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THE ALEXANDRINE GOSPEL

(SIRACH, WISDOM, PHILO, THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS)

BY THE REV.

A. NAIRNE, D.D.

CANON OF CHESTER

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

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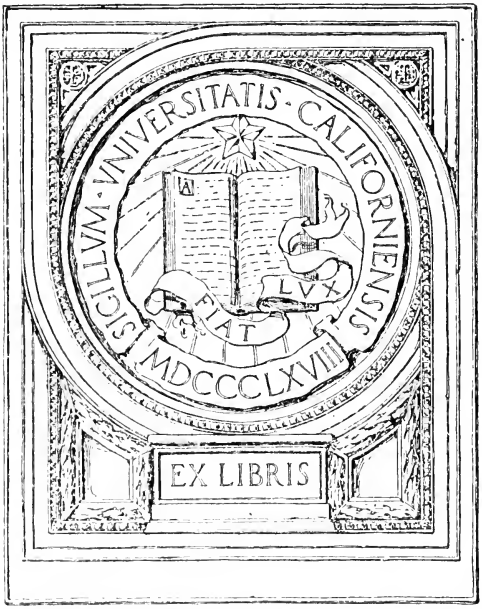

Liverpool Diocesan Board of Divinity Publications

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PREFACE.

The Diocesan Board of Divinity have allowed me, as they did last year, to print at somewhat greater length than was possible in delivery. For this and much other kindness, especially from the Lord Bishop and the Chancellor of the Diocese and from Canon J. T. Mitchell, I would express my gratitude. All the authors named in the list of books have been of service to me; my obligation to Bréhier in the pages on Philo is very great. To Canon Box and Mr. J. H. A. Hart I owe far more than I have learned from their books, and I thank them for special help, generously given, in the preparation of these lectures.

A. NAIRNE,

CHESTER, JUNE, 1917.

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THE WISDOM OF SIRACH OR ECCLESIASTICUS.

Alexandria founded by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.: monument of imperial failure and spiritual success: centre of Hellenistic world.

There the Jewish Colony made the Septuagint version of the Law. Thither came the grandson of Jesus the son of Eleazar the son of Sirach in 247 or 132 B.C. with his grandfather's book, and translated it into Greek: the greater part of the Hebrew original was recovered in 1896.

Hebrew Wisdom, a critical theology: quiet and steadfast in Proverbs Sirach and Rabbis: boldly protestant in Job and Ecclesiastes: modern and philosophic in Wisdom of Solomon and Philo.

Sirach keeps the old ways "as one that gleaneth after the grapegatherers;" righteous, kindly shrewd; a pious heart; loyal to the fathers and the sacred books; a friend of the simple, he magnifies the office of the leisured scribe. His book comes home to us

and wins our affection; "example of life and instruction of manners." His whole doctrine of faith works hope love forgiveness springs from direct trust in God as King Saviour Father: he worships the LORD and asks no questions about the Absolute.

What would he have thought of a second edition of his work with enlargements from the new school of the Pharisees? yet thus till lately have we read it; cf. AV with RV: who were the Pharisees and Sadducees?

II.
THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON AND PHILO.

WISDOM.

The name and date of the author of Wisdom are unknown; he personates Solomon only as a literary convention; is later than Sirach and earlier than Philo. But he wrote when persecution made love for enemies a hard and therefore important doctrine.

Greek education helped him to solve the problems of his time: (*a*) in spite of triumphant wickedness God does care for men, but he works indirectly by the mediation of wisdom his effluent spirit: (*b*) though good men are slain their life is preserved, for the

soul is immortal: (*c*) the world is good, not evil, for the holy Spirit of God, who loves all men, animates the whole.

His heart is enlarged by philosophy, not changed; his direct Jewish trust in God predominates. How far his Greek training went is doubtful; he treats the language with rude but vigorous genius: the two divisions of the book.

PHILO.

Philo was contemporary with our Lord. A devout Jew of Alexandria but also a discursive student of Greek literature, he interpreted the law philosophically with flowing language and unsystematic reasoning.

Sincerely attached both to synagogue and academy, he found in allegory an instrument for criticism of the sacred books and for modernism in faith: within the plain historical sense lies a more intellectual truth; beyond the simple Jewish conception of God as King Saviour Father extends the all-including abstract reality of God.

But how can such Deity reach the heart of the creature? By the mediating Word, which Philo describes with such a wealth of illustration as almost persuades us that the problem has been solved.

Yet intellectually Philo does not solve it; for he still leaves the two realms of life separated, one beyond, not one within the other; and the Word remains an abstract term in the description of God, not a person whose influence draws persons to God.

Nevertheless he does approach the solution by his unconscious grasp of goodness as true spirituality. His own goodness attracts the reader, and his goodwill, as of one who knew God towards those who were feeling after God, is the deepest characteristic of his thought. Revelation, grace, conscience.

III.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

In the Gospel Philo's problem was partly superseded, really solved: first by a return to Jewish simplicity and in the fulfilment of the Jewish expectation of the kingdom of God. This kingdom our Lord proclaimed: in the tragedy of his death it came: and by his resurrection he was declared to be the Christ. S. Paul taught and the church proved by experience that in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Spirit, men were restored and united with God.

So far the main interest was in the death and resurrection of our Lord and in the hope of his advent in messianic glory. Then the interest of memory revived; the church turned back to the days of his flesh, and was disturbed by the realism of his recorded passion.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews met the difficulty by shewing that Christ's glory was to be perceived in his humiliation, his Godhead in his manhood: a sacramental doctrine which their Alexandrine platonism enabled this writer and his first readers to appreciate.

Those readers were a little company of friends, thoughtful Jews who had become imperfect Christians, accepting Jesus as Christ and the Christian as a reformed branch of the Jewish church: they had not realised the full mystery of the Saviour's person, and the trial which was approaching (perhaps the war with Rome which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, AD 70) pressed them to return to the ancient faith. The hard duty set before them was to break old ties and hold firm to the Lord to whom they had given allegiance.

That duty, said their friend, you will be enabled to carry through, if you will trust Christ for what he truly is and has done for you; and if you will think of him as the high priest offering himself to God, I can make you understand.

But he also says that by making up their minds to do their duty they will clinch the argument.

Both argument and exhortation point to peace through conflict; glory in humiliation; Godhead revealed through the limitations of manhood, the eternal through the visible; union with God by going the way that Christ has gone.

This is Alexandrine thought unconsciously returning to its purer source in Plato and invigorated by the light of a personal and perfect sacrifice: the idea has come to life. This sacramental theology was elaborated into final simplicity by S. John, and has guided the church ever since to philosophy without philosophising, and to realise, by participation, the "taking of the manhood into God."

The preparation for the Gospel, Jewish and Greek: Wisdom, Word, and Captain of salvation.

I.

THE WISDOM OF SIRACH OR ECCLESIASTICUS

At the Battle of Issus, B.C. 333, Alexander of Macedon defeated Darius of Persia. Thus ended the Persian period in Jewish history and the Greek began. But that was only an incident in the change which came over the whole world. Alexander extended his conquests far east into India and when he died, B.C. 323, the empire which he left might be fairly called world-wide. As empire it did not last. It was broken up among his generals. Ptolemies in Egypt, Seleucids in Syria, reigned, quarrelled and degenerated. Alexander's material legacy fell to pieces. But for good, or partly for evil, he left a spiritual legacy which has lasted even to the present day. He hellenised the world. He did not make it quite hellenic however. The language and the mind of Homer and Plato were not his to

give, But he did bind men of diverse nationality together in a secondary hellenism. We may describe it by a term used in the New Testament and call it hellenistic. Greek civilisation filtered into the rude or gorgeous barbarisms of the east, and into the purer simplicity of the Jews. The ancient language was vulgarised till it became a general means of communication. To say it was vulgarised is precisely accurate: this new Greek was known as *Koine*, the common or vulgar tongue. The term Greek, which comes so readily to our lips to-day, indicates a still later stage of the process inaugurated by Alexander. He turned what had been hellenic into hellenistic, and the Romans turned what had been hellenistic into Greek. As Greek the undying influence still works upon us all. We see this third stage just beginning in the New Testament: to the second stage belongs that Alexandrine wisdom of the Jews which we are now to consider.

Alexandria was founded by Alexander the year after his victory over Darius. It is a monument of his political failure and spiritual success. Politically it represented that portion of the spoil of his empire which fell to the Ptolemies: spiritually it became

the centre of the hellenistic world. It became a university city with fine buildings consecrated to learning. There was a great library, Scholars thronged the halls. The last sweet echoes of the true hellenic poetry were heard from its sea-shore. The new sciences of grammar and criticism were cultivated. To be of the Alexandrian Museum was, as we say now, to take a degree. And students were welcomed with academic generosity from all parts.

That was indeed by no means the only reason why so many Jews dwelt in Alexandria. They proved their worth in commerce and even in arms. Nor was this the only place in Egypt where they were found. Not long ago documents were discovered at Syene or Assuan, in which the life of a Jewish colony of the sixth century B.C. is vividly revealed, their family affairs, their worship, their relations with the native population and with Jerusalem. These documents are not written in Hebrew but in Aramaic. Aramaic is as it were a cousin language, spoken from old time with local varieties by people from the borders of Palestine to Babylon in the far east. By degrees it ousted Hebrew even in Judea, so that in the days of the Gos-

pel Hebrew was to the Jew what Latin is to the Roman church, the sacred language scarce understood of the people, used in worship but in parts of the service interpreted into common speech. In Alexandria the interpretation was in Greek. We still possess, the Greek church still uses, this interpretation; it has taken permanent form; it is the version which we call the Septuagint, "the seventy."

It is hardly necessary to explain why we use that name. The famous letter of Aristeas tells us that Philadelphus the second Ptolemy, who reigned 285-247 B.C., brought seventy elders from Jerusalem to make a translation of the Law into Greek for his library: they made the translation and it was received with joy by the Jewish people in Alexandria. Later writers embroidered on these plain statements, which are indeed surrounded with abundant pomp and ceremony in the letter itself. The letter is certainly not quite what it professes to be. But there is good reason to trust its assertion that the Law was translated at Alexandria as early as the reign of Philadelphus. It says nothing about the other sacred books, and these were probably translated later and by degrees. The state-

ment that the Jews received the translation gladly is apparently nearer truth than the other statement that the king ordered the version for the royal library.

It might be so: absolute proof to the contrary is impossible. But there is no doubt that our Aristeas romances a good deal, and another explanation of the origin of the version is so probable, so consistent in itself, that we need have no scruple in accepting it. The synagogue at Alexandria would need an interpretation in their worship. That interpretation would be supplied as it was in Palestine. It would be in the vulgar tongue of every day life. In just that tongue is the Septuagint composed. We say composed: for though the Greek of the Septuagint is the *Koine* and the particular variety of *Koine* to which the ordinary Jew of Alexandria was accustomed, it is not merely that. The writer's art has been applied to it. The diffuse and ragged grammar of conversation has been broken in for the reader's need. The book is composed in vernacular but it is composed. And it may well be that it represents the end of a fairly long process. *Ex tempore* translations in the synagogue took by degrees a more or less fixed shape;

then were written down ; then revised ; then finally written out. The Law was done first. Books in frequent use like Isaiah and the Psalms would go through the same treatment a little later. Others, Job for instance, were dealt with in more literary fashion ; were deliberately turned into a more pretentious Greek by a scholar in his study. Not at one stroke nor in one manner was the Septuagint created. Nearer to the real speech of daily life on the whole, and more spontaneously than any other version of holy Scripture, it reached maturity by natural growth.

To such a city and to such a Jewish synagogue therein, a synagogue possessing at least the germ of such a liturgical version, and sympathising with the more earnest Greek philosophers in a high ideal of truth and conduct, came the grandson of a pious and studious Palestinian Jew. And he carried with him a book which his grandfather had written in Hebrew. "My grandfather Jesus", he says, "having much given himself to the reading of the law and the prophets and the other books of our fathers, and having gained great familiarity therein, was drawn on also himself to write somewhat pertaining to instruction and wisdom ; in order that

those who love learning and are addicted to these things might make progress much more by living according to the law."

So he wrote in the prologue with which he published his translation of the book for his brethren in Alexandria. He made the translation in their own homely style. In the prologue he allowed himself something a little finer. We have to confess with shame that it is too fine for us. He meant to be clear: to his contemporaries he no doubt was clear. But we are in two places uncertain as to what he has told us. We do not know when he came to Egypt, and we do not know what something was which he says he found there. He says that he came in the thirty-eighth year in the time of Euergetes. This is generally taken to mean in the thirty-eighth year of Euergetes II who became king B.C. 170; that is in 132 B.C. But if we press the preposition which signifies "in the time of" it might be better to go back to Euergetes I who came to the throne in the thirty-eighth year of his predecessor, viz., 247 B.C. Thus we should understand "in that thirty-eighth year of Ptolemy Philadelphus in which Ptolemy Euergetes succeeded him." Mr. Hart, in a commentary in which he recreates vivid

historical life out of textual criticism, argues powerfully for the earlier date. The Greek phrase by itself is to us ambiguous. In the Greek of that period the proposition need not necessarily add any thing to the general sense. Nor is Mr. Hart's contention decisive that the Jews were too harassed under Euergetes II to care about making or reading books. But the translator goes on with a curious word. I came, he says, in that year and "synchronised" or counted my years with some one else's. With whose? Surely with the king's in whose year of accession his own stay in Egypt began. And if that be allowed, some confirmation follows in a word which has often been interpreted as contradicting the conjecture. Be indulgent, he asks his readers, to my effort, for translations can never represent their original adequately: "things originally spoken in Hebrew have not the same force in them when they are translated into another tongue. Even the law and the prophecies and the rest of the books have no small difference when they are spoken in their original language." Then comes the sentence we have been considering: "for having come into Egypt in the eight and thirtieth year under Euergetes the king and

having synchronised, I found" —what? Our revised version renders "a copy affording no small instruction." From that it would appear that there was already a "copy" of the Septuagint containing the second and at least part of the third division of the Jewish canon. But if that were so in 247 B.C. the generally accepted history of the production of the Septuagint would need to be revised: even the letter of Aristeas would need enlargement from the store of later legend.

