realise (in some parts of England quite half the population had turned Quakers) was not going to convert the whole nation, much less the whole world, and that therefore some sort of Church government and some form of discipline would be required for this new religious society. Moreover he had seen, and had cordially detested, what he called the "Anarchy of the Ranters"; and in conflict with

some unruly spirits among his own followers he had learned the truth that, after all, in every religious organisation there must be some agreement as to the terms of membership, some sacrifice of the inclinations of the individual to the collective judgment of the body, that it is not quite possible for every man to be a law unto himself. These considerations led to his maturing, with some help from his friends, a system of Church government, which, while making no claim to be the only one permissible for Christians, has yet in a marvellous degree blended Liberty and Law, admitting all the members of the Church to a share in its government and yet never degenerating into anarchy or license.

As a psychological phenomenon it is interesting to observe how the fervid and ecstatic utterances of Fox's youth are matured into the ripe wisdom of his old age. If in reading some of the earlier pages of his *Journal* one almost trembles for his sanity, one is reassured by seeing how the current of his thoughts flows calmer and clearer as he is nearing the end of his career.

A few words written by his friends contain the simple record of his closing hours :

Our said dear brother George Fox was enabled by the Lord's power to preach the truth fully and effectually in our public meeting in White Hart Court by Gracechurch Street, London, on the eleventh day of this instant eleventh month 1690 [Jan. 11, 1691], after which he said, "I am glad I was here : now I am clear, I am fully clear."

Then he was the same day taken with some illness or indisposition of body more than usual, and continued weak in body for two days after, at our friend Henry Goldney's house in the same court, close by the meeting-house, in much contentment and peace, and very sensible to the last. . . . He signified to some Friends, "that all is well and the Seed of God reigns over all, and over death itself: that though he was weak in body, yet that the power of God is over all, and the Seed reigns over all disorderly spirits," which were his wonted expressions, being in the living faith and sense thereof which he kept to the end.

On the 13th instant, between the ninth and tenth hour in the night, he quietly departed this life in peace, being two days after the Lord enabled him to publish and preach the blessed truth in the meeting as aforesaid. He was about sixty and six years of age—as we understand—when he departed this life.

So lived and died the founder of Quakerism. Could he now behold the body of Christians who profess to follow his principles, would he own them as his followers? I know not. In the two hundred years which have intervened, many changes have taken place, and several layers of sedimentary rock have been deposited above the fierce lava-stream of Fox's preaching. Yet while admitting that here, as so often in the world of thought, the enduring structure does not in all things correspond with the idea of the earliest builders, I venture to express my own individual belief that George Fox, though neither faultless nor infallible, was a real prophet of the Most High, and that the world

even at the present day is in some respects a better and a happier world because the shepherd of Leicestershire was “not disobedient unto the Heavenly Vision.”

BAMBURGH, 1896.

JAMES PARNEL¹

WE are met here to-day to commemorate the short but eventful life and the cruel death of James Parnel, who died two hundred and fifty years ago, imprisoned in Colchester Castle.

His short life, I have said. It is most important for us in judging both this man's actions and the actions of his enemies to remember how young he was when his career ended. Only nineteen: the age at which the public-school boy is just taking leave of Eton or Harrow, and preparing to go up to the University; the age at which the young artisan is emerging from his apprenticeship, and rejoicing in the prospect of earning a man's wages; the age at which the officer in the Army is receiving his first commission: this was the age at which James Parnel died, after preaching hundreds of sermons, holding long and fiercely contested religious debates, writing letters and pamphlets—letters which fill nearly five hundred pages of a small quarto volume—and finally enduring ten months of cruel imprisonment.

He was born at Retford in 1637, and, though

¹ An address delivered at the Parnel Commemoration, at Colchester Castle, 21st June 1906.

of somewhat obscure origin, seems to have received a fair education, possibly at Retford Grammar School. His childhood was passed in a stormy period—such a period as must have filled every cottage in England, however lowly, with stirring tidings and strange vicissitudes of hope and fear. His birth coincided with Laud's attempt to fasten the English Prayer Book on the Scottish people, with the throwing of Jenny Geddes's cutty-stool, and the beginning of the great Stuart downfall. When Parnel was seven years old Cromwell won the battle of Marston Moor; at eleven he must have heard the awful news of the execution at Whitehall. All these world-important events, however, leave no impress on Parnel's autobiography,¹ which is entirely taken up with the history of his own inner life.

Unlike George Fox, and like John Bunyan, Parnel draws a dark picture of his own unregenerate youth:

"I was as wild as others," he says, "during the time I was at school, and after I was taken from school I still continued in the same nature, growing and increasing in sin and iniquity, following the vain courses of the wicked world. I may well say with Paul, 'Of sinners I was chief,' for according to my years I was as perfect in sin and iniquity as any in the town where I lived, yea, and exceeded many in the same."

He describes, however, how through all his wanderings the Spirit of God was working within

¹ *The Fruits of a Fast* (Collection of the writings of J. Parnel), p. 231.

him, rebuking him for sin and leading him to repentance ; and how at length—apparently under no influence of any human teacher—he was brought to renounce his sinful manner of life.

So did the goodness of God lead me to repentance, and the grace of God wrought in my heart a reformation, and so I was found of Him whom I sought not, and thus He both wrought the will and the deed of His own good pleasure, and plucked me as a brand out of the fire, to make me a vessel of honour to his name. Thus, though aforetime there was as little hope of my conversion as of any in the town, yet, though it is a place of many people, I was the first in all that town which the Lord was pleased to make known His power in, and turn my heart towards Him and truly to seek Him, so that I became a wonder to the world and an astonishment to the heathen round about. But they were such enemies to goodness, and so given up to idolatry, that as much as before they had loved me in my vain conversation, so much the more they hated me in my conversion. Yea, and they of my family came to ensnare me, and lay wait for me to entrap me ; but when they could not prevail they stood afar off from me and reproached me with lies and proved my greatest enemies ; yea, and my relations became my adversaries, and laboured to destroy what God had begun in me, because that thereby I came under the reproof and shame of the world, because I could not conform to the world, but was made subject to the law of God.

This momentous change in the lad's life took place when he had reached the age of fourteen or fifteen, and we may fairly conclude, notwithstanding his own words of severe self-condemnation,

that he had never led what the world would consider a vicious or disreputable life.

At the time of his conversion Parnel does not seem to have met with any Quaker preachers, a fact which makes his testimony to their great doctrine of "the Inward Light" all the more valuable. He says that "there was a people with whom I found union, a few miles from the town where I lived, whom the Lord was a-gathering out of the dark world to sit down together and wait upon his name"; but these persons were apparently not themselves members of the Quaker community, which was still only in its infancy. In our sketch of Parnel's life we have reached the year 1652, and it was only two years before that date that Gervase Bennet, the magistrate, called George Fox and his adherents "Quakers," because he bid his hearers tremble at the word of the Lord.

Before many months had passed, however, Parnel was, as he says, "called forth to visit some Friends in the north of England, with whom I had union in spirit before I saw their faces." Possibly some rumours of George Fox's visit to Swarthmoor, and of the marvellous results which had followed his preaching there—so that for a time it seemed as if the whole county of Cumberland would accept the Quaker teaching—may have penetrated to Retford. At any rate Parnel made his way to Carlisle—it is a continual subject of wonder how these early Friends, often with very slender resources, contrived to perform the long journeys

through ill-roaded England which fill the pages of their biographies—and at Carlisle he found George Fox himself, thrust down among the moss-troopers in a vermin-haunted dungeon, but loved and listened to by his fellow-prisoners, notwithstanding all the bullyings and cudgellings of an iron-hearted gaoler.

George Fox himself, in his *Journal*, thus describes the interview :

Whilst I was in the dungeon at Carlisle, James Parnel, a little lad of about sixteen years of age, came to see me and was convinced. And the Lord quickly made him a powerful minister of the word of life, and many were turned to Christ by him, though he lived not long.

These words of the founder of Quakerism help us to form an idea of the personal appearance of his convert. Parnel was not only very young, but little of stature : “the little Quaking lad” being the name under which he was contemptuously known by his adversaries. But if his bodily presence was weak, “his speech was” not “contemptible.” He evidently had a considerable gift of natural eloquence and, I conjecture, a strong and resounding voice. In reading his pamphlets, with their long flowing sentences, and their cataract of Scripture texts, I feel that I can imagine the enthusiasm of his followers, and the fury of his opponents, as they heard the little Quaking lad pouring forth his torrent of warning, reproof, and fiery testimony. It must be admitted, if we may judge from his

published works, that these, rather than the consoling influences of the Gospel, were the chief characteristics of his ministry.

In the next year after Fox's and Parnel's meeting in Carlisle gaol we find them again together, this time in Fox's own native country, on the borders of Leicestershire and Warwickshire. Here, at Atherstone, on the Watling Street, there was a theological battle royal. Stephens, the Presbyterian minister of Fenny Drayton (Fox's birthplace), had seven of his colleagues to help him, while Fox had on his side a certain Thomas Taylor, who had been a priest, James Parnel, and several other Friends. Hundreds of people were collected, some of whom grew rude as the ministers became "light" or jocular. The proceedings were lively. Fox, who refused to conduct the argument in the church, was set on "something like a footstool under the church wall," and when he called the clergy "hirelings" was knocked off it again; but in the end his earnest argument seems to have touched some chord in his old opponent's heart, for "priest Stephens" brought him a form of prayer, which he craved that they might each use for one another's enlightenment. Unfortunately the *Journal* of George Fox, from which all these details are taken, does not tell us what was the precise part taken by Parnel in the great arbitrament.

When Parnel was betwixt seventeen and eighteen years of age he was, he says

. . . moved of the Lord to go to Cambridge, and in obedience unto the Lord I came to see what He had for me to

do, not knowing one foot of the way but as I was directed, neither knowing when I came there where to be received ; but I had heard before of two of my friends that were there whipped, at the order of the mayor that then was, only for declaring the truth as they passed through the town, against the deceit thereof. Neither did I know but it might be my portion also when I came there, but without conferring with flesh and blood I passed on my journey, and He that called me forth went along with me and did direct me.

It would be interesting if we could learn whether Parnel when he was at Cambridge had any intercourse, friendly or hostile, with any of the members of the University, at that time strictly but not unwisely ruled by the Puritan heads of houses, most of them once members of the famous Westminster Assembly, whom the Long Parliament had planted there instead of the uprooted Episcopalians. On such matters, however, Parnel's autobiography is silent. All that we learn therefrom is that at the end of a fortnight, William Pickering, the mayor of Cambridge, committed him to prison for publishing two papers (apparently not now extant): one "Against the Corruption of the Magistrates," the other "Against the Corruption of the Priests." "And there they kept me in prison the space of two sessions, and tossed me from prison to dungeon, and had nothing to lay against me whereby to prove the breach of any law." When he was at last brought to trial, the jury refused to find that the two documents were scandalous and seditious libels,

and would only affirm the undoubted fact that they were written by Parnel. He was accordingly liberated, after three more days' imprisonment, in as ungracious style as possible.

