THE CHURCH IN THE MIRROR OF HISTORY.

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THE CHURCH

IN THE MIRROR OF HISTORY:

Studies on the Progress of Christianity.

BY

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TRANSLATED BY

ELIZABETH STIRLING

AND DEDICATED BY PERMISSION

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS CHRISTIAN OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN.

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1890.

TO

Her Royal Highness the Princess Christian

OF

ENGLAND AND SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN.

MADAM, — As Dr. Sell of Darmstadt was first introduced to the English reading public through Your Royal Highness's graceful references to him in the Preface to your able Translation of his Memoir of Her Royal and Serene Highness the Princess Alice of England and Hesse, the idea of dedicating my Translation of his Lectures on the Development of Christianity to Your Royal Highness naturally presented itself.

In that preface Your Royal Highness says: "In these days, when the custom has become general of publishing biographies of all persons of note or distinction, it was thought advisable, in order that a true picture might be given of my sister, that a short sketch of her Life should be prepared by some one who was personally known to her, and who appreciated the many beautiful features of her character. The choice fell upon a clergyman at Darmstadt, Dr. Sell. It would have been premature and out of

place to attempt anything like a complete picture of my sister's opinions on the affairs of Europe, in which she took the deepest interest, and on which she formed opinions remarkable for breadth and sagacity of view. The domestic side of her nature might alone for the present be freely dealt with; and to help Dr. Sell in delineating this, my mother selected for his guidance the extracts from my sister's letters to her which appear in the present volume," etc.

The selection of Dr. Sell for that delicate and difficult task is most significant, and is calculated to give a special interest to any work proceeding from his pen, and also to ensure for it a favourable reception in this country.

From this point of view, as well as encouraged by your very gracious permission, I have much pleasure in dedicating to Your Royal Highness my Translation of this work, *Aus der Geschichte des Christentums*, which I have re-christened *The Church in the Mirror of History*.

I have the honour to be,

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S
RESPECTFUL AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

ELIZABETH STIRLING.

10th November 1890.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

In compliance with the wishes of those to whom they were delivered, these Lectures now appear, in the form in which they were written, in aid of the Local Branch of the Gustavus Adolphus Ladies' Union and the Association for Church Building in Darmstadt.

For practical reasons I have refrained from adding explanatory notes and bibliographical references, and therewith, necessarily, the technical proof for many of the positions I have ventured to assume.

The coincidence of many of my statements and opinions with those in Rudolf Sohm's lectures, published firstly in the *Allgemeinen Konservativen Monatsschrift*, and afterwards in book form, and entitled, *Kirchengeschichte im Grundriss*, induces me to remark that the leading thoughts of my work and its plan as

a whole were sketched out before my perusal of his stimulating and valuable production.

The cordial reception given to my Lectures enables me also to agree with that eminent jurist's hope that our cultured classes will begin to interest themselves in the history of religious questions when they find them discussed in their general historical relations. Only then, naturally, can we expect to arouse this interest.

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PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

THE progress of Christianity forms an essential element in the general history of mankind.

The inner development of the human race is directed by ethical ideas. These have been multiplied, transformed, and brought into new relations by Christianity, through the medium of a new religion. The influences of this religion are not yet exhausted, after a progressive growth through the varying conditions of civilisation, and the changing nationalities of two millenniums.

I desire to exhibit some of the results attained by Christianity as concisely as possible; but, with boundless materials, the difficulty is to select exactly those which are most important and characteristic. If you will bear this in mind, you will judge my essay considerately. I entreat you, moreover, to estimate my

work as a whole; for only by the light thrown on one Lecture by another can I hope to awaken the impression which should reward meditation on these matters—that of Providence presiding over the course of history.

In the year 113 or 114 A.D., the Roman deputy of the province of Bithynia, in Asia Minor,—Caius Cæcilius Pliny,—wrote to the Emperor Trajan, asking him how he should carry out his law regarding secret societies, in the case of the numerous Christians residing in his province. The statements which he had elicited in the course of judicial examination of those who had been reported Christians or had confessed themselves Christians, but were prepared to abjure their errors, were: "They meet on an appointed day, before sunrise, first sing a hymn to Christ as to a God, then take an oath (sacrament) for no such evil purpose, as they are sometimes accused of, but, on the contrary, to avoid theft, robbery, adultery, and denial of a claimed deposit, binding themselves, also, to keep their promises faithfully. When they have done this, they are accustomed to separate, and to meet again at a later hour, to partake of food, of an ordinary and innocent character."

As this was not enough for the deputy, he ordered

two virgins,—female slaves,—who bore the title of "*Deaconesses*," to be racked, but extorted nothing further than "perverse and monstrous superstition" (superstitionem pravam et immodicam). The matter seemed to Pliny to be worthy of the Emperor's closer consideration, because so great a multitude of people, irrespective of age, condition, or sex, were in danger of falling a prey to this superstition, which was spreading like an epidemic from the cities into the most isolated districts, that the temples were becoming deserted, and the sacrifices were being discontinued. So far Pliny.

Contemporaneously with this, the Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus, wrote the following statement, in reference to the burning of Rome, in the year 64, (of which the Christians, detested by the populace, had been accused by Nero), in his historical work, which deals with Roman history from the death of Augustus onwards:[1] "Christ, the Founder of this denomination, was executed during the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, by the procurator Pontius Pilate. The baneful superstition, then suppressed, was revived and spread, not only through Judea, where the evil originated, but also through the city of Rome, whither

[1] Tacitus, xv. 44.

all the abominations of the whole world flow and find devotees."

We see from this that, even in the year 64, the distinction between Christians and Jews was recognised in Rome. The Christians were sacrificed to the malice of the Roman mob, and were burned like torches in Nero's garden, as Tacitus goes on to relate. A new religion had arisen in the Roman empire. There were people who worshipped Christ as a God, with special religious ceremonies, and were ready to submit to torture and death for their faith.

Our sole information regarding the Founder of our religion is derived from His disciples. Negative critics have scrutinised their statements, and exposed their discrepancies, they have also maintained that the traditions as a whole are unreliable. I do not share their pessimistic views, because I find that we arrive essentially at the same result, which had been already reached, when the unsifted tradition was accepted as a whole, even when we adopt the standpoint of the most advanced critics. The controversies of scholars are still going on about the dates of the greater number of these New Testament Scriptures. The general opinion is confirmed regarding several, that they belong to the earliest period. I may specialise

among these the larger epistles of Paul, those addressed to the Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans, and the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

The statements made by these Scriptures, in the name of the Christian tradition which they follow, regarding the person of the Lord, are not inferior to those in the more recent books of the New Testament which have been so frequently suspected on account of their exalted estimate of Christ. The peculiar conception, common to Christian tradition, of the position held by Jesus in relation to His people and their religion, is as clearly set forth in those first living testimonies as in the later writings.

The Jewish people were unique among the nations, in the profession of Monotheism, which had been communicated to them by a very ancient revelation, according to their own accounts. This Monotheism was nationally restricted. Israel alone—the chosen people—was called to this worship of God. The diffusion of their religion throughout the world, which became their hope at a later period, could only be conceived of by them as the political supremacy of their nation over the other races.

The dispersion of the Jews among the other nations, brought about by various national catastrophes, had

the effect of intensifying rather than annulling their religious and national idiosyncrasy. They collected and treasured the memorials of their exclusively religious literature in the lands of their exile. The Old Testament translated into Greek, the language of the learned world, became a factor in Hellenic culture. The Jewish religion made proselytes among the Gentiles.

The veneration in which the temple of Jerusalem was held, as central sanctuary, was a bond of union for the dispersed Jews; and the religious, administrative Court of Justice of the land, the High Council, was a species of Consistory for the collective Judaism of the world. The promises uttered in the bygone days of an enthusiastic faith by the ancient prophets, had raised extravagant hopes regarding the future of Judaism, which were fostered by its diffusion throughout the earth. Their expectation was that the Messiah, kept waiting by God in heaven till the fulness of time should come, would one day descend, accompanied by Elias or some other prophet, and like a valiant David, like a wise Solomon, would found the universal empire of Judaism.

Extremely strict and exclusive adhesion to all such religious and nationally characteristic ceremonies as were enforced by the Pharisees—the ultra-national

sect—was considered the safest mode of paving the way for this era. Under this Pharisaic influence the faith that had been noble, free and spiritual, as it came from the lips of the prophets, was narrowed into a hard literal orthodoxy. The Mosaic law with its many ritual and legal elements was reduced by a quibbling casuistry into a species of religious regulation drill for every separate day in the life of a pious Israelite, and punctilious fulfilment of contract-like mutual obligations was considered the sole righteousness wherein the covenant God could have dealings with His people.

Jesus made His advent within the sphere of this national religion, with the declaration that in Him the prophecy was fulfilled, but ignoring utterly the purely national conception of the prophecy in His view of this fulfilment. He proclaimed, as a herald, the approaching sovereign supremacy of God over His people, but the Kingdom He had in view was a heavenly one, supreme in the world of the invisible, established in the spirit and will of men, and proceeding thence to subdue the world. The Gospel—the good news—was the declaration of these things, which the Jews had only been able to conceive of as a proclamation of judgment on the Gentiles, and these

tidings of great joy were addressed not alone to the legally rigid—the hierarchy—or to the heads of the theological schools and sects, but to the people without distinction.

If any announcement of a Kingdom of God, of a Divine Covenant with a nation, could only have been intelligible on Jewish soil, that of Jesus could only be appreciated by those who suffered themselves to be led by Him out of the beaten path of piety towards a new conception of religious and moral duty. Only those who attained to this very peculiar trust in Him, who believed in Him, could have the real meaning of His teaching revealed to them.

In the discourses delivered by Jesus in His wanderings from place to place the Kingdom of God was always brought into prominence, instead of His own personality; and yet the key to all His words and acts can only be found in the living problem of His own personality. He enforced His words by marvellous deeds, not for the sake of asserting an unlimited and almighty power over all material nature, but rather to prove that God had authorised Him to reveal the promised Kingdom as one of health and happiness, and of compensation for the shortcomings of earth. His miracles always demonstrated the almighty power

of His word, and in them He laid account by a faith either prepared to meet Him or ready to be awakened. By this commanding word He proved Himself to be greater than any prophet.

The prophets had delivered God's messages to the people, when under the influence of individual and temporary inspiration; but Jesus spoke independently of all special inspiration, out of the fulness of the Spirit, as the *mouthpiece of God.* He decided questions of faith and morals by His own personal authority, assuming the functions of Moses and the prophets, and thereby claiming a position of dignity, quite phenomenal in the religious history of Judaism, but perfectly consistent with the character of the Messias in the popular conception, as the *alter ego*—the other I—of the earth-governing God. And Jesus declared, in those very discourses which are considered authentic, even by the negative critics, that He stood towards God in the relation of Son to Father, in an absolute community of mind and will, in an essential unity, not to be shared even approximately by any of His fellow-men. A personality which commanded veneration, in spite of the unassuming simplicity of its human and Jewish manifestation, made good this claim by its silent power. The title, "Son of Man," adopted

from the prophecy of Daniel about the Son of Man who was to come in the clouds of heaven to reign over the kingdom of the saints, either gives expression to the claim of Jesus, or veils it, according to our point of view.

This personality, transparent and clear as crystal, original in every utterance, attractive and benevolent, serious and gentle, tender and courageous, is the great mystery—reverently be it spoken—the miracle—something utterly novel, a new manifestation in this sphere of the religious and moral ideas of Judaism, which, it must be remembered, was the ancestral religion which He also had inherited.

The Church gives exact expression to this mystery by the predicate—the Godhead of Jesus Christ.

Thus He demands unqualified trustful adhesion to Himself. Thus He leads His disciples to the spiritual conception of the heavenly Kingdom. Thus He stamps upon the conscience love to God and brother-man, as this Kingdom's law, and becomes security for the hope that this Covenant, established by the God of the Hebrews—the Father of mankind—will be extended to many, who are not of Israel by the flesh, and that the destiny of this world will be fulfilled in the coming down from heaven to earth of the

kingdom of glory, in which those who accept the Gospel, and are redeemed, will have their appointed place.

Instead of using words of my own to delineate the historical character of Him whose virtues have been the fountain-head of all the Christian virtues for well-nigh two millenniums, and who has been for us the exalted and profound type of the life which is pleasing in the eyes of God and full of love to man, I shall quote the statements of two historical writers who briefly refer to this subject:—

JOHANNES VON MÜLLER[1] says: "We read in the ancient history of the Jews that when one of the most zealous champions of the law, who had fled into the Sinaitic desert after year-long struggling against the prevalent idolatry, entreated God to give him a sign of His presence: the earth shook, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; a great wind arose, but the Lord was not in the wind; after that came a softly whispering zephyr: the Lord had come in the sweet west wind. In like manner did He manifest Himself in Jesus."

LEOPOLD VON RANKE[2] says: "Simple and secluded

[1] *Universal History*, vol. ix. 6.
[2] *Lives of the Popes*, vol. i. 4.

as was His life and His work, speaking to a few fishermen, who did not always understand Him, in suggestive words and parables concerning God, He had not even where to lay His head; and yet, even judging from the world's standpoint, we dare to say that nothing has ever been seen on earth more innocent and mighty, more sublime and holy, than His life, both in living and in dying. The pure breath of God is wafted from every one of His sayings. They are words of everlasting life, as Peter said. Humanity has no records of anything at all comparable to this.

His mission, primarily undertaken for the reform of Judaism, and as the fulfilment of the law and the prophets in their original signification, was compelled to provide itself with an external organisation for the propagation of the practically new religion, only by the opposition of the official representatives of Judaism.

Its adherents, without respect of person or even of nation, became thenceforth the new people of God, the true Israel, "the assembly of the people," "the congregation of the people;" for that is the original sense of the word, which, giving it an essentially different signification, we now translate, "Church:" ecclesia (ἐκκλησία).

As King, Jesus gathered such a congregation of the people around Him, and this community of disciples entered upon the succession of ancient Israel, and was lawful heir to all the promises and pledges of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant was the extension to the many of God's mercy, which had only been made manifest to the few under the Old Covenant. This is typified by the choice of twelve disciples as apostles — as tribal fathers of the New Covenant people who were to be called into existence through the proclamation of His gospel. The law of this people was to be the royal law of fraternal love, of unqualified placability, of righteousness and of ever-willing service.

Without disturbing or setting aside any human or mundane institution, even whilst insisting upon and elucidating the divine and benevolent significance of such social ordinances as marriage, the Sabbath, the family relationships, and life's common callings throughout His parables, He was directing believers towards another goal than that of living in their worldly fellowship and vocation—that of a life spent in fellowship with all the citizens of the Kingdom of God in the fulfilling of the Divine law of universal love. They were divinely constrained and con-

clusively brought under this law by means of a striking event—the death of Jesus for His people.

This martyr death, accepted by Jesus with premeditated decision, inflicted by the Jewish hierarchy, in league with the popular party, and permitted by God for the fulfilment of His decrees, was transformed, through the construction put upon it, into the basis of the New Covenant and into the sacrament of the new religion.

I repeat my statement: All these characteristic passages in which Christianity is exhibited as a new religion, with Jesus, as God's Representative, for its central figure; with a preached gospel for its sole propaganda; with the gathering of a people of God around the throne of a Divine King for its end, may be corroborated from those New Testament Scriptures which are acknowledged by all critics to be original. As this is so, it follows that there is no such fundamental discrepancy between the earlier and later traditions of the Christian community as is assumed by negative criticism.

Naturally, however, with every rendering of the quintessence of a religion into abstract ideas, its true significance is only conveyed to those who already know it from personal experience. As the knowledge

of the physical, optical, and physiological laws of the propagation of light and the perception of colour can give no conception to the blind of the charm of the world of form and colour which delights our eyes, as the laws of sounds and of musical sensation cannot lead the deaf into the wondrous sphere of harmony, neither can those words have any true significance for him who has no experience of the blissful reality of the inner meaning of those biblical ideas.