But the word rendered "copy" is, as RV margin admits, of doubtful meaning. It is the neuter of an adjective which ought to mean "unequal." And the word rendered "instruction" might quite as well have a simply moral sense, "discipline" "manners." And nothing has been definitely said about a translation of Scriptures into Greek. The writer might be thinking of Aramaic interpretations he had heard in synagogues in Palestine. If he were thinking of Alexandria he might be referring to Greek interpretations he heard in the synagogues there, not to any written book. For, giving the word of doubtful meaning its natural meaning, we shall continue thus: "I found no small discipline or care for piety in Egypt but it was unequal,

there was room for improvement." And so he proceeds to his conclusion: "I thought it (therefore) most necessary for me to apply some diligence and travail to interpret this book of my grandfather's for the benefit of those who in the land of their sojourning are desirous to learn, fashioning their manners beforehand, so as to live according to the law." Thus the copy is not a copy, and the immediate context has no reference to a version of Scripture or other writing, while the preceding sentence describes (if it describes Alexandria at all) just such a state of things as would prevail at the close of the reign of Philadelphus, when the Law perhaps had been finally translated but no other of the sacred books had received permanent form in Greek.

But this minute criticism grows tedious. What we must remember of it is that at about 247 B.C., or else 132 B.C. a Greek version of the Hebrew wisdom of Sirach was made; then that this Greek version is the form in which the book has come down to us. The Hebrew was seen by S. Jerome and therefore it is possible that it left some traces in the Vulgate Latin, but since then it has been lost. In our own day however it has been to a large extent recovered.

The recovery began with a single leaf brought from the east by Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson in 1896. Then in rapid succession other portions of other MSS were discovered till at last the Hebrew of about two-thirds of the whole book was collected. A good deal of this is contained in more than one manuscript, which is a help in making a fair copy of the text, and tends also to reassure us in our first fresh delight at possessing Sirach's original work.

For that pleasure was almost at once dashed with disappointment. Professor D. S. Margoliouth pronounced the fragments to be no originals at all but merely part of a re-translation of a Persian version which was itself "based partly on the Greek and partly on the Syriac versions of the book." This drastic criticism came from one who had a good right to speak. However, satisfactory reasons were produced for rejecting it. Yet caution is required, and we cannot boast of having in every line the actual words of the author. Our Hebrew has in many places suffered corruption, and the Greek, Latin and Syriac versions are often useful in restoring the more probable form of the Hebrew text itself.

Here are two or three instances of the new light which this discovery has given us.

In xxxvi 8 the Greek is rendered

Hasten the time, and remember the oath ;
And let them declare thy mighty works.

The Hebrew means

Hasten the end and ordain the appointed time,
For who may say to thee : What doest thou ?

Sirach is in fact praying : Thy kingdom come ; thy will be done.

In xlix 9 he speaks of Ezekiel, and the Greek interprets him in these inexplicable terms :

For verily he remembered the enemies in storm,
And to do good to them that directed their ways aright.

But the Hebrew gives

He also made mention of Job among the prophets
Who maintained all the ways of righteousness ;

As in fact Ezekiel does make mention in xiv 14, 20.

The translator names his grandfather simply "Jesus the son of Sirach Eleazar" (l 27) but in the Hebrew we get quite a pedigree,

"Jeshua of Simeon the son of Eleazar the son of Sira." At the end of the Hebrew book however there is a subscription which tells us that he was commonly known as "Ben Sira." In the early Greek speaking church the work was generally styled "Wisdom of Sirach," without even "ben" or "son of;" which convenient brevity we may as well adopt in this lecture.

And now what kind of person was this Sirach; what were the characteristics of his faith; what good things does he tell us in his book?

The long pedigree attests his respectable ancestry. It is added that he belonged to Jerusalem. Some MSS also add that he was a priest. Certainly he admired the priesthood. He writes with enthusiasm of "Simon, the son of Onias, the great priest who in his life repaired the house, and in his days strengthened the temple." Like a cedar of Libanus with all the sons of Aaron in their glory round about him, "that he might adorn the offering of the most High, the Almighty,

> He stretched out his hand to the cup,
> And poured out the blood of the grape;
> He poured out at the foot of the altar
> A sweet-smelling savour unto the Most
> High, the King of all."

In this magnificent chapter (l) we recognise the germ of that mystical exaltation of priesthood which will presently be carried so far by Philo and the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. Perhaps too we ought to notice in passing that if this Simon son of Onias is the more famous of the two high priests who bore that name the later of the alternative dates for the book is necessarily inferred. But the argument is not decisive. If the first Simon were Sirach's hero, the unknown future would not have stinted his contemporary praise.

To return to Sirach himself. He was not only of good family but in easy circumstances. That is evident in his manner of giving precepts about loans, gifts, and the relations between rich and poor. All the more delicate for that is his sympathetic consideration for the poor.

My son, deprive not the poor of his living,
And make not the needy eyes to wait long.
Make not a hungry soul sorrowful;
Neither provoke a man in his distress.
To a heart that is provoked add not more trouble;
And defer not to give to him that is in need.
—iv 1-3.

A rich man toileth in gathering money together;
And when he resteth, he is filled with his good things,
A poor man toileth in lack of substance;
And when he resteth, he becometh needy.
—xxxi 3 f.

How well we understand the difference.

And there are passages which shew that he himself had felt hardship. He had travelled, been in tight corners, experienced the bitterness of dependency. But out of all his varied trials and advantages he has emerged at last a leisured scribe. That is his profession and he magnifies it.

The wisdom of the scribe cometh by opportunity of leisure;
And he that hath little business shall become wise.
How shall he become wise that holdeth the plough,
That driveth oxen, and whose discourse is of the stock of bulls?—xxxviii 24 f.

Not that he despises these others. With fine appreciation he describes the art of the signet-engraver, the toil of the smith, the anxious craftmanship of the potter. These

" shall not declare instruction and judgement ; and where parables are they shall not be found." But

They will maintain the fabric of the world ;
And in the handywork of their craft is their prayer.

Yet the scribe has a peculiar glory :

Not so he that hath applied his soul,
And meditateth in the law of the Most High ;
He will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients,
And will be occupied in prophecies.
He will keep the discourse of the men of renown,
And will enter in amidst the subtilties of parables.
If the great Lord will,
He shall be filled with the spirit of understanding :
He shall pour forth the words of his wisdom,
And in prayer give thanks unto the Lord.
He shall shew forth the instruction which he hath been taught,
And shall glory in the law of the covenant of the Lord.
His memorial shall not depart,
And his name shall live from generation to generation.

If he continue he shall leave a greater name
than a thousand :
And if he die, he addeth thereto.
—(xxxviii, xxxix)

He is a scholar, full of ancient tradition and abreast with modern thought. He will gladly learn and gladly teach. But all is directed to one end. He studies the sacred law, righteousness, truth, God. This is wisdom in the large Hebrew sense. Solomon was the traditional father of this wisdom, but in early times we hear of it oftenest as flourishing in eastern lands outside Israel. So, when it springs into vigorous life in the post-exilic Jewish church, it always has a broad outlook ; its light is the light that lighteth every man, not the chosen people only. The wise men differ from the prophets in that respect, nor have they the prophetic fire. And the law they study is not merely the book of the law of the Lord by the hand of Moses. The ceremonial part of that law they are apt to pass over with slight attention. Sirach indeed loved a gorgeous function in the temple, but he is severe upon formality in sacrifice and insists that " all wisdom is the fulfilling of the law " (xix 20). Herein they share the spiritual conception of the psalmists. Yet the fervour

of the psalmists is not theirs. Sometimes indeed they appear even too shrewd in their common sense, too homely in their esteem for an honest profitable life. Yet manly uprightness is a very needful part of a churchman's education, and if the wise men taught that godliness was the best road for getting on in life, they also insisted that the great use of wealth was generosity. And these homely precepts of good policy throw into stronger relief their more soaring thoughts. For they did soar too. They looked honestly into the tragic possibilities of human life, they realised the mystery of Godhead and with what unceasing, surprising and even unwelcome progress that mystery unfolded itself to new generations. Some were conservative like Sirach; some modernists like Job; some approaching scepticism like Ecclesiastes or that strange person Agur the son of Jakeh whose sarcasm in Prov. xxx 1-4 is rebuked in the next two verses: but all did something for the carrying onward of the faith. It was the wise men in Israel who forbade the delusion that faith is repose in custom, and not rather strenuous thinking and noble adventure.

These are the wisdom books in the Hebrew canon: Proverbs Job Ecclesiastes. In the

Alexandrine Bible Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon are added. Proverbs is a collection in which several smaller collections of various dates are gathered up. The greater part of these proverbs are of the shrewd kindly sort; often racy of the soil, like that in xiv 4:

Where no oxen are the crib is clean:
But much increase is by the strength of the ox.

But in xx 27 we have another type:

The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD.

That was the favourite text with those Cambridge Platonists who, in their philosophical yet practical piety, were something like the wisdom writers. The great praise of wisdom in Prov. viii, as the agent of creation almost co-eternal with God, is the development of this type. Another stage of that development appears in the description of the all-pervading Spirit in the Wisdom of Solomon; then in the Word of God in Philo; then in the prologue to S. John's Gospel. Yet these distinctions must not be too sharply cut. Our Lord in the synoptic Gospels often speaks in the simpler manner of the wisdom teachers: indeed his beatitudes with their promise of reward help us to understand how much that is truly spiritual underlies the naivety of

Sirach and Proverbs. But in the synoptic Gospels too our Lord not seldom touches the deep mystical thought which is characteristic in S. John. And that is what we find throughout the Jewish wisdom. Simplicity of form is generally aimed at. Yet in the simplest passages that kind of thought which we call mystical continually surprises the reader. That may be observed in the epistle of S. James, which is more nearly akin to the wisdom of the Old Testament than any other book of the New Testament. Certainly it may be observed in Sirach; as for instance in his praises of wisdom, in which he imitates the mystical chapter of Proverbs, yet modifies the idea and renews it in his own way. To him wisdom and the law are almost one and the same. And it is worth noticing what grew out of this in later rabbinic doctrine. The rabbis taught that the law has been eternally pre-existent with God; and it seems to have been from the union of wisdom with the law, in Sirach already taken for granted, that their dogma was inferred. It may however be questioned whether Sirach would have been prepared to endorse the inference. There is a certain tyranny of logic about it which is not quite in his vein.

For the most part he carries on the homely proverbial wisdom. Job and Ecclesiastes are a branch from the other line. They are not so philosophic as the Wisdom of Solomon and Philo. Their problems are more practical. The two Alexandrine writers prepare the way for the doctrine of the holy Trinity; the two Hebrew writers are more concerned with God's government of the world, with the question of pain and the meaning of life. The difference is partly parallel to the difference between east and west in Christian times; the east occupied with the mystery of the divine essence and the incarnation, the west with the mystery of grace and free will. Not to pursue this further, however, we have our two main lines of Jewish wisdom both starting from Proverbs; a practical line in Hebrew, viz., Proverbs, Sirach; an intellectual line in Hebrew and in Greek, on the one hand Job and Ecclesiastes, on the other Wisdom of Solomon and Philo. And now to take up our examination of Sirach's book again.

Like the old makers of proverbs he is both pious and shrewd. He puts a high value on good manners and tells people how they should behave in the presence of great

men or at dinner parties. "A fool, he says, lifteth up his voice with laughter; but a clever man will scarce smile quietly" (xxi 20). He thoroughly enjoys good fare and good talk, but neither can be had without well-bred self-effacement:

> Pour not out talk where there is a performance of music,
> And display not thy wisdom out of season.
> As a signet of carbuncle in a setting of gold,
> So is a concert of music in a banquet of wine.
> As a signet of emerald in a work of gold,
> So is a strain of music with pleasant wine.
> —xxxii 4-6.

Diffuse talk is most unpleasing to him:

> Sum up thy speech, many things in few words;
> Be as one that knoweth and yet holdeth his tongue.—xxxii 8.

There speaks the scholar with his passion for truth: he says elsewhere:

> Strive for the truth unto death, and the Lord God shall fight for thee—iv 28.

That is more than scholarship, we should say; Sirach would hardly recognise the distinction. The depth of his mind appears in the simplicity with which he runs all things up to God whom he loves as well as fears,

from whom and unto whom are all the interests of life. What we smile at as his shrewdness is really his robust refusal to separate the secular from the sacred. That will impress every one who makes a study of his teaching upon friendship, in which he sounds every note of the scale of faith. A faithful friend he must have been himself, and right entertaining. He himself had some friends in whom he saw nothing less beautiful than the face of God.

To children and to servants he recommends a severity which shocks us. He also expects an intimate affection towards both children and servants that rebukes us. And if he, the servant of truth, is on many other points austere, his general standard is the infinite divine mercy:

Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done thee;
And then thy sins shall be pardoned when thou prayest.
Man cherisheth anger against man;
And doth he seek healing from the Lord?
Upon a man like himself he hath no mercy;
And doth he make supplication for his own sins?

Remember the commandments and be not
wroth with thy neighbour;
And remember the covenant of the Highest,
and wink at ignorance.—xxviii 2-7.
The mercy of a man is upon his neighbour;
But the mercy of the Lord is upon all flesh;
Reproving, and chastening, and teaching,
And bringing again, as a shepherd doth his
flock.