They sent me away with a pass, under the name of a rogue, yet durst not give me the law which belongs to rogues, but had me away with clubs and staves; and I could not see the pass until I was three miles out of the town where I lodged that night; and the next day there came a justice of the peace from Cambridge, who, knowing me to be innocent of what was laid to my charge, witnessed the pass to be false and took it back to Cambridge, and so I was set free. And not long after I went to Cambridge again, and went abroad, preaching and declaring the truth freely in the countries about.

In reading this and many other descriptions of the collision between the early Quakers and the magistrates, we must often feel a sentiment of pity for the latter, who, in many cases, do not seem to have been either bigoted or cruel, but who were thoroughly perplexed by the cases brought before them, and became persecutors in their own despite. Here they were, commonplace men doubtless, for the most part, but desirous to "execute justice and maintain truth" according to their lights. Suddenly a man appears in their town or village, preaching what seems to some of the hearers a new Gospel; what the minister of the parish holds for blasphemy. The preacher is generally a young man, sometimes, as in the case of Parnel, a very young man; he denounces the corruption of magistrates,

the corruption of priests ; he appears like one of the old Hebrew prophets, thundering against all that the conventional Englishman holds—I will not say most sacred, but most obviously essential to the conduct of human affairs. He has, perhaps, forced on the minister a theological discussion in what he calls “the steeple-house” ; he has rebuked in unmeasured terms the hypocrisy of “the high professors.” If this sort of thing goes on, thinks the magistrate, we shall be having a renewal of civil war (he does not know how utterly impossible it is for the Quaker to fight), and at any rate I am bound to protect the minister from obloquy and abuse in his own parish church. And yet there was a note of earnestness in that young man’s voice. He speaks of having a message from the Lord to deliver. When he appealed to the witness in my heart, there was something which seemed to echo his words. Thus, probably, many a magistrate, and some even of the judges of the land, communed with themselves when the Quaker was brought before them for trial ; and sometimes, while the magistrate looked his sternest, the question was being debated in his own heart : “Shall I order this young man to be whipped as a rogue and a vagabond, or shall I descend from the bench, take him for my spiritual guide, and follow him into the social wilderness?”

And the young Quaker enthusiast himself, how shall we account for his irresistible impulse to dash himself against the religious and social conventions of his age? I cannot, to my own mind, explain it

better than by Browning's description of the mental attitude of the risen Lazarus :

So here—we call the treasure knowledge, say,
Increased beyond the fleshly faculty—
Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth,
Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing Heaven.
The man is witless of the size, the sum,
The value in proportion of all things,
Or whether it be little or be much ;
He holds on firmly to some thread of life
(It is the life to lead perforcedly)
Which runs across some vast distracting orb
Of glory on either side that meagre thread,
Which, conscious of, he must not enter yet,—
The spiritual life around the earthly life :
The law of that is known to him as this—
His heart and brain move there, his feet stay here.

The duality of purpose which Browning attributes to Lazarus was not perhaps exhibited by the early Friends ; but in the clashing between their spiritual perceptions and the conventional rules of conduct of the people, even the good people, round them, we may see reproduced something of the same conflict which is here so vividly portrayed.

Before we contemplate the cruel end of Parnel's short career, let us devote a little time to the description of his teaching.

One of the points on which he seems to have been most bitterly denounced by his Puritan adversaries was his assertion that the Christian can attain perfection in this life. In his queries to the "chief priests in Essex," he asks whether those preachers, who, like himself, "witness forth perfection from

sin here, or those who tell people 'they can never be perfect or be wholly set forth from sin so long as they are upon the earth,' " are most likely to be the ministers of Anti-Christ :

Where had you this doctrine, to tell people " They could never be wholly cleansed or be set free from sin so long as they are upon the earth " ? And is not this in opposition to the doctrine of Christ, who saith, " Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect " ?

He that is justified by the righteousness of Christ, doth he not dwell in it, and it in him ? And doth he sin that dwells in the righteousness of Christ ?

We come here upon a question which is still one of the living issues in Christian theology, and which was, not many years after Parnel's death, to be hotly debated in the Roman Church itself, when Molinos and Madame Guyon were shut up in prison for advocating that system of Quietism, one of the essential elements of which was the possibility of attaining Christian perfection. With the Catholic Quietist the motive force was antagonism to the priestly system of confession, penance, indulgences, on which so much of the power and wealth of the clergy depended. With Parnel and his fellow-preachers it was rather a revolt against the practical antinomianism into which the impassioned preachers of " salvation by faith alone " were ever in danger of sliding, though in theory they accepted the anathema of Paul, " If they say, ' Let us continue in sin that grace may abound, ' their condemnation is just. "

Can we not easily see how, in those years of Puritan triumph, when the downtrodden ones of Tudor and Stuart had become the conquerors, and were riding in the high places of the earth ; when grave matters of State were decided at the prayer-meetings of the soldiers, and when “godliness” had indeed become a “gainful trade” ; there would be thousands of insincere, or but half-sincere professors of evangelical doctrine, to whom the reiterated statement, “You can never be wholly cleansed from sin while you are in the flesh,” would be only too welcome. Against this antinomian tendency Parnel, while he was but a boy of seventeen, thundered, in a pamphlet called *A Tryal of Faith* :

Come, try your faith, all you professors of Godliness, of God, and of Christ. Come, search the ground and bottom of your faith what it is built upon ; for the faith and hope of the hypocrite perisheth, which stands in words and on an unsteady foundation. You say, “You are saved by the blood of Christ and by His stripes you are healed,” and so would make Him the ground of your faith ; but what are you saved from, and what are you healed of ? Christ came to save and redeem sinners from their sin, and to heal them of the wound of sin ; to bruise the serpent’s head, and to bind the strong man, and to cast him out of his house. . . . He came to make a separation betwixt the precious and the vile, betwixt the wheat and the tares, the sheep and the goats, and to purchase to man that which man hath lost, and to this end is He come. Those who can witness this can witness Him, and may claim an interest in Him, and have an assurance of their salvation. But they who

cannot witness this cannot witness Christ, and so are reprobates concerning the faith. Now here all you drunkards are shut out ; here all you swearers are shut out ; here all you proud and covetous and lustful ones are shut out ; here all you scoffers and scorners and back-biters and revilers and extortioners and whoremongers and envious ones and gamers and sporters ; and all you self-righteous professors who live in the fashions and customs of the world, delighting in its pleasures and vanities ; you are all shut out from the true faith which purifieth the heart. The serpent is head over you, and your strong man keeps the house, and a stronger than he is not yet come. The imprisoned lies in prison, and the wound of sin is yet fresh. Christ lies low in the manger, and the inn is taken up with other guests. Here you can challenge no interest in the blood of Christ, . . . and all your faith is vain, and your hope vain, and the foundation thereof is sandy and will not stand in the day of tryal.

Another paragraph of the same discourse seems to show that the England of the Protectorate was not altogether so austere and melancholy a place as the satirists have represented it :

And all you wilful blind, carnal, ignorant creatures, whom my soul pitieth to see how ignorantly you are led, who pin your faith upon the sleeves of your forefathers and live in lightness and wantonness, spending your youth in vanity, in gaming, pleasures and sporting, in drunkenness, in swearing and lying, in vain talk and foolish jestings, in pride and lust and filthiness, and say, "You follow your fathers," and say, "What is become of them?" and say, "Your pleasures are pastime and recreation, and your vain talk and foolish jesting is

pastime and merriness," and so you pass the time away, and say your drinking and rioting and feasting is good fellowship and neighbourhood, and so you cover over your sins and iniquities; woe unto him that hides his sin and covers his iniquity, and all this will not profit you anything, neither can your forefathers excuse you before the Lord.

Passing from the question of doctrine to the much less important but practically more often discussed questions of external behaviour, I find Parnel saying, in his pamphlet called *A Shield of the Truth* :

We are accused to be destructive to all superiority and honour, breeding, and manners, because we cannot put off our hats, nor follow the fashions of the world, nor respect any persons, but speak the plain word Thou to any one, rich or poor.

On this last point, the use of the second person singular, the change of manners which has taken place in two centuries has taken the heart out of the Quakers' argument. Their scruple about the use of the plural number was an intelligible and a living thing when Judge Jefferies said from the Bench to Richard Baxter, "I thou thee, thou traitor." Now, when the King of England says "You" to the humblest menial in his household, "Thou" has become nothing more than a grammatical survival. As for the general principle, however, it deserves consideration, whether our Christianity does not require us to make a stand, some in one way and some in another, on behalf of simplicity of behaviour and truthfulness of speech, and against those insincere

and flattering courtesies of language and gesture with which, in our highly conventionalised state of society, we are too apt to lubricate the working of its wheels.

Though the early Friends were never Levellers, and carefully abstained from taking part in any agitation for political changes, one can trace in some of their writings an instinct of the kind which we now call democratic; and this perhaps shows itself in none more plainly than in the utterances of "James Parnel, labourer." Thus he seems to attribute to "Lucifer" the distinction of society into various classes:

He hath invented ways whereby he is honoured and exalted and worshipped, and he calls this manners and breeding; and those who can honour him the most and exalt him the highest are, he saith, "the best bred and of the best breeding," and those he calls noblemen and gentlemen, and the others he calls yeomen and common people and inferiors, though they all honour him, but they observe it [the rule of "manners"] not so much as the others.

In reading such a passage as this one has to remember that the writer was a lad of seventeen, with a very limited experience of the world. Had he lived some years longer, and come into contact with such a truly high-bred Christian gentleman as William Penn, he had perhaps expressed his thoughts in different words. Even as it is, there is in him a yearning after a true aristocracy:

True nobility we own; the seed of God is noble,

wheresoever it is born up. Where this seed reigns and rules there is true nobility, there is true gentility, no more after the flesh but after the spirit, and honour is due to this both in magistrate and minister, fisherman and ploughman, herdsman and shepherd, wheresoever it rules, without respect of persons. . . . And thus all the true prophets of God were noblemen and gentlemen, sprung of the noble seed, though of the nobles and great ones of the earth they were disdained and reproached, because, according to the world, they were of low degree, some of them ploughmen, some herdsmen, some shepherds, and therefore they persecuted them and destroyed them, yet were they gentle and bore all.