The overwhelming impression produced by the death of Jesus, like a common malefactor on the cross, was effaced, and His disciples were again rallied by their risen Master reappearing in their midst. This evidence of supernatural power decided His claim to the dignity of Son of God, and His exaltation to the right hand of the Father was thenceforth regarded as His assumption of the universal dominion which would be made conducive to the triumphant issue of His cause.

The little company of Fathers of the Church (people of God) entered upon their mission in the world, confirmed in this conviction by the wonderful tokens of the Holy Spirit resting permanently upon the early disciples.

It is self-evident that the separation of the Lord's

people, or the "Brethren," as they called themselves, from their national Jewish connection, could only be accomplished by degrees. For, in the first place, they, as well as their Master, were sent primarily to Israel; and, in the second, Jerusalem and the Temple still existed, with all the institutions which had not been abolished by Jesus, although He had not, like the Pharisees, over-estimated their importance. The prospect which their Master had revealed to them, of the admission of the Gentiles within the fold, could only be realised by them as a matter of vital importance after every hope of gathering Israel as a whole around the Messiah was gone. This explains the exclusively Jewish leanings of the first apostles. They were in reality both national and cosmopolitan in spirit. Thoroughly national in their prejudices, although already cosmopolitan in virtue of their religious principles; while practically they confined themselves to their immediate mission to their compatriots, as the work nearest at hand.

Even without a direct mission, the diffusion of the belief in the Messiah among the Jews of the Dispersion, who were closely related to heathen proselytes in every region, must have led gradually to the adoption of this faith among the Gentiles; and

we find this stated to have been the case in Antioch, the capital of Syria. Saul, the Pharisee, who firmly believed himself to have been converted to Christianity through the personal influence of the Lord, was the first to conceive the idea of founding a direct mission for the conversion of the Gentiles. He sought the approval of the older apostles for this enterprise, and gained it after satisfactory results had already testified for him, upon condition of the Gentile converts abstaining from everything connected with the heathenish idol-worship. By this action he voluntarily recognised the pre-eminence of the immediate disciples of Jesus as the pillars of the Church.

In these days, since we have all adopted the same broad standpoint as St. Paul (one that cannot be refuted), it is scarcely possible for us to enter into the feelings of the earlier generation of apostles in the difficulty which they found in deducing the practical conclusion, which they, nevertheless, were obliged to recognise in principle. The New Testament narrates their contentions on the subject, and we have no need to conceal that such differences of opinion existed among the apostles. In order to account for the still more profound divergences,

plainly indicated in the New Testament, we need not assume that the primitive Church was split into two parties—one of which was ultra-Jewish, the other as decidedly Gentile; the one considering none Christian who were not Jews by birth or by profession, while the other was quite indifferent as to whether the converts had previously been idolaters or worshippers of Jehovah. It is much more natural to take for granted that there was quite an array of parties, with the friction and emulation which are unavoidable when strongly marked individualities come into collision. No calm mental equipoise, which would have been an unnatural condition in that feverishly excited age, is the crowning glory and sanctity of primitive Christianity, —but the fact that all the brethren were inspired by one Holy Spirit, and that they were striving together towards one heavenly goal. The route followed by St. Paul clearly marks out the various stations on the road, connecting the chief cities of the Empire with Rome, over which Christianity was bound to find its way from the East to the West—Antioch, Tarsus, Seleucia, Iconium, Ancyra, Miletus, Ephesus, Troas, Philippi, Corinth, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Rome.

The actual history of the propagation of Christianity in the apostolic and post-apostolic eras must always remain obscure, notwithstanding the narrations of the New Testament. This obscurity is not the result of the undetermined controversies of the learned over the dates and particular versions of most of the New Testament Scriptures, but is due to our lack of sufficient information concerning the life and the real social conditions of that class of the populace in which Christianity first took root. Only by obtaining more than our present very fragmentary knowledge of the proletariat and humble artizans in that era of the Roman Empire, shall we be enabled to understand how and where the gospel first laid hold of their souls, what transformation it effected in them, and what metamorphosis it underwent through them. As this is impossible, we must be satisfied with a merely partial understanding of the historical aspect of the New Testament Scriptures, which throughout refer quite evidently to special local conditions; but so much the more clearly can we recognise in them the truths communicated by the Spirit from above to the first adherents of the new religion.

The Christians, who were to be found in all parts

of the Roman Empire, even in one generation after the death of Christ, constituted the Lord's people, who were living in the expectation of His coming again from heaven. Their bond of union was their common faith in this Lord, not crystallised into a dogmatic form, but simply faith in Him as having fulfilled the ancient promises of God, and as still fulfilling them. This faith pledged them to brotherly love, which was practically manifested by mutual aid and support, for that was rendered necessary by the adverse circumstances of the majority of the believers, who belonged, in great measure, to the indigent classes. The Christians held themselves aloof from everything pertaining to idolatrous rites and customs. A new spirit of personal chastity and purity was aroused, and strict puritanism took the place of heathen libertinism. The commands of Christ concerning prayer for enemies and persecutors, and patient endurance of injuries and insults, were fulfilled to the letter. Worldly wealth and social position lost their charms when brought into comparison with the coming glory of heaven. Services corresponding to their capacities were required from all members of the Church, whether they might be aged men or in the prime of life, widows, virgins or youths. Work

was made honourable by its power of gaining the means for benevolence. A brother in the faith, provided with letters of commendation, however distant might be the land from which he came, was felt by the Christians to be more closely allied to them than their own unbelieving compatriots. Family ties were strengthened or dissolved by difference of religion; but all believers formed one family. They considered that the intellectual gifts of one were bestowed for the benefit of all. There were no distinctions to render mutual understanding difficult where all belonged to one social grade. A voluntary communism had been instituted by the Church of Jerusalem as a temporary measure, but it suffered long from the evil consequences of that expedient, and required continual aid from the other churches. Until its destruction, Jerusalem continued to be the headquarters of this cosmopolitan Church of God and its governing centre; and the apostles, who had been chosen by Christ Himself, were regarded as the representatives, rather than as the rulers of this Christian Union.

CHRIST Himself ruled, through the Holy Ghost shed upon all the believers. The deliverances of the Spirit, which were revealed by the oracular utterances of the prophets, in the congregations, or

by unanimous conclusions being arrived at after joint prayer, and after being tested by the transmitted words of the Lord, were looked upon as decisive. The agency of the Spirit was also recognised in the various gifts manifested by the individual members of the Church. These gifts conferred a certain individual ascendency, in no wise connected with any other personal authority or official standing. As eye-witnesses of the life of Jesus, and as the direct recorders of His words, the apostles had such authority, not because they were considered princes of the Church, but rather as prophets of the Spirit.

Paul, the foreign missionary of the Gospel, could find a place among them, for although he had not shared the privilege of close companionship with the Lord, he had been personally elected by Him. There existed, moreover, even till the second century, other apostles, foreign missionaries, endowed by God with the faculty of preaching the Word—prophets, who revealed the future—evangelists and teachers.

Every local congregation, assemblies of households and of families, in any place whatever, were regarded as the Lord's people (the Church) quite as much as the collective Church (ecclesia). This made the institution of special offices a necessity. These assumed

various forms, according to the already existing Jewish or Gentile prototypes. In the New Testament they are entitled Episkopoi—bishops, *i.e.*, overseers, deacons, deaconesses, male and female servants, presbyters, both male and female. Bishops and elders appear frequently to have been the same persons, holding the two offices conjointly; the bishop being treasurer and guardian of the Church's property, and being aided by deacons in the distribution of relief to the poor; the elders forming a church court for moral discipline and the decision of controversial questions. All these offices were conferred by election and laying on of hands, in token of authorisation, on such individuals as seemed to be endowed with the necessary gifts. They were adapted to meet the existing exigencies, without any special instructions from the Saviour. The most important element in the life of the *brethren* was the church service; any one inspired by the Spirit could take part in it either by exhortation or prayer. The preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments were not restricted to any specific functionary till a century later. From the very beginning a double service had been celebrated in adoption of the forms prevalent in the Jewish synagogue; the one being a meeting for

prayer with antiphonal singing, exhortation, and probably the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures. The second, distinct therefrom,—the solemnisation of the Holy Supper, — originally connected with a social repast, at which festival the church members presented their contributions as voluntary offerings. We have a eucharistic liturgy nearly as ancient as the apostolic age, which shows us how, evidently under the influence of the Judaic paschal rite, this solemnity — this special communion ceremonial of the Lord's people, who were dispersed throughout the world, with God, with Christ, and with one another—was the sacrament of their divine and fraternal covenant.

Leaving Judaism out of account, even the heathen world of the period was not unacquainted with such social celebrations, for it had numerous religious associations, guilds and brotherhoods; and social repasts, stated meetings, yearly festivals, a common treasury and solidarity were all features of these. The name of "brother" even, and the mutual aid system, were not peculiar to Christianity.

The essential difference between the Christian and heathen brotherhoods lay in the conviction of the Christians that they had received a virtually new

revelation from God, and that their religion was founded upon an ancient historical scheme of salvation. This was not confined to the mere events connected with the Saviour, which had been orally transmitted after a gradually crystallising type, but it ran through the whole course of Old Testament history; for the spirit of Christianity had already attained that important stage of development, even in the Apostolic age, that the sacred book of the Jews (then accessible to every one in its Greek translation) was recognised by the Christians as the Holy Scriptures, whose promises were then being directly fulfilled in their midst. As legal heir of the Old Covenant the Church of the New Covenant felt itself pledged even to seek for predictions of the experiences through which it had passed in the records of the Old Dispensation. It was impossible that this could be done without many misconceptions and much reading of false ideas into the text during the process. In an age when historico-critical and philological treatment of ancient MSS. were unknown, people did not perceive that; and a religious community, permeated with such a vivid and enthusiastic assurance of the right of its own cause, could, as a matter of course, not see it. Through this bond of union with the Old Testament the new Church

obtained a set religious phraseology and also an incomparable and marvellous range of religious conceptions; and in the struggle with the heathen world it entered upon a historic career vaster than could have been anticipated, and gained some idea of the providential dealings of the living God from the very beginning of time.

This adoption and use of the Old Testament by the Christian community first led to the realisation of the New Covenant. In conjunction with this a service was performed for the Old Testament which no merely Judaical and literally historical interpretation could have done for it, for the inner significance of the doctrines and conceptions which were communicated by God in the original revelation were revealed in the light of fulfilment. At the very time in which the last spark of the ancient Israelitish spirit expired, when all the elements possessing that inherent tendency had turned towards Christianity, whilst the nation as a whole had succumbed under the yoke of the Pharisees, the whole literature of ancient Israel was being enshrined in the ark of the new-born Church of the Messiah. It was destined to arise therefrom with renewed vigour; for what are the greatest achievements of Christian poetry, exhortation, and preach-

ing, but the renascent spirit of the prophets and psalmists?

The religious mission of Judaism to the world was at an end, and the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70 A.D., after the sanguinary Jewish war, was the outward evidence of that fact.

Even those Christians who still clung to their connection with the national Judaism, in spite of the persecution of their compatriots, had the way made clear for them by this catastrophe.

There could no longer be any question—in the realistic national sense—of the Temple and of Jerusalem; and the gradual vanishing of Jewish elements in a Church supported essentially by the Gentiles, who were crowding into it, could be more easily forgotten since the spiritual Israel was preserved.

A few years before the Jewish power met its doom, Paul, and probably also Peter, had suffered martyrdom in Rome during the Neronic persecution, and Rome had assumed the place formerly held by Jerusalem.

The metropolis of the world was then one, at least, of the headquarters of Christianity. The most ancient document of Christian literature after the New Testament Scriptures—of the post-canonical period—is an epistle from the Church in Rome to that at Corinth,

in which a certain consciousness of having a right to pose as patroness of the other Churches is displayed.

The Roman Empire sprang into existence simultaneously with the Christian religion. In pursuance of the policy of his greater predecessor, Augustus had united the countries on the Mediterranean sea-board into one consolidated civilised realm, in which the intellect of Greece and the vigour of Rome were to be combined as a cultural basis for the coming ages.

The most intellectual nations of the ancient world, with an admixture of the most vigorous of the Keltic and Germanic races, were united under one government. A uniform culture was diffused through the higher classes of this empire. This was heathen and polytheistic, but not in the naïve sense of an earlier age, when a nation believed that its gods were *the* gods. Faith in the national gods was beginning to waver, and comfort and help were sought from strange gods. They were all acknowledged, and consequently there were to be seen in Rome, in the days of Augustus, priests of the Persian Mithras, of the Egyptian Serapis and Isis, and of the great Phrygian Mother of the Gods, side by side with Jewish rabbis. The Eleusinian and Dionysian mysteries—those secret ceremonies associated with sacramental consecration—

had their adherents, while other worshippers flocked to the great public ceremonials. Only one state religion was universally binding—the worship of the divinity who then ruled the world, and that was the genius of the Emperor. The worship of the Emperor's image, which was often exhibited in conjunction with that of Roma, is misunderstood when it is conceived of merely as the adoration of a human being. It was the ideal principle of universal dominion to which homage was thus paid. It was a political cult, an acknowledgment of the Roman monarchy as of an article of faith.

The Christians whom Pliny subjected to punishment had contravened this tenet of faith. They had refused to offer incense and wine before the statue of the Emperor—that was high treason, and death was its penalty.

The noble Emperor Trajan, to whom Pliny appealed for direction, set a precedent for judicial procedure in the case of Christians by his answer. This was the first law of the Roman State promulgated against them: "The Christians are not to be hunted out: but if they are reported and found guilty, they must be punished. Those who make recantation of their Christianity and sacrifice to the heathen gods may be acquitted; those who do not must die."

It could avail the Christians nothing that they paid their taxes as loyal subjects, and that they prayed for the Emperor and avoided all wrong-doing; for, if they did not pay religious homage to the Emperor, they were rebelling against the principle of the Empire, and were shaking the ideal basis of the State.

Were the Romans not right in drawing this conclusion? The King of these Christians had indeed declared before the Roman procurator that His Kingdom was not an earthly kingdom; but if His coming again out of that unseen world to abolish everything earthly were imminent, then it was certain that He did menace the Universal Empire with destruction. And in this empire the best—indeed everything that was sacred in the eyes of the ancient world—was included: religion and government, art and philosophy, culture and fame; it was the finished form of human existence illumined by the radiance of the highest aristocratic culture. Were the Christians—the offscourings of the human race, as Tacitus called them—to be suffered to blaspheme with impunity? For it was nothing short of blasphemy when they declared that all the intellect and cultivation and glory and beauty of this world were nothing but a transient dream; when they maintained that a slave who had died upon a cross

would eventually cast the gods of Rome down to the dust! At that very time—in the days of Hadrian and the Antonines—Roman civilisation was pressing onwards towards its acme. In profundity of religious thought, in the bold flight of lofty philosophical speculation, and in the perfection of the fine arts, Rome was about to produce her finest fruits. Philanthropists and philosophers were to adorn the imperial throne of the metropolis of the world.

In contrast to the Roman State religion—the worship of the material, faith in the *divinity of the present world*—a new spirit began to make its presence felt—new in one sense, but more ancient in its origin than heathenism—the spirit of faith *in an unchanging God, ruling over a changing world.* That spirit emanated from the lowest stratum of society, where it had succeeded in reconciling thousands of oppressed human beings to their wretched lot. It assumed that it had the power to do all—more even than the best of Emperors had done out of humane consideration for their subjects, more than the most gifted of the philosophers had taught in their advocacy of the principle of the natural equality of men, more even than the most mysterious of the mystic religions could do towards satisfying yearnings after divine things; and

above all—it could secure *actual admission into an eternal kingdom of liberty, equality, and fraternity!*

The spirit of Christianity did not war against the State, but neither did it yield its foothold, for it was heaven-sent, and therefore its cause was good. Whether it could hold its own in the world was the question that had to be solved.