. . . . . .

For as his majesty is,
So also is his mercy.—xviii 13, ii 17.

Throughout the world he perceives this generous mercy of God. He loves his books and frequents the school, but all human relationships and the fair face of nature are dear to him, and all is in God:

The life of one that laboureth, and is con-
tented, shall be made sweet;
And he that findeth a treasure is above both.
Children and the building of a city establish
a man's name;
And a blameless wife is counted above both.
Wine and music rejoice the heart;
And the love of wisdom is above both.
The pipe and the psaltery make pleasant
melody;
And a pleasant tongue is above both.

Thine eye shall desire grace and beauty ;
And above both the green blade of corn.
A friend and a companion never meet amiss ;
And a wife with her husband is above both.
Brethren and succour are for a time of affliction ;
And almsgiving is a deliverer above both.
Gold and silver will make the fort stand sure ;
And counsel is esteemed above them both.
Riches and strength will lift up the heart ;
And the fear of the Lord is above both :
There is nothing wanting in the fear of the Lord,
And there is no need to seek help therein.
The fear of the Lord is a garden of blessing,
And covereth a man above all glory.

—xl 18-27.

That makes one think of Bacon's confession : Thy creatures have been my books, but thy scriptures much more. I have sought thee in the courts, fields and gardens, but I have found thee in thy temples.

Indeed Sirach is rather like Bacon in his conservative instinct and forward outlook, his fondness for quotation and for giving a new turn to what he quotes, in his industry and his genial curiosity about all the affairs

of men, and chiefly in his reverence before the divine mysteries which transcend the limits of human understanding.

Great is the potency of the Lord,
And he is glorified of them that are lowly.
Seek not things that are too hard for thee,
And search not out things that are above thy strength.
The things that have been commanded thee think thereupon;
For thou hast no need for the things that are secret.
Be not overbusy in thy superfluous works:
For more things are shewed unto thee than men can understand.

. . . . . .

We may say many things, yet shall we not attain;
And the sum of our words is, He is all.

iii 20-23, xliii 27.

A physician eminent in science, reticent about religion, stayed with a friend of mine last year and found that every morning he must hear Sirach read at prayers. After a few days he asked what this book was and where he could get it; he was delighted with it. Certainly a physician ought to respect Sirach, who stood up bravely for the profession

at a time when it would seem that new-fangled notions were in the air, as though men of faith needed no help from the doctors (xxxviii 1-15). But I fancy there was a larger attraction. This practical sympathy and wide-awakeness towards all the interests of life, this honesty and uprightness, joined with this lowliness of intellect toward the great and good God's partial revelation of himself, is acceptable theology to a keen witted layman. He appreciates a book which "as Hierome saith, the church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth not apply to establish any doctrine": not that he is against doctrine, but he prefers to contemplate the few great doctrines rather than many minor ones, and those in silent thought rather than with facile words.

On one great doctrine S. Jerome might well find something lacking in Sirach. He is more than reticent about eternal life. He says nothing of a resurrection of the body, and of the life beyond the grave he would confess with Richard Baxter that "my knowledge of that life is small, the eye of faith is dim." Yet Baxter continues "'tis enough that Christ knows all, and I shall be with him,"

and if we put "God" in place of "Christ" perhaps Sirach would have agreed to that also. It is hardly fair to say that he considers a man's children to stand for him instead of eternal life. He does think it a great thing to leave good sons in the world when the father goes hence, just as he would like to leave a good name, or the fruits of good scholarship; and he says, just as we do, that this is in a manner to lengthen life. But he does not formulate a dogma on such lines. Nor is it fair to say that he shared the popular doctrine of Sheol, viz., that the dead man goes to a shadowy place where he is out of reach of the love of God. In the passage which comes nearest to that pagan creed, xvii 27-32, the point is that God, whose kindness to the penitent on earth is boundless, has not told us that praise or penitence is possible beyond the grave:

> For all things cannot be in men
> Because the son of man is not immortal,
> What is brighter than the sun? yet this faileth:
> And an evil man should think on flesh and blood:

that is on the inevitable end of "flesh and blood" (a late variation of the Old Testament expression "flesh," which betrays the

modern writer in the midst of Sirach's very respectably classical Hebrew) ; and so thinking should not put off repentance till too late.

Generally he speaks of death as a kindly visitant. So perhaps in a passage from which the church borrowed the beautiful phrase ἀνάπαυσις αἰώνιος *requies aeterna* (xxx 17):

Death is better than a bitter life
And eternal rest than a continual sickness.

But here (xli 1-4) is his most characteristic utterance upon death :

O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that is at peace in his possessions,
Unto the man that hath nothing to distract him, and hath prosperity in all things,
And that still hath strength to receive meat!
O death, acceptable is thy sentence unto a man that is needy, and that faileth in strength,
That is in extreme old age, and is distracted about all things,
And is perverse, and hath lost patience !
Fear not the sentence of death ;
Remember them that have been before thee, and that come after :
This is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh.

And why dost thou refuse when it is the good pleasure of the Most High ?

Whether it be ten, or a hundred, or a thousand years,

There is no inquisition of life in the grave.

The last line might indeed displease S. Jerome. But attention should not be concentrated upon it as upon a theological definition. Here, as is his way, Sirach looks at death from the every day point of view. Just so he did observe the unwillingness of contented active healthy men to die ; and it seemed natural to him. And just so he observed that death came as a rest to those whose body powers were wearing out, and as a release to those who were unhappy, and, yes, to those too who had made a failure of life. And that also seemed natural to him. Not a very high view perhaps. But when these few lines are read in the light of the whole context of his book we are inclined to say " God's will " instead of simply " natural." It is part of his genial trust in God's magnanimous mercy. That trust does not allow him to slight the severity of God's dealing with obstinate sinners. Death itself comes to some as punishment. But beyond death he does fall back upon the invincible mercy :

there is no further inquisition of life in the grave. It really is his manner of expressing what we sometimes describe as faintly trusting the larger hope; perhaps this passage throws a little light on some rather startling words in I Peter, iv 1: "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin:"—cf Rom., ii 7.

And if his hope is less large, his trust is not faint. Yet there is after all a considerable difference between Sirach's faith and ours. There was a good deal of difference between his faith and certain novel opinions of his own day on which he looked with no favour. He was a member of that later Jewish church in which various parties or schools of thought flourished side by side as in our own church now. One of the most important of these parties were the Pharisees. Hearing that name we think at once of the "Pharisees, hypocrites" of the Gospels. But we ought to remember that even in the Gospels the Pharisees consorted freely with our Lord, at least for a while; that in our own church movements have taken place which at first made men self-forgetting and sincere, yet afterwards passed into the conventional stage and bred something like

hypocrites; and that even in that stage the old vigour sometimes breaks out afresh and, within the party lines, heroes of faith arise to reform their party or to carry its ancient spirit into new fields. Thus did Paul the Pharisee; and such in its whole history was the party of the Pharisees.

We may trace their descent from Ezra, the scribe who interpreted the whole law to the whole people. That was the first characteristic of the Pharisees. They would not quite approve of Sirach's peculiar exaltation of the learned scribe: they were for allowing the highest blessedness of the faithful life to all the Jews, to the people. Such men are always progressive in theology. Time-honoured restraints must for them be overleaped because of the needs of the simple emotional people. Hence it was the Pharisees who first recognised the larger canon, prophets and sacred writings as well as the five books of the law. The Pharisees again accepted the more definite belief in life beyond the grave, resurrection of the body, judgement to come, which had been gradually winning its way into the heart of the people, though it was not plainly declared in the law, nor included in the ancestral faith of Israel. We find such belief

in the book of Daniel, and it is pre-supposed in the earliest accounts of the Maccabean struggle; at which period the book of Daniel, whenever composed, came into prominence. From that time the party was known by its title, "Pharisees." The name may have been already used in Sirach's day. The new opinions were certainly in process of formation then. Sirach belonged to the old orthodox party who resisted these innovations. These people were presently called "Sadducees," which perhaps means "righteous," perhaps was a kind of nickname with less honourable signification. Probably Sirach acknowledged no such name, and would have repudiated the idea of belonging to any party. His party was the ancient orthodox Jewish church. He did exalt the temple above the synagogue, the priest above the layman, and the scribe learned in sacred wisdom was not to him as other men were. Only for him there was no need to press these distinctions disagreeably. In the old orthodoxy all Jews were brothers, and when each did his duty in that state to which God called him all lived most brotherly. These new and popular Pharisees he did not like, and when he made his catalogue of glory—"Let us now praise famous

men, and our fathers that begat us" (xliv ff) he omitted Ezra, the ancestor of the Pharisees. And to their novel doctrine of a future life he would not yield, no not for a moment. For himself, we may venture to suppose, the old quietism of his fathers sufficed: "We go to God and that is enough; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is not the God of the dead but of the living; all live unto him." But in opposition to the new theology he will not say even so much as that.

Sirach as one of the school of the "wise" is broader than the Pharisees in some respects. They loved the people, he counted kin with all mankind. They insisted on the precepts, his idea of the law was far more beautiful and profound. Still, he moved along the old way which he held them to be deserting. His whole doctrine of faith, works, hope, love, forgiveness, is undogmatic; it springs from direct trust in God as King, Saviour, Father. He worships the Lord God of Israel and asks no questions about the secrets of his rule over man and creation.

What would he have thought of a second edition of his book with enlargements from the school of the Pharisees? That is what hap-

pened. It is an example of the strange but surely happy reconciliations which are wrought by death and time.

Compare our revised with our authorised version of Ecclesiasticus. You find a great many omissions in the revised version, and in the margin you find notes to this effect: this verse, or the remainder of this verse, or such and such words are omitted in the best authorities. These "best authorities" are the ancient Greek manuscripts of the fourth century A.D. What the revisers did not find in them, they excluded from their translation. In 1611 only the later manuscripts were used in which these omitted words and verses are included. Mr. J. H. A. Hart has made a study of these extracted or else interpolated fragments in his edition of one of the later manuscripts, Codex 248. He finds all of them distinguished by the presence of words, phrases or ideas which belong to the vocabulary of the Pharisees as we learn that vocabulary from their literature and from S. Paul. Here is an example. You remember how S. Paul told the multitude in Jerusalem that he had been taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers (Acts xxii 3), and how again before Agrippa he claimed that after

the straitest sect of their religion he lived a Pharisee (Acts xxvi 5). In each place he used a form of one and the same Greek word which means "accuracy" and is a regular Pharisaic term. It is used by the first translator of Sirach in xxxii, 3, the grandson himself, mistranslating the Hebrew. But in the later manuscripts the technical term is stressed: "sound knowledge" becomes "the accuracy of knowledge." Another of these Pharisaic watchwords is "patience" or endurance or "persistence," also a favourite word with S. Paul as we see from his epistles. At the end of chap. xx the later manuscripts add this fine verse (which is inadequately rendered in our authorised version):

Better inexorable persistence in seeking the Lord
Than a masterless charioteer of his own life.

There is a Pharisaic point in the last line as well as in the first here. Josephus says that the Sadducees insisted even too much on man's free will. Hence the Pharisee asserted against them with emphasis that God governed the world. So in xviii 27-29, where Sirach might seem to claim too much for human wisdom the later manuscripts insert

" Better confidence in the only Master
Than to cling with dead heart to dead things."

Both assertions, says Mr. Hart, " amount to this:—*the Pharisee is better than the Sadducee*, who conducts his life without a guide and is essentially an idolator." If so, we must, I am afraid, correct our pleasant fancy of the later edition being a reconciliation wrought by time. But perhaps Mr. Hart has rather sharpened the wit of the reviser.

In the quotation from chap. xviii another of the Pharisaic watchwords comes in, " boldness " or " confidence," and it too is Pauline. But there is something still more interesting in the immediate context. The wise men " pour forth apt proverbs," says Sirach. His grandson, who is rather inclined himself to the vocabulary of the Pharisees, has used the adjective " accurate " again: our rendering " apt " is literally " accurate." But the later text adds two words, " unto life." In the light of other additions we are inclined to give a high value to this word " life." Sirach, as we noticed above, would not venture far in speculation upon immortality. The Pharisees were " bolder." " I am a Pharisee," said S. Paul,

"a son of the Pharisees: touching the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." Then "there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees: and the assembly was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both."—Acts xxiii 6-8. The reviser of Sirach is not quite so definite as the Pharisees of S. Paul's day, but his face is set in that direction. When I quoted "eternal rest" (xxx 17) a little while ago I was obliged to to put in a "perhaps." If you look at the margin of the revised version you will see that the older manuscripts omit "eternal." This too may have come from the reviser. But the most striking of these corrections or developments is in chap. xix. The seventeenth verse ends: "Give place to the law of the Most High." The twentieth begins: "All wisdom is the fear of the Lord." The thought which is common to both these lines is thus filled out in two verses omitted in the fourth century manuscripts:

The fear of the Lord is the first step to be accepted of him,
And wisdom obtaineth his love.
The knowledge of the commandments of the Lord is the doctrine of life:

And they that do the things that please Him
Shall receive the fruit of the tree of immortality.

The reviser has drawn the more ordinary part of this from Sirach himself. The "immortal" hope is gathered from Prov. iii 18 and xi 30, but he raises it to a sublimer height. I speak of the "reviser," for Mr. Hart has made so searching an examination of so many passages and illustrated the language from so many sources that it is hardly possible to doubt his conclusion. He formulates it thus:

"These additions are the fragments of the Wisdom of a scribe of the Pharisees and contain tentative Greek renderings of many of the technical terms and watchwords of the Sect. As Jesus ben Sira dealt with the earlier Scriptures, so some unknown disciple dealt with his master's composition. He received the deposit and added to it. His speech bewrays him.