In the middle of May, 1655, Parnel entered Essex, a county previously untrodden by Quaker missionaries, and began a course of preaching there which was crowned with extraordinary success. Essex was one of those counties which had contributed largely to the success of the Parliamentary cause in the first Civil War; and in the miserable episode of the second Civil War, the town of Colchester, Parliamentarian at heart but captured and occupied by the Stuart partisans, had suffered severely from both armies. Perhaps there was in the minds of many a weariness of all these religious discussions; perhaps the Independent preachers, who now ruled supreme in most of the churches, had borne themselves somewhat too haughtily in their new dominion. At any rate, Parnel found "the fields white unto harvest," and some important citizens of Colchester, notably Stephen Crisp, were converted to Quakerism by his ministry. His

success at last roused some of the fanatics to fury. One day, as he was leaving the beautiful old church of St. Nicholas, a man struck him with a big stick, saying, "There, take that for Jesus Christ's sake." He meekly answered, "Friend, I do take it for Jesus Christ's sake."

Alarmed and mortified by the success of Parnel's ministry, the Puritan ministers appointed fasts, preachings, and special prayers "against the errors of the people called Quakers." One such fast was appointed for Sunday, 12th July, at the little town of Coggeshall. Thither Parnel repaired, and entering the church, stood quietly while the preacher, an Independent minister named Willis, delivered his diatribe against Quakerism. When this was ended, Parnel claimed the liberty conceded by St. Paul, "that all should speak one by one, and that if anything were revealed to him that was standing by, the first should hold his peace." With fairness which we must admire, Willis granted him permission to speak in vindication of the Quakers; but either he went on too long, or he used some words which exasperated his opponents. "The priests [that is, the Independent ministers] ran out into many words and caused great confusion." The debate seems to have degenerated into a war of words about the meaning of the word "church." At last Willis announced his intention to offer prayer, and Parnel, who had remained covered till then, was ordered to put off his hat, which he refused to do, and so refusing, he quietly departed from the church.

A strange scene undoubtedly to be transacted in a church, and one very unlike our present decorous and peaceable ways. But every line of the picture reveals an utterly different state of manners and society from that which now surrounds us, and the whole story is eloquent of the upheavings and down-thrustings through which the Churches of England had been passing during Parnel's short life. The Independent minister who was now vicar of Coggeshall had probably supplanted a Presbyterian; either Independent or Presbyterian had certainly supplanted a Church of England clergyman, who was probably in exile or obscurity, striving to eke out a scanty living by teaching in the family of some "malignant" squire.

But this altercation with the preacher at Coggeshall, no more and no less, was the offence for which the boy-preacher of nineteen suffered the terrible imprisonment, the memory of which is in all our hearts to-day. A magistrate, named Dionysius Wakering, one of the members of Parliament for Essex, followed him out of the church, and arrested him in the name of the Protector. The indictment against him set forth that "he riotously entered the church at Coggeshall, stood up and told the minister that he blasphemed, and spoke falsely, with other reproachful words; went out into the common highway with a great number of his followers [this was quite untrue] and gave out menacing and threatening speech, tending to the breach of the peace and against law."

Two months' imprisonment at Colchester Castle followed while he waited for the assizes. Then, in September, he was marched through the county to Chelmsford (twenty-two miles distant), handcuffed to a murderer, and brought up for trial, manacled, before Serjeant Roger Hill. We need not go through the familiar story of the trial, the trouble about the removal of the hat, the reading of some fiery pamphlets which he had written in reply to the indictment, the cautious verdict of the jury, almost amounting to an acquittal, the insistence of the judge, and at last, after some hesitating words from the foreman of the jury, the judge's sentence that he should be fined in two sums of £20 each—one for contempt of the magistracy, and the other for contempt of the ministry; and in default of payment should be committed to gaol or Colchester Castle; and "see," said the judge to the gaoler, "that you do not allow any of the giddy-headed people to come at him."

Colchester Castle, the scene of the poor young preacher's sufferings and death, needs no description for us who are standing under the shadow of that mighty pile, reared out of the *débris* of Roman Camalodunum; who stand in the great quadrangle; who can lift up our eyes to see the lofty gallery running round the keep, in one of the chambers of which Parnel was imprisoned; who can step forth into the forum in which the terrified colonists huddled together eighteen hundred and fifty years ago, in vain hope of escaping the onslaught of the

maddened Britons under Boadicea ; who see the green turf whereon, sixteen centuries later, the two Stuart generals, Lisle and Lucas, were shot by order of Fairfax. The great castle itself, built about the same time as the Tower of London, and not unlike it in shape, reared in the first twenty years after the Norman Conquest, tells of the stern determination of the Conqueror and his barons to hold by ruthless force the dominion which they had so hardly won on the battlefield of Hastings. Brute force was typified by its erection under the orders of the Norman seneschal Eudo ; brute force repressing the growth of unwelcome opinion was exemplified by the closing scenes of James Parnel's life, which shall now be described in the exact words of the old Quaker historian Sewell.

Thereupon J. Parnel was carried back again to the prison, being an old ruinous castle, built, as it is reported, in the time of the ancient Romans. Here he was to be kept until the fine should be paid, and the gaoler was commanded not to let any giddy-headed people (by which denomination they meant his friends) come at him.

The gaoler was willing enough to comply with this order, suffering none to come to him but such as abused him ; and his wife, who was a wicked shrew, did not only set her man to beat him, but several times herself laid violent hands on him, and swore she would have his blood ; she also set other prisoners to take away the victuals brought to him by his friends, and would not let him have a trundle bed which they would have brought him to lie on, so that he was forced to lie on the cold and damp stones. Afterwards he was put into the hole in the wall, a

room much like a baker's oven, for the walls of that building, which is indeed a direful nest, are of an excessive thickness, as I have seen myself, having been in the hole where this pious young man ended his days, as will be said by and by. Being confined in the said hole, which was, as I remember, about twelve feet high from the ground,¹ and the ladder too short by six feet, he must climb up and down by a rope on a broken wall, which he was forced to do to fetch his victuals or for other necessities ; for though his friends would have given him a cord and a basket to draw up his victuals in, yet such was the malice of his keepers that they would not suffer it.

Continuing in this moist hole his limbs grew benumbed, and thus it happened, that as he was climbing up the ladder, with his victuals in one hand, and had come to the top thereof, catching at the rope with his other he missed the same, and fell down upon the stones, whereby he was exceedingly wounded in his head, and his body so bruised that he was taken up for dead. Then they put him into a hole underneath the other, for there were two rows of such vaulted holes in the wall. This hole was called the oven, and so little that some bakers' ovens were bigger, though not so high. Here (the door being shut) was scarcely any air, there being no window or hole. And after he was a little recovered from his fall they would not suffer him to take the air, though he was almost spent for want of breath ; and though some of his friends, viz. William Talcot and Edward Grant, did offer their bond of forty pounds to the Justice Henry Barrington, and another, whose name was Thomas Shortland, to lie body for body, that Parnel might have liberty to come to W. Talcot's house and return when recovered ; yet this was denied ; nay, so immovable were

¹ According to our present information, more like twenty ; but there may have been some changes in the level of the great quadrangular yard.

they set against him, that when it was desired that he might only walk a little sometimes in the yard they would not grant it by any means ; and once the door of the hole being open, and he coming forth and walking in a narrow yard between two high walls, it so incensed the gaoler that he locked up the hole and shut him out in the yard all night, being in the coldest time of the winter. This hard imprisonment did so weaken him, that after ten or eleven months he fell sick and died. At his departure there was with him Thomas Shortland and Ann Langley ; and it was one of these (that came often to him) who long after brought me into this hole where he died.

Several things which are related here I had from the mouth of eye-witnesses who lived in that town. When death approached he said, " Here I die innocently." A little after he was heard to say, " Now I must go," and turning his head to Thomas, he said, " This death I must die ; I have seen great things ; don't hold me, but let me go." Then he said again, " Will you hold me ? " To which Ann answered, " No, dear heart, we will not hold thee." He had often said that one hour's sleep would cure him of all ; and the last words he was heard to say were, " Now I go," and then stretched out himself, and slept about an hour, and breathed his last. Thus this valiant soldier of the Lamb conquered through sufferings ; and so great were the envy and malice of his persecutors, that to cover their guilt and shame, they spread among the people that by immoderate fasting, and afterwards with too greedy eating, he had shortened his days. But this was a wicked lie ; for though it be true he had no appetite to eat some days before he fell sick, yet when he began to eat again, he took nothing but a little milk. . . .

This story about his suicidal fast was probably invented by the gaoler in order to shield himself

from blame for the hardships which had caused the death of his victim. In reading the narratives of the sufferings of Parnel and many like him in prison, we are naturally stirred to indignation against the persecutors who perpetrated these cruelties in the name of Christ. In this respect there is nothing to choose between the different religious parties which in their turn ruled seventeenth-century England. Parnel was done to death under Cromwell, though assuredly not with his cognizance. The imprisonment of George Fox at Launceston, under the Commonwealth, was at least as cruel as those which he endured under Charles II. in Lancaster and Scarborough. All sects, except the Friends, were more or less stained by the crime of persecution; it was only a few solitary thinkers such as Jeremy Taylor and Roger Williams who descried the coming dawn, and pleaded for the toleration which is now, at least in theory, accepted by all Englishmen.

Yet, in reflecting on this and similar passages in the religious history of the seventeenth century, I feel that we must beware of attributing too large a share in the actual infliction of cruelty to the religious leaders on either side, whether Puritan or Episcopalian. The English prisons of that age were detestable; no one doubts it. Read the graphic picture of them drawn in Macaulay's *History of England*, and remember how, as he says, the gaol fevers bred in these pestilential holes often came forth at the assizes and avenged the prisoners

on the ministers of the law. The gaolers, whether they called themselves Republicans or Loyalists, were for the most part brutal, uneducated men, whose only thought was how to make the most money out of the prisoners committed to their charge. If the prisoner had friends who would bribe handsomely, such rough comforts as the gaol could afford were his; if not, so much the worse for him. Then came in the instinct of cruelty which slumbers in so many vulgar souls, and the fact, as old as humanity, that—

Man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep.

For failing to inquire into these villainies ; for dismissing the unfortunate enthusiast from their minds as soon as they had once " handed him over to the secular arm," do I hold the Puritan or the Episcopalian minister guilty, rather than for actually contriving, or even conniving at, the cruelties of which we read.

But, after everything has been said, it must be admitted that the condition of our prisons at that time, and right down for some way into last century, is a dark blot on the record of Christian England. Here were divines disputing on Election and Reprobation, on Baptismal Regeneration and Apostolical Succession, on all sorts of abstract theological and political questions, and all the time here was this

grievous scandal to our very civilization lying at their doors, uninquired into, unredressed, unremedied. Then, at last, John Howard and Elizabeth Fry arose; they sounded once more in the ears of thoughtful men the words, "I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me"; and one great stigma on English Christianity was removed, we hope, for ever.