II.

The Early Catholic Church.

II.

THE EARLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

IN the year 256, Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, spoke before the Synod assembled in that city in favour of the principle of the absolute equality of bishops, in refutation of certain assumptions advanced by the bishops of Rome. He maintained that no bishop had the right to make himself a bishop of bishops or to attempt to coerce his colleagues by intimidations, as every bishop was entitled to exercise his own discretion within the jurisdiction of his authority and superintendence, and could neither be prosecuted by other bishops nor drag them before his tribunal.

What a vast change this was that had taken place within a century and a half since the reign of the Emperor Trajan! Synods of bishops—superiors—church officials wielding monarchical power had sprung into existence. Each of these functionaries was supreme in

his own diocese. They convened with their colleagues and held conferences on matters of general interest, acting as representatives of the Church. Even at that early date some among them were striving to exalt themselves over the others; their assumptions were being repulsed, but the attempt and the opposition sufficed to show the direction of the current. The Catholic Church existed in all parts of the Roman Empire, under the eyes of the Roman authorities, governed by bishops with plenary power to open or shut the gates of salvation.

How had all that come to pass?

In the beginning of the second century Christianity had soared upwards from the conventicles of the poor into the broad light of the cultured classes of the Roman world. Heathen thinkers yearning after certitude in Divine things, instead of mere probability, found in its teaching the heavenly revelation for which they had been longing. The religious bias displayed by the culture of the period, and manifested in its appreciation of a new philosophy—the Neo-Platonic, which assumed the power to bring men into direct union with God, led many of the higher classes to adopt Christianity. Here and there, especially where the rabble had been irritated by the Christians holding themselves

aloof, persecutions ensued, beginning the army of martyrs; and pathetic stories of their sufferings and death flew like wildfire throughout the Christian world of that day, from Asia Minor even to Gaul. The steadfastness of many of these confessors excited admiration. Frequently their youth and beauty and tender innocence moved to pity, and the style in which the learned advocates of Christianity pled their cause before the imperial tribunal aroused general interest. In these legal procedures the principle was first propounded that religion—the conscience of man—cannot be coerced and must be allowed freedom; and these "apologetics" usually proceeded from defence to assault upon heathenism. On their side, heathen literati esteemed Christianity a fit subject for polemics, and already in these polemics, we find almost all the arguments brought forward which have been used against Christianity in later ages; depreciating it from a philosophical standpoint, minimising its moral and religious influence, and uprooting its historical basis. I shall only particularise the Voltaire of antiquity, the witty scoffer LUCIAN, and the Strauss of the second century, CELSUS, (with his book on the false new faith, in contradistinction to the true ancient one). The Neo-Platonic philosophy, moreover, levelled the heavy artillery of its aristocratic

sapience against the democratic creed of the masses. Those attacks were only advantageous to Christianity. Far more perilous was a movement gradually taking shape within the bosom of the Church, with the aim of adapting the new religion to the taste of the ancient world by moulding its truths into one system with the teaching of the heathen religions, and by countenancing the heathen tendency towards aristocratic distinctions between the cultivated and learned classes and the illiterate masses.

This attempt to recommend the new religion as a higher knowledge, *Gnosis*, made its appearance, to a great extent, simultaneously and in conjunction with the various religious systems of the East. Like them, it threatened to supplant humble faith in revelation by proud reason, and to abandon the principle of the equality of all believers for the distinctions of first and second grade Christians—the Initiated and the Uninitiated. What made those Gnostics doubly dangerous was their appealing to Apostolic Scriptures, which contained a different text from that in common use in the Churches, for the corroboration of their assumptions. When we consider that there was no Canon,—no generally accepted collection of the Apostolic Scriptures at that time—the earliest attempts at cataloguing them,

widely discrepant as these were, being only then initiated,—we can realise better how perilous this attempt to falsify the Christian records was, although it proved unsuccessful.

New prophets also appeared at that time, in many places, enthusiasts, emanating from Asia Minor, who announced a fresh outpouring of the Holy Ghost, irrespective of person and office. They were called Montanists, after their founder MONTANUS. They demanded that only those who had received that heavenly inspiration, and had gained a character for asceticism and the invincible courage for facing martyrdom, should be permitted to direct the Churches, whose sole aim, in view of the imminent doom of the world, ought to be the due preparation for going out to meet their King in the white garments of innocence—meaning by that utter abstinence, if that were possible, from everything earthly. These were the Independents of the second century, and dangerous to the Church because of their pleading the customs of the primitive Christian communities in support of their fanaticism. Menaced thus with a double danger—rationalistic misconstruction of their creed on the one hand and a reactionary tendency in morals, constitution and Church order on the other, (peculiarly perilous to the then existing institutions

and offices)—the majority of the Churches, moved by an instinct of self-preservation, had resort to attempts at a legitimate, hierarchically graded regulation of their offices. From proceedings, tedious, and at many points obscure, as well as agitated by the most violent controversies, there resulted a representative order of the fellowship of Christians. This sprang into existence in many places simultaneously, in a series of orders, and when we consider these various orders collectively—as a hierarchy—we gain some conception of the state of Christianity at that period. We can imagine some of the thoughts actuating these proceedings. The Christians may probably have argued thus: If the Holy Ghost was shed upon the apostles, as individuals, where can His influences be expected to survive but in those who have succeeded them in the oversight of the Churches? If they do survive in them, are they not the successors of the apostles? The holders of the offices of bishop and presbyter, which were at first constituted solely for external direction and representation—they usually did duty as teachers also—began, in course of time, to exalt themselves over the Church as specially authorised and peculiarly inspired by the Spirit. The bishop was elevated above his colleague the presbyter, on account of the natural ascendency

of his office—that of administration of the Church funds—and the advantage of monarchical rule in troublous times made itself evident. The further gradation in every individual Church between bishop and presbyter allowed of the relation of the one Christ to His many apostles being reproduced. And so the offices of the Church became the organism of the Holy Spirit, and the holders of these offices constituted a privileged class, in contradistinction to the commonalty of the Church—the laity. Thenceforth Church government was restricted to those functionaries as well as the administration of the word and sacraments. The aristocratic distinction between Christians of the first grade, the Spirit-anointed, and Christians of the second grade—buttressed, no doubt, by the hierarchic type of the Old Testament priesthood—became a feature of the Church. The Church having thus obtained organised government in a body of functionaries, whose vocation it was to rule, could decide questions of doctrine and tradition, and was enabled to repel all reactionary movements. Her homogeneously constituted corporate bodies were thenceforth in a position to convene in a visible unity, in a confederation, represented by its legitimate deputies and heads,—in a general (catholic) alliance,—which, moreover, as the one

indivisible Church, was the legitimate successor of the whole body of the Apostolic Churches. It had authority to decide questions of creed, and to determine the authenticity of the Apostolic Records, declaring which should be accepted and which rejected. This official, hierarchic, priestly organisation came to be regarded as the peculiar institution of Christ upon earth, which must exist till His second coming. The Kingdom of Christ was no longer to be dependent on the Spirit and on faith, but rather on the existence of bishops and presbyters, and on the word and sacrament, as administered by them and them alone. Whoever was excommunicated by this official Church was considered cut off from Christ; whoever erred from its doctrines, from the traditionary doctrine of its teachers, was a heretic; whoever questioned the authority of the Church, even in his own house, was looked upon as a gainsayer—an apostate. A legal, official, sacerdotal institution had usurped the place of "The Lord's people" of the apostolic age. Instead of the "Brotherhood" of the early Christians, a system of corporations with uniform laws, doctrines, customs, morals, hopes and faith was diffusing itself over the world, in one word —*a universal Church.*

We call it the Early Catholic Church. Its or-

ganisation was completed in good season; it saved Christianity in the final settlement with the Roman Government.

TERTULLIAN, one of the Fathers of the Church, wrote the following triumphant words, in his defence of Christianity, in the beginning of the third century: "We are but of yesterday, and yet we fill your whole world, your cities, your islands, the hill castles, the free towns, and even the camps, the guilds, the judicial commissions, the imperial palace, the senate, and the forum." The new religion had made its way into every province of the empire by the middle of the third century. There were churches with considerable revenues in all the towns, with well-organised systems of poor relief and maintenance, with influential bishops and collegiates of priests at their heads. These men were very differently esteemed from the heathen priesthood; for, apart from the superstitious awe with which they were regarded, as endowed with a mystic power in their consecration, which could even secure immortality, their blameless and humane morals, and their sublime preaching of a divine word, which, among other new aspects of duty, enforced that of treating even women with justice, created a profound impression in their favour. Although the

Christians withdrew in great measure from public life, shunning the theatres, the circus games, and all heathen festivals, and in some degree refrained even from holding public offices and undertaking military service, they were ever ready with their help in public calamities, and cared for their fellow-citizens as well as for their own brethren.

No member of their Church was allowed to want—the Church at Rome alone maintained fifteen hundred widows. At the risk of their own lives the Christians stood by one another during the persecutions; they had become a State within the State, and every Roman could hear from the lips of Christian neighbours that the Church would outlive the State. They utilised all State institutions. The bishops of imperial provincial cities, such as Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Carthage, Rome, presided in the synods which united the provincial churches into one great corporate society. Yet this amalgamation of the individual provincial churches was merely an ideal unity, for they could occasionally be at variance with each other. The idea of making them into an administrative unity was, however, bound to come.

As often as a local persecution tore this invisible network, — and local persecutions must have been

very frequent from what we know of the attitude of the Roman legislature,—so often were its meshes reunited. The dissension of parties within the Church, which we can conceive to have been sufficiently violent, only served to further its expansion The most energetic and efficient of the Roman Emperors paid homage to the power of the Church by their persecutions.

In the year 250 Decius Trajan, the conqueror of the Goths, an emperor distinguished for his stern military disposition, ordered the first universal persecution. It aimed at crushing the Church in its corporate capacity, and was therefore directed against the bishops and other officials as its representatives rather than against mere individual Christians. The sacred books and the revenues were seized, for the great object aimed at was the rending asunder of that invisible network. The defection from Christianity was enormous. It was abjured in many ways, from public recantation to mere sacrificing before the Emperor's image and the production of certificates (usually bought) that such sacrifice had been duly offered; from the delivering up of the registers and sacred books of the Church to the mere pretence of doing so, while substituting for them

worthless parchments as if they were documents of value. Thousands of apostates were excommunicated. In this persecution and that which followed shortly under Valerian, three bishops of Rome suffered martyrdom. Cyprian of Carthage, also, of whom I have already spoken, was beheaded in the reign of Valerian. He belonged to a noble family, and was at first a professor of rhetoric, only adopting Christianity after he had reached mature years. He bestowed half of his fortune on the poor of the Church immediately after joining it, and speedily became one of the most influential bishops of his age, although he was neither original as a thinker nor as an author. His contemporary, ORIGEN, the great Alexandrian thinker, far surpassed him, and he is not to be compared with his brilliant compatriot, TERTULLIAN — the most intellectual of Latin Church historians. But he was a hierarchical power, the special theorist of the Episcopal Church system. His are the epigrammatic sayings: "The bishopric is an essential element of the Church. He who has not the Church for mother cannot have God for father. He who separates himself from the priest separates himself from Christ. No hope of salvation outside the pale of the Church."

If we are to consider Cyprian the originator of the

episcopal theory, we must look upon his contemporary opponents, the Roman bishops, as the diplomatists who secured the primacy of Rome, for the first evidence of papal usage ensued upon the establishment of the episcopal theory in the year 256.

Rome, the most important Church of the west, was a microcosm of the whole Church, numbering, even at that early date, about fifty thousand members, who were in the stream of the various Christian currents of the world; for every opinion, every heresy, had its representatives there. This Church attained, at an early stage, great diplomatic shrewdness in dealing with controversies on Christian doctrine and discipline. This was more ecclesiarchic than theological in character, and succeeded almost invariably in arriving at decisions which suited the exigencies of the period, and were in conformity with the most influential opinions. Its bishops were prudent and wary, as well as domineering and imperious in conduct, but they were brave and fearless in the face of death.

Rest from persecutions being again vouchsafed to Christianity for a space of forty years, it increased in power. Splendid churches were built, and Christians were to be found occupying the highest offices of the

State and Court, when in the year 303 the supreme Emperor DIOCLETIAN promulgated the last and greatest persecution, the violence of which was intensified by edicts ever increasing in severity. The last of these ordained that all Christians, without exception, should be compelled to conform to idolatry. Rivers of martyr blood flowed, but cowardice, too, was abundant. The Emperor's son-in-law, the joint Emperor GALERIUS, to whom this plan of slaughter was due, carried it out with the uttermost violence in the East by torture, fire, and axe; while his colleague, CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS, ere long permitted milder measures to prevail in Gaul and Spain. In the year 311, after the persecution had lasted for seven years, even GALERIUS saw the inefficacy of the measure, and promulgated, in conjunction with the joint Emperors, CONSTANTINE and LICINIUS, the first edict of toleration. This freed the Christians from further compulsion to attend the heathen services, it gave them permission to meet together, but bound them to pray to their God for the Emperor and empire.

In the following year Constantine gained a victory, in the neighbourhood of Rome, over the usurper MAXENTIUS, under the banner of the cross, and after that he granted a universal religious amnesty, as well

as the restitution of buildings and property to the Church, with the consent of Licinius.

Although its members were decidedly in the minority at that epoch, being reckoned at from ten to fifteen millions, Constantine, with far-seeing diplomacy, recognised in the Christian Church the spiritual power of the future. He saw that its friendship had to be gained, if no power of the empire could quench it. In how far Constantine was Christian by personal conviction — he only submitted to baptism on his deathbed—may be left undetermined. What gained for him the title of "Great," due only to those who successfully advance a new principle, is neither the elevation nor the purity of his character, but the penetrating acumen which enabled him to divine the spiritual forces of his age.

He took a still more decided stand in favour of the Church when he became sole ruler after deposing Licinius, who still clung to heathenism. He gave the Church authority to acquire property, and to accept bequests (which led to a speedy accumulation of wealth); he endowed particular churches and granted benefices and privileges to the clergy; he regulated the diocesan divisions in accordance with the political divisions of the empire, and protected and influenced

their judicature in matters of discipline and controversy; he conferred administrative unity upon the Church.

Primitive Christianity, as we have seen, was a new life in mind and heart, a regeneration of the individual and of society; and notwithstanding its perfect simplicity and lack of all pomp in externals, a creation of the Holy Spirit. Without speaking of the faith that it inspired, its very essence was aspiration after the invisible—faith. It was inevitable that that primitive age should be followed by a very different one, for the masses who had adopted Christianity had dragged it down to the level of their own conceptions, needs, and aspirations, and into communication and controversy with other systems of thought. When it was thus brought into conflict with philosophising heathenism, Christianity had to be invested with the robe of a philosophy, of a science; and the Alexandrian thinker Origen wove such a robe for the Church from the ideas of Plato and his disciples, and called it *Christian theology as a philosophy of revelation.*

In the war waged with Gnosticism and Montanism, the teachers of the Church became aware that if they entered into scholastic, theological speculations on questions of faith, philosophical differences would arise among them, and the problem was raised how

far these might go without endangering the uniformity of the Church's doctrine. The doctrines of the Church, compiled in scholastic tenets—the dogmas—would require to be subjected to ecclesiastical legislation. In the Church, victorious over outward foes, dogmatic strife was to unsurp the place of the spiritual warfare for the faith, which was a feature of the nascent Church.