Differences of attestation suggest—they do not prove—that probably this *Another* is a School and succession of Scribes rather than a single Rabbi-Missionary of the Dispersion. The fragments

exhibit varying degrees of proficiency in the use of the Greek, and of independence of Hebrew phrases. But all belong to the period within which the Scribes of the Pharisees went out into the world as friendly rivals to the Stoics.

There is no external evidence to decide these questions of date and authorship. It is possible that the grandson himself supplemented this Wisdom. The Synopsis of Scripture attributed to Athanasius (reproduced as Prologue in Codex 248, and translated in the Authorized Version) takes this view; but it seems to be simply an inference from the (original) Prologue."

II.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON AND PHILO.

The Wisdom of Solomon.

We may be sure that this book was written in Greek as we now read it, and by a Jew who had received an Alexandrine education. In some places he writes in the person of Solomon. But like the author of Ecclesiastes he is merely following a literary tradition, referring his wisdom to the father of Hebrew wisdom. Neither author is careful to keep up the device. We see how such literary devices were accepted and understood in early times, from that list of the books of Scripture which is known as the Muratorian Canon, a Latin translation made from the Greek of Hippolytus. In this list, which records the Roman tradition in the second century A.D., Wisdom is said to have been written by the friends of Solomon in his honour. The idea of Solomon being the real author is not so much as considered ; compare the Psalms of Solomon, another late Jewish book, with its Christian continuation the Odes of

Solomon. But this entry in the Muratorian Canon has been quoted to suggest another early guess as to the author. "Friends" would be in Greek "philon" and "philonos" is the form which Philo's name would take in the same grammatical position in the sentence. Hence it has been conjectured that the translator missed Hippolytus' meaning. and that Hippolytus and the church at Rome in his day believed Philo the Jewish philosopher to have been the author. It may be so. But if so, they were mistaken. The Greek style of Wisdom is utterly different from Philo's. It is rude but fiery, and fire and rudeness are just what do not appear in Philo. A second argument is no less conclusive. Philo is really a philosopher: the author of Wisdom is indeed philosophic compared with Sirach, but unphilosophic compared with Philo. We may save ourselves the tedium of discussing the very various dates which have been assigned to Wisdom, and be content with this relationship to Sirach and to Philo as a clue. Wisdom stands between Sirach in the third century B.C. and Philo in the first century A.D. It is satisfactory to find that Mr. St. John Thackeray comes to a like conclusion from linguistic evidence.

Let us consider more clearly what this comparison of philosophies means. There are some who think of God in a very simple way. God is our Father, they would say; he created the world and he rules it; we speak to him and he answers; he is our Lord and our friend; he stands among us as another person, wiser, stronger, better than all other persons, yet as one person among the other persons. This is a beautiful mode of faith and it is deep. The best and wisest men come back to it in some sense, but they generally have to come back to it after learning to enrich it by other thoughts which the experience of life forces upon them. This faith in children is lovely and childlike. If persisted in without widening reflexion it grows childish, and sooner or later we are obliged (like S. Paul) to think as a man. Then with a new-born simplicity, won through discipline, we become again like little children in the profound sense of our Lord's precept.

Take an illustration from the present time of trouble. How many thinking of God as ruling from outside, so to speak, ask why he does not prevent war; he can for he is almighty. But then if they are modest trusting souls, they think again. They

gradually perceive that God is more wonderful than they had supposed. He is the author of all that is (so Sirach said); but he is also in all and all is in him: as the rabbis said, God is the place of the world but the world is not his place. He has not merely made all men and things. A truer way of putting that truth is to say that all life proceeds from him. Of him and through him and unto him are all things. At "the end" (as S. Paul says) God will be all in all. But the process is a process of life with all its good and evil, changes and chances, heroism, suffering, and holiness through repentance. It is not the smoothly ordered progress that an almighty king's indisputable will imposes on subjects who are not allowed to share in the interest, the infinite promise, and therefore risk, of a life running up into the eternal.

How feebly and confusedly I put it. I can but so imperfectly, the most thoughtful philosopher could but dimly express what we are feeling after. But we are compelled to feel after this larger idea. The sorrow of these years of war compels us.

Now this book of Wisdom was written by some one who was being compelled in like manner to enlarge his thought of God. The

persecution of the righteous is the background of his book. He begins by warning the kings and judges of the earth that they are responsible to God, and ought not to let things go on as they do ; and he recurs to this warning. Then in chap. ii he gives that picture of the lovers of pleasure with the gaiety and beauty of their life, but also with their cruelty : and then their hatred of the righteous man who is contrary to their works and "nameth himself a servant of the Lord."

Let us see if his words be true,
And let us try what shall befall in the ending of his life.
For if the righteous man is God's son, he will uphold him,
And he will deliver him out of the hand of his adversaries.
With outrage and torture let us put him to the test,
That we may learn his gentleness,
And may prove his patience under wrong.
Let us condemn him to a shameful death.
—ii 17-20.

And this they do, making their strength a law of righteousness (v 11). And the good men perish, and the wicked flourish, and the question—our question—is asked : Why does

not God put forth his might and stop all this misery and wickedness ?

And, like us, our author enlarges his thought of God. No doubt, he says, God might strike in and cut off the oppressors. But that has never been his way :

> They might have fallen by a single breath,
> Being pursued by Justice, and scattered abroad by the breath of thy power.
> But by measure, and number, and weight thou didst order all things.—xi 20.

" By measure and number and weight thou didst order all things." Here is the philosophic idea, very simply expressed, of God the all pervading who works through natural order. His prophet had said : " I form the light and create darkness ; I make peace and create evil ; I am the Lord, that doeth all these things " (Isaiah xlv 7). But in face of the terrible suffering of the world, that seemed now to be just a denial of the goodness of God. " Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." So the prophet had continued, and this later thinker seems led to develope that sentence. Yes, he is God because he hides himself, because he is not simply the God of Israel ; he is the only Saviour because he

saves all, all is in him, he does not create evil but the evil too is gathered unto him and transformed in the good which is indeed himself.

Our author's philosophy has not gone very far. If it has gone far enough to bring a touch of relief, it has also gone far enough to suggest the shadow which always accompanies immature philosophy. The universal, slowly working God, retires beyond the reach of our warm human sensibilities.

Out of darkness came the hands that reach
through nature moulding men,

said Tennyson. The Unknown, the First Cause, the Absolute: those are the cold names which immature philosophy gives instead of Our Father; cold names for one who is hidden in the dark beyond. The task of growing philosophy is to come into real touch again with this unknown God, to reach his "hands," outstretched hands of one who is personal; no longer a person among or apart from other persons, but the one and only person in whom our imperfect personalities are gathered up. Yet that is ugly language. The task of philosophy, rightly put, is to find out what S. John meant by saying, God is love, instead of, God is king, judge, or justice.

The inspiration of our author is mainly to be recognised in his passionate conviction that God is love. A faith, never quite demonstrated, works as impulse behind all the philosophies which have moved the world. This faith lies behind his. He starts from his own Hebrew scriptures. In Prov. viii we find a praise of Wisdom which has had great influence on theology Jewish and Christian. There Wisdom appears almost as a person within the Godhead. When God created the world, says this divine Wisdom,

Then I was by him, as a master workman :
And I was daily his delight,
Rejoicing always before him ;
Rejoicing in his habitable earth ;
And my delight was with the sons of men.

Our author accepts this wisdom as the mediator, coming forth from God, and working gradually, naturally as we should say, his eternal purpose. Wisdom enters into good men and through them moulds history. But only into good men :

Wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil,

Nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin. i 4.

How then can a real and complete transformation of this dark and pitiable world ever be wrought? He felt the difficulty and met it by calling to his help the Greek philosophy of his day. He had not studied that philosophy in detail. Perhaps he had but picked up some of its phrases and general ideas. For his purpose and his mind, still simple and Hebraic as he was, that was the best way. The broad idea which caught his fancy was of the divine Spirit working through the mass of natural life. You remember Virgil's

> mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet:

and how beautifully he put it into his poetry of the farmer's life:

> esse apibus partem divinae mentis et haustus
> aetherios dixere; deum namque ire per omnis
> terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum;
> hinc pecudes armenta viros genus omne ferarum;
> quemque sibi tenuis nascentem arcessere vitas;
> scilicet huc reddi deinde ac resoluta referri
> omnia, nec morti esse locum, sed viva volare

sideris in numerum atque alto succedere caelo.—G. iv 220 ff.

> "There is in bees a portion of the divine mind and an aery origin. For God proceeds through all the lands and tracts of sea and the depth of heaven. From that mind flocks and herds and all the wild creatures claim at birth their own spiritual life. And then, you know, all that is must thither be returned; resolved into its elements it is drawn back thither. And so there is no death, but in continuous life all seeks the height of heaven."

That Spirit then our author takes and joins with his Hebrew Wisdom. The prophet's conception of the holy Spirit of the Lord of course helps him to do so. But there is more than the prophetic conception in vii 22 ff:

> For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding, holy;
> Only-begotten, manifold,
> Subtil, freely moving,
> Clear in utterance, unpolluted,
> Distinct, unharmed,
> Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,
> Beneficent, loving toward man,

Steadfast, sure, free from care,
All-powerful, all-surveying,
And penetrating through all spirits
That are quick of understanding, pure, most subtil.

This Wisdom-spirit is a vapour from the power of God, an effluence of his glory, a mirror of his working, an image of his goodness, and

Being one hath power to do all things;
And remaining in herself reneweth all things: and
Against wisdom evil doth not prevail;
But she reacheth from one end of the world to the other with full strength,
And ordereth all things graciously.

You think of Lancelot Andrewes' confession of faith in

Holy Spirit, power from on high, coming from a source invisible yet working within and manifestly transforming unto holiness.

The ancient Wisdom has certainly grown. There is more than teaching here and discipline; there is the mystery of influence: more than the equipment of religious hearts; the promise, far off but assured, of universal evolution into God.

Yet of course it is good hearts which respond quickly to the impulse, and which receive at once its fullest effect. Hence, out of this modern theology of his, our Alexandrine draws direct consolation for the death of the persecuted righteous. "In kinship unto wisdom is immortality." viii 17. The good man's spirit is one with the eternal spirit of Wisdom. Therefore death is for him a change but not an end.

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
And no torment shall touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died ;
And their departure was accounted to be their hurt,
And their journeying away from us to be their ruin :
But they are in peace.
For even if in the sight of men they be punished,
Their hope is full of immortality ;
And having borne a little chastening, they shall receive great good ;
Because God made trial of them, and found them worthy of himself.
As gold in the furnace he proved them,

And as a whole burnt offering he accepted them.—iii 1-6.

It is always in the times of tragedy, of "resisting unto blood, striving against sin," that faith in eternal life is revived and deepened.

You will object that this writer does not deepen it enough: he teaches the immortality of the soul not the resurrection of the body. The objection is just yet not quite just; there is more to be said. In chap. ix he does write "a corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly frame lieth heavy on a mind that is full of cares." That is a less noble view of the body than S. Paul's who writes of "the body of our humiliation" which the Lord Jesus Christ "shall fashion anew that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." But our author is thinking of something rather different. He is only asserting that the bonds of the flesh prevent our knowing the whole mind of God; and S. Paul himself would hardly disagree with that. And though it is plain that he has not attained to the apostle's full great hope, still he does mean the immortality of man, not of a mere part of man by his doctrine. For he thinks of man as being a spirit, not of the spirit or soul as

merely belonging to a more perfect whole. Thus he says in the person of Solomon (viii 19):

Now I was a goodly child, and a good soul
fell to my lot;
Nay rather, being good, I came into a body
undefiled.

"Nay rather:" he corrects the vulgar notion of the immortal soul, and would not speak of "my soul" but of "I". "I" am the spirit who comes from and returns to God, he would say. And, however, he did confirm the hope and deepen the faith of his contemporaries, even though he left something to be added by the Gospel.

Indeed all readers feel the beauty of his chapters on immortality. His doctrine of repentance, of salvation for the wicked is perhaps less noticed. Yet how noble it is and how bold a trust in God it shews. Impelled to write his book by his brethren's need of consolation in a time of persecution he thinks with love and pity of the persecutors, and shews in his new teaching of the holy Spirit how God cares for them and works for their conversion.

Who ever gained knowledge of thy counsel,
except thou gavest wisdom,
And sentest thy holy spirit from on high?

And it was thus that the ways of them
which are on earth were corrected,
And men were taught the things that are
pleasing unto thee ;
And through wisdom were they saved.

So he writes at the end of chap. ix. And in chap. xi he explains how God curbs his might in punishing, and adjusts the punishment to the need of the offenders, that they who would not yield to the gentleness of the divine father, may be at last won by the severity of the stern king. It reminds us of George Herbert's poem, The Pulley :

Let him be rich and wearie, that at least,
If goodnesse leade him not, yet wearinesse
May tosse him to my breast.

And it is in the doctrine of the Spirit universally diffused that the possibility of this may be discerned :

For to be greatly strong is thine at all times ;
And the might of thine arm who shall
withstand ?
But thou hast mercy on all men, because
thou hast power to do all things,
And thou overlookest the sins of men to the
end they may repent.
For thou lovest all things that are,

And how would any thing have endured,
except thou hadst willed it ?
Or that which was not called by thee, how
would it have been preserved ?
But thou sparest all things, because they
are thine,
O Sovereign Lord, thou lover of men's souls ;
For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things,
Wherefore thou convictest by little and little
them that fall from the right way,
And putting them in remembrance by the
very things wherein they sin, dost thou
admonish them,
That escaping from their wickedness they
may believe on thee, O Lord.—xi 21-xii 2

"Lover of men's souls," "lover of men," *philanthropos*, that is in this book a characteristic epithet of God spiritually working. It was adopted by the Greek church and still gives the key note to Greek prayer. How differently the popular theology of the west might have developed had we been accustomed to address God oftener as "lover of men" than as "almighty."