For Parnel himself we can have only words of admiration. The intolerance which we note in some of his early utterances would probably have been softened had his life been prolonged; according to the judgment of his latest biographer it was already disappearing during the weary months of his imprisonment. His intense zeal for what he believed to be the cause of truth; his dauntless courage; his patient endurance of cruelty and wrong, are all marks of a noble nature. If we ever pause to reflect on the complete religious freedom which we now enjoy, let us remember that this did not come of itself; that, on the contrary, it was with a great price that Parnel, and men like him, obtained for us this freedom.

NOTE.—Any of my readers who may desire further information as to the life and character of this young martyr for the truth are referred to the little volume by Charlotte Fell Smith, with preface by Wilson Marriage, published by Headley Brothers. As for the spelling of the martyr's name, I have adopted that which I find on the title-page of his works and in Sewell's History; but the baptismal certificate, as given in facsimile in Miss Smith's biography, gives the name as Parnell, with a double final letter.

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES AND THE MACCABEES

*(A Lecture delivered to the Ladies' Summer School,
Durham, July 1906)*

THE heroic struggle of a little band of Jewish patriots with the kings of Syria, commemorated by Josephus and in the books of Maccabees, has an undying interest for all lovers of liberty, and has also some special points of contact with the thoughts and aspirations of our own time. It was not merely a struggle between tyranny and freedom. Antiochus represented Hellenism, the religion of Nature, the victory of the Beautiful over the Holy : while the Maccabees fought for a strong, stern, uncompromising faith in Jehovah, the God who had made covenant with their fathers, and claimed a Covenant-obedience from them. "Art for Art's sake" was, perhaps we might say, the unconscious motto of the Hellenist, while something of the intensity, and at the same time of the narrowness of Puritanism was characteristic of the triumphant Maccabee.

Again, the sufferings which Israel for a time endured at the hands of the Seleucid lords of Asia vividly suggest some of the tragedies which

have lately been enacted in another great empire of even vaster extent than that of the Antiochi, while the hatred which the Jew inspired in many of the neighbouring nations points to something in the national character which continues to this day and prompts the Anti-Semitic movement of modern politics. But, after all, it is the religious interest of the struggle that is rightly uppermost in our minds. "The noble army of martyrs," says the great hymn of the Church, "praise Thee, oh God."

As has been remarked by a modern historian,¹ "The figure of the martyr, as the Church knows it, dates from the persecution of Antiochus: all subsequent martyrologies derive from the Jewish books which recorded the sufferings of those who in that day "were strong and did exploits."

Let me try briefly to bring before you the two mighty opposites in the strife—Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria, and Maccabean Israel.

I. Antiochus IV., surnamed Epiphanes, was descended in the fifth generation from Seleucus, one of the fortunate players in the game of crown-winning and crown-losing which was enacted for twenty troublous years after the death of Alexander the Great. The more we read of the career which was ended by Alexander's premature decease, the more wonderful does it seem. Macedonian conquest was one of the very few victories with any approach to permanence that Europe has won in its age-long

¹ E. R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*, ii. 175. I have been throughout this narrative under constant obligation to this very scholarly book.

struggle with Asia. Rome, Russia, England have conquered great tracts of Asiatic territory, but will it be the judgment of history that any of them have stamped their image upon it with an abiding impress? The spirit of Hellas, hovering behind the Macedonian phalanx, did undoubtedly Hellenise for many centuries almost the whole of Western Asia. I need not waste words in enforcing this universally admitted fact of history; it is enough to refer to the mere existence of the Greek New Testament. But for Alexander the Great and his three world-transforming victories of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela, Aramaic, not Greek, would have been the language used by Evangelists and Apostles in the composition of the book which stands at the head of the world's literature. But the mighty king died and his kingdom was broken and divided toward the four winds of Heaven. Let us see how the wind blew upon its eastern quarter.

There is something attractive in the history of Seleucus, the far-off ancestor of Antiochus. Born probably in the same year with Alexander, and emerging to notice as a young but efficient officer in his army, he at first plays no prominent part in the battlings for empire between the "Successors" (the Diadochi): but at length he gets a place in the front rank as Satrap of Babylonia. He is overmastered by a jealous rival, the mighty Antigonus: he flies for his life to the court of his old friend Ptolemy, King of Egypt, but returns before long; and in a daring expedition, not unlike that of

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Garibaldi in 1860, confronting the forces of a great kingdom at the head of only a thousand followers, he succeeds in winning back his lost satrapy, and from that time forward sits in the palace of Babylon as lordly and as firm-seated on his throne as Nebuchadnezzar himself. This wonderful return and recovery of empire took place in the year 312 B.C., and from that date, commonly called "The Era of the Seleucidæ," all events were reckoned for many centuries in the Grecian East, as in Greece itself they were reckoned by the Olympiads and in Rome from the foundation of the city.¹

In the thirty years which followed this return Seleucus utterly overthrew Antigonus: made himself supreme over the eastern part of the Empire to the Jaxartes and the Indus, and, finally, by his victory over another of the "Successors," Lysimachus, became the undoubted Lord of Asia Minor. Thus his power extended over all the vast regions which we now call Turkey in Asia, Persia, and Afghanistan, from the Dardanelles to the Punjab. This was the climax of Seleucian greatness; none of his descendants ever ruled so wide a domain. Seleucus himself seemed to be on the point of adding Macedonia to his Empire, the home-land which all these "successors" longed for in the midst of their Oriental magnificence. The victory over Lysimachus left Macedon prostrate before him; but immediately after he had crossed into Europe,

¹ This chronological system is the only one known in the books of Maccabees.

while he was, with antiquarian zeal, examining an old monument said to be the altar of the Argonauts, he was foully murdered by the son of his old friend Ptolemy, a scoundrel to whom he had given shelter and hospitality when his crimes had banished him from his father's house.

The death of Seleucus happened 281 B.C. : the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes a little more than a century later, 176 B.C. I am not going to trace the history of the Seleucid Empire during that century, but I must call your attention to the fact of its greatly reduced extent at the close of this period. The murder of Seleucus was itself a terrible blow to his still imperfectly organised kingdom. Then his son Antiochus the Saviour had to bear the brunt of that terrible Gaulish Invasion (278 B.C.) which was the distant precursor of the storms that overthrew the Roman Empire : the invasion which has left its mark on our New Testament in the title of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

The sixteen elephants of Antiochus enabled him to win a notable victory over the invaders, but the Gauls remained, a foreign body in the realm, a disturbing element in the politics of Asia Minor. At this time also, partly perhaps in consequence of the Gallic anarchy, arose the powerful dynasties, half-Greek, half-Oriental, which ruled in Cappadocia, in Bithynia, and in Pergamos and grievously curtailed the power of the Seleucid kings in Western Asia.

A generation later (about 240 B.C.), when the

house of Seleucus was sorely hampered by family dissensions, a Scythian chief named Arsaces conquered Parthia and set up there, in the east of Persia (as we now call it), an independent kingdom which blocked the way to Bactria and separated the Seleucid kings from the young and not unpromising Hellenic civilisation, for which the victories of Alexander had opened the way in cities like Merv, Herat, and Kandahar. From that time forward the loss of all the territory east of the Tigris was only a question of time.

Meanwhile there was a perpetually simmering feud between the descendants of Seleucus and those of his old comrade Ptolemy. Sometimes the feud would be suspended for a short time when a Ptolemy married a Cleopatra, or an Antiochus married a Berenice, the daughter of a king of the rival house, but often these dynastic alliances were themselves the cause of fresh wars. The main subject of dispute, however, was always the same; the question who should possess Southern Syria and Palestine, or, as it was called in the political language of that day, the satrapy of Phoenicia and Coele-Syria. The term Phoenicia needs no explanation except to observe that this narrow strip of sea-coast extended far north of Tyre and Sidon, the chief Phoenician cities, and, in fact, came within a hundred miles of Antioch itself. But Coele-Syria, or "the hollow Syria," though an appropriate name enough for that which is now called the Bukáa, the long and beautiful valley which lies between

Lebanon on the West and Anti-Lebanon on the East, is a strange name to apply to a region which included what is to us the infinitely more interesting region of Palestine. For this country from Dan even to Beersheba is emphatically a land that is convex in shape rather than concave, a high central ridge of mountains rising between the Maritime Plain on the west and the deep gorge of Jordan on the east. However, so as the satraps of Ptolemy and Antiochus named it, we must be content to receive it, always remembering that when the historians talk of Coele-Syria they include therein that old battle-ground between Egypt and Assyria, the land that was given to the children of Israel for a possession.

The grievance of the Seleucid kings with reference to Coele-Syria was an old one. When Ptolemy and Seleucus joined their forces in order to war against the mighty Antigonos, the Egyptian King stipulated for Coele-Syria as his share of the spoil. Before the day of battle, however, his heart seems to have failed him, and he slunk out of the Hollow Syria almost as soon as he entered it. This left the stress of the conflict to fall on Seleucus and his other allies, and, when in the decisive battle of Ipsus (301 B.C.) Antigonos was utterly overthrown, Seleucus not unnaturally claimed Phoenicia and Coele-Syria as his own. As Ptolemy, however, had again moved his army northwards and occupied the two provinces, Seleucus had to content himself with a protest. "For old friendship's sake" he would

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take no active measures to possess himself of the territory, but he would know in future how to deal with a friend who thus grasped more than his share.

Thus, then, when the game of Empire-sharing was ended, Palestine and the Phoenician coast fell to the lot of the Ptolemies, and remained under Egyptian rule for a century. It is important to remember this fact since we sometimes see it stated that at the division of Alexander's Empire Palestine became part of the Asiatic kingdom of the family of Seleucus.¹ In point of fact the Jews were at least twice as long under the rule of the Ptolemies as under the rule of the Seleucidæ, and their connection with the latter dynasty was a very recent affair when the great revolt of the Maccabean heroes took place. It was about the year 201 that Antiochus III. made the first conquest of Palestine, winning a decisive victory over Scopas, the Ptolemaic general, at beautiful Banias hard by the sources of the Jordan. Anticipating the course of my present narrative I remark that in the year 141, by the expulsion of the Syrian garrisons from the fortresses which they still held, Simon the Maccabee achieved the practical independence of the Jewish state, and under his son John Hyrcanus that independence was fully recognised by the Seleucid kings. Hence it follows that the period of effective supremacy of the Antiochi over Israel cannot be stated at more than sixty years. It is to be observed that for some reason or other the rule of the Ptolemies was

¹ *E.g.* in Conder's useful little book on Judas Maccabeus, p. 13.

always more popular in Palestine than that of the Seleucids. "Whenever the Seleucids did occupy Palestine they took it by force and held it by force." This is the assertion of Professor Mahaffy, who proceeds to discuss the reason for this difference between "The King of the North" and "The King of the South." Something he attributes to the pleasant manners and courtesy of the first Ptolemy and something to the traditional dislike of the Jews to potentates who seemed to them the successors and representatives of those Eastern despots, Hazael, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, at whose hands they had suffered grievous oppression in by-gone centuries. But he attaches more weight to the generally kind and friendly policy adopted by Ptolemy towards the Jews, and, contrasted therewith, the over-zeal with which Seleucus and his successors pursued their policy of Hellenising their Semitic subjects:

Thus, while Ptolemy would provide for any number of Jewish emigrants in Egypt, and make room in their homes for the rest, Seleucus [or Antiochus] would crowd the country with heathen settlers, privileged in their cities, offering a bad example and much inducement to follow it, to the ambitious youth of Judæa.¹

The career of Antiochus III., surnamed the Great,² was one of remarkable vicissitudes. In six years (from 210 to 204) he conducted a series of successful

¹ Mahaffy, *The Empire of the Ptolemies*, p. 90.