The question that engaged Christian speculation, in consequence of the impulse given to it by Origen, was that of the Person of Jesus Christ. In an age in which the monotheism of the great philosophers had become the common good of the cultured classes, the right of Christianity to constitute itself as a religious system depended upon the solution of that question. They did not study His historical existence and nature as we do now, but searched into the origin and pre-incarnate life of the Divine Being—the Logos — the Word of God, which in Him was made flesh. Immediately after the State had given peace to the Church, the controversy upon the Logos—the Son of God—threatened to rend the Church of God asunder. This was the Arian controversy—so-called after ARIUS, a presbyter of Alexandria. He regarded the Son of God as

merely the first and supreme creation of the Father. He and his dogma were excommunicated from the Church, and the essential unity of the Son with the Father was declared to be established at an imperial synod, held at Nicea, in Asia Minor, in the year 325, and convened and inspired by Constantine. Arius had a great party on his side, however, especially among the eastern bishops, and a decided conclusion was only arrived at by means of strong imperial pressure. We cannot wonder, therefore, that Arius and his dogma were received into favour again under another emperor. Only after a contest of fifty years, which threatened repeatedly to create a schism between the Churches of the East and West, was the Nicean conclusion reconfirmed, by a second imperial synod, convened at Constantinople in the year 381.

The hero of this controversy was ATHANASIUS, Bishop of Alexandria, who is justly called one of the fathers of orthodoxy. He was one of the most sagacious thinkers of the century, a man of profound piety and of inflexible energy; he was proudly independent of court favour and of imperial caprice; and for him Christianity was an affair of the heart as well as of the head. The controversy upon the

perfect Divinity of Christ was bound up, in his opinion, with the question of an actual, accomplished redemption of the human race. He recognised the danger which lay in the speculations about the Logos, and in the introduction of a philosophical element, with all its consequences, into the faith, and he substituted for that an explicit declaration of the perfect Divinity of the Son.

In this age of ours we may wonder why men excited themselves about matters which lay beyond the region of all possible experience, and why they contended about ideas, whose practical application to divine and heavenly Beings was beyond their control, and if there was any practical benefit in all these controversies?

The only answer is, that since, in the continuity of the history of the human intellect, every question that has been raised has had to find a solution, so, even in doctrinal controversies, those which were raised had to be determined; and although they may appear incomprehensible and aimless to us they concerned the essentials of Christianity, and were discussed in conformity with the ideas and opinions of that age.

Athanasius saved Christianity from being resolved

into a mere national religion, from declension into a sublimated heathenism, by finding a formula for expressing its mysteries, conformable to the thought of the time. Thus, the Church's dogma of the Divine Trinity resulted from his victory, which cannot be correctly comprehended till it is viewed in this light, cast upon it by history, as the formula in which the Hellenic spirit sought to express the mystery of Christianity.

Other controversies arose after this, regarding the two natures in Christ—the divine and the human. I cannot enter into them, although they led, possibly, to still deeper schisms between particular sections of the imperial Church, such as Constantinople and Alexandria, and Alexandria and Antioch; for politics, ecclesiastical disputes, and the rivalries of the great bishops of the Empire, added fuel to the fiery theological battles; and court intrigues as well as street riots influenced the decisions pronounced by the imperial synods. During this wrangling of the bishops of the empire, Rome held the balance with wary discretion; and the dogma of the Church on the Person of Christ, as formulated by the imperial synod of Chalcedon, was drawn up by Bishop Leo of Rome.

The excommunications connected with every decision of a controversy struck off great portions from the

general Church Union, just on the most exposed frontiers of the empire—such as the Nestorians in Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia; the Monophysites in Abyssinia, Syria, Egypt, and America, and the Monothelites (Maronites) in Lebanon; and eventually smoothed the way for Islam conquering the Grecian Empire. In their dispersion, however, these severed sects were carried like winged seed over the world. Only recently, traces of Nestorian missions of the eighth century have been found in Siberia and in China.

The theological system, founded upon the decisions of the Councils, treated Christianity as a philosophy of redemption, wherein a sacred mystery was enshrined which could not be comprehended by the human reason. Thenceforth the communion of the congregation with God was enveloped by the ritual in the veil of this mystery. The liturgy did indeed retain the old, simple, pathetic forms of primitive days, within the framework of its glorious hymnic prayers; the flame of Grecian eloquence did indeed glow again in the great pulpit orators of the fourth and fifth centuries, but the celebration of the Holy Supper—as of the mystery of the Church which was in a measure palpable — formed the special central point of the religious solemnity, in undeniable analogy with

the heathen mysteries. If the Christian Church service was originally neither more nor less than the symbolic and yet real expression of the self-dedication of the congregation to their Lord, it had been certainly but gradually transformed into the symbolic presentation of the sacrifice offered for the Church by Christ upon the cross. To express it strongly: an ever new redemption, wrought out by this mystic rite, was substituted for the mystery of the already accomplished redemption. Only the baptized members of the Church and such as were not under penance could participate in it.

In order to symbolise the presence of the exalted Christ in sacramental form in His Church the high altar—the sacrificial table—was erected at the upper end of the nave of the columned Basilica. For that same end the earnest, solemn mosaics of the Lord and of His apostles and saints gazed down from the golden backgrounds of the niches of the apse or from the vaulted cupolas. Art, the ancient glory of which had withered with the vanishing of the heathen joyousness and pride of life, began to pursue a new path, and strove to express the inexpressible; for art, too, became the servant of the new religion, although her first essays in the new field were sufficiently stiff and awkward.

But heathenism was destined to confront Christianity once more in the person of the philosophical Emperor Julian, who was unexpectedly exalted to the throne. He tried to fight Christianity with her own weapons rather than by violent measures. He established a reformed heathenism in rivalry to it, equipped with preaching priests, charitable institutions, and magnificent and lavish beneficence. His early death, in 363, put an end to all that however.

In the following decade the religion of antiquity, with closed temples and prohibited sacrifices, was relegated to the heaths as a religion fit only for peasants—it became "heathenism."

Exactly a century after the final imperial persecution, Christianity was the established religion of the Graeco-Roman Empire, and the Church had actually become the dominating power in the State. Heresy was treated as a crime against the government —as felony. The whole sphere of public provision for the indigent, the needy, the oppressed, and for prisoners and slaves, combined with a share of judicial authority, had been committed to the Church. Its great possessions gave it extensive influence, which expended itself in hospitals, orphan homes, poor-houses and hospices. Within the pale of the Church,

all found a home and a refuge; there the escaped prisoner was secure from pursuit, and its service meant liberty to the slave.

It constituted a world in itself, very different from and much more sublime than the material world, and utterly quenched the sentiment of nationality (which had begun to be transformed into cosmopolitanism in the universal empire), substituting for it the citizenship of a higher world.

CHRYSOSTOM, the greatest of Hellenic preachers, said: "He who becomes a *Christian* ceases to be a *Greek!*"

When men had begun to look upon the world as no sufficient home for the immortal soul, the idea arose of retreating from it and of participating in the heavenly life, even in this mortal state. This, which had been one of the ideas of the Neo-Platonic philosophy, pressed itself more and more on the minds of earnest men after the Church's assumption of worldly state and rule—after it had itself become one of the kingdoms of this world.

Monasticism was their solution of the problem. This was a development of the heremitical system, of the anchorite life of the Egyptian desert. Whether it was the same impelling power that drove hundreds

into martyrdom at an earlier epoch, which led penitents, ascetics, and men of prayer out to the solitudes; whether they were incited by heroic self-abnegation, goaded on by great misfortune, or even by heinous guilt, or their loathing of a corrupt civilisation—one thing is evident, that in their isolation those fathers of the wilderness, those forest, marsh and pillar saints belonged to no ecclesiastical order. They only became organised when they were amalgamated in particular brotherhoods, leading lives entirely consecrated to communion with God, under a common recognised rule.

These confraternities had arisen in Egypt in the days of Athanasius—in the fourth century. They were stimulated by the same spirit which had pervaded primitive Christianity—the conviction that no earthly material good could satisfy the soul yearning after God's kingdom, and they considered it a small thing to give up all to gain the pearl of great price. These so-called *ascetics* reduced these sentiments to practice as soul-discipline and religious exercise. They hoped to unite themselves more fully with God by utter abstinence from every worldly joy, by the renunciation of all that makes life attractive—even marriage and family happiness. All this chimed in with the maxim

which had emanated from the schools of the great philosophers—"The soul can only participate in the revelation of God through an utter abstraction of mind and heart from every earthly thing." Monasticism was erelong esteemed by the whole Church the truly perfect, the angelic life; and that was not all, for, in the opinion of its numerous admirers and devotees, —synonymous soon with all Christendom,—the monks were considered "the elect of God" (a title which had belonged to all Christians at an earlier date), and their system was styled "the heavenly philosophy," "the divine athletics." The monasteries, where originally the brethren were solely engrossed with solitary, prayerful meditation, in conjunction with a trifling amount of manual labour, became in course of time the strongholds of an unscrupulous and unbridled fanaticism, where doctrinal disputes were too often decided by the forcible arguments of the *holy brethren's* fists.

The visionary, enthusiastic and romantic contemplation of nature originated in the monasteries, as may be seen from the second volume of Humboldt's *Kosmos*, and monkish fantasy likewise gave birth to the legends and fictions about the saints, and bred the grossest enormities of superstition. While the monasticism of the East did not advance beyond the stage of apa-

thetic contemplation of the life of the Church and of the world, that of the West, as organised by the Roman Benedict in Italy, and reduced to rule in the convents of Subiaco and Monte Casino, became a pioneer of civilisation. The Benedictine monasteries were cities of refuge for the science and art of antiquity—strictly speaking, mission stations of the classic world which was so soon to be submerged by the barbarian inundation. All unconsciously, Benedict became the father of Latin and Germanic Christianity.

Even woman found a secure shelter in the convents. In them she had first accorded to her an equal share in the benefits of Christian thought and work; and for nearly fifteen hundred years the sole contribution made by woman to literature and art issued from the convents.

Was there not in this monasticism a silent protest against the hierarchic system of a State Church, against the salvation negotiating system of a Sacramentarian Church?

The assurance of peace with God and of eternal life which could, within the Church, be obtained solely through priestly mediation, in an elaborate and gorgeous ritual, was obtained by the monk (mayhap under severe discipline and sore temptations) through

direct communion with God in his cell, on the mountain-top, or in the lone desert. In fact, something of the liberty eulogised by St. Paul—personal, individual, independent Christianity—was preserved within the bounds of the triple vow of obedience, poverty, and chastity.

Constantine the Great transferred the centre of gravity of the Church and of the Empire to the East. Constantinople became the metropolis of the world in lieu of Rome. The Hellenic spirit dominated the Church, and the hand of the Empire weighed heavily upon it. The imperial dignity of Byzantium, shrouded in splendour and veiled by clouds of incense, was oriental in mould, isolated and aloof, only visible on festal occasions, and separated from the people by the impenetrable hedge of a hierarchic bureaucracy. It was at the mercy of favouritism, of feminine caprice, and of court intrigues—and this was the empire that set itself to govern the Church.

None ventured to oppose it save the Bishop of Rome. Rome maintained the independence of the Church at that epoch. The Romish legates protested and withdrew from the Synod of Chalcedon when it was resolved that the Patriarch of Constantinople—the modern Rome—should be placed on an equal footing with him of ancient Rome. That was the

Synod which ratified the Confession of Faith formulated by the Bishop of Rome, and at which his legates had presided.

On that day it was made apparent that Rome coveted the primacy of the whole Church, and that it would rather take half than share the whole with another. That was the origin of the schism which became final six hundred years later, and through which the Græco-Eastern Church, severed from that of the West, fell into the apathetic state in which it still continues; for it stands to-day where it stood fifteen hundred years ago when it was still the Church of the Roman Empire.

From the beginning, the bent of the Western mind in doctrinal disputes ran in a totally different current from that of Eastern thought. The Westerns did not theorise about transcendental matters, which can only be believed, but interested themselves in practical matters which can be carried into effect.

JEROME, a Roman scholar, who had studied Greek theology and the Hebrew tongue at their sources, and who had been the first to make monasticism popular in the Latin Church, gave to it a Latin Bible, translated directly from the originals. And as the Early Catholic Church was indebted to the theories of one African bishop, Cyprian, for its organisation, so was

the Church of the coming age to be moulded by the theories of another—AURELIUS AUGUSTINE.

Augustine deduced his theories from actual facts. What this man, with the tender glowing heart, the eager will, and the versatile intellect had experienced during his youth in his African home, and during his riper years in Italy and again in Africa, gave him the impression that the Church was the one steadfast organisation in the Roman Empire. As a matter of necessity the empire had split itself into two halves. The barbarians were storming its frontiers on every side, but the Church stood firm, because it was founded upon Divine authority. Augustine, who wrote his confessions as a self-imposed penance, after he had attained mature years and had become a decided Christian,—confessions made to God and dedicated to humanity, in evidence of the depths from which man might cry to God,—was the first Modern of the ancient world. In these confessions he unveiled his whole soul without reserve. After a youth spent at first in careless revelry and then in a Faust-like pursuit of truth, after wandering through the various religious systems of the age and finding the promised revelation of truth neither in the Manichæan nor in the Neo-Platonic theories, he went over to the Church

in his thirty-third year, because in it alone the long and ardently sought truth was to be found. He soon became one of the mightiest champions of Christianity, first as Presbyter and afterwards as Bishop of Hippo, in Africa.

As Bishop he fought the battle of the African Church against the Donatists—the Puritans of that age—who had established a great ecclesiastical community, immaculate in morals and independent of the State. After the manner of the ancient Montanists and Enthusiasts they contemned every ecclesiastical function that was not administered by a stainless person. He availed himself of the power of the State for their suppression, and he was not afraid to advocate the employment of force in religious matters. He was the spokesman for the whole Church against the Irish monk, Pelagius, who, by his denial of the natural corruption of human nature, seemed to him to deny the necessity of the divine work of redemption, the glory of grace, and the absolute need of the Church.

The dogmas of Augustine on original sin and on predestination, partly adopted by our reformers—his struggles of soul (which seem to have been re-enacted in Luther), and his doctrine of grace, excluding all human merit, have made him more familiar to Protest-

ants than any other personage of the Early Church. He is the connecting link between two worlds—the ancient and the modern, as well as the Father of the Mediæval Church. He it was who uttered the death-warrant of the ancient world, although he was himself possessed of perfect classical culture, being an orator and poet in the Latin tongue and an enthusiastic disciple of Cicero and Plato.

The Universal Empire of Rome was, perhaps, the greatest, the most consummate creation of the human intellect; but even from its origin it was confronted by another system—the heavenly commonwealth—the Kingdom of God. That began its career in biblical story, in the days of Abel, and had been carried on by a succession of holy men. It had assumed a stately form in the theocracy of the Old Testament, and had achieved its realisation—attained its maturity on earth in the Catholic Church. It was the Church with her faith which kept the decadent Roman Empire in life, and which restrained the punitive judgments of God. The Church was destined to survive the Empire, and to provide a refuge in the heavenly kingdom for those who fled to her, as to an ark, for shelter from the approaching flood.

That is the conviction urged by Augustine in his

great work of twenty-two volumes on *The City of God,* which was the philosophy of universal history from an ecclesiastical standpoint, and the most influential book of the Middle Ages.

In this philosophy of history the standpoint of antiquity is already surmounted. The world is no longer regarded as a mere Kosmos—an object of æsthetic complacency—with no ulterior intention. It shows that the real significance of the world is contained in its history; that history, far from being haphazard, is being guided towards a definite goal by a living God, and that it is also an education of Humanity for the Kingdom of Heaven. The noble ideal of St Paul was thus moulded by St Augustine into what is still a fundamental conception of our modern civilisation.