At xii 2, where our last quotation closed, a space is left in the revised version. After long and various fluctuations of judgement,

I have at last found private satisfaction in deciding henceforth to consider that to be the end of the Wisdom of Solomon. In what follows there are one or two fine things but as a whole these concluding chapters are so fierce, so poor in thought, so bombastic in language, and so contradictory of the large faith of the earlier part, that they spoil my pleasure in the book. Whether there is a break of this kind or not is a well worn critical problem. Those who think there is put the break at different points; and that disagreement of course makes one hesitate to accept the separating criticism at all. Yet a moment's reflexion will suggest that if two documents are made into one the difference between them may still be discerned, though the dovetailing is concealed. And there must be many who feel that they cannot love this magnanimous author as they desire if he is to be credited with the appendix to the book.

Mr. Goodrick, who has written one of the best commentaries on Wisdom, is very severe upon the author's Greek. He says he did not know real Greek, makes bad mistakes, is pompous and altogether as unskilful as a half educated native in India trying to write English. Now that seems to me to be fairly

true of the latter, but not true of the earlier chapters. The earlier are rude, vigorous, somewhat motley, mingling phrases from the schools with phrases from the streets. This is not the polished style of the Alexandrine university, nor the easy style of the Greek citizen. It is the rude original experimental style of an Alexandrian Jew; and it is a success; you can always understand the meaning. In the latter chapters most people, including the committee of revisers of our English version, find much of the Greek incomprehensible. The style begins to change at chap. x, before which our revisers leave an extra large space. But in x and xi you can still translate easily enough. The change of style is only due to a development of subject. In chap. x a proof from history is given of the saving power of Wisdom: compare the proof of faith in Hebrews xi. This leads the author to emphasise the sternness of God towards the ungodly. He passes naturally from his philosophical point of view (which he never holds too firmly) to the common Jewish view of God the king and judge. But in the next chapter he refines, and expounds the theory of loving correction which we have noticed above. Finally he establishes this

theory by returning to his philosophy of the Spirit.

Then at xii 3, what he has said about the exodus is repeated and elaborated without any additional instances from history. But it is repeated with alterations which amount to contradictions. The philosophic conception of God is given up: there is reaction to old-fashioned Judaism. The large view of remedial sternness becomes an assertion of condign punishment. Admiration for the divinely natural order of history gives place to exultation in the supernatural. In chap xi it is said that whereas God might have created a new kind of wild beasts to execute his judgement he did not. In chap. xix some such reversal of the laws of nature is said to have taken place. In this chap. xix terms and ideas are borrowed from philosophy but there is nothing philosophic: in the earlier chapters one idea, the Spirit of the stoics, is adapted without pedantry to a truly religious use. There are indeed some fine touches in the latter part; such as the subtle and sympathetic analysis of the growth of idolatry (xiv 15 ff), or the description of the descent of the Word of God (xviii 14 f), "while peaceful silence enwrapped all things, and night in her own

swiftness was in mid course," which is transformed into a glorious Christmas introit in the Roman missal by the omission of the fierce purpose for which (in the context) the stern warrior-word "leaped into the doomed land." But such touches are few and far between. Appeal against separation is made to words which are common to both parts. There are such words but the significance of the parallels is often (I fancy) misrepresented. Take one instance. In xvi 25, a verb *metalleuo* which means *to mine*, literally or metaphorically, is used in the sense of *metallasso*, to *change*: just so an artist this year affixed as a motto to his picture "The darkness falls at thy bequest," when he should have written "behest." But in iv 12, it is pointed out, the same verb is used in the same wrong sense. The revisers do indeed agree, and translate, "The giddy whirl of desire perverteth an innocent mind." But surely the author made no such mistake in this place. "The wandering of concupiscence doth undermine the simple mind," is the perfectly legitimate translation of the authorised version: it exhibits a mixed metaphor to be sure; but this author cared for that no more than did Shakespeare or Isaiah.

All this indicates connexion between the earlier chapters and the latter, but not the connexion of a single author's mind.

Philo.

Do you put truth before all else ? Perhaps not. You may feel the suffering of the world to be so intolerable that you only value truth as a means, among other means, for removing it. If you can know enough to act a little more justly yourself, and to alleviate something of the misery round you, you may well be content to leave ultimate problems of truth alone.

But the sense of evil in the world may have an opposite effect. Some there are who feel their own impotence keenly. They need assurance that the whole of life has a good meaning. This assurance they can only find in the belief that the good, or as most of us would say, that God abides in his perfection, and that from this inexhaustible source we may draw power deeper than any we can call our own. Such thinkers do put truth, pure whole truth, first of all, for all depends upon it. They never cease from the search for it,

though the good of their search perpetually recedes beyond them. Such thinkers are called idealists, and of them is Philo.

The author of Wisdom lived in evil days, and sought a larger view of God in order to bring encouragement to those who suffered then. Philo felt a great compassion for all men of all ages, for their doubtful doom, their high destiny and the peril of failure. And he believed that truth pressed home could save them. And he devoted his life to seeking truth.

He was an elder contemporary of our Lord and the apostles. A devout Jew of Alexandria, he had been bred to Greek literature, and recognised the aid that philosophy, platonic, cynic, stoic, could bring to Hebrew piety. His position in the synagogue may have been somewhat peculiar. Still he was thoroughly loyal; whatever he learned from Greek philosophers he could not allow to contradict the sacred books which were read in the worship of the Jewish church. But the reconciliation was not always obvious. How could it be effected?

He made use of a solvent already applied by the Greeks to their poets, perhaps already familiar to the Jews: he interpreted alle-

gorically. Beneath the surface of the sacred narrative he found a further meaning. This further, spiritual meaning was, he believed, more true, more designed by the divine author, than the literal. The literal circumstances recorded are shadows, as it were, of bodies: the qualities indicated by them are the things which in reality subsist. Thus Hagar fled from Sarah and was sent back by an angel. But Hagar signifies human learning and general education in the arts and sciences. She departed from her mistress Sarah, the emblem of virtue, and was brought back by the angel who is the divine Word (*de cherubim*, p. 108, cf. Morgan, *The Trinity of Plato.*)

This method enabled Philo, while asserting the general accuracy of the narrative, to pass lightly over what offended him therein; such as the frankly human terms in which God is often described. He would not allow for instance that God could properly repent; for God changes not. This method, taken over from Philo by the Christian church, has often turned the edge of the difficulty of verbal inspiration. But it is to be noticed that he does generally uphold the history itself. Some allegorists did not. Because Philo does his figurative interpretations are reason-

able on the whole. They rest upon the fact of Israel's history, taken as an accumulation of religious experience, not upon prejudice. He is not free to invent: he is guided. He would not agree with us if we were to hazard the opinion that the theology of of S. Paul or S. John or the later church would still stand even though the gospel record were discredited. On the other hand he would not have us perturbed if we found discrepancies or errors in details of the narrative.

Such, then, an allegorical commentary upon the chief sections of the Law, is the formal plan of Philo's writings. What that allegorical treatment elicits is this first: beyond the simple Jewish conception of God as King Saviour Father, extends the all-including abstract reality of God the absolute Being. But then comes the more difficult task of the idealist: how can such Deity reach the heart of the creature? It is on the answer to that question that Philo pours forth volumes of diffuse yet passionate argument, sentiment, and poetry.

That God, the very God, the absolute, does hold the centre of all being is his idealist faith. He ought to prove this by shewing

how impossible it is to form any consistent theory of life without this postulate; how, with it, all becomes intelligible. But he proceeds in another manner. He takes the absolute God for granted: confesses that God, as God, cannot be described; you can only say that God is, not what God is. Then he essays to fill up the distance between this unimaginable state of God and the world of men by a multiplied imaginative series of connexions, which start from the imaginative idea of powers, qualities, quasi-personal influences, flowing out from the unreachable. It is as though he would fill up a space, by a very large number of pictured shapes; and as though he would dazzle himself by brilliant vagueness out of the misgiving that from One who is only to be adumbrated by negatives no outflowing of positive qualities is possible.

This appears to be sophistry. But it is not. Philo plainly confesses that reasoned argument can never bring us all the way to God. Philosophy is but the schoolmaster who leads us to the boundary of our world; yet also educates us for the leap, if such a leap be possible, into the world of divine truth. The only guide who will help us farther is a

moral one. The various powers that emanate from God are held together by the one supreme power, the Word, which is the thought of God and its expression, the principle of the stability of the world and of virtue in the soul of man. By the Word, when it or he is in a man, man has a footing in both worlds. But is the Word in all men ? No: there is a particle, a faint breath from the Word in all men. God of his mercy grants this to all that all may start upon the journey to God. But this must be developed into a truly moral sense. As discipline proceeds and the ladder of virtue is climbed, the Word in man attains its proper character as conscience. Hence repentance and forgiveness continually accompanied by an ever nobler faith. No one has written finer things on faith than Philo. And faith indeed is a most necessary feature in his system. For all comes from God. Man's nature in itself is not divine. It needs an utter change. The change begins with gradual amelioration. But all is of God's free gift. All comes from him who yet remains hidden in his own perfection beyond the reach of man's natural faculties. If God shall be approached at all, it can only be by man's

humility. To confess himself dust and ashes, nothing, is the only way he can be filled with God.

And most men will not be filled: they will but receive something. To Philo men, apart from idolaters and atheists, fall into three classes. There are those who may, not blameably, be content with serving God in his elementary manifestations—as did Sirach: they worship, in Philo's phrase, the Word. Then there are those who are fired with desire to penetrate God's reality. Finally there are those who do thus penetrate. The first are simple souls and may in their simplicity be fulfilling what is God's will for them. The second are called to press on and on, and at last they have their reward. There comes a point at which they lose the taint of self. The vision of God floods them. They experience the blessedness of peace. That is not a stage in philosophy. It is beyond the range of philosophy. It is mystical vision; it is conversion; humanity is left behind; the man is possessed by God. If the happy state could continue it would be no other than eternal life. But it does not continue. No denizen of this vale of sense has enjoyed that constancy. The third class of Philo's saints

is not properly a class. It is an abstraction, shadowed forth in some of the patriarchs but never seen in the flesh. This is the sage of the stoics transformed; one who is no longer man; an Enoch who has been rapt out of the world of man into the world of God.

Here appears what has been called the fatal doctrine of the two worlds. Plato's picturesque language gave it colour afterwards but the doctrine is none of Plato's. Aristotle did not avoid it. The later platonists who so much affected Philo taught it extravagantly. The error lies in the doctrine not in the phrase. Keble says, "two worlds are ours," but it is "the mystic heaven and earth within" not "beyond" that he thinks of. He does not mean two separated worlds, but a holier reality manifested in every day life. Keble's greater pupil Newman avoids the phrase, yet sometimes comes near to the doctrine. Our blessed Lord was clear against it in spite of the popular language to which he so graciously condescended; and no true conception can be formed of the mystery of his person if this erroneous division be suffered to prejudice our mind.

Perhaps what has just been said is unfair

to Newman. He was of course full of the sacramental doctrine of Keble and the Christian fathers of Alexandria. But I fancy he never quite threw off that early habit of resting "in the thought of two and two only absolute and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator" (*Apologia* ch. 1). Hence his pathetic mistrust of the beauty of the outward world, a beauty he felt so poignantly. And I notice this in him because I fancy there is a likeness here to Philo. Philo makes much of the social duties, but he hardly warms to this thought. He is a psychologist, and to him too "myself and my Creator" are the two certainties. But the certainty of God fades if God is not manifested in this world of the creature. Separate this world from the other world of God and you find your own self is removed also from God, while you move as an alien in the world to which you belong and which ought not to be imagined as other than the world of God.

In this respect the fatal doctrine mars Philo's teaching. It might be expected to vitiate it altogether. Yet it does not. It affects on the whole the intellectual form far more than the true theology of his writings. In form he is clogged by platonic and stoic

methods which were already in his day losing their vitality. He has a passion for setting things out in order, but his order is often merely external. We get his real mind better by slighting the formal progression of his argument. So here: he argues in the degenerate phrases of a corrupt platonism; but he means a better thing. The late Greek schools had missed what lives for ever in Plato's philosophy. They hardened and made systems. They instituted the search for abstract being, instead of seeking to the source of life. If modern philosophy improves upon their plan, it does so by setting the problem in a broader, more spiritual light again. And it can do so because new ideas have risen into our ken. Philo represents the birth of one of these ideas. As Socrates completed a period of human thought and inaugurated another by giving a new meaning to the word "soul"; so Philo brought the idea of conscience into outworn speculation and prepared the way for a fresh, more truly theological, advance in philosophy. That is his greatness.

As yet, in Philo, this is confusedly presented. But it raises his whole diffuse, unsystematic work to nobleness. It forbids our indulging that impatience which a first

reading provokes; as though, having Plato and the Gospels, we wasted time in reading him. In Philo we see the transition, not merely from Judaism, but from the ancient world to the Gospel. He is so nearly Christian; and in nothing more than in this, that he trains us to look for a new gift from God. To him there is no such thing as natural progress. Every advance man makes is due to God's pitying generosity, God's grace. The final leap beyond the walls of nature is by God's grace. He has never seen man dare that leap. A fleeting vision has been granted sometimes to some men: that is all. The constant sage, who lives the life eternal, is but an abstraction of his thought. And yet, he is also very nearly a hope. And Philo's main doctrine of God creating and re-creating a new thing within man's conscience makes his readers at least ready for the appearing of this new man in Christ Jesus whom God sent to save the world. For therein is the Christian faith. New birth of the ages and for each of us has been wrought by God. And in their Lord the disciples first saw One who always lived at the height of the great ideal, and in him they recognised the light and life of men.