² Bevan thinks that this title was rather a revival of the old appellation "The Great King," as applied to the monarchs of the East than an epithet meant to distinguish between Antiochus III. and other Antiochi.

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campaigns which restored the supremacy of the Seleucid house from the Tigris to the Indus, reducing the Parthian King and all the other chieftains who had claimed to exercise independent rule to subordination—unfortunately only temporary subordination—to the great Hellenic Empire.

Soon after came the series of wars and alliances which in 201 made him master of the long-coveted land Coele-Syria. But there ended his good fortune. His ignorance of the real conditions of the problem and the persuasive tongue of Hannibal, the eternal enemy of Rome, brought him into collision with the great world-conquering Republic, a collision which involved him in such swift and surprising ruin as might befall a savage ignorantly meddling with a full-charged electric dynamo.

After his crushing defeat at Magnesia, 190 B.C., he had to submit to the ignominious conditions imposed upon him by the Roman Senate: the entire evacuation of Asia Minor beyond Mount Taurus; the payment of 15,000 talents (£3,270,000) to Rome and 400 (£87,200) to Rome's ally, the King of Pergamos; the surrender of all his elephants and all but ten of his battleships; the expulsion of Hannibal from his kingdom; and, lastly, the delivery to Rome of twenty hostages, one of whom was to be his own younger son. That son was Antiochus Epiphanes. Three years later (187 B.C.) the great King perished in a struggle with the obscure tribe of the Elymæi who dwelt somewhere beyond the Tigris, and whose temples he sought to

rob of their treasure of silver and gold in order to fill the void caused by the terrible indemnity to Rome.

The eldest son of the dead King, Seleucus IV., reigned peaceably and, on the whole, wisely for eleven years (187-176) and at the end of that time was murdered by his chief minister Heliodorus. His son Demetrius, who was but a boy, was absent as a hostage in Rome, the Senate having for some reason—probably because they deemed that a son would be dearer than a brother—insisted that he should take the place vacated by his uncle Antiochus. That uncle, travelling eastward, had taken up his abode at Athens and was figuring not only as a citizen but an official of the Athenian Republic. On the news of his brother's death he at once quitted Athens, traversed Asia Minor, and, by the friendly aid of the King of Pergamos, succeeded in winning the kingdom of his ancestors under the title of Antiochus IV. Of the murderous prime-minister Heliodorus we hear no more. No doubt he was defeated and slain.

Thus, then, we have Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes seated on the Syrian throne. What is the meaning of that title which has been generally translated the "Illustrious"? It seems clear, however, that it means something more than that. The full surname is Theos Epiphanes, "the manifest God," and thus, extraordinary as is the contrast, it contains the same thought which the Christian Church wishes to express when it speaks of the

Epiphany of Christ. The process of thought by which both Greeks and Romans brought themselves to see something actually divine in the rulers before whom they cringed is unintelligible to us moderns: though, indeed, the language of the Egyptian Moslem who has lately written an anonymous letter to Lord Cromer might help us to understand it. "Though the Khalif (that is the Sultan) were hapless as Bayezid, cruel as Murad, or mad as Ibrahim, he is the Shadow of God." This absolute deification of power, utterly regardless of holiness or even of wisdom, is one of the strange vagaries of the human intellect, but never perhaps has it been more strikingly exemplified than when men saw in Antiochus IV. the manifest God, or in Abdul Hamid the Shadow of God.

As this man was the cruel persecutor of the Hebrew race we could not reasonably expect to find in the books of Maccabees an absolutely unbiassed estimate of this character. We are fortunate, therefore, in possessing another portrait of him, drawn by a superb judge of character, a contemporary and an intimate friend of his nephew, none other than the historian Polybius.

Sometimes stealing forth from the Palace without the knowledge of his servants he would wander at will with one or two companions through the city [of Antioch]. Most often, however, he would be found in the quarter of the goldsmiths and silversmiths, chattering away and showing off his artistic knowledge to the workers in relief and the craftsmen. At such times he would enter into

conversation with any one whom he met, and would have a drink with the meanest of the foreigners who happened to be passing through the city. If he saw signs of a carousal of young fellows he would present himself among them unbidden with cornet and bagpipe,¹ and having entered in he often behaved so oddly that many of the guests would get up and walk away. Often, too, laying aside his royal robes he would put on a toga² and go round the forum canvassing for votes. One man he would take by the right hand, another he would clasp in his embrace and beg them to give him their votes, perhaps for the office of market steward,³ perhaps for that of alderman.⁴ Then, when he had obtained the desired office, he would sit on an ivory curule chair after the manner of the Roman, would listen to the reading of contracts about market business and would deliver his judgments with the utmost gravity and earnestness.

By all these vagaries he drove reasonable men to despair; for while some thought him a good-natured simpleton, others took him for a raging lunatic. His conduct in respect of presents was all of a piece with that which has been already described: he would present some people with knuckle bones from the body of a stag, others with date stones, and others with gold, and sometimes he would give costly presents quite unexpectedly to chance-comers whom he had never seen before. In civic sacrifices, however, and in all that pertained to the honour of the gods, he surpassed all his predecessors, as may be inferred from his work at the temple of Jupiter Olympius at Athens and from the statues with which he encircled the altar at Delos.

¹ μετὰ κερατίου καὶ συμφωνίας: two of the Greek words for musical instruments used in Daniel iii. 5. It is a curious coincidence, but probably nothing more, that "a little horn" is the term used to denote Antiochus himself in Daniel viii. 9.

² τήβεννα.

³ ἀγορανόμος.

⁴ δήμαρχος.

He used to bathe in the public baths when they were crowded with townsfolk, and would have jars full of the most costly ointments brought to him there. Once upon a time a man called out, "Happy are you, oh kings, who can use such things as that and smell so sweet." He said nothing at the time, but next day when the man was bathing he ordered an enormous jar of that very costly ointment called *Stactē* to be emptied over his head. All the bathers who stood by rushed in and rolled themselves in the overflowing liquid, and as many fell down on the slippery pavement, the King himself being one of them, there arose a mighty laughter.

The sum of the whole matter is that Polybius decides that Antiochus IV. should have been called Epimanes, the madman, rather than Epiphanes. And yet he finds it hard to abide even in that judgment of this most perplexing character, for in another place ¹ he says :

Antiochus the King was an efficient man and one who formed large designs, and was worthy of the royal name, but for one incident in his life [in connection with Egyptian affairs].

However, the portrait is now before us painted with extraordinary vividness, if it is not easy to read the soul that lay behind these ever-changing features. Though from other indications we know that he was a man of impure character, he was, pretty certainly, no mere bloated sensualist. His coins—at this period genuine portraits of the monarch—show us a face of Greek beauty and with

¹ xxviii. 18.

signs of intellectual power and refinement. We have also to remember the fact that he had spent his boyhood in Rome, in the period which followed the great deliverance from the Second Punic War, and had doubtless made the acquaintance of senators and consuls, not yet wholly demoralised, though rapidly degenerating from the ancient republican virtue and simplicity of life. He had also spent some months or years in Athens, had seen the working of the Republican Institutions which that famous city still enjoyed ; and had sometimes reflected how much more delightful it would be to earn power through the excitement of a contested election than to wear the same purple robe and the same diadem all one's life as a mere inheritance from an ancestor. But, after all, the chief factor in his history must ever have been the influence of his native city Antioch. This city which we know so well from the descriptions of Julian, of Libanius, and of Chrysostom, kept for centuries its character unchanged ; it was emphatically the city not of commerce nor of learning but of sensual delight, a city of keen satire, of frivolous amusement, of little reverence for majesty, human or divine. All these influences, and probably some touch of madness in his brain, made of Antiochus one of the most "inconsequent" beings that ever existed. That word, though still scarcely naturalised here, must be permitted us in order to describe the character of a man whose actions never seemed to follow one another as friend or foe expected.

Wordsworth's wish,

I would have my days to be
Bound each to each in natural piety,

was the very antithesis of the life of Epiphanes. But let us remember that through all his strange vagaries he was emphatically a Greek: Greek is his craving for novelty, Greek in that lack of personal dignity which contrasted so strangely with gravity that made the Roman Senate an "Assembly of Kings"; Greek in the love of art which sent him down to the quarters of the goldsmiths to chatter with the artists in repoussé work; and Greek more than all in a strange underlying love for and belief in the gods of Olympus. It was this which caused him to continue, doubtless at great expense, the building of the temple which had been begun by Pisistratus and was to be finished by Hadrian, the glorious Olympieion at Athens.

We have in all these co-efficients of character some explanation of the causes which made of a man not naturally cruel or bloodthirsty the very type of a persecuting tyrant. The inconstant, paradoxical, pleasure-loving Greek was to dash himself against the solemn fervour of the Jews; the man who cared only for the Beautiful was to try to break the wills of men devoted to the Holy; the patronising worshipper of Jupiter Olympius and all his bright train of immoral deities was to strive to erase from the minds of a whole nation the deeply engraved but unutterable name of Jehovah Sabaoth.

II. Of the people of Israel themselves, with whom

the Syrian king was thus to come into conflict, we have far less information than we could desire, far less real and trustworthy information than could be inferred by an uncritical reader of the smooth-flowing narrative of Josephus.

The transportation of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin into captivity took place about the year 600 B.C. The books of the Maccabees begin their detailed history of the nation about 200 B.C. Of the intervening history of the Jewish people during all these four hundred years we have practically no authentic record, except for some twenty years (536-516) at the time of the Return, and twenty-six years (459-433), the period in which Ezra and Nehemiah were carrying through their work of Reformation. From 433 to 200 authentic history is silent as to the doings of the little nation that clustered on the Judæan hills, round the temple of Jerusalem. Legends, now generally discredited, about the men of the Great Synagogue, the names of several of the High Priests and a story, probably mythical, concerning an interview between the High Priest Jaddua and Alexander the Great, help to fill up the pages of historical manuals, but add little or nothing to the sum of our real knowledge.