He rose above the standard of antiquity in yet another particular. According to it, man's chief end was the happiness of the individual—absorption in pure thought was the way in which the Neo-Platonist strove to attain it; but Augustine pointed out to piety its proper aim, in the active exercise of charity, and in the enjoyment of the Supreme love. He extolled love as the peculiarly significant element of the life everlasting with all the fervour of a poetic soul.

His description of a heavenly kingdom—not existing merely in the unseen, but beginning in this world, and attaining its consummation in Heaven—his conception of the present and the hereafter, no longer split asunder into two separate worlds; incorporated, indeed, it may be said, preserved, for Christian consciousness the conception of the Kingdom of God in the only form in which it could be conceived of in that age. Impressed with the conviction that nothing in this world was permanent save the Church, Augustine became the enthusiastic champion of all its claims of domination and of all its institutions and privileges.

He died in the year 430, in his seventy-second year, and in the third month of the siege of Hippo Regius by the Vandals.

The last hour of the Empire had come. Its dams were broken on the east, north, and west, and the Germanic flood was surging in. The Suevi were marching towards Spain, the Visigoths had sacked Rome, and had founded a German Empire north and south of the Pyrenees, the Burgundians were advancing on the Rhone, the Franks were making for Paris, the Anglo-Saxons were capturing England, and the Vandals were inundating Africa.

Another generation, and the Ostrogoth Theodoric—the soldier-king, Dietrich of Bern—will have taken the place of the Emperors of Western Rome, and the Mediterranean Sea will be called a Wendilsêo—a Vandal sea—as we read in that oldest of German epics the *Hildebrand's Lied.*

The Empire of Rome had fallen, but the Church of Rome arose in its stead, as heiress and executrix of its world-dominating claims in the Middle Ages. Augustine was the prophet of this Mediæval Church, and his theories were the foundations on which it was based.

III.

The Middle Ages.

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THE MIDDLE AGES.

IN the Cathedral of Speyer, restored, since the French spoliation, by the artistic taste of two Bavarian kings, in a style that recalls the ecclesiastical magnificence of the Middle Ages, there is a fresco which portrays a white-cowled monk presenting the Crusade-banner to the German Emperor, Conrad III., of the Hohenstaufen line. The monk is the French Abbot, Bernard of Clairvaux, and the incident represented took place at Speyer, in the month of December of the year 1146.

The most eminent monk of the Middle Ages stands face to face with the first representative of the great German imperial race, victorious through the force of his moving eloquence as preacher of one of those crusades, by means of which the popes proved the power of ecclesiastical ideas over the nations. French,

Provençals, Norman, English, Italians, Germans and Slavs, pilgrimed as one people of God to the Holy Sepulchre or to the heavenly Jerusalem; and there we see the Mediæval Church at its acme.

The Middle Ages embrace above a thousand years of Western history, extending from the downfall of the Western Roman Empire to the Reformation Era. That was the springtime of German and Latin Christianity—beginning when the German Empire was established on the basis of ancient Rome, when the Ostrogoths and Lombards took root in Italy, the Franks in Gaul, the Visigoths in Spain, and the Vandals in Africa. The ruin of the ancient Empire, begun by these Germanic races, found its climax in the inrushing storm of the Mohammedan invasion, which swept like a sirocco over the eastern and southern coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. Almost the half of the countries which had belonged to the Cross were conquered by the Crescent. But new nations were arising in the lands which had formed the nucleus of the Roman Empire,—Italy, Gaul, and Spain,—and these were the Romanic peoples; and it was the Church governed by the Bishop of Rome that united them in one homogeneous civilisation with a common language—the Latin—with the German,

English, Scandinavian, Slav, and Magyar races. The Romish Church was the tutor of the European nations during the Middle Ages. They were indebted to the Church for the spiritual element—and they in return communicated to it their fresh natural forces, their heroic achievements, and the ardent spirit which remoulded the forms inherited from an ancient civilisation into something entirely new.

The energy of their vigorous rulers was the direct agency which created enduring political systems out of the chaos of the barbarian invasions. The most important of these was the Frankish Empire of the Merovingian Kings, which soon extended to the Mediterranean Sea in Roman Gaul, and included Southern and Middle Germany, as far as Westphalia. By accepting the Catholic faith, the Frankish Empire had at once entered into alliance with Rome, while the Visigoths, who were converted when Arianism prevailed, and after them the Ostrogoths, the Vandals, and the Burgundians (for a time) were Arians. The Frankish Empire did not only support the Church, it also domineered over it. The Bishop of Rome was by no means Lord over the Western Church from the beginning. The very Pope who gave the most distinct utterance to the idea of a priestly domination of the

laity by an immaculate and ascetic clergy, who introduced the dogma of purgatory, who perfected the service of the mass, and therewith gave to the Romish ritual the stamp which it still bears,—Gregory the Great,—had much to endure at the close of the sixth century and at the beginning of the seventh from the attacks of Arian Lombards. This confirmed him in the conviction that the Church could only hope to subdue the barbarians—the Germanic nature seemed barbaric to every Catholic Roman—by making use of the barbarians. As the Roman Emperors carried on their wars with German auxiliaries, so did he establish Catholic missions among the Anglo-Saxons, and, by the agency of this English ecclesiastical province, which very soon became entirely submissive to Rome, the more ancient Iro-Keltic Church was supplanted in England and in its native land. The Anglo-Saxon monk Winfred — Boniface — rendered Rome the same service in the Frankish Empire, very specially in Germany. Long after the Gospel had been preached on the Rhone and on the Main, in the Black Forest and on the shores of the Lake of Constance by Scottish monks, Boniface constituted a regular Church system by which Germany was subordinated to the Patriarch of Rome, as an archiepiscopal

province. This was incident to the progress of civilisation at the period, and we need not blame the narrow but upright man for it. His monastery of Fulda was, in sooth, the Christian heart of Germany. The monasteries of Western Germany founded by Benedictines, such as Hersfeld, Weissenburg, Reichenau, and St. Gall were Christian agricultural colonies. They were hospitals and also hospices for poor wayfarers as well as being schools and universities for the higher classes. There, under protection of the Saint, who was regarded as perpetual regent of the monastery, mead and field tilled by monks, who had some idea of scientific agriculture, blossomed and brought forth abundantly; there the arts of war and peace found a welcome and fostering care; there the literary treasures of antiquity were preserved and multiplied. In the monasteries, also, an ecclesiastical style in architecture and in art began to be evolved giving special expression to the Germanic spirit and the new requirements of its Christian development, within the framework of the traditional Romanesque forms. In them, side by side with the dawning spiritual poetry, the old heroic epic found shelter and fostering care; the *Waltharilied* was composed in Latin; and the fast vanishing scanty remnants of the popular heroic

ballads in early High German were preserved by the monks.

The sword of Charles Martel, who beat back the Arabs into Spain, saved the West from an inundation of Islam. The Carlovingian sword rescued the Pope from the Lombards, and thus the modern Roman Empire arose through the alliance of the Pope with the Frankish kings. The imperial crown with which Charlemagne was crowned at Rome in the year 800 was something totally different from that already worn by the Sovereign of the Franks, the Alemanni, the Bavarians, and the Saxons. It was symbolic of his supremacy over the nations, whom he governed for the protection and propagation of Christianity, as leader in war and peace; it was a counterpart to the Mohammedan Caliphate. Its claim to recognition was coextensive with the Church of the West.

The heroic age of the Germanic races ends with Charlemagne, who is the first heroic figure seen by us in the clear light of history. The favourite mediæval legend of St. Christopher—who was determined to serve none but the mightiest lord, and who sought some high emprise to which he might dedicate himself in all his heroic strength—expresses, to my thinking, the vague impulse which swayed the Germanic races

in the times of barbarian invasions, in the days of the heroes. This emprise was found in the service of Christianity, as presented by the Church, in combination with the civilisation transmitted from antiquity. Charlemagne was St. Christopher; and the sword of the German monarchs of the Frankish and Saxon dynasties protected the Church's progressive career during two centuries and a half. The conversion of Scandinavia was undertaken by Carlovingian Germany. The military expeditions of the Saxon kings into Sclavonia had the Christianising of the frontier lands in view as well as the maintenance of political security.

The missions of the monks followed the military expeditions (often preceded them like those of the Archbishop—Adalbert of Prague—in Prussia, and of Bishop Otto of Bamberg in Pomerania). The Sovereignty of the Ottos and of the Salic Franks secured Middle and Northern Germany for the all-conquering Church, and more than once rescued the Papacy out of the mire of moral degradation. Only at that period were there German popes. In their alliance with the most powerful rulers of the West the Romish bishops gave up attempting to influence the Christianity of the East; but, instead of that,

they were silently preparing to oust the German Empire, even from the secular supremacy.

The first step towards this end was the creation of a legal basis, which was effected by fabricating "The Donation of Constantine." This was probably done in the Carlovingian age, during the reign of Pepin. This document set forth that Constantine the Great had given the "Western Provinces"—what a wide word—to Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, for his own possession. The Frankish kings did not contest this deed of gift, but neither did they show any desire to make it valid. Another forgery, the most unblushing known to history, that of the *pseudo-Isidorian Decretals*, had greater immediate results. A Spanish collection of Catholic Church laws, called after Isidore, Bishop of Seville, made its first appearance in France in the ninth century. It was afterwards used by Pope Nicholas I. in a materially expanded form; about one hundred letters of the earliest popes, a few writings of other leaders of the Church, and the acts of some synods (till then never heard of) were published in it. They were each and all forged, and, indeed, so clumsily forged that they could not have passed unchallenged but for the ignorance of that century. The immediate

aim of the promoters of the forgery was to secure the bishops against the influence of the archbishops and the temporal lords. In order to attain that end, however, the papal power had to be so enhanced that these decretals made out the Pope of Rome to be the sole and infallible head of the whole Church—the universal bishop. During the whole of the Middle Ages this collection passed for genuine. It constitutes the basis of the ecclesiastical—the canon law.

As a matter of course, such forgeries could only be effective weapons in a determined hand, and such a hand grasped them in the eleventh century.

It was monastic influence that succeeded in carrying out the Mediæval Church ideal into actual fact. The resolution to seize the universal supremacy ripened in the ascetic mind. A reformation of the Benedictine Order had proceeded from the Burgundian Monastery of Clugny, with the ulterior design of thoroughly renovating the ranks of the secular clergy likewise. HILDEBRAND, chaplain of the anti-Pope, Gregory VI., was a monk there; and he carried on the Cluniac Church reform during the years from 1049 to 1073, when he was leader of the papal polity for twenty-four years, as well as during his own pontificate of twelve years.

As leader of the papal polity, he made vast, wary, and determined use of the confusions which had resulted in Germany from the death of the great Emperor Henry for the rendering of the papal throne independent of the German Empire. Afterwards, as Gregory VIII., he promulgated the new statutes of the canon law, by means of which he transformed the whole body of secular clergy into a species of monastic order, placing them under the central directorate of the Roman Curia. His reform consisted in introducing celibacy for the whole body of the clergy; in prohibiting simony—the sale of spiritual offices—and the laic investiture,—the collation of Church dignities by the laity,—which he declared to be analogous with the sin of simony. He executed his schemes in every conceivable way, making use even of popular riots to serve his ends. He inflicted the extremest penalties of the Church on the refractory nobles, and promoted a revolution of the princes against the imperial power in Germany.

In consequence of the predominance of the feudal system, which made the hereditary holders of the great imperial principalities more and more independent, the German sovereigns depended materially upon the spiritual princes of the Empire, upon

whom, until this period, they had bestowed Church dignities, combined with extensive dynastic rights, without having this privilege called in question. The Pope's assumption of the right to withdraw this power of investiture from the crown was tantamount to a revolution in civic law; but it was finally effected by subsequent popes, although only in a very mitigated form, and ratified by the Concordat of Worms, 1122. Still, the imperial power, which till then had been clothed with the glory of the headship of the Church, had found a rival, who drove it ruthlessly back into the ranks of the laity, and forced it to feel the overweening might of the Augustinian ideas, which demanded the subjugation of all mundane power to the spiritual authority of the Church. The pseudo-Isidorian law was an accomplished fact, amplified by the understanding that all mundane authority required to be legalised by the spiritual powers. For this, Bernard of Clairvaux found the symbol of the two swords held by Peter, — *the Church* understood, — one of which was to be wielded by the secular arm, but only at the papal beck.

Bernard of Clairvaux was the oracle of mediæval Christendom. He was born of a noble Bur-

gundian family in the year 1091, and was dedicated by his pious mother to the service of God, which meant to the cloister. When he entered upon the monastic life he did not choose the powerful, rich community of Clugny, already secularised by its wealth, but that of Citeaux (Cistertium), which had been reformed after the strictest code of discipline. Among the Cistercians no decoration was allowed, even in the churches—not so much as towers. The crucifix was of wood; the great candlestick, instead of being gold or silver, was iron; the censers were iron or copper; gold and silver were reserved solely for the communion chalice.

The young noble, aged twenty-two, announced his arrival with thirty companions of his own age and rank (who had been won over by his influence) to the much surprised abbot of this unpopular monastery. Two years later, its cloisters could not contain the many aristocratic enthusiasts who sought admission to them, fired with the determination to renounce the world, and to follow in the footsteps of the notable novice. A new monastery had to be founded. Bernard became its abbot. It was planted in a robber-haunted ravine, and was named Clairvaux — "the vale of light." Ere long, there

were thirteen Cistercian convents; and before St. Bernard's death, there were no fewer than five hundred abbeys under the rule of the Superior of Citeaux, and his monks were reckoned by the thousand. Wherever a monastery is found amid sweet, silent woodlands and green vales in this region of ours, such as Erbach, in the Rhine valley; Arnsburg, in Upper Hesse; Maulbronn, Bebenhausen, or Lichtenthal, we may take for granted that it has been Cistercian.[1]

Whence this enthusiasm for the cloister? we may ask. It sprang from the same source as every other genuinely religious movement—from anxiety for the soul's salvation. If the Church, consonantly with her doctrines and worship, could only tell the seeking soul that the more it separated itself from the world and from every earthly care and labour so much the more would it become capable of attaining everlasting salvation, those who were determined to sacrifice everything for this ideal would find utter breach with the world and entrance into a religious order the only sure way of gaining their end. Those

[1] This remark applies to our own country also: witness the lovely sites of Fountains, Tintern, Rievaulx, Melrose, Newbattle, and Sweetheart Abbeys.—*Translator's Note.*

who could not or would not go so far could at least purchase the intercession of the monks on their behalf by the expenditure of money. St. Bernard threw the radiant light of a glowing, enthusiastic spirit around this life of utter renunciation, although he did not believe, nor encourage the belief, that eternal bliss was guaranteed by the white or grey habit of the Cistercian; for all the temptations and sins, peculiar to the monastic life, could not escape his psychological penetration. His earnest, yet mild, monastic discipline was masterly; and he was also the creative poet of the system. From the solitudes, to which he often retired for secret soul communion with God and nature, he brought back the perfect flowers of his Latin hymns.

"Ah wounded head that bearest
Such bitter shame and scorn"

is simply a translation of one of his hymns.

His exegetics and preaching were likewise masterly, whether addressed to the narrow circle of the cloistered brethren, to whom he communicated his most profound speculations, or to the great masses of the people.

The key-notes given by him in those cloister sermons are still followed in all devotional literature. He it was who rendered the contemplation of mortality

and of the suffering Saviour the central point of devout meditation. He was one of the fathers of western mysticism, of that theory, according to which the soul, through the medium of prayer and devout meditation, can actually be united to God, and freed from the fetters of the flesh, as water returns to the ocean. But while the vision ineffable (which he was convinced had been granted to him on more than one occasion) was his supreme ideal of bliss, he yet declared it to be better to break off the most blissful ecstacies, if love for others demanded the sacrifice. The foretaste of heavenly blessedness in this life was for him, and for all mediæval spirits, the highest good, but he was the first to find the soaring utterances to express its joys. The more closely any vocation attained that ideal so much the more was it esteemed. Those of laymen in the world, of princes and kings, of merchants and peasants, were considered lowest; practical life within the pale of the Church, such as that of the secular clergy, ranked higher; and the contemplative existence of the monk was the very highest. This world-weary mystic, nevertheless, exerted a very decided influence on political affairs.