And Philo's own goodness is so remarkable

Not for the just man, said S. Paul, yet perhaps for a good man one might even dare to die. Philo is good in that affectionate sense. His books, so long drawn out and fanciful, ought to be dull; but his goodness saves them. The reader would like to have known the man. This is the stranger, for his theory is austere. He holds the depravity of human nature. That makes him earnest like S. Paul, S. Augustine, Pascal. Yet he has an indefectible interest in all the homeliness of man's natural lot, a loving-kindness which counteracts upon the theory. There is an untranslatable phrase in Hooker which comes to mind in reading Philo: Philo, like the church, feels "the remorse of equity."

Hence our hasty judgement is corrected about Philo's attitude to the heathen. We are apt to suppose that he admired their philosophy so heartily as to have forced his Jewish creed into conformity therewith. The fact is he never for a moment considered philosophy complete without revelation; the great advance, led up to by philosophy, came by conversion. The formulae of the schools were useful. Revelation, conversion, spring as it were from another world; rather from that unfathomed deep where God and con-

science are one. How describe this mystery, which cannot be dispensed with, but in the negative terms of the philosopher's absolute ? So much he borrowed. For the rest, he had compassion on his Greek masters. He perceived them yearning for assurance and he believed that in part at least he could give them assurance through the revelation with which Israel was entrusted. With such honesty, humility and love he offered himself as their companion in their journey to God.

These are but notes on a vast theme ; a mere sketch of Philo's position between the earlier Alexandrines and the epistle to the Hebrews. Let me however close this lecture by quoting a vigorous summary of our subject, so far as we have gone as yet, from a letter which Mr. J. H. A. Hart has kindly written :

> "Alexandria was a great experiment. Aristotle, Alexander's tutor, had knowledge of at least one Jew who could absorb Hellenism or current international civilisation ; and Jews no doubt served Alexander even more than Greeks as guides and agents when he marched east. Given their privileges they were capable of loyalty, whereas the Greeks if they had their parliament (it

was abolished in Alexandria) were liable to be demoralised by demagogues like Demosthenes and Cleon. The Ptolemies and the Cæsars continued that experiment—Sejanus was the first anti-Semite among responsible statesmen. Alexandria was the door of the great granary till Vespasian, and so the vital part of the Roman empire. The Septuagint is the fruit and proof of internationality, and the Septuagint was not condemned—contrast Aquila. The Jews had their sacred tradition of Torah which included customs and worship, and having it were perforce missionaries to their emancipated and disillusioned fellow-citizens. Ben Sira links the colony with its metropolis and that link was tightened and strengthened at each great feast of every year by representatives of every colony. The treasure of all the Jewries was remitted yearly to the holy city. He supplements the Law, teaches morals and manners like a countryman confronted with the strange life of cities. But his home-spun wisdom takes little of Greek licence beyond the medical profession. Epicurus is the typical atheist for the Rabbis because man may *not* pass the *flammantia moenia mundi*; he said,

What is this? To what purpose is this? Ben Sira said, You must not ask; and Job agreed. The Jew's immemorial duty is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever, to be good in spite of modern improvements. Ben Sira, Philo and Hebrews all call the roll of the fathers and find the climax in the priesthood, the business of which was to furnish God with his proper sacrifices, men devoted to his service. Their world is stayed on the Law and the Divine Service. The author of Wisdom learns from such cataclysms as the persecution of Antiochus—was he one of the seventy, who translated Job? For Philo the fundamental things are: God is as man a Lord to be feared, and God is not as man but God whose goodness somehow created this world and us—God to be loved. Scripture distinguishes these conceptions, the lower and the higher, but the Logos unites them like the cherubim above the mercy seat. And man is composite; his mind, as undefinable as God himself, can grope into the darkness; and God comes forward to meet it, now thus, according to man's capacity. The record stands firm through all the changes and

chances of this outer life, telling all that man need or can know—the Lord is my shepherd—know yourself and your nothingness. Moses its author is the Logos incarnate, and 'There shall a man come forth' if need arise."

III.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

We have seen how our thought of God has been deepened in the passage from Sirach through wisdom to Philo: also how this deepening brought with it a separation between man and God which Philo tried to overcome. As far as logical reasoning goes he failed in this endeavour. Even in practical piety he was not quite successful because his doctrine of two worlds led him to undervalue the offices and relationships of common life, and to reserve the immediate knowledge of God to a favoured class. Moreover his whole treatment of the problem was so abstract and intellectual that he could bring but little help to the mass of average men.

In the Gospel Philo's problem was partly superseded, really solved. It was partly superseded, for Philo had put the question to some extent in an old-fashioned way, and so put, it could have no answer and needed

none. In the Gospel that unnecessary difficulty is not felt. No doubt something remains unrevealed: else God would not be all that great name means. But the problem of the possibility of communion with God is really solved. In the first place the Gospel makes it clear that many people need not feel the problem: many solve it quite unconsciously by approaching God in the simplicity of a good conscience as our Father in heaven. And our Lord and his apostles after him allow no doubt that such people enjoy divine communion as perfectly as the most thoughtful saints, as the most saintly philosophers.

On the other hand the Gospel refuses no less emphatically to restrain this perfect communion to the simple souls which have never faced intellectual perplexity. Indeed such intellectual perplexity besieges every one whose conscience has been darkened by sin; and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is very certainly meant for these. In all repentance there is at one stage a struggle of the reason towards God, and a doubt. The contrite heart has looked into that intellectual darkness which Philo perceived as needing illumination from the light that comes into the world with the Word of God.

In the first three Gospels we find our Lord deepening men's thought of God by his own intense faith and moral earnestness. At the same time he clears away those confused unlovely thoughts which hindered men's trust in God's readiness to forgive and to accept. The Lord's Prayer and the parable of the prodigal son restore the old simplicity of communion, without ignoring the complex experience which had filled the fatherhood of God and the miracle of forgiveness with such increased significance. Only one barrier is recognised, and that has nothing to do with the obscurity of the other world of the Absolute. It is the pride and cruelty which prevents man forgiving his brother man here. The one thing our Lord insists upon is that pride cruelty and self-righteousness can have no place in the kingdom of heaven.

With that cleansing transformation, our Lord accepted the popular Jewish expectation of the advent of the kingdom of God, and for the most part was content to adopt the popular language about the kingdom. In this pictorial form of the kingdom that should come at the end of time the Jews shaped, in our Lord's day, their idea of the consummation of God's communion with his people. It was

not quite the ancient prophetic idea. It grew out of that; and Daniel, Enoch, and a multitude of apocalyptic books, carried forward the mysterious and far-reaching utterances of the old prophets to an intense and definite conviction, that in the end of the days God would cut short the processes of empire and worldly progress, and would inaugurate his righteous reign on earth. He would put down the mighty from their seat, exalt the humble and meek, fill the hungry with good things and send the rich empty away. As king in this reign of good, the Son of Man, who is the divine Son of God, would come from his home in heaven, and rule among the elect. Sin and sinners would be swept away. Such a hope was indeed liable to become fierce and material. In good minds like Zacharias, Simeon, and the quiet in the land among whom our Lord was born, it was exceedingly spiritual, and our Lord's doctrine of faith and forgiveness rendered it still more so: Thy kingdom come, meant for his disciples the ideal of Christ's humility, and still means that.

Our Lord also transformed the hope by bringing it into the present; finally by setting it free from the misleading limitation of

time, by making it a sacrament of eternity.

That however emerges later. In the three first Gospels what we see is this. He proclaims that the long expected kingdom is at hand, is coming now, now is the day for entering. He does not proclaim himself as the king. But he calls himself the Son of Man. No one can read S. Mark without wondering at the awe with which the multitudes approach him. In S. Peter's confession, Thou art the Christ, the explanation for which the narrative has prepared us is given. Then a new revelation is made, a revelation which seems to come at this point to our Lord himself out of his uninterrupted consciousness of the Father's love, that he must die to bring the kingdom. His death is made inevitable by his claim before the high priest to be the Christ. In the tragedy of his death the kingdom came, though at the moment no one saw it come except the heathen centurion. Then it was proved by the resurrection; he "who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead."

So S. Paul wrote in the opening sentence of his epistle to the Romans. Yet S. Paul

would not say that finally and completely the kingdom or even the Christ had come. The early creeds distinguish our Lord's "sojourn" in the days of his flesh from his "advent" at the end of time. S. Paul still looks for the great advent when he shall come to reign as Christ triumphant: to that succeeds "the end" when all such imperfect symbols of human thought shall pass away, and "God shall be all in all" (1 Cor. xv 28).

There we hear S. Paul the philosopher, interpreting the simple Jewish language of the church in accordance with the new deepening of thought concerning God, which, once more, growing experience compels: in accordance too with a strain in our Lord's own teaching which the early evangelists hardly notice, and which will later still be wrought out by S. John. Meanwhile S. Paul reserves that kind of wisdom for rare and fit occasions, and employs a doctrine which the church had inherited from Judaism to explain the seemingly contradictory ideas of the kingdom both waited for and already come. That doctrine was twofold. First, the Jews had never thought of the divinity of the Messiah as separating him from men but as gathering all his people into himself. We call this,

not quite adequately, the doctrine of the representative Christ. In Ephesians S. Paul puts it more boldly: the Christ is being all in all fulfilled, till all, in Christ, become one perfect man (Eph. i 23, iv 13 ff). Secondly, this union is accomplished through the Spirit of the Christ poured out upon all believers as members of his body. Thus believers already live the life of the kingdom, though the triumph of the kingdom is yet to be manifested. And to S. Paul, who no longer lives but Christ lives in him, all has become so personal, so full of burning love, that he hardly speaks of the kingdom at all, but only of being "in Christ," and expecting Christ to "come." So he taught, and the church proved by experience, that in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Spirit, men were restored and united with God.

All this was no private doctrine of S. Paul's. It was Jewish doctrine completed by the recognition of our Lord Jesus as being himself the Christ. S. Paul found this a doctrine in the church when he entered it. But he made it intense and profound. His great intellect and his passionate self-effacing love raised it to a pitch that average men in the growing church could hardly reach.

Think again of that outburst in Galatians (ii 20): "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." How many of us dare assert that we understand this, or could apply the words to ourselves? They express an ideal which does indeed exist already, but much must be done and suffered before we shall have possessed it for ourselves.

It is clear from S. Paul's own epistles that the whole church did not live at the level of his faith. In the later epistles of the New Testament things are said which can best be explained if we recognise also a more every day kind of faith, there from the first, sometimes dropping to a lower standard, but presently developing into a hardly less beautiful rule than S. Paul's fiery principle. By the side of mystical union in Christ, the imitation of Christ became the aim and interest. This was helped too by mere lapse of time. While the death and resurrection of the Lord were of yesterday and while the great advent might be, as many thought, tomorrow, it was enough to reckon salvation in those few

terms alone. By degrees the interest of memory revived. The church turned back to the days of the Lord's flesh ; meditated on his peerless example ; set itself to discover the vital connexion of the Galilean ministry and teaching with the immense act of redemption wrought in the death, the resurrection, the giving of the holy Spirit and the promise of the advent. The church of our own day has been engaged on a like task and we know the joy, but also the disappointment of the result. The joy is great. We find new life in the fresh air of the Gospel. Long obscured, the very manhood of our Lord is again portrayed. So for the early church gnosticising systems and docetic unreality were blown away by this fresh air. But at the same time, for them as now for us, the disillusionment of realism was severe. That Galilean life was so confined, so obscure. The manhood of the Lord was beset with such daunting limitations of manhood. The details of the tragedy were so surprising in their weakness and shame. So S. Paul had already recognised "the scandal of the cross." So a fourth century writer was to declare that in the Gospel "nothing is concealed : all the human things which men now blush to say of the Lord the evangelists were

not ashamed to say" (see Bethune Baker, *Nestorius and his teaching*, p. 155).

For such boldness that writer found justification in the epistle to the Hebrews, and in that epistle we do find the difficulty met. The author shews that Christ's glory was to be perceived in his humiliation, his godhead in his manhood; a sacramental doctrine which their Alexandrine platonism enabled this author and his first readers to appreciate.

The Alexandrine platonism of this epistle is the one point in its origin of which there is no doubt. No one can fail to recognise that character in it who has read the books we have been just now studying. Who actually wrote the epistle God only knows, said Origen, adding that no one acquainted with Greek style could suppose it was S. Paul. And in the west, where the epistle was first known, many centuries elapsed before the eastern conjecture of Pauline authorship was tolerated. Nor can we do more than guess where it was written and whither it was sent. This however may be inferred from the letter itself. It was addressed to a little company of friends, thoughtful men who had become imperfect Christians, accepting Jesus as Christ and the Christian as a reformed branch of the Jewish

church. They had not realised the full mystery of the Saviour's person or of his work of salvation. Some trial was imminent in which pressure was being put upon them to return to the Jewish faith of their fathers. The hard duty set before them was to break old ties and hold firm to the Lord to whom they had given allegiance. The epistle was written to encourage them to make a venture of faith and to do that duty.