On the other hand, there are some indications that this long period of unrecorded history was by no means the least prosperous in the religious life of Israel. It contains, it is true, the works of only three prophets—Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi—

but, as the mission of the prophet was generally to denounce the sins of his countrymen, and to warn them against idolatry, this silence may itself be a proof that it was not an age of apostasy from Jehovah. Some, at least, perhaps many, of the Psalms, which have become the rich heritage of the Christian Church, were composed in the course of these four centuries. If Ecclesiasticus, the noblest of all the Apocryphal books, was, as most scholars now hold, not composed till the very end of this period, at any rate the state of the society out of which such a book was to emerge cannot have been altogether unfavourable to holy living or to the growth of that wisdom, the beginning of which is the fear of the Lord.

It is evident that during this interval the institutions which claimed Moses for their author maintained a strong hold upon the life and conscience of Israel. As Mr. Bevan has well said :¹

When Ezra and Nehemiah had repelled the encroachments of the heathen environment, and made the sense of the Law yet more strong, their labour was not lost. The little people dwelt separate in their hill country and, while wars rolled past them and kingdoms clashed and changed, nursed the sacred fire and meditated on the Law of the Lord.

In their seclusion their antagonism to the Gentile nations round them grew stronger and more bitter. When St. Paul said of his countrymen, in writing to the Thessalonians, " They please

¹ ii. 167.

not God and are contrary to all men," though they would have indignantly denied the first clause of the indictment, they would probably have admitted the second. "Lo, the people dwelt alone and was not reckoned among the nations." "Edom and Ammon, the heathen that were in Gilead, they of Tyre and Sidon and all Galilee of the Gentiles" were still regarded as enemies; but the bitterest of Jewish scorn and hatred, half-racial, half-religious, was reserved for the Samaritan neighbours who said that Gerizim, not Jerusalem, was the place where men ought to worship.

Judging by their conduct at the time of the Syrian persecution, we conclude that the three points in the Law of Moses on which the faithful Jew insisted most uncompromisingly were the rite of circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and the maintenance of the Mosaic distinction between clean and unclean beasts; the uncleanest of all the unclean to him as to so many million adherents of another Semitic faith, this day, being "the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud."

There was a party of strict Jews called the *Khasidim* or the Pietists, who clung with desperate tenacity to these three essentials of Judaism; but there were also, as we shall soon discover, some lukewarm Jews who, while very likely willing heartily to join in their brethren's scorn of the Edomite and the Ammonite, were half-fascinated by the joyous licence of Greek civilisation, and had

no mind to be looked upon as fanatics and barbarians when they visited the groves of Daphne, or sauntered through the colonnades of Antioch. The only serious dispute which had yet arisen between the Jews and their new rulers, the Syrian kings, was in the reign of the predecessor of Antiochus IV., his brother Seleucus Philopator. The dispute then turned on no deep religious controversy, but only on the necessity of replenishing the royal coffers, so grievously depleted by the terrible indemnity paid to Rome. According to the story, evidently much embellished, if founded on fact, which is told us by the author of the second book of Maccabees, Heliodorus the Treasurer, at the instigation of an evil-minded Benjamite named Simon, came to Jerusalem, demanded of Onias the High Priest that he should hand over some part of the "infinite sums of money" which were stored up within the temple, and when this demand was refused, insisted on penetrating the sacred precincts and forcing his way to the Treasury, amid the horror-stricken lamentations of all the dwellers in Jerusalem. There, however, he was met by the apparition of a horse with a terrible rider upon him, covered with a complete harness of gold. At the onslaught of this terrible rider Heliodorus fell to the ground and was compassed with great darkness, having first been scourged with many sore blows by two young men, notable in strength and of excellent beauty, who accompanied the celestial horseman. The intruder was restored to consciousness by

the prayers of Onias, and left Jerusalem without having accomplished his mission; but it was by his felon hand that some years after, as has been already said, his Master Seleucus IV. was murdered.

This story has been made memorable by the pen of Dante and the brush of Raffaele, and there may be for it some groundwork of fact. At any rate, after the payment of the ransom to Rome, we find the kings of Syria constantly visiting the temples of the gods worshipped by their subjects, and seeking to despoil them of their treasures.

The first assaults, however, on the citadel of the Jewish faith came not from foreigners but from domestic treason. The good high priest Onias was intrigued against by his brother Joshua, who took the Gentile name Jason, visited the Court of Antiochus soon after his accession, and persuaded the king, by a bribe of 440 talents (£95,920), to grant him his brother's office. "At the same time certain wicked men, desirous to make a covenant with the heathen round about, went to the king and obtained from him" (assuredly with no great difficulty) "license to do after the ordinances of the heathen." The chief outward sign of this desired Hellenisation of Israel was the building at Jerusalem of a Greek *palæstra*, in which, of course, naked athletes would run and wrestle and wield the *cestus* as at the Olympic games. Another less important innovation was made in the national dress. The Hellenisers laid aside, apparently, the Semitic turban and took to wearing the *petasus*, the spreading hat

which was the ordinary head-dress of the Athenian youths, and which we know from its frequent representation in the friezes of the Parthenon. The craze for athletics spread through all classes, and the chronicler records with horror that even the priests, finding it wearisome to continue their daily ministrations at the altar, rushed down to the palæstra as soon as the signal was given for the throwing of the *discus*.

Probably in order to show his liberality in religious matters, Jason sent an offering to the altar of Hercules at Tyre, at the Quinquennalia, when the king was present, but for some reason which is not very clearly explained, perhaps because of the smallness of the offering, it was not accepted by the sacrificing priests.

Possibly Jason found himself outdone by a more thorough-going apostate: he was at any rate easily vanquished by the same weapons of corruption which he had himself used. A man who had taken the Greek name of Menelaus, brother of Simon the Benjamite, offered 300 talents of silver more than Jason, and, albeit not of the sacred family of Aaron, obtained the high priesthood for himself, the venerable Onias being murdered in order to prevent opposition from his partisans. We are told that this crime was committed without the knowledge of Antiochus, who wept when he heard of it, and deprived the governor, who was guilty of the deed, both of office and life.

It is not easy to follow the course of the

Hellenisation of Jerusalem which, under these depraved and utterly irreligious high priests, seems to have gone forward rapidly: but there were evidently tumults and skirmishes between the partisans of the two claimants for the pontificate, and rightly or wrongly Antiochus looked upon these disorders as signs of disaffection to Syria and a desire to resume the old allegiance to the Ptolemaic kings.

Meanwhile Antiochus, little heeding probably the religious or irreligious caprices of the little nation on Mount Zion, was playing the great game of Empire in the valley of the Nile. Taking advantage of the fact that Rome was engaged in a difficult struggle with the last king of Macedon, and also of a fratricidal strife between two princes of the Ptolemaic line, he had invaded Egypt, besieged Alexandria, and placed a strong garrison in the Egyptian frontier fortress of Pelusium. This he had been able to do in the years 170 to 169, because Rome needed every available soldier for her struggle in Macedonia. But when he moved southwards in 168 to renew the strife, and to impose a more humiliating yoke on the now reconciled Ptolemaic brethren, his opportunity was already gone. On the battlefield of Pydna, Aemilius Paulus had inflicted a crushing defeat on Perseus, king of Macedonia, and now the Roman ambassador, C. Popilius Laenas, had no need to temporise with the Seleucid king. Before Antiochus could appear under the walls of Alexandria the ambassador met

him, and then followed that well-known scene, so typical of Rome's manner of dealing with her Mediterranean neighbours. Antiochus, who no doubt had made the acquaintance of Popilius during his captivity in Rome, hailed him from afar, and, as he drew nigh, stretched out his hand in greeting. Popilius made no other reply than to hold out the tablet on which was inscribed the will of the Senate, "Antiochus must retire from Egypt," and bade him read that first. The king hesitated and talked of consulting with his friends. Thereupon Popilius, who held in his hand the vine rod with which Roman centurions chastised unruly soldiers, drew on the sand a circle round Antiochus and demanded an answer, "Yes" or "No," to the Senate's decree ere he stepped out of the ring. Antiochus was silent for a few minutes, and then answered that he would do whatever the Romans desired. At once the manner of Popilius changed: he clasped the proffered hand, and he and all his colleagues greeted the king with cordiality.

Groaning in spirit, but yielding to the necessities of the time, Antiochus returned to his own land, and vented on Jerusalem the wrath which he dared not display against Rome. The disturbances which had happened in Jerusalem gave him a pretext, perhaps something more than a pretext, for doubting Jewish loyalty, and now that Pelusium had been surrendered, it was more than ever necessary to strengthen Jerusalem against an invading Ptolemy. A citadel, the Acra, was built, probably

overlooking the temple: it was made a place of arms and a storehouse for the army, and, as the chronicler says, "It became a place to lie in wait in against the sanctuary, and an evil adversary to Israel continually." It is possible that, as is averred by the author of the first book of Maccabees, the proceedings at Jerusalem were part of a design on the part of Antiochus to Hellenise his whole kingdom in order, as he describes it, "that all should be one people, and that each should forsake its own laws." If it were so, the other Semitic tribes, Moab and Ammon and the Edomite, yielded quietly: only Judah refused to abandon the God of his fathers, and his resistance stirred the sore and restless spirit of Antiochus to something like frenzy. There was indeed a method in his madness, for when he arrived at Jerusalem he insisted on visiting the temple, and took from thence treasure amounting, according to one statement,¹ to 1800 talents (£392,400): but when that was done he left a new governor, a Phrygian named Philip, at Jerusalem with orders to carry through the complete transformation of city and temple to a Hellenic type.

On the fifteenth day of Chislev [November], in the 145th year [167 B.C.], an abomination of desolation was builded upon the altar: [in other words, the great altar of Jehovah had superimposed upon it an altar to Zeus Olympius]: and in the cities of Judah on every side they builded idol altars. And at the doors of the houses and in

¹ 2 Maccabees v. 21.

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the streets they burned incense, and they rent in pieces the books of the Law which they found, and set them on fire : and wheresoever a book of the covenant was found with any, and if any consented to the Law, they delivered him to death.

In some cases the holy books were not burned but profaned by having idol-pictures scrawled over them, or being dipped in the broth of abominable things which the ministers of the heathen sanctuary had prepared. For swine and other animals, unclean according to the Mosaic law, were now offered on all the altars, and, moreover, once a month when the king's birthday came round the Jews "were led along with bitter constraint to eat of the sacrifices, and when the Dionysia came they were compelled to go in procession in honour of Dionysus, wearing wreaths of ivy." The practice of circumcision was prohibited by law, and two women who had dared to disobey this decree by circumcising their children were led ignominiously round the city with their dead babes hanging from their breasts, and were then cast down headlong from the city wall into the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There is undoubtedly some exaggeration in the story of the persecution, especially as it is told by the author of the second book of Maccabees, who talks too freely of general massacres in which great multitudes were slain, but that the persecution was for a time intense, and that the king with his fitful and irrational energy had set himself to root out the worship of Jehovah, and to substitute for it

the worship of Olympian Jupiter, there can be no doubt.