At the time of a disputed pontifical election he obtained, by means of his persuasive eloquence, the

recognition of Pope Innocent II. by the sovereigns of France, England, and Germany; he conducted that Pope to Italy, and finally re-established the unity of the Church after the death of the Antipope.

During that journey he repeatedly proved the wondrous power of his personality. He reconciled princes who were at deadly enmity, he reduced rebellious towns to regretful penitence, and he was credited with the cure of multitudes of sick folk. The people would scarcely suffer him to leave a place where he had preached, and they fought over scraps torn from his habit that they might at least get possession of some benign relic—of something that had been worn by him.

When Eugenius III., a Cistercian monk and one of his disciples, was afterwards elected to the Pontificate, the people said, "Bernard is Pope." Eugenius had to evacuate Rome, where Arnold of Brescia, a follower of the sagacious thinker, Peter Abelard, demanded a reform of the clergy and curia which would have led to their renunciation of worldly possessions and powers, and which would have relegated them to their own sphere of spiritual work, and to apostolic poverty and humility. This was Bernard's own ideal life, but he opposed this insurrectionary

movement because of its revolutionary tendencies, and because it offered the sovereignty of Rome to the secular power of the empire. He was thus the advocate of papal supremacy, but in one of his epistles to his disciple Eugenius, "On Meditation," he attempted to prove, from his own vast experience of men and things, that it was possible to combine the perfect sublimity of the ideal conception of the apostolic office with multifarious and dangerously secular concerns. It was, likewise, in the interest of his Pope that Bernard advocated the second crusade.

After arousing the enthusiasm of the chivalry of France, at Vezelay in Burgundy, he proceeded to Germany. The Germans, who did not understand his language, and only gathered his meaning through an interpreter, were captivated by the unassuming appearance of the man. There was such a glow of devotion in his countenance that many imagined they saw a halo of glory around him. But he had still Conrad III., a cool Swabian, to win over, and his first three attempts were fruitless; but at last his powerful preaching, after High Mass in the Cathedral of Speyer, resulted in the Emperor being moved to tears, throwing himself down before the monk, and receiving from him the cross, sign of his acceptance of the chivalric

pilgrimage to the Orient. It is well known that this crusade did not meet with the success which Bernard had foretold for it with all the confidence of a prophet. The stamp of his spirit was likewise impressed on the most remarkable creation of the Middle Ages—the Spiritual Knightly Orders. He wrote the rules for the Templars, and several Spanish and Portuguese Orders of Knights subjected themselves to the rule of Citeaux. The noble passions of high-born chivalry were combined with the old monkish vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. They were commissioned to wield the sword against the unbelievers, and, as knightly monks could not fail to take heaven by storm, either by prayers or prowess. But for the difference made by their oath of allegiance, which enjoined meekness and patience, the Military Orders might be considered a phenomenon akin to Islam, which they were created to confront, for they employed the sword in the service of the faith after the fashion of Islam.

The vast domains acquired by those knights in the East have all vanished away; only one acquisition remains intact, that of Prussia, made by the Teutonic knights,—*die Brüder vom Deutschen Hause.*

So the foundation stone of the Prussian monarchy was laid by one of the Military Orders, and it has

proved to be one of the strongest foundations in the German empire. The iron cross—the German soldier's highest badge of honour—is the very black cross on a white field of the Teutonic knights. The whole mighty crusading movement—that pilgrimage of the chivalry of Europe, united under the leadership of the Normans, the descendants of the ancient Vikings, who, as last converted sons of the Church, were the Pope's most zealous servants—had been despoiled of all its conquests before Bernard had been dead a hundred years.

The kingdom of Jerusalem and the Latin Empire of Constantinople had vanished; the Saracens held Egypt and Palestine with a tight grip; Venice alone had managed to secure some advantage for her Eastern commerce. But these knights-errant had possessed themselves of another realm; not on this earth did it lie, but in the fabulous regions of the far away, and yet, not so very far away, for it was the realm of romantic poetry.

The old heroic ballad, rooted in heathen tradition, had been reduced to dumbness in all the Christian nations. The Church had ousted it, and for centuries poetry in the Latin and in the vulgar tongue, too, had been left solely in the hands of the clergy. With

the political power which devolved upon the knightly nobility under the feudal system, a particular development of culture arose in keeping with their manners and customs; national so far as language went, but common to all nations in other respects. The laws and the code of honour of chivalry were the same in all regions as were its ideals and passions. France, where the chivalric ideal was first developed, was also the birthplace of the material and style of the new poetry.

Northern France and Brittany were the homes of romance,—of the narratives of romantic adventures in glorification of chivalry and beauty,—such as the legends of Arthur and the Round Table, of the Holy Graal, and of Tristram and Isolt. Minstrelsy was born in Southern France, "in the vales of Provence," as Uhland says. In this poetic development the vulgar tongue awoke to the consciousness of its own power and musical beauty. Amidst the mingled strains which celebrated the one chivalric ideal in every land of Christendom and paid homage to the fairest of all ladies — the Queen of the Heavenly Court—the Virgin, audacious notes of mockery and of assault on the stately structure of the hierarchy were also to be heard.

This structure was practically perfect and complete when Innocent III. assumed the regency over the kingdom of the Two Sicilies — when the Crusaders had taken temporary possession of Constantinople; when a Patriarch of the Eastern Church had been nominated in Rome; when the kings of Arragon, Portugal, Hungary, and England received their crowns from the Pope in fief; and when he placed the crown of the Roman Empire on the head of a submissive Guelf. Then he could write to the Patriarch of Constantinople, not without a semblance of truth, "Christ has committed to St. Peter the dominion of the whole world in addition to that of the universal Church."

That was just the time, however, which heresy chose for shaking the pillars of the Church in Southern France and in Northern Italy, the very countries which were most spiritually enlightened. The sanguinary crusade, promulgated against the Catharists, Albigenses, and Waldenses, by order of Innocent in Provence, did certainly stifle the rebellion against the Church in blood, and the Inquisition, which was established as a permanent institution by that time, carried on the work of persecution, although the popular movement of the mendicant friars was a much more effectual antidote to the heretical tendency.

A legend tells how Pope Innocent once dreamt that the Lateran Church — the greatest in Rome at that time — was about to fall, when a man clothed in a beggar's gown came forward and propped it up with his back, and how the very man appeared before him on the following day,—FRANCIS OF ASSISI,—the founder of the Order of Minorites. That son of the Umbrian Highlands, child of a wealthy father and probably of a French mother, had been aroused like many another from a joyous, worldly youth, spent in song and tournament, to take the resolution to renounce the world. He had separated himself from his father and had lived as a hermit, as a beggar, as a scullion, as the nurse of lepers, until the true meaning of the Gospel story of Jesus sending forth His disciples on their preaching tour with the order, "Provide neither silver nor gold nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves," dawned on him and convinced him that his vocation was to set out after their example, and in utter poverty to preach repentance and peace to the whole world. For this truly evangelic life, followed in exact imitation of the poverty of Christ and His disciples, he gained recruits, who joined him in his wanderings, after selling

all their possessions and giving the proceeds to the poor. Although they were only laymen, they preached the Gospel in the vulgar tongue as "Brethren of Penitence." Francis requested and received the oral authority of the Pope for this lay-preaching, which had been formally forbidden to the Waldenses. His society was not originally a religious order; it only became so, at a later period, when its gradually developed organisation received official papal sanction as a special monastic order.

The advent of the new prophets made a very deep impression in Italy. It was something to see people possessed of faith strong enough to enable them to commit themselves literally to the care of Him who feeds the fowls of the air.

They kept nothing for themselves—neither house, nor roof, nor money, nor provisions. They lived on alms or by manual labour, as circumstances required; they burdened no one; they were always contented and even joyful. They did all the good they could, and in their sermons they required nothing save repentance from the people, and only insisted upon their being reconciled with each other, keeping the peace and exercising a spirit of love. This made the people feel that the Gospel had indeed come to life

again in the touching primitive style of its first advent on earth.

The results reaped by the founder of this mixed fraternity bordered on the miraculous. His speech, simple and unstudied, but glowing with the fire of a poetic imagination, and permeated by faith and child-like kindliness, attracted every one to him. His meekness and cheerfulness, his ability and activity, in spite of the fragility of his frame, overcame every difficulty. He undertook to preach the Gospel in Egypt, and even to the Saracens; he sent forth his friars into every land; and results, as successful as the first, were reproduced in every quarter. Vast numbers were incited to more holy living, and crowds of adherents from every class joined the friars and adopted their system of Gospel poverty.

The constitution which Francis gave his society reckoned upon its dissemination throughout Christendom. A guardian presided over each settlement, an elected provincial minister—servant—over the chapter of each province, and a general minister, elected from the general chapter—often Francis himself—over the whole. It may be remarked, incidentally, that this was a sample of a representative republic, and military and civic dignitaries have since then borne

the titles invented by poor Francis—"General and Minister."

It was a master-stroke of curial diplomacy to keep this order under its own control. The Minorites or Franciscans were placed under the immediate supervision of the Holy See, they were obliged to vow personal obedience to the Pope, and were relieved by that from Episcopal supervision and jurisdiction. They were permitted to preach and to hear confessions everywhere, and thus they marched, like flying columns of the Papacy, into every region.

The secret of their importance for the Church was this: In those mendicant friars that which had always been held by the Church to be the ideal of a truly evangelic and apostolic life was actually carried out in the very midst of the people among whom the Franciscans laboured, with the design of reforming the whole of Christendom, especially the laity. Meditation and revelling in ecstatic devotion were no longer put in the highest place, but the influence that could be exercised upon all classes of the community. This order appeared just at the time when the burgher or middle class was coming into existence, and it was the means of bringing it into touch with the Christian ideal.

St. Bernard was the cultivated theologian, the acute thinker and the great politician, who exercised his chief influence over the higher classes; but St. Francis was the son and darling of the people—a troubadour of the love of God and a knight of poverty. He had chosen poverty—the bride of Christ—for his lady, after the manner of the knights who dedicated themselves to the service of one fair dame.

The great master, Giotto, painted Poverty in the Cathedral of Assisi exactly according to the ideal which St. Francis had expressed in his fervid, symbolic style: A noble, grave woman, clothed in ragged raiment, stands amid thorns, barked at by a dog and stoned by a man, whilst she is being united in wedlock with Francis by Christ Himself.

An extravagant veneration of poverty became the rage, scarcely conceivable by us common-sense people of the nineteenth century. What did this enthusiasm for a condition, by no means desirable in itself, signify? It signified a practical faith, through whose influence men gave themselves up unreservedly, without will or care of their own, to the providence of God; retaining neither choice nor care for themselves. It was the strongest proof of the independence of true religious peace and joy of all outward circumstances, and it

manifested boundless sympathy with all who were poor or sick or needy. Thenceforth the monkish ideal of poverty marched all-conquering through the world, side by side with the chivalric ideal of honour; and as the ideal of the people it gained predominance over the chivalric ideal.

A female order, that of the Nuns of St. Clare, was attached to the Minorites, and besides that, during the excitement aroused by the preaching of penitence, societies were formed, first of all in Italy, but afterwards in other countries, whose members pledged themselves to live as quietly and temperately as possible, and to give themselves up to the exercise of benevolence and philanthropy, while retaining their worldly station and following their ordinary callings, without forsaking the wedded state or even giving up their wealth. These were the so-called third order of St. Francis, the Tertiaries; St. Elizabeth of Marburg is the type of this life, devoted to deeds of penance and charity. The Tertiaries were ere long reckoned by tens of thousands in every country. PIER DELLA VIGNE, Chancellor of the Emperor Frederick II., wrote thus: "There is scarcely one person to be found who is not connected with the lay orders of St. Francis or St. Dominic." The order of preaching friars, instituted

by the Spanish priest, Dominic, had also become a mendicant order after the Franciscan model, and those two orders divided the dominion of the Church between them.

Only two years after his death Francis was canonised. When one of his brethren once asked him why God had committed so great a trust to him, he answered: "The eyes of God never looked upon a greater sinner on this earth than me; therefore He chose me for His instrument to accomplish a wonderful work upon the earth, for God often chooses the foolishness of the world to put its wisdom to shame." The legend, which soon gained currency after the death of Francis, but which is not even referred to in the bull of canonisation, that Christ had impressed him with the stigmata on Mount Alverno, made him a perfect counterpart of Christ, in the opinion of his brethren and of the credulous people.

The first Gothic church of Italy arose over his grave in Assisi. In other towns, where the afflux of the masses to the Minorites created the necessity, other great Franciscan churches were built. The churches of the mendicant friars had a style of their own, and became the homes of a new art and monuments of the renaissance of national life, which had its source in

Franciscanism. The Franciscans gave the Church the grand Latin *Stanzas* of the *Dies Iræ, Stabat Mater, etc.;* they also produced religious poetry of incomparable fervour in the Italian language. The poetic and devout meditation on special passages in the life of our Saviour, cultivated by St. Francis, probably gave rise to the first popular passion plays in the Church, and these again furnished material for the return of Italian art to nature, and to the animated portrayal of historical scenes, by means of which Giotto, the great leader of the artistic renaissance in Italy, broke through the fetters of the stiff Byzantian style.

Giotto's renderings of the legends of St. Francis, and of scenes from the life of Christ in the Church of Assisi were the dawning rays of the incomparable historical painting of Italy.

Germany had to thank Franciscanism for the awakening of an independent religious spirit among the laity, as well as for the finest vernacular preaching of the Middle Ages, in which Friar Berthold of Ratisbon excelled all his compeers.

At a later period, the Popes, in collusion with a powerful party within its own ranks, forced the Franciscan Order into the acquisition of worldly property, rousing those who clung to the early primitive

Franciscan veneration of poverty to a revolt which brought many of those enthusiasts to the stake. Through abundance of wealth, through the powerful influence which the friars had obtained as confessors of kings and princes and as the spiritual directors and good friends of the people, *en masse*, their institution, like every similar association, very soon became demoralised.

The complete working out of the scientific conception of the universe which obtained in the Middle Ages—that is to say, of the scholastic and mystic theology—was directly related to the position which the mendicant friars had attained. Both orders soon became rivals in the sphere of philosophy, although the Dominicans managed to retain sole possession of the theological faculty in the University of Paris. Their greatest philosopher,—the leading scholastic,—THOMAS AQUINAS, a disciple of the German ALBERT THE GREAT, was professor there.

Scholasticism worked up the materials transmitted by the Patristic theology into a unified system of God and the world. It conceived of the kingdoms of grace and of nature as a unity, and undertook to prove their connection to the reason. Proceeding from the proof for the being of a God, advanced by

ANSELM OF CANTERBURY, it went on to demonstrate the Divine creation of the universe, its mode of construction, and its various spheres and degrees of existence, the necessity for the incarnation of God, and for the redemption, for the mission of the Church, its hierarchy and its means of grace, and for the political and social orders. It proved the immortality of the soul, and its progressive purification or everlasting damnation; and the logic of Aristotle was employed to bolster up this hierarchical conception of the universe.