All this appears to me a fair inference, and I will not stay to discuss the many other explanations which have been offered. The earnestness of the writer in the face of his friends' peril and temptation seems clear. The occasion is less easily decided. If it were the outbreak of the Jewish war with Rome, which began soon after the death of S. Paul and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the whole argument would gain a vivid reality. The philosophic liberals to whom it is addressed were being pressed to make common cause with their nation, to deny the Christ of the Nazarenes who had set his face against political Zionism, and to fight for hearth and home. To these quiet thinkers the appeal would come with peculiar attraction. To refuse it would mean perse-

cution; but it would also seem to them a failure in honour; and a perplexed sense of honour appears to be their trouble far more than a fear of persecution. Again and again the writer meets this perplexity with the reminder: You have given allegiance to our Lord Jesus as Christ; no other claim can possibly over-ride that.

This occasion would also fit well with what we have just considered about the awakening interest in the gospel memories, and the problem of faith arising therefrom. That was connected with the lengthening delay of the expected advent, and the re-adjustment of the idea of that advent which the delay was rendering necessary. It is hardly possible to avoid perceiving that the author of this epistle recognises a coming of Christ in the crisis of his day. So did S. Luke in his Gospel when he made distinct, what is hardly hinted in S. Mark, that there would be a real connexion between the final advent and the fall of Jerusalem: not that the one would take the place of the other, but that the final advent was a mysterious consummation, the nature of which would be more and more revealed in partial fulfilments such as the catastrophe of the Jewish war.

Now S. Mark's Gospel was very likely written some ten years before that catastrophe. In S. Mark that other problem of the Galilean manhood—the problem of realism as we called it above—was very sharply set. In S. Luke and S. Matthew as well as in this epistle the solution is attempted. In those Gospels the harshness of realism is to some extent smoothed away. Still more do these evangelists essay to satisfy our reverence by shewing the moral grandeur with which the Lord rises above the confined and thwarting sphere in which he moves. The epistle still more frankly recognises the humiliation and shews that it is the sacramental means of the Lord's glory; the means of his present glory not the preliminary of his future glory; the glory is in the humiliation. Allow the plain grammatical sense of that verse (ii 9): "Consider him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, as he stands wearing the athlete's wreath of glory and honour for the suffering of death, that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man." And compare John xiii 31: "When therefore he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him; and God shall glorifiy him in himself, and straight-

way shall he glorify him." Judas had left the supper room, the last uncertainty about the end was taken away, the cross and shame were plainly determined; and in that certainty the glory shone. The supreme hour of humiliation was the hour of manifest glory. That is in S. John's Gospel, where this sacramental principle is elaborated into the simplicity of a fresh narrative of the Saviour's life; all is told with words that a child may enjoy, yet all the earthly is instinct with the heavenly; the veil grows thin, and eternity continually breaks through. The Gospels of SS. Matthew and Luke and the epistle to the Hebrews are two lines of development from the plain story which S. Mark received and wrote, two lines which still later meet in the fully experienced utterance of S. John's old age. There is the position of Hebrews in the progress of New Testament thought.

Yet something must be added if we would define that position thoroughly. This epistle is not a gospel narrative. In some degree the author goes back from the epistolary theology of S. Paul to the evangelistic memories of our Lord's earthly life, but he carries with him the theology which S. Paul had found and developed in the church. For him as for

us the attempt to go back from church doctrine to gospel life, distinguishing one from the other, would have been impossible. As we have seen, the earliest picture of our Lord's Galilean life is charged with doctrine. He came as the inheritor of Jewish Messianic hope. His divine Christhood was at first concealed, but it was felt. Presently it was confessed. His death is the supreme subject of all the evangelists; and the resurrection followed. Evidently the overpowering interest of the Galilean life, the gospel tragedy, is in the questions. Did the Lord come to save man? Has he saved us? The early church, instructed by their Jewish preparation for this question, at once perceived that the answer was, Yes. S. Paul with the ardent devotion of his faith in the Master who had subdued him, made this answer clearer. And now no teacher in the church could go back to the days of the Lord's flesh without this answer in his mind; nor would any disciples have cared to listen to him had he wished to do so. Certainly the author of the epistle to the Hebrews and the friends to whom he wrote could have been content with no such fancied simplicity.

For the all important question with them

was just that original one: Has Christ saved us? It was because the readers had never satisfied themselves about this that they were hesitating as to their duty. The letter was written to overcome this hesitation; to prove that Jesus Christ has wrought redemption and that there is no eternal life except in him; and to urge them therefore to be loyal to him however dark the outlook appeared. Their friend renews, re-states as we say, the doctrine of redemption through Christ's victorious death. He treats of the days of the Lord's flesh as leading up to this doctrine, as involved in it. And he sets those days forth with special sympathy because they constitute an example which, if his friends will bravely follow it, will help them to understand the dogma, and will enable them to make the saving power their own.

He re-states the accepted doctrine. What he says in effect is: our Lord Jesus Christ died to bring you to God, in that union with God is our salvation. He lives with a life uninterrupted by death, for death is not the end but a mysterious act of life, the perfecting of life. He lives as man now at the right hand of God, for he became and ever more remains truly man, and therefore able to

feel compassion—to sympathise, is his Greek word—for you in the human earthly trial through which you have to go. He went through like trial, and if you go through it faithfully trusting and following him, then you will share the perfecting to which God brought him; the Lord will re-enact in you what he acted in himself. He lost and found his will in God and you may do the same because he has done it once for all time and for all of us; he has created the ideal which by his continual aid he enables us in turn to possess as our own: "We are not of the shrinking back into perdition—our redeemed nature, as we should put it in our idiom, is no longer of that timorous apostate kind—ours is the nature of faith by which we are destined in God's purpose to gain possession of our true, that is our Christlike selves." (x 39) The whole theology of the epistle is gathered up in the blessing at the end (xiii 20f). Only this must be read, as in the revised version, according to the ancient text, with the antithesis between the "you" of the author's friends who have still to make up their minds to do God's will in the stress of the evil world as Jesus did, and the "us" of the author who has yielded his will to God and has thus

reached the peace which is not of the world, as Jesus Christ has reached it.

> Now the God of peace, who brought again the great shepherd of the sheep in the blood of the eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good way to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

You see they have still to do the one thing that God wills them at that time to do; that is the force of the Greek aorist here: the author has passed that stage and needs to ask no special boon, only that God will continue to do with him according to the divine pleasure; that is the force of the present participle. He has entered into "the rest of God" (iv 1) and understands the secret of eternity: *la sua voluntate è nostra pace.*

He says this, and he tells his friends that he can make them understand it if they will think of our Lord as the priest who stands on the godward side of men; whose blood is (according to the theology of Lev. xvii 10 ff) life enriched by death; who in this indissoluble life (vii 16) has opened the way for men to come to God (x 19 ff); who ever liveth to

make priestly intercession for them (vii 25); whose sacrifice avails for them if they will make it their own by following him in like act of sacrifice (xiii 13 f); that act of personal will is necessary else all this sacrificial language lapses into mere metaphor (x 1–14).

This is re-statement of the ancient doctrine of the church in terms of sacrifice. Such terms were an Alexandrine fashion: compare the praise of the high priest in Sirach l, Wisdom xviii 24, and in many passages of Philo. Hence they would be quickly understood by the friends of the author who, like him, had received (in whatever place of instruction) an Alexandrine education. The analogy starts from the Levitical parts of the Old Testament, from the literature of Israel's sacrifices. But little interest is shewn in those sacrifices by themselves. As performed in Jerusalem in the author's own day there is hardly any. Nothing in the epistle indicates that either author or readers had ever seen the temple; the imagery is all taken from the tabernacle of the sacred books. No care is spent on getting all the correspondences exact. The ancient sacrifices were but a shadow. The term "shadow," as nearly always in the Old and New Testament, signi-

fies the unreality which passes away, not the promise of something approaching. Aaron and his priesthood furnish a vocabulary, a set of pictures, but they are not the type of the great and true high priest. Melchisedek is the type. He is another Alexandrine, Philonic figure, and therefore the first readers could catch their friend's meaning more easily than we do. But if Melchisedek seems to us artificially chosen as the type, we do catch the meaning as we read on in the epistle. The mechanical line of Aaron, says the author, is a shadowy ordinance fading ineffectually away before our eyes. Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfils another line, an eternal line of world-wide ancestry and living growth, which has been dimly perceived when and where ever men have stood on the godward side helping their brothers to come to God, as Israel's Christ-kings did, or Israel the Christ-nation, or Isaiah or Jeremiah the martyr-prophets. And still it shall be seen and may be perfectly continued now, when and where ever men will make sacrificial surrender of their private wills, and enter with Christ into the sanctuary which is the only good and universal will of God.

If it were not for this epistle we should

perhaps never have used the word sacrifice in its noble sense. Even now we often forget or misunderstand. We think of sacrifice as a kind of bargain, giving something up for the sake of something better; or as loss; or at best as resignation. Sometimes, quite away from the idea in Hebrews, we think of punishment bought off by another's suffering. But to our author sacrifice means what he saw his Lord do: giving up with joy life, self, will, to God; so to enter into God. And the effect of the Lord's sacrifice is what the author found it in himself and others, an imparted freedom to do the same Sacrifice is a generous gift, a glad offering of life and all life means, for God to take to himself and to transform and multiply. Sacrifice opens the way to God the invisible and, without sacrifice, the unapproachable.

In this epistle attention is concentrated on the present, on the future only as growing out of the present. "To-day: harden not your hearts while it is called to-day," is the appeal. This is in the first place due to the circumstances in which it was written: the author writes to urge his friends to do a hard duty which was just then set before them. So Isaiah and the ancient prophets urged their

fellow-countrymen to do an immediate duty, and interpreted a present danger as a judgement and also an opportunity, upon the use or abuse of which irrevocable consequences would ensue. Theology always developes out of such actual present necessity. The Jewish apocalypses also started from the present hard estate of the faithful people. But they were addressed to a faithful persecuted people. and offered consolation or encouragement, whereas the old prophets thundered their warnings against an unrepentant nation. Hence the apocalypses do shift the point of interest to a future, an end of the world, and to the advent of another better world. In the three first Gospels we see our Lord adopting this apocalyptic faith, but again drawing hearts to the present by proclaiming the kingdom now at hand, and by showing how simply, in God's fatherly love, his children may renew their spirit and enter the kingdom. The death and resurrection of our Lord once more threw the hope of the church into the future. The faithful were now waiting, expectant of the great advent. But still they expected it immediately; and when years passed and it became evident that some modification of the form of their expectancy

was God's will, this mere hope for the future was again transformed into a faith in the present. This transformation was prepared for by the doctrine of the holy Spirit, so intensely real to S. Paul. In the Gospel of S. John we find the transformation carried far. That Gospel represents it as actually taught by our Lord. No doubt the very words in which this Gospel records his teaching are largely chosen by the evangelist. But we may well believe that it is the Lord's own teaching which is here preserved. The other three evangelists chiefly noticed their Master's more picturesque manner of putting things, the sayings which most resembled the popular religious language of the day. That is what would first strike the ear of contemporaries. But besides these the Lord used another strain of doctrine. The beloved apostle heard and it answered to thoughts in his own mind. Half a century of recollection, meditation, active service for the no longer visible Master and daily communion with him still present in the Spirit, brought all into order and clearness. So at last S. John taught—perhaps a disciple of his wrote—" the spiritual gospel." The epithet need not mean that his book is unhistorical. It means this above all: that

here "eternal" takes the place of "future." Instead of two worlds, one now and one to come or one here and one beyond, depth within depth in an eternal present, an eternal "here," is revealed. To Martha the Lord does not deny a resurrection at the last day, but he opens her heart to perceive that, "I am the resurrection and the life," is a truer manner of embracing the great promise. Throughout the last discourse in the supper room this eternalising of space and time is the main theme. "In my Father's house are many mansions, or sojourn places: I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am ye may be also": may still be, is the idea required by the context. The Father's house is here, as perhaps in Luke ii 49, the whole heaven and earth, the universal presence of God. The Lord is about to move from the sojourn with his disciples in visible presence to another state of presence with them still, a presence through communion by the Spirit. He "goes" that he may more fully "come." And all through this gospel story we see neither a man who shall after death become God, nor One who has come down from heaven to take a partial manhood, accepting some and escaping others of the limitations of man-

hood; but One whose real manhood is the evident first fact, while through the real limited manhood the depth of godhead may be discerned. The difference between this Gospel and the other three is that whereas there the future manifestation of Jesus as the glorified Christ lies behind the earthly story, here the eternal godhead is recognised within the visible manhood. And to the experienced memory of this evangelist the whole has become pellucid. As though gazing on deep water, he sees through the surface to the depth; and yet there is no break, surface and depth are continuously one. Hence those flashes, in this Gospel so frequent, of the eternal breaking through the use and wont of common life.

If you think of the description in the catechism of a sacrament, you will readily allow that this Johannine method of theology may be properly styled sacramental. The visible and the eternal are both real, both divine; together they form one life. There is no need to leave earth in order to enter heaven: no need of that mistaken reverence which fears to recognise our Saviour's likeness in all points of temptation with ourselves: the utter reality of that likeness is the means

by which we reach his rescuing divinity. "Yet without sin": that would not mean all the immensity it does were it not for the "tempted in all points."