It is to this time that we must refer the story of the martyrdom of Eleazar, "one of the principal scribes, a man already well stricken in years and of a noble countenance," who welcomed death by torture rather than eat the swine's flesh which the officers of the tyrant endeavoured to force into his mouth. The tragedy of the seven brethren who were successively put to death before the eyes of their mother for their steadfast refusal to taste of the abominable swine's flesh, and of that mother herself who followed them to martyrdom, can hardly be historically true in the shape in which it has come down to us, since it represents Antiochus himself as taking part in the scene and striving to threaten or to wheedle the young men into compliance with his wishes, but there is nothing in the general tenor of the story inconsistent with probability.

There was at first some resistance, especially from those who refused to obey the governor's commands by working on the Sabbath day. They wandered on the mountains; they withdrew into the caves, with which Palestine abounds, that they might there keep the seventh day secretly; but the very scruples of these *Khasidim* were the means of their destruction, for the Syrian officers had only to set the battle in array against them on the Sabbath day. "They answered them not, neither cast they a stone at them nor stopped up the mountain passes, but said, 'Let us all die in our

innocency ; Heaven and earth witness for us that ye put us to death without trial.' So the Syrians fought against them on the Sabbath, and they died, they and their wives and their children, and their cattle, to the number of a thousand souls, because they scrupled to defend themselves from regard to the honour of that most solemn day."¹

Thus everything seemed to point to the triumph of Hellenism over Judaism, of Olympus over Mount Zion, when the wave of persecution rolled on to a little village in the Maritime Plain, met there with unexpected resistance, and was thence beaten back with scarcely interrupted defeat to its own Syrian starting-point. At Modin dwelt an aged priest, Mattathias the son of John, and he had five sons, John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan. Each son had a surname, the interpretation of which is for us now somewhat doubtful, but it is generally agreed that Maccabeus, the memorable surname of the third son Judas, signifies a hammer. Thus Judas Maccabeus, the vanquisher of the Syrians, foreshadows Charles Martel, the vanquisher of the Saracens.

Already, when he had heard the tidings of the blasphemies that were committed in Judah and Jerusalem, Mattathias had poured forth a psalm of lamentation, and he and his sons had rent their clothes and put on sackcloth and mourned exceedingly. Now came one of the king's officers to Modin with orders to execute the king's decree,

¹ 1 Maccabees ii. 28 combined with 2 Maccabees vi. 11.

and compel the villagers to sacrifice to Jupiter. With courteous words he invited Mattathias as the chief man in the little town to come forward and do sacrifice as all his countrymen in Jerusalem had done. So complying, he should be enrolled in the aristocratic class of "the King's Friends," and he and his sons should receive silver and gold and many precious gifts.

With a loud voice Mattathias answered that if all the nations of Asia should obey the king's decree he would stand firm, and he and his sons would continue to walk in the covenant of their fathers. "Heaven forbid that we should forsake the law and the ordinances. We will not hearken to the king's words to go aside from our worship on the right hand or on the left."

When he ceased, an apostate Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice on the heathen altar. Thereat the anger of the aged priest was kindled, and he ran and slew the recreant Israelite on the altar. Then he, helped probably by his sons, slew also the king's officer and pulled down the altar which he had built.

Of course, after this defiance of the king, the peaceable Maritime plain was no place for Mattathias. He and his sons and all who like him were zealous for the law and maintained the covenant "fled into the mountains and forsook all that they had in the city."

Two voices are there : one is of the Sea ;
One of the Mountains ;
And both of liberty.

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Never did the latter voice ring more truly than when that high mountain range, the backbone of Palestine, which travellers know so well, received the Hasmonean¹ patriarch and his sons. At first they "kept themselves alive on the mountains after the manner of wild beasts, feeding on such poor herbs as grew there, that they might not be partakers of the threatened pollutions." Then as more and more of the Khasidim joined them, they made descents upon the villages, pulling down the heathen altars, slaying many of the apostates, persuading some of the faint-hearted lovers of the law to join them, and returning, doubtless, with some weeks' supply of food to their mountains.

After a few months the aged Mattathias died, worn out probably with the hardships of his life in the highlands, and Judas, who had been pointed out by his father's hand as his successor, took his place at the head of the movement. One most important element in the generalship of Judas was that, overruling probably the counsels of the stricter Khasidim, he carried into effect a resolution, already formed in his father's lifetime, to resist even on the Sabbath day. "Whosoever shall come against us to battle on the Sabbath day, let us fight against him, and we shall in no wise all die as our brethren did in the caverns."

It is only the early campaigns of Judas Maccabeus that fall within the scope of this paper,

¹ The reason of this family name is not altogether apparent, but probably Hasmon was one of the ancestors of Mattathias.

for in the winter of 164 Antiochus Epiphanes was no more ; and even those campaigns must be treated with brevity. There was evidently something in the character of Judas Maccabeus which especially fitted him for the part he had to play as leader of a band of untrained patriots against the disciplined armies of a mighty monarchy. Arising, as he did, at the lowest and most depressing period of his nation's fortunes, he had in his own personality a magnetism which attracted to him all brave men, and he shed around him an aura of happy confidence which caused them to "fight with cheerfulness the battle of Israel. So he got his people great honour and put on a breastplate as a giant, and girt his warlike harness about him. In his acts he was like a lion and like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey, for he pursued the wicked and sought them out and burned up those that vexed his people." ¹

The first battle which Judas fought was with Apollonius, who was probably the Syrian governor of Samaria, and who "gathered together the Gentiles and a great host out of Samaria to fight against Israel, which thing when Judas perceived he went forth to meet him, and so he smote him and slew him : many fell down slain, but the rest fled. Wherefore Judas took their spoils and Apollonius' sword also, and therewith he fought all his life long." So says the chronicler, but the remainder of that victorious life was not to exceed the span of five years.

¹ 1 Maccabees iii. 2-5.

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His next victory was over a general named Seron, and was won on the historic site of the pass of Beth-horon, where Joshua had inflicted his memorable defeat on the Five Kings of Jerusalem and the surrounding cities. Though the number of slain in this engagement is given at the very moderate figure of 800 men, the fact that it was a victory, the second of its kind, won by the guerilla bands of the Hasmoneans over the Macedonian phalanx, caused, doubtless, many searchings of heart, as well as much incoherent wrath, when the tidings thereof reached the palace of Antioch.

For, in the meantime, while this little-heeded revolt had been gathering head among the mountains of Judæa, Antiochus had been squandering the treasures won during his Egyptian campaign upon pageants and banquets of splendid absurdity. Having heard of the games given in conquered Macedonia by the Roman pro-consul Aemilius Paulus, and being desirous to outdo the great Republic, at any rate in peaceful rivalry, he invited all the Grecian cities to attend the games which he was about to celebrate in cypress-shaded Daphne. First came the procession of some 50,000 men, armed in the fashion of various nationalities, Roman, Gaulish, Macedonian, with brazen or silver shields, or with purple surcoats embroidered with gold. Then came 100 chariots drawn by six horses, and 40 drawn by four, two chariots drawn by four and two elephants respectively; and then 36 elephants

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in single file with magnificent housings. Eight hundred young men wearing gold crowns carried the images of gods, demi-gods, and heroes of Night and Day, of Earth and Heaven: young slaves of the king carrying golden vessels, and hundreds of women in litters with gold or silver feet all adorned with great costliness. Then followed the games, the combats of gladiators, the hunting scenes, lasting for thirty days, and the public banquets of the most luxurious kind at which couches were spread, sometimes for 1000 and sometimes for 1500 guests. At all these festivities the king himself acted as an assiduous Master of the Ceremonies; during the processions, riding on a sorry nag alongside of the marching men, halting this squadron and hurrying forward that group of image-bearers, his own appearance being only like that of a respectable servant. Then at the feasts he stood at the door to assign their places to the guests; and when the banquet was begun he was perpetually jumping up from his seat and moving about among the company drinking healths or laughing at the jokes of the comic reciters. In all this part of the performance his conduct was that of a perhaps over-zealous host, intensely anxious that his guests should enjoy themselves and that universal jollity should prevail. But stranger yet were his proceedings towards the end of the feast, when the mummers carried him in, shrouded in a robe, and laid him on the ground, for all the world as if he were a comedian like themselves. Then at

a signal given he leaped up, stripped himself naked, and danced an indecent dance with the buffoons, till the guests who still remained, scandalised at the sight, withdrew from the banquet hall.

And this was Antiochus, Lord of Asia, Antiochus the Manifested God, in whose name, perhaps at that very hour, Macedonian warriors were fighting in rocky defiles against the solemn servants of Jehovah who clustered round the Maccabean Lion.

But, as I have said, when at last the news of the reverses of his armies in Palestine reached the ears of Antiochus, he saw that a great effort was necessary, and that Coele-Syria, instead of providing him with a handsome tribute, would be a drain to his already impoverished treasury. He decided, accordingly, to make an expedition beyond the Euphrates, to despoil the temples of Armenia and Mesopotamia. Thus, in Napoleonic phrase, "war was to support war," for at the same time he despatched a large army to Jerusalem under the command of his kinsman Lysias, whom he had appointed Regent in his absence.

It was probably in the spring of 165 B.C. that Antiochus started on his Eastern campaign, from which he never returned. After achieving some successes in Armenia, and visiting the old Median capital of Ecbatana, whose name he changed to Epiphaneia, he attempted to break into the temple of the goddess Istar in the midst of an Elamite population who defended the shrine of their goddess

so successfully that Antiochus was forced to retire wrathful and humiliated.¹

Some disease of the brain seems to have attacked him, and he died soon after at Tabae, a little town in Persia. The date of his death was probably the end of 165 or the beginning of 164 B.C.

Such an end, so obscure and inglorious, to a life in some ways so brilliant and energetic, of course attracted the attention of moralising contemporaries. Polybius says that "he was driven mad, as some say, by some manifestations of divine wrath in the course of his wicked attempt upon the temple of Artemis." The Jewish writers naturally connect the king's death with his violation of their own sanctuary and persecution of their people. The author of the first book of Maccabees represents it as partly due to his grief at the news of the victories of Judas.

And he called for all his Friends and said unto them, "Sleep departeth from mine eyes and my heart faileth for care : and I said in my heart ' Unto what tribulation am

¹ First Maccabees (vi. 1-4) says that "Antiochus the King, while journeying through the upper countries, heard say that in Elymais in Persia there was a city renowned for riches, for silver and gold, and that the temple which was in it was rich exceedingly, and that therein were golden shields and breast-plates and arms which Alexander, son of Philip, left behind there. And he came and sought to take the city and pillage it, and he was not able because the thing was known to them of the city, and they rose up against him to battle, and he fled and removed thence with great heaviness to return unto Babylon."