This complete mundane system, as conceived by faith, has been pictured in a most graphic style in the work of a poet, who wrote, as Uhland says, "in characters of fire, as the lightning writes upon the rocks," by DANTE ALIGHIERI, whose Divine Comedy is, to my thinking, the most perfect literary monument of an entire cultural epoch. There we find the little earth, under it the Inferno, with the place of cleansing and purification in Purgatory towering over it, surrounded by the nine circles of the Heavenly Paradise. This work aimed at being much more than descriptive. When the poet described his visionary pilgrimage through the three kingdoms of the unseen world,—Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise,—he intended,

as a prophet, to call his age to repentance and reflection, even as he himself had been called through the intervention of Divine grace, symbolised by Beatrice. No mere description can convey the faintest idea of the power of the poetic conception through whose medium the torments of the lost are portrayed with merciless vividness, and yet with a sublime sense of justice, nor of the presagefulness of the pilgrimage up the Hill of Cleansing towards the Earthly Paradise; nor of the ascent into Heaven, up even to the abodes of the blessed, and to the vision of the Trinity. There, in the highest heaven, St. Bernard guides him to the presence of heaven's queen; there, from the lips of the greatest teacher of the Church, he hears the praise of St Francis celebrated—as a sun that had arisen over his fatherland.

In Gothic art this ideal world of the Middle Ages found yet another embodiment, visible and tangible to all. As the language of the whole Church, its methods of thought, its legal standards and its forms of procedure were similar throughout Christian Europe; so likewise did one architectural style—that of the pointed arch—become universally prevalent. One conception and one model or form were followed from Drontheim to Florence, from Dantzig to Paris

and Seville. The peculiar modifications found within the limits of this uniform architectural principle are to be attributed rather to the nature of the various materials employed than to any idiosyncrasies of national or popular taste.

In the gigantic construction of its masses, by mathematically exact articulation of its parts, this style is a species of counterpart to the structure of the philosophical works of the period. It was no mere parallel, however, for it was in itself the artistic incarnation of the mediæval era. It symbolised the Church, which, although constructed from earthly materials, enshrined a Divine mystery, and soared upwards into an ethereal region, even as the Gothic minster—the house of God—rose above the mingled masses of the crowded city's roofs and gables, as if built for eternity in its vast dimensions. The walls, with their curbs and buttresses, were like a grand forest in stone, with its branches and lofty heads and interwoven stems, within which a whole world lived and moved, and from which the towers—but few—as if glorified and etherealised, soared up into the empyrean. Even the wide portals, with their rich adorning of saints and prophets, and their representations of the last judgment, or of scenes from Christian

history, seemed to invite entrance to the paradise within. There was room for every grade of the people within the broad vaulted portico; room, too, for processional services, and for pious pilgrimages from shrine to shrine.

There was provision made for every case, and an ear for every prayer in the countless chapels, with saints waiting to help in every variety of need. The whole sacred story, in every form and phase, was painted, cut, carved and moulded on the altars, pillars, stained windows and ceilings; on the choir stalls, too, and on the organ lofts; and, in the midst of all this splendour, there was enthroned on the high altar, in every church, where He was daily raised again in the consecration, the invisible but ever-present Saviour—the Corpus Domini—the palpable pledge of peace with heaven and of life eternal. There every prayer was sure of being answered that was offered in the right way and accompanied by the proper offerings. There the priesthood reigned,—the keepers of heaven's gate,—even though they might not always be esteemed in the outer world. There the soul, full of longing for the life eternal, might imagine itself already within the heavenly home when the thunders of the organ pealed forth amid the golden

clouds of incense, and when, on the days of high festival, a whole people united in the singing of heart-stirring harmonies.

The world became the dream and heaven the realised vision described by multitudes of devout souls, by none with more beauty and power than by Dante.

Dante, himself a Tertiary, was also full of the ideal of evangelic poverty, he disapproved of the Church possessing worldly property, and of the Pope being entrusted with political supremacy. With the wrath of a prophet he broke his rod over the statecraft of the Popes who had overthrown the imperial line of Hohenstaufen; but, in spite of all that, he considered the Papacy a perfectly Divine ecclesiastical institution. He saw clearly enough, however, that the secular power also was ordained by God, and a portion of the everlasting harmony of the universe.

In one allegory of his poem he pictures the awful fate of the Church of his age, in which the Kingdom of Christ had been supplanted by the reign of iniquity, through the insatiable avarice of the Roman Curia. He looked for the salvation of the Church and of Italy from a fast approaching reformation, which would carry out the principles of evangelic poverty,

and from the reappearance of a powerful Emperor. Dante believed that the independence of the State would ensue upon the acceptance of the dogma of poverty; but while he was writing thus, Pope Boniface VIII. was anathematising this dogma of the secular power being independent of the spiritual, in his famous bull—"*Unam Sanctam*"—promulgated in the year 1302, and declaring it to be nothing short of Manichæism. This bull likewise proclaimed that every human being was made subject to the Pope for his soul's welfare. This was the old watch-word, but as battle-cry it aroused no responsive echoes. The Papal power, which had just succeeded in crushing the house of Hohenstaufen and its supremacy in Italy, fell utterly under the ascendency of the crown of France. It was forced to make its headquarters in Avignon, hedged in on every side by French rule. In the contest, which, at the beck of France, it was compelled to wage, by ban and interdict, against the German King, LOUIS OF BAVARIA, the Franciscan monks entered the lists of its opponents, and used the weapons of a brilliant scholasticism to fight the battle for the King's independence and against the Pope. This was afterwards ratified by the golden bull as a statute of the German Empire.

At the same period, the English Wycliffe was protesting against the reckless exercise of the papal right of nominating to spiritual offices as well as against the financial spoliation of England by the Curia and the corruption of the mendicant orders. He demanded reform for the Church, reform of its constitution, and a renewal of its efficacy among the laity. Like the Waldenses he appealed to the Gospel, from which he also deduced doubts concerning certain details in the doctrines of the Church. Although the seed of his teaching was choked in England, it sprang up afresh in Bohemia, where the Wycliffite Czeck, John Huss, in conjunction with the germs of a national radical opposition, made similar demands. These were foiled, however, by the resistance of the aristocratic potentates of the Church, and by the diplomacy of the Emperor, who, becoming reconciled to the Church, took the work of reform into his own hand.

The attempt to re-establish the Pontificate in Rome on an independent footing, ended in two popes—one Italian, the other French—struggling for the supremacy of Christendom. Each of them had cardinals of his own, each of them claimed full supremacy. Neither would yield. The unity of the

Church, for the sake of which war had been waged on heresy by the tribunals of the Inquisition and the autos da fé, was rent in sunder by the Popes. The hour had come when the Episcopate, which had been ground down into a mere vicariate of the Pope of Rome for five hundred years, could secure a position of power by allying itself with the newly-awakened national and political spirit. It achieved its purpose in the *three great Church Councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basle,* where, during a whole generation, from 1409–1443, negotiations were carried on for the reform of the constitution of the Church. The tenet of the Council of Constance—"that the Pope is subject to the Council"—did not long hold valid. The quondam secretary of the Council of Basle,—the wary humanist, Eneas Sylvius Piccolomini,—as Pope Pius II., laid a ban upon any who should in future appeal to an Œcumenical Council. The Papacy came off victorious, although it was by means of certain concessions granted to various sovereigns.

In the year 1512 it was re-established in the fulness of its former power at the fifth Lateran Council of Pope Leo X., and all the complaints of the German nation against papal abuses died away on the winds. This Council, nevertheless, presided

over by the Medicean Pope, addressed a changed world. The Eastern Empire had vanished, Constantinople was in the hands of the Turks, and Islam menaced the peace of Europe. Besides that, in France, in Spain, in Portugal, and in England, ambitious national monarchies were asserting themselves, and the peninsula of Italy was the battle-field of the French and Spanish powers, which were struggling for the mastery in Western Europe.

Even the Popes wielded the sword to gain worldly dominions for their sons or kinsmen. In the far East and West the outlines of a new world were becoming visible. The enterprising Portuguese had already sailed around Africa, doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and found the ocean way to India. The Genevese Columbus, provided with ships by Spain, had discovered a new India in the West.

Another empire, an ancient intellectual sphere, had been rediscovered; for the epoch of the discovery of the New World was that in which the eyes of the learned in every land were dazzled by the revelation of antiquity. The Greeks, who had fled after the fall of Constantinople, had brought the knowledge of the early Grecian literature to Italy, where the traditions of antiquity had never quite

disappeared, and where art had been led on from the study of nature to that of the antique. The newly-kindled zeal for the intelligent study of ancient learning spread thence throughout Europe. The learned classes of Christendom still formed a republic, the headquarters of which were Florence, Rome, and Basle, where dwelt ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM —"that world's wonder."

Scholars felt that they were now hearing the language of Cicero for the first time (although Latin had been the language of the Church for eleven hundred years), and they were intoxicated with joy when any antique statue was excavated from the ruins of Rome. It seemed as if a veil had been torn away which had covered their eyes and concealed the world. It was not the doctrine of the Church that had been guilty of drawing that veil, for it remained intact, although an insolent humanist here and there might proclaim a renascent heathenism; it had been drawn by the ascetic sentiment of contempt for the world—by the dogma of renunciation.

Even art, which had reached its acme through the study of the antique, in the hands of the great masters,—the brilliant constellation, Leonardo, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Titian need only be mentioned,—dealt

chiefly with religious material. Yes, following out the Augustinian conception of sublime beauty being a Divine attribute, art, humanly speaking, reached perfection, while embodying and symbolising the Divine with the utmost beauty of form.

The easy joyousness with which those scholars and artists of the Renaissance moved in a world, basking in the radiance of this newly-risen sun, led to their concerning themselves less and less about reform.

The science of philological criticism had also appeared, and, in a work dedicated to a Pope, LAURENTIUS VALLA had proved the donation of Constantine to be an imposture. Erasmus had issued a new, although it might not be the best Greek text of the New Testament, and scholars were beginning to read the Old Testament in the original.

The concurrence of all this learned research, under the *enlightened* Pontificate of a patron of science and art fostered the idea of superseding the mediæval church by a catholicity of classic mould.

The learning of antiquity, science and art, united under the fostering care of the Pope,—that is the idea to which Raphael gave expression in his paintings in the galleries and chambers of the Vatican,

and over which Michael Angelo raised the grandest dome in the world—the cupola of St. Peter's.

The culture of the Renaissance was aristocratic; but since the second period of the Middle Ages, the people—citizens and peasants—had attained to a consciousness of their own power, and that had led to national distinctions becoming more sharply defined. This incipient democratic tendency was not solely the result of such spiritual movements as the creation of the mendicant orders, but was in great measure brought about by an economical revolution, which created a people with cities, with commerce and with colonies, out of an agricultural people, by transforming the old methods of business —paying in kind—into a financial and credit system, first of all in Germany and afterwards in the other countries. Germany was the first colonial power which had possessions and factories in England and Denmark, in Sweden and in Russia, as well as colonies in the territory of the Teutonic order and on the Baltic Sea, extending as far as to the Gulf of Finland. It appears to have been the wealthiest country in Europe. The commercial highway from the Mediterranean passed through Augsburg, Nürnberg, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Antwerp to the sea.

A prosperous, brilliant, richly coloured, joyous religious art sprang up along this highway, and was soon diffused in all directions. The same subjects were painted with endless variations and with an ever-increasing mastery of technique and more sharply-defined characteristics. This whole system of religious art arose on the basis of the institutions which were being founded for the spiritual good of the community. The multiplication of schools and alms-houses, of hospitals and *soul baths*, of prayer-unions and of the sacramental confraternities, owed their origin to the same source. Certain great catastrophes and calamities, like the black death, had engendered an epidemic terror throughout Europe, and had called forth phenomena like the pilgrimage of the Flagellants.

The craving for closer religious union had been growing in intensity. It had led vast numbers into the secret conventicles of the heretical sects since the beginning of the thirteenth century, and it had also given rise to a multitude of religious associations under the patronage of the Church, or at least of the clergy. Religious and lay, men of the world and of the cloister, devoted themselves to lives of mutual edification, adhering to the precepts of the Church, while holding themselves spiritually free.

They were, as a rule, grouped under some illustrious preacher, or members of some order. Such were "The Friends of God" on the Upper Rhine, disciples, for the most part, of Master Eckhart, the great Dominican monk, and the first philosopher who wrote in German, or of his followers, Tauler and Suso; such, also, were the Beguines and Beghards, who were scattered all over Germany at a later period. And these circles, which were thus closely identified with the community, watched the leading actions of the ecclesiastical government in the European embarrassments and dissensions; and they criticised, in no friendly spirit, the broad papal policy, which, in times of interdict, could sacrifice the spiritual welfare of a whole nation to the overweening insolence of the Pope. Even while they abhorred every form of heresy with a horror that had waxed in intensity since Middle Germany had been laid waste by the Hussites, they maintained that a much more radical reformation of the Church was requisite than what had been attempted by the Councils of Constance or Basle. They believed that a terrible reckoning was in store for the clergy, both high and low, and for every class in Christendom, besides, that had been unfaithful to its ideals.

This conviction may be said to have permeated Western Christendom since the thirteenth century, when the predictions of a Calabrian abbot, Joachim, had been diffused throughout the Church.

They foretold a new age of the Church—the final dispensation, that of the Holy Ghost—the Johannine, in which the papal power would be overthrown by the imperial, and even that supreme imperial power would meet with due punishment. Finally, when all its ecclesiastical abuses were abolished, the restored, united Church, gathered from all Christian nations under faithful shepherds, and converting all Jews and unbelievers, was to advance towards the eternal Sabbath.

Dreamers and enthusiasts, rebellious monks and thinkers opposed to the papal power, developed and elaborated these prophecies. The downfall of the Church was pictured in imagery taken from the Revelation of St. John; and almost every one of the great popular prophets who appeared subsequently made use of one or other feature of those symbols of the coming awful judgment and of the latter glory of the Church, which was only to be attained through repentance and the renunciation of worldly honour. In Italy, Katherine of Sienna, the friend

of popes and republics, did so; and Bridget of Sweden also, whose revelations received the pontifical approval in the fourteenth century. So likewise, at the close of the fifteenth century, did Savonarola, the most celebrated prophet of Italy, the Dominican Prior, and the temporary political ruler of the republic of Florence which he had himself created. His prophecies led to his being burned as a heretic, at the instigation of the Pope; and yet he was painted by Raphael among the great theologians in the Vatican.

In all those soothsayers, apart from what might be fantasy or imagination, or perhaps even real clairvoyance, there existed a deep instinctive feeling that the Church and the world were on the eve of a great revolution, in which the Papacy, before all other ecclesiastical institutions, and, after it, the whole body of the clergy and monks, would be visited with punishment for their sins. It was no abatement of the religious spirit, but rather its quickening, sometimes to fever heat, that secured the space for this quiet criticism of the existing order granted to it, especially in Germany, in the pamphlets and illustrated literature of the waning fifteenth century. All this was contemporaneous with the greatest industry in

the production of devotional books for the use of the laity, with a thirst for popular preaching, with the discovery of new shrines and pilgrim resorts, with zeal in the building of churches and the founding of institutions, even with incipient efforts at disseminating the German translation of the printed Bible.

This dissatisfaction with the existing order did not lead to doubt or to despair, but to the expectation of something that was to be no mere restoration of the discipline of a monkish order, but rather the readjustment of the whole world—in one word, *the Reformation.*

In the year 1495, the young Albrecht Dürer began his series of woodcuts illustrative of the Apocalypse of St. John. The first of these portrayed the fall of the great city Babylon, as described in Rev. xviii.; and he used the literal Rome of the period to represent Babylon. From the open heaven above, the armed Word of God rides down upon a white horse, followed by the heavenly hosts, to establish the New Jerusalem.

This vision was realised as literally as most prophetic dreams.

IV.

The Reformation.

IV.

THE REFORMATION.

AFTER negotiations had been carried on for five years at Osnabrück and Münster, the Westphalian Peace, which put an end to the Thirty Years' War, was concluded on the 24th of October, 1648.