And here we have slipped back to our epistle. This epistle is in fact the link which connects the earlier evangelists and S. Paul with the Gospel of S. John. Here we have a first sketch of the sacramental principle applied to Christ's person and work: in S. John we find the principle easily handled as with long practice. In S. John the narrative is told with the utmost simplicity. You do not stay, borne on by the interest of the story, to think about the principle. In the epistle the principle, is as it were, a new weapon shaped for the special needs of author and friends. They did not understand how Christ had wrought redemption by his death. The author tells them to think of Christ as a priest and of his dying as a sacrifice. The outward visible act was a shameful death as in a criminal's execution. The inward eternal reality was his entrance, at that very moment of shame, into the presence of the Father on their behalf. They did not understand the mystery of the Lord's divine person—mystery is the Greek word for the Latin sacrament. The author

bade them consider his love and sinlessness, his union in perfect obedience with his Father, and how this all shone out the clearer by the very opportunity and means of suffering and humiliation of the days of his flesh. The two parts of the sacrament correspond. Both are real. The one is the instrument of the other. How so? Is not this but a pretty fancy? they might still ask. He would answer: Because his whole life is one, one indissoluble life (vii 16); to which, moreover, the sacrificial analogy itself points, for in sacrifice blood means life, and Christ's blood, shed on the cross, was the sacrificial means which God ordained to renew cleanse and enrich life. If still they objected that there was too much analogy about all this, and the heart of the matter could not after all be thus reached, he would point them to chapter x, where he penetrates beyond his analogy and imagery, and grounds all on the will of God. As there is one life, not many, in which all share, so there is one will in the universe, not many. Our separate wills are by themselves slaveries (cf ii 14f). We are made one with God when we lose and find our will in his; and Christ, by doing this in his own person once for all, has won for us too the power of doing the same.

But if still they pressed their objections, and still required proof that Christ's doing this enabled them to do it, their friend would bid them listen again to the practical appeal which runs all through the letter; the appeal to follow Christ in the imminent crisis, and to do their duty as Christ did his. That practical venture of loyalty will alone clinch the argument. For here is the great thing. The sacramental principle has solved in theory the problem of Philo. It has done away with the two worlds; has shewn the divine in the human; heaven here: the entrance into God's presence through common life not by leaving common life behind. But all this theory would leave us cold, the argument would still remain incomplete, if personal affection did not set hearts aflame to believe in truths that do run out beyond immediate experience. And the life, death, enriched exalted life of Christ; his coming now and his call to his loving followers to follow him indeed in this present definite act of loyalty; there is the personal affection. The Word of Philo has lost its vagueness; it has come to life; Jesus Christ, the dear Lord who died for us, brings us to God when he lifts us above ourselves in the following of himself to God.

No doubt, as we might imagine Philo answering to our criticisms of his philosophy; no doubt something still remains unexplained. If God means all we hope that great name means, there must be more in God than the utmost communion possible for man as yet with God can satisfy. In two ways this epistle meets that difficulty. First, by its insistence on the real manhood of our Lord. Part of that temptation of our Lord's, in all points just like ours, was the limitation of his manhood's insight into that dark glory. It would indeed be terrible if any derogation from the doctrine of Christ's true manhood forbade us to believe that he, the compassionate, shared and shares our reverent awe before that darkness. But Christ can share it; and if we believe that, we may well trust happily, though the sadness of this whole present evil world be involved in the mystery. With him, we face a mystery but not an uncertainty. Then secondly, there is Chist's true godhead, equally insisted upon in this epistle as the indubitable, traditional doctrine of the church. That doctrine cannot be proved by mere argument. It is finally proved by acting upon it. The doctrine cannot even be described except in imperfect symbolic terms. But the sum

of the doctrine—what S. Paul would call its "energy"—is just this: that our Lord Jesus Christ can bring men where he has gone; can join them with God; can save. And those who allow him to unite them with his manhood in obedience thereby learn the might of his godhead.

And this epistle has given us the term we need. Sacrifice is the secret of the life which is life indeed. A modern philosopher, Dr. Seth Pringle-Pattison, at the end of his Gifford lectures on "The idea of God," says that in our Lord's doctrine and act of sacrifice not only is religion perfected, and the sorrow of the world transformed, but in that doctrine the open secret of the universe, as the philosopher regards it, is revealed. And in this doctrine our criticisms and distinctions die away. We may give free course to our instinctive feeling that Philo all but reaches the truth. For nothing is so confidently asserted in this epistle of sacrifice than the continuity of our Lord's consummate achievement of salvation with all the imperfect effort of men who, in every time and nation, laid self aside, and loved their brethren, and stood for them on the godward side. That is why Melchizidek the universal, is chosen as the type of the eternal and supreme High Priest.

I hope the title of these lectures has been justified. We do see, do we not ? a continuity between Sirach, Wisdom, Philo and the epistle to the Hebrews. And it is the continuity of a gospel. We have also extended it to S. John. Further reason for that extension has lately been given by Dr. Rendel Harris in his remarkable little book *The prologue of St. John's Gospel.* He shews that almost every phrase in that prologue has its root in those praises of Wisdom which start from Proverbs viii and are developed in Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon. Only in S. John the Word (which however is also a frequent term in those books) takes the place of Wisdom. The parallels had been noticed before, but Dr. Harris works them out more thoroughly than his predecessors, and carries the enquiry into new regions.

He approached the subject from that early book of Christian evidences Cyprians' *Testimonia* in which he found Wisdom cited as a recognised designation of our Lord. He remembered how S. Paul says in 1 Cor. i 30 that Christ Jesus has become to us Wisdom ; and how in Luke xi 49 the Wisdom of God is quoted, while in the corresponding passage of S. Matthew it is our Lord himself who speaks.

In Tatian's *Harmony* the two modes of expression are brought together thus: Behold, I, the Wisdom of God, send unto you etc. That was no arbitrary adaptation of Tatian's. Dr. Harris examines all the early Christian literature and shews that, as in Cyprian's *Testimonia*, so generally in the first centuries, Christ is called Wisdom, and what is said of Wisdom in the Old Testament is applied to him.

Then, enlarging his search, he finds this. The earliest name of this kind for Christ in the church was Wisdom. Presently that term which is associated so often with Wisdom in the Old Testament was also applied to him: Christ was both Wisdom and Word. Later still a distinction was made: Christ is the Word, the Holy Spirit is the Wisdom.

It will be observed that all springs from the Old Testament, especially from Proverbs and the Alexandrine Wisdom books. Proverbs, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon, the early Gospel, S. Paul, S. John, is the line of tradition. According to Dr. Harris, Philo with his doctrine of the Word stands apart. "The Christian statements which we find in the Fourth Gospel are not derived immediately from Philo and his speculative Logos. The

two evolutions of doctrine are very nearly independent of one another." He leaves it still an open question whether the epistle to the Hebrews should be co-ordinated with Philo, and not rather with the Wisdom books. We will not go into the detail of such an enquiry. But we may just remark this in concluding our own study to-day. The author of Hebrews participates in that imaginative temperament which we noticed as one of Philo's characteristics. This author is no strenuous philosopher though he avails himself of certain ideas and of much striking phraseology from the Alexandrine schools. He represents all his thoughts in pictures. The sacramental idea which runs through his letter, that the crucifixion was the outward visible sign of an effectual eternal act, still remains pictorial. The eternal action itself is visually imagined as a priestly entrance into the sanctuary of God's presence. And it is partly through this unpretentious naivety that he keeps free from the philosophical confusion which beset Philo; and, so far as he does philosophise, he returns unconsciously from Alexandrine degenerations to the purer perception of Plato. What stirs him, and what he hopes will stir his

friends, is the imaginative, romantic idea of their Lord coming, actually coming, in the crisis of the times, and summoning his disciples to follow him. Let them but follow in the adventurous duty set before them, and the Master will lead them into the very city, rest, presence of God. Even that inmost, perfect union he conceives pictorially: contrast the Saviour's prayer in S. John, "that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us. . . one as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one." There is a title of Christ in Hebrews which may stand over against the Wisdom and the Word. In our English version it is rendered variously. But the equivalent first given for it in Heb. ii 10 is most characteristic of the imaginative, romantic spirit of the whole epistle: to this author with his little group of friends, soon perhaps to be martyrs, Christ is the Captain of salvation.

LIST OF BOOKS

The Greek text of Sirach and Wisdom may be read in the second volume of *The Old Testament in Greek*, Swete; Cambridge, 3 vols: Swete's *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (new ed. Swete and Srawley; Cambridge) is an invaluable guide to the study of Alexandrine Judaism and Christianity.

An important book is *Ecclesiasticus, the Greek text of codex* 248, *edited with a textual commentary and prolegomena* by J. H. A. Hart; Cambridge. This gives the longer Greek text (corresponding to AV) with discussions, in a lively style, of date and the character of the Pharisaic additions; a handy companionable volume.

In English these books may be read in RV and AV Apocrypha: in Sirach the two versions represent two editions of the Greek book. Both RV and AV were made before the recovery of the Hebrew Sirach. A convenient edition of the whole extant Hebrew is Peter's *Ecclesiasticus Hebraice* (pointed

Hebrew text and Latin translation on opposite pages; Freiburg). A translation made from a text constructed from the Hebrew and the versions is given in Dr. Charles' great work *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*: 2 vols. Oxford. Translation, introduction and notes are by Box and Oesterley. Dr. Oesterley has edited Sirach, with all the resources of scholarship simplified for English readers, in *The Cambridge Bible for schools and colleges*; he has also edited a translation from a reconstructed text in the series of *Translations of early documents*, S.P.C.K., 2/6.

The Wisdom of Solomon may also be read in Dr. Charles' first volume; translation, introduction and notes are by Mr. Samuel Holmes. A still more interesting edition of Wisdom has been written by Mr. A. T. S. Goodrick for Rivington's *Oxford Church Bible Commentary*; he treats the author's Greek style with severity.

For the Wisdom literature in general see Oesterley's *Books of the Apocrypha: their origin teaching and contents*; Robert Scott: Cheyne's *Jewish religious life after the exile*; Putnam: and *Job and Solomon* (a work of rare beauty); Kegan Paul and Trübren:

and the article *Wisdom Literature* in *Encyclopaedia Biblica* by C. H. Toy, with its appended bibliography. In *The origin of the prologue to St. John's Gospel* (Cambridge 1917) Dr. Rendel Harris derives the Christian doctrine of the Word from the Hebrew doctrine of Wisdom.

For the Pharisees Mr. R. T. Herford's *Pharisaism, its aim and method* (Williams and Norgate) may be read: more thorough is Mr. I. Abrahams' *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels* (Cambridge 1917); Canon Box has an excellent article on *Pharisees* in Hasting's *Dictionary of religion and ethics*, vol. ix., in which he reviews all that has been written on the subject in England and abroad.

The pages of Thomas Mangey's edition of Philo's Works in Greek (1742) are still quoted as the standard of reference. This text was reproduced in the eight volumes of the Tauchnitz edition (1851-1853) which may often be bought to-day for a few shillings. Cohn and Wendland are issuing a revised text at Berlin in two forms, with and without critical apparatus. A selection from the Greek, arranged with brief Latin commentary to illustrate the main lines of Philo's doctrine

will be found in Ritter and Preller's *Historia philosophiae graecae*; Gotha, ed. 8, 1898. Mr. J. H. A. Hart has done something of the same kind in English for the *Jewish quarterly review*, vols. xvii and xviii; and he will presently give us a handbook of translated extracts in the series of *Translations of early documents* which S.P.C.K. is publishing.

James Drummond's *Philo Judaeus: or the Jewish Alexandrian philosophy in its development and completion*; 2 vols. London, 1888, is still the most full and readable introduction in English to the study of Philo. Those who do not care to read large books may consult his article *Philo* in Hasting's *Dictionary of the Bible*, extra vol.; to which a list of books English and foreign is appended. But the best modern account of Philo's philosophy is Bréhier's *Les idées philosophiques et religieuses de Philon d' Alexandrie*; Paris (Picard et fils) 1908; and Windisch's small book *Die Frommigkeit Philos und ihre Bedeutung für das Christenthum* (Leipzig, 1909) is a fine exposition of Philo's religious teaching. Edward Caird wrote a good chapter on Philo in the second volume of his *Evolution of theology in the Greek philosophers*; Maclehose. In Bigg's *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*

(Oxford 1886, new ed), a noble book, the Jewish Alexandrines take their proper place as forerunners of Origen and Clement.

The epistle to the Hebrews must be read in its true text, as given in Westcott and Hort (nearly but not quite so well in the edition Nestle made for the Bible Society) and as translated in RV. *The textus receptus* and AV are misleading in crucial passages. The first great commentary on which Alford and others have drawn, was Friedrich Bleek's, Berlin 1828-1840. The best of all commentaries is Westcott's, first published (by Macmillan) in 1889. The following may also be mentioned: Rendall (good scholarship); Peake in the *Century Bible* (terse scholarly and useful); Davidson in T. & T. Clark's *Handbook for Bible Classes* (unpretending but profound); Wickham in the *Westminster Commentaries* (elegant and instructive); Windisch, the latest German commentator (Tübingen, 1913), has written a small book full of valuable and new illustrative matter, but his interpretation is too hard and literal.

Out of the multitude of treatises on the theology of the epistle the following may be chosen as opening particular points of view: Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews, the first*

apology for Christianity, T. and T. Clark; Westcott, *Christus Consummator*, Macmillan; William Milligan, *The ascension and heavenly priesthood of our Lord*, Macmillan; DuBose, *High priesthood and sacrifice*, Longmans; Ménégoz, *La théologie de l'épitre aux Hebreux*, Paris, Fischbacher; George Milligan, *The theology of the epistle to the Hebrews*, T. and T. Clark. All that has been said on questions of date authorship &c., is admirably reviewed by Dr. Moffat in his *Introduction to the literature of the New Testament*, T. and T. Clark, 1911: his commentary on the epistle in the *International commentaries* of Messrs. Clark is eagerly expected.

Material for discussion of nearly all the questions which are approached in these lectures will be found in Schürer's *Geschichte des judischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi.* The German book is now in its fourth edition. A translation of the second edition was published by T. and T. Clark in 1897 with the title *The Jewish people in the time of Christ.*

PRINTED BY THE CHURCH PRESS, CHURCH HOUSE, LIVERPOOL

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