This writer seems to make the place of Antiochus' death to have been Babylon, though his language is not quite decisive.

Second Maccabees puts it apparently near Ecbatana. The authority of Polybius who puts it at Tabae in Persia (whatever the precise site of that city may have been) is to be preferred to either.

I come, and in how great a flood am I overwhelmed, for I was gracious and beloved in my power' [these words of a hostile chronicler are worthy of notice]. But now I remember the evils which I did at Jerusalem, and that I took all the vessels of silver and gold that were therein, and sent forth to destroy the inhabitants of Judah without a cause. I perceive that on this account these evils are come upon me, and behold I perish through great grief in a strange land."

The author of the second book of Maccabees, who colours his pictures more highly than the author of the first, represents the king as moved to a paroxysm of fury by the tidings from Judæa, and as threatening to make Jerusalem a common graveyard of Jews: but in the mid-current of his passion he is struck down by an invisible hand; he falls from his chariot and is attacked by some loathsome disease which makes him intolerable to himself and all his attendants. He repents of his past misdeeds, promises restitution of the vessels taken from the Temple, and says "that he will himself become a Jew, and will visit every inhabited place, publishing abroad the might of God." But the repentance comes too late, and "the murderer and blasphemer, having endured the sorest sufferings, even as he had dealt with other men, ended his life among the mountains by a most piteous fate in a strange land."

The greater part of this later historian's narrative we feel that we may safely discard, but there is incorporated with it a document which some recent

critics are disposed to consider as authentic.¹ It is a letter addressed by Antiochus, King and General, to the worthy Jews his fellow-citizens. The chief object of the letter is to inform the receivers thereof of his own "noisome sickness," from which he hopes to recover, but he has, nevertheless, appointed his son Antiochus his successor, and for him he solicits their loyal goodwill. But this letter, as has been well pointed out by Bevan, contains no evidence of contrition for the indignities inflicted on the worshippers of Jehovah, and "the worthy Jews his fellow-citizens" are the Hellenising inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were the objects of fiercest aversion and bitterest scorn to the Maccabean patriots. On the whole, we are not entitled to say that there was any real repentance on that deathbed in the obscure Persian town for any misdeeds towards Jews or Elamites or any of his subjects. All that we know is that the pride of the God Manifest was suddenly brought low, and that his restless, fervid, inconstant brain at length had rest. In conclusion we must briefly notice the events of the years 165 and 164 B.C., some of which may—for the chronology is most uncertain—have reached the ears of Antiochus in his march through "the upper countries," and may have hastened his end.

While Antiochus was busily engaged in the eastern provinces of his Empire, his lieutenant-governor, Lysias, was organising his forces for

¹ See Bevan, ii. 177 and 298, quoting the German scholar Niese.

the suppression of the revolt in Coele-Syria. An army consisting, as we are told,¹ of 40,000 infantry and 7000 cavalry "was sent into the land of Judah to destroy it." This army was under the command of three great nobles (King's Friends) named Ptolemy, Nicanor, and Gorgias, and was accompanied by numbers of merchants who saw an opportunity for a profitable investment in the Jewish youths and maidens whom the generals would certainly take captive and would sell for slaves. The army took up its quarters at Emmaus, a town of the Maritime Plain about twenty miles from Jerusalem.²

While they were gloating over the prospect of the coming victory, Judas and his fellow-patriots, assembled on the top of Mizpeh over against Jerusalem, were fasting and praying, clothed in sackcloth and with ashes on their heads, crying aloud to heaven for help against the Gentiles who had profaned God's holy place. Then, according to the Law of Moses, Judas made proclamation that

¹ 1 Maccabees iii. 39.

² The name Emmaus naturally suggests to us the incident, so unlike a Maccabean battle scene, recorded by St. Luke xxiv. 13-35. It is, however, certain that the Emmaus of 1 Macc. iii. 40 cannot be the Emmaus of St. Luke. In the first place, the former received after the battle the name of Nicopolis, the City of Victory, and was probably known generally by that name in the time of Christ. Secondly, it is at least 160 furlongs from Jerusalem, not 60 as was the Emmaus of St. Luke xxiv. 13. Thirdly, no alteration of the text would seriously affect this argument since it would be impossible for the events recorded in St. Luke to have occurred in connection with a place fully five hours' journey (for pedestrians) from Jerusalem.

The suggestion may seem a hazardous one; but is it possible that in memory of the great victory of Judas, the name Emmaus may have been given to some suburban retreat in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, as to Portobello in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh?

all the faint-hearted ones, all the newly married men, all they whose hearts were in their lately planted vineyards, or in their houses just rising from the foundations should return to their homes and leave only the whole-souled patriots to fight for their Temple and their nation.

Was there some lack of unity and purpose in the triply generalled army of Lysias? It is possible: at any rate the disposition of the country-folk gave Judas the better chance of learning the movements of the enemy. Hearing that Gorgias with 6000 men meditated an attack upon his encampment among the hills, he decided to let him have his desire, and himself, the same night with 3000 men, not too well armed, stole forth from the camp, descended into the plain, and was ready at break of day to attack the camp of the other generals at Emmaus. The surprise, the fervour of the Jewish patriots, their irresistible onrush accomplished the utter defeat of the Syrian host, greatly superior as they were in numbers, and when the men of Gorgias, returning from the empty stronghold of Israel, peeped over the brow of the hills, they saw the smoke ascending from their own quarters, the camp of Nicanor and Ptolemy. Restraining his followers from dispersing in quest of plunder, Judas led them victoriously against the amazed and dispirited men of Gorgias, and then they returned to spoil the tents of the Syrians where they "got much gold and silver, and blue and sea purple, and great riches." So they returned home chanting the 136th Psalm

with its continually recurring refrain, "For his mercy endureth for ever": perhaps also that noble song in which Ananias, Azarias and Misael call upon all the works of the Lord to "praise Him and magnify Him for ever."

Another battle, of which we hear fewer particulars, was fought at Beth-zur near Hebron against the Lieutenant-Governor Lysias himself, and was apparently so complete a victory that it opened to Judas the road to Jerusalem. Then "Judas and his brethren said, 'Behold, our enemies are discomfited; let us go up to cleanse the Holy Place and to dedicate it afresh.' And all the army was gathered together and they went up unto Mount Zion. And they saw the sanctuary laid desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burned up, and shrubs growing in the Courts as in a forest or on one of the mountains,¹ and the priest's chambers pulled down; and they rent their clothes and made great lamentation, and put ashes upon their heads and fell on their faces to the ground, and blew with the solemn trumpets and cried toward Heaven."

The Acra, the strong Seleucid fortress overlooking the Temple, was still untaken and remained so for many years. Judas had therefore to appoint certain men to fight against the garrison of the Acra until he should have cleansed the Holy Place

¹ Nicse (quoted by Bevan, ii. 298) "has brought out that the writer is here intentionally making a vacuum where really there was a Hellenistic population. The two accounts of what happened to the Temple, (1) that it was given over to heathen worship, (2) that it was forsaken, are, in fact, inconsistent."

—a remembrance of the days of Nehemiah when with sword in one hand and trowel in the other the soldier masons of Jerusalem wrought at their double labour.

“Blameless Priests”—that is, men who had not polluted themselves by compliance with the idolatrous regime, and such as had pleasure in the Law—were employed to cleanse the holy place, to take down the stones of the great altar defiled by the offering of swine’s flesh upon them and carry them forth to “a convenient place” where they should be stored until some prophet should arise to give an answer concerning them. The altar itself was rebuilt, the gates re-hung, the courts hallowed anew, the candlestick, the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread brought once more into the Temple. The lamps were lighted; the purple veils were hung in their accustomed places. All was again solemn joy in the House of the Lord.

Such was the great feast of the Dedication on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month Chislev (corresponding nearly to our December), the feast which Christ attended, and at which he “was walking in the Temple in Solomon’s Porch.”¹

It was noted with especial gratification that this solemn Purification of the Temple took place on the precise anniversary of the day on which its desecration had taken place by order of Antiochus, but how long the reign of pollution had lasted we are not able to say.²

¹ John x. 22.

² Second Maccabees x. 3 says that the sacrifices ceased for two years, surely an impossibly short time. The chronology of First Maccabees i. 54,

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With this joyous festival, the feast of Dedication or of Lights, our review of the first part of the Maccabean War of Liberation comes to an end. There were yet some vicissitudes in the struggle to be encountered. Judas himself fell in battle in 161, his glorious career having lasted little more than five years. His brothers, Jonathan and Simon, continued the struggle : Jerusalem was captured and re-captured several times. Roman aid was solicited : the usurpations and disputed successions in the Seleucid house all helped the cause of Jewish freedom. At last in the year 141 B.C. the Syrian garrison in the Acra surrendered, and the independence of the Jewish state was practically recognised by the Seleucid kings.

In conclusion, I observe that we should do well to remember the strong impression which the events of the Maccabean struggle made on the Jewish mind and the degree in which that impression was still enduring when Christ came. The interval which separated the death of Judas Maccabeus from the Birth of Christ was only about as long as that which separates us in the present day from Charles Edward Stuart's attempt to overthrow the House of Hanover. Can we doubt that such a memorable struggle as that recorded in the book of Maccabees, the attempt so vigorously made and so nearly successful to Hellenise the Jewish nation had burned itself deep

iv. 52 makes it three years. Mr. Bevan, ii. 299, who puts the purification in December 164, would, I suppose, make the pollution last four years.

into the hearts of the posterity of the patriots: Jewish mothers would tell their children the story of the desecrated Temple, of the seven brave martyr brethren, of the righteous zeal of Mattathias, of the night march of Judas to the camp at Emmaus. In reading our own Christian Scriptures we should have the events of the Maccabean revolt vividly present to our minds. There are verses in the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews which sound like echoes of the books of Maccabees. Such are "waxed valiant in fight turned to flight the armies of the aliens. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. They wandered in deserts and in mountains and in caves and holes of the earth." Nor less strong must have been the effect of the struggle in making more bitter and more intense the religious prejudices of the Jews. When Peter on the house-top said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything common or unclean," he repeated the protest of the Seven Brethren who died rather than eat swine's flesh at the bidding of Antiochus. When the infuriated mob of Jerusalem demanded the life of St. Paul, because "he hath brought Greeks into the Temple and hath polluted this Holy Place," they might be half thinking of Heliodorus and Epiphanes, and of how their intrusion into the Holy Place had been avenged by Jehovah. Nay, even the persistent wrangles of the Pharisees with our Saviour about the observance of the Sabbath become to us a

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little less meaningless when we remember that there was actually a party among the devout Jews of the Maccabean period who would rather "be slaughtered in their innocence" by the myrmidons of the tyrant than raise a hand in self-defence on the Sabbath Day.

THE END