Torn, trampled upon, bleeding and impoverished, Germany lay prostrate. The mouths of all her rivers were in the hands of foreigners; she was hemmed in by three great powers — Hapsburg, Sweden, and France; and the Low Countries and Switzerland were severed from the Empire; but, notwithstanding all that, the Catholic imperial power had not attained the end for which it had drawn the sword from the scabbard a hundred years before—the restoration of the Protestant German States to the ancient Church.

Germany had lost all else that makes a nation great

—authority, power, honour, and wealth—but it had maintained the Reformation.

The Lutheran Reformation had become supreme in Northern and Middle Germany, and in Würtemberg. Besides some of the free cities in Upper Germany the Reformed Church only claimed the princes of the Rhine valley territories, and the Brandenburgers as individuals. Protestantism had been violently eradicated in Austria, Styria, and Bohemia; and Catholicism had held its own in Bavaria, in the domains of the spiritual electoral Princes of Rhineland, and in the other spiritual principalities. Other countries, where Protestantism had taken firm root, were gathered around Germany,—the cradle of the Reformation,—viz., Poland, Moravia, Hungary, and Transylvania. Lutheranism prevailed in the Duchy of Prussia and in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark; while the greater part of German and Romansch Switzerland adhered to the Reformed Church, as did also the German Netherlands, and England and Scotland with their colonies in the new world. Reformed Protestantism was still tolerated in France. The Germanic nations were to a large extent protestantised, while the Romance nations continued to be almost exclusively Catholic. The mediæval unity of the world had been

rent in sunder, and Protestantism and Catholicism confronted each other as two distinct religions, while the power of the Crescent reached unchecked to the very walls of Vienna, and a still more radical readjustment of the affairs of Europe and of the world at large was about to be made.

All that had been brought about by a religious revolution, and, if we trace it to its source, we shall find its germs in the struggles of conscience, and the resulting action of a German monk.

Like the greatest and most potent conceptions of the Middle Ages the Reformation was born in the cloistered cell.

A mendicant monk—an Augustinian friar—had tortured himself with the question, "What must I do to be saved?" He had turned his back on the world with no intention of ever seeing it again, his only desire having been to find peace with God, and die. But after he had found this answer to his question, "Your part is to do nothing but humbly to accept by faith the salvation freely bestowed by the mercy of God, and then to live like a faithful child of this gracious God," a new view of ecclesiastical and of secular things unfolded itself in his process of reasoning, which was intuitive rather than systematic. He had obtained

that answer from his study of the Scriptures. It is a mistake to look upon Luther as the discoverer of the Bible, for it had been widely disseminated before his day, even in a printed German translation, but he had found a key which opened its deepest mysteries, and that was his intense realisation of the unconditional mercy of God and of the absolute moral duty incumbent on Christian men.

In its religious aspect the Reformation of LUTHER, like that of Zwingli, was based upon the strictest Augustinian tenets—on the belief in the absolute sovereignty of God over man. "Man is not independent of God, but owes an unqualified submission to God." That conception had lost its force by reason of the Church often putting its own ordinances in the place of God. The Reformation rectified the balance by declaring "that man existed wholly and solely for God;" hence his moral obligation, hence also his moral freedom; for the man who belongs altogether to God is by that very reason set free from every other claim on him than that of God; and God's claim on him is simply moral duty, in the lofty sense in which the Gospel interprets it. "This right and duty are alike for all. There is no longer a privileged religious order, or ecclesiastical laws which can exempt from moral

obligations—in matters of duty and religion all men are equal."

The results of Luther's long-continued conflict can now be summed up in such brief phrases. He had not had the faintest idea or desire of bringing his views into great publicity. He had expounded them to his students in Wittenberg from the professorial chair, and to his parishioners from the pulpit, and he had only meant to serve the Church when he cited the abuses of the papal indulgence commissioners and the danger of certain theories of indulgence before the bar of an academical debate.

The infatuation of his opponents, who were unable to discriminate between the voice of outraged conscience and the snarling of a pettifogging monk, first confirmed him in his opposition. The attempt to intimidate him by threats aroused his manly spirit, and brought him to the conviction that he had a cause to plead for the Church and for eternal truth. When the Church repelled him he was set free, and carried his supporters with him into that opposition from which a new Church system—a new development of religious culture—subsequently sprang. For Protestantism and Catholicism do not differ as varieties of one and the same religion, but as two distinct religions,

inasmuch as they define in diverse ways what is the basis of all religion—the relation of man to God and the duties depending upon that relation.

Towards the close of the Middle Ages reform had been attempted on early Catholic lines by the great Church Councils, but in vain; no other resource remained but that of return to primitive Christianity. And while all previous reforms had only aimed at constitutional reorganisation and had left the doctrinal system unassailed, or had only sought to improve it in detail, the doctrines of the Church and its very basis were made the subject of attack by the Reformers. The Gospel was brought forward as a different—as *the true* theology, in contradistinction to the mediæval scholastics—the theology of the Councils—the jurisprudence of the Canon Law.

Even in the Middle Ages the Gospel had been brought forward as a life-giving power, but then, as we have seen from the Franciscans, it was "the evangelic life," the imitation of Christ, that was striven after. The excommunicated Waldenses and Wycliffe had attempted a new method of circulating the Bible among the people, but doubts had never been mooted of the Church's having and holding the truth; the important question had been the bringing of its

influence to bear aright on the people. But Luther carried the controversy with the collective authorities of Church, Pope, scholastics, doctors, and monks to such a pass that he was forced to doubt the integrity of the Church, and the conviction—so terrible for a Catholic heart—was borne in upon him that its doctrine was faulty. The agonies of soul torturing him in the midst of his most valorous deeds, and ascribed by him to Satanic agency, must have been connected with the question which perpetually vexed him, "Can I be justified in entering into conflict with an ecclesiastical system which has lasted for a thousand years? If so, how is it possible that God should have permitted His light to be so completely quenched within the Church?" He strove to silence these voices that warred within him by appealing to the oath that he had taken as "Doctor in the Holy Scriptures." There he found a sure standing ground to retire upon. In the Holy Scriptures there was more than a mere "dogma," in the sense held by the Church and affirmed in its creeds. It contained the Gospel—a living, real, actual, all-sufficient revelation of God, an ever active Divine power, in lieu of the impotent rationalistic triflings and subtleties of the schoolmen. The Gospel became his theology, and

this theology was no system but an inspiration, the ardent breathings of a soul filled to overflowing with the assurance of the grace of God, as manifested in Jesus Christ the Saviour. He knew that he was at one with the universal Church in his acknowledgment of the Divine and human natures of Christ, but he was perplexed that the Church had made almost no use of this acknowledgment. How could it have allowed the Saviour to be thrust into the background, behind His mother, behind the sacrifice of the mass; even behind the saints and all the sacred relics? He saw that it was of vital importance that Christ should be found again and made known to men.

Luther did not dwell exclusively on the details of the Saviour's life and the human traits of His personality, as the devout of the Middle Ages had done, and as every mechanically constructed religious system must do. In Jesus Christ he laid hold of and realised the mercy of God towards lost and ruined sinners; in Him the terrible judicial wrath of God was appeased—the Divine message, "I will forgive," was uttered by His streaming blood. For these reasons the Gospel of St. John and the Epistles of St. Paul were in Luther's estimation the true New Testament interpreters of the Saviour's mission. From this point of

view the whole Bible was transformed into a flowing river of Divine deeds and words and lively symbols, all conspiring to publish the one message in various ways. The Bible had been, at the best, a mine of texts proving certain verities for the previous theological systems; for Luther, it became again the one and all in theology.

When he translated the Bible into German every distinction between the ages in which the revelation had been given and his own epoch vanished, and everything appeared to him in the light of the immediate contemporaneous present. That was the case with the other Protestant nations also, who soon had the Bible translated into their own languages —Swiss, German, Low German, Danish, Swedish, English, and Dutch. The Scriptures gave such direct testimony to their own inspiration by the Holy Spirit, that the Reformers did not feel the necessity of seeking further proofs; they required no doctrine of inspiration with all its issues, even respecting the transmission of the text of Scripture.

A sense of gratitude that the light of primitive Christian doctrine had again arisen after centuries of Egyptian darkness was the motive power of the Reformation movement. That alone accounts for its

uniting hearts instead of driving them asunder like a storm. The majority of those devout circles which had previously carried on the work of revival allied themselves with the new Gospel. Luther had sought peace with God in the peculiar sanctitude of the monastic life, but had not found it there. The error involved in that system and in all others which had been instituted by the Church, without Divine authority and regarded as conditions of surpassing merit, was next recognised. Men had been relieved from the most important and immediate moral duties that they might assume self-chosen duties which were considered more spiritual. The man who had outrivalled all his compeers in monkish asceticism now declared these to be forced and unnatural vows, and maintained that the various domestic and social conditions ordained by God—marriage and the family, the offices of ruler and subject, every honest trade or profession, every ministry, from that of the prince to that of the servant who sweeps the room—were the true sacred orders of the Christian religion. One code of morals for the religious orders and another for the laity was to be endured no longer. The Reformer had learned to regard the Church in a totally different light, and he felt as if he were rediscovering it and

breaking its bonds. He found that what had formerly been supposed to be *the Church*—the pope, the hierarchy, the clerical and monastic orders, the canon law and ecclesiastical possessions—were not the real Church at all, but a worldly, despotic power, founded upon fraud and robbery, a violent and tyrannous reign of the popes, permitted in the anger of God for the chastisement of the Christian nations, a supremacy of Antichrist, a snare set for Christ's kingdom by the devil.

What was left intact after subtraction of this utterly illegal and anti-Christian or, at least, not purely Christian constitution — the rites and ceremonies of the Church—might be retained or not as was found expedient.

The Word and Sacrament of God, which had been preserved throughout the ages, under the name of the Church, although often obscured and concealed, were the Church's wellspring of life, indeed the very Church.

Seeing that all the so-called ecclesiastical orders had succumbed to papal despotism, the reformation of the Christian State had to be confided to the secular authorities. Luther appealed to the princes of the Empire, and primarily to "that noble young hero"—the Emperor Charles—in his epistle addressed

to "The Christian Nobility of the German Nation;" and an exalted conception of the free, divinely conferred moral dignity of the political magistracy was made the basis of the whole mundane theory of the ethical system of the Reformation.

This new theory was only developed step by step. It differed from that of the Middle Ages chiefly in that having possessed a finished, flawless system of cognitions embracing the whole world, visible and invisible, connected by a rational logic, and warranted safe by the Church which had transmitted it. The mouth of the Church spoke, and its utterances were matters of faith, which the intellect of the Church was bound to accept; in the Reformation theory, faith confessed the truth of whose redeeming power it had personal experience. It did not accept mere tenets of cognition, but rather historical truths, divine facts, which were exalted above mere rational proof. In the old theory, the Church propounded a dogmatic system; while in the new, individual faith bowed submissively before a historical fact, made a certainty for it by its internal evidence.

Luther's greatest achievements were accomplished almost unconsciously. He entered upon the indulgence controversy without foreseeing how vastly it might develop, but in the course of three years he had

deduced all the consequences involved in it, and his three pamphlets, written in the year 1520—"To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation on the Amendment of the Christian State," "On the Babylonish Captivity of the Church," "On the Freedom of Christian Men"—contain the negative and positive programme of the Reformation.

An affirmation was set over against every negation. The assumption of the hierarchic, ecclesiastical system, even that of the Early Catholic Church constitution, being essential to salvation was denied; and the re-establishment of the Church, and of political, social, communal and family life, upon their divinely appointed basis, was demanded—in short, a reformation of the Christian world.

Luther declined the assistance of the sword of chivalry for his Reformation enterprise, which had been offered by Franz von Sickingen and Hutten. Although supported by the publications of his adherents, and protected, to the utmost of his ability, by his own Electoral Prince in his own dominions, he stood practically alone—he had no party. When the papal anathema of his doctrine and the sentence of excommunication reached him, he publicly burned the Bull, sealing his breach with the dominant Church by that act.

He fearlessly accepted the invitation to the Diet of Worms, and there he defended his cause humbly and firmly. From the hiding-place on the Wartburg, whither the Elector had conveyed him—an outlaw lying under the ban of the Empire—for security, he suddenly reappeared in Wittenberg to exorcise the ecclesiastical revolution that had broken out there. Our history has no parallel to such heroism save that of Frederick the Great when he was surrounded by three hostile forces all numerically superior to his own. In the strength of God, Luther bade defiance to the whole world.

After the Diet of Worms the Reformation became the dominating and fundamental question of the German commonwealth. Its destiny was affected by the relations of the Germanic Imperial States towards the Spanish policy of Charles V. on the one hand, and by the conflicting interests of the secular and spiritual princes of the Empire on the other. Often enough its prospects were very dark—as, for instance, after the Diet of Worms in 1521, after that of Speyer in 1529, and after that of Augsburg in 1530. Sometimes, too, it seemed probable that the whole of Germany would side with the movement; this was specially the case after the publication of the Ninety-five

Theses, and towards the close of the Thirty Years' War.

The goal towards which all the restless elements of the community were eagerly striving loomed very vaguely in Luther's horizon, so far as its political and social aspects were concerned. He was compelled to set his face against the radical revolution of the fanatics and peasants, in order to save the religious system which he had created; and at a later period to express disapproval of the radical social reform attempted by the Anabaptists, which, even at that date, comprised the characteristic features of the present socialistic and communistic programme; and for that he was stigmatised as a reactionary, even in his own day. Such is not my opinion of Luther. I am certain that he did not perceive the possible political bearing of his ideas, for he opposed every deduction from them, however logical it might be, that could prove detrimental to the positive and conservative religious constitution which he had built up, with the same fearlessness of animadversion from below with which he had defied the wrath of Pope and Emperor. He was not the man to do anything for the sake of popularity, consequently his immediate work of reform was confined to the establishment of a new faith and an

order of Divine service. Neither he nor Melanchthon created a particular system of theology; they merely set forth the leading conceptions of the new aspect of the doctrines of salvation, with Christ for their centre, and the Bible, in lieu of the Fathers, for their source. Only the rudiments of the new system, destined to supersede the mundane theory of the Middle Ages, can be found in the doctrinal teaching of the Reformation.

The greatest testimony to its value is the fact that it made a continuous development possible within the sphere of Christian religion, which left the essentials of religion intact. The mediæval theory of the universe was exploded, but Christianity had been preserved, proving that the point of view from which men regard the mysteries of the universe may alter without affecting religion.

A great social revolution was involved in the closing of the monasteries and the establishing of parsonages with a married clergy. That led to a new and very fruitful element of culture being grafted into the Germanic commonwealth; for, whatever may occasionally be said against the pastors, it must be acknowledged that the pastor's wife has been an unqualified blessing.

The reversion of Church property in some measure into secular hands, the stoppage of some branches of ecclesiastical industries for which the demand had ceased, the end put to the founding of religious houses, and the very embittered struggle waged, with reckless roughness, between man and man over the most essential principles of life, were naturally followed by detrimental consequences. The lamentations of the Reformers over the increasing rudeness and wildness of the people and the violence of the aristocracy must have had some foundation, and yet a new force of religious and moral earnestness had been then communicated to the nation from which even the Catholic section derived some benefit. Its special organ was the Bible in the vernacular, which became then, for the first time, a household book among burghers and peasants.

Moral progress manifested itself in the new system of poor relief. Poverty had been a necessity in the Middle Ages, for how could benevolence have been exercised with empty purses? We have endeavoured to understand the cult of poverty when it was venerated as a condition of truly Divine blessedness. The reformed doctrine looked upon wealth as a gift of God, but considered that the government, as God's

executor, was bound to relieve poverty by a regular aid-system, and by training its victims to work, as the exercise of charity was a duty incumbent on the social community, now synonymous with the ecclesiastical. The educational system, the primary as well as the higher, took a prominent place among the communal and political concerns. The universities, which had been fostered by the Humanists before, had an ecclesiastical stamp impressed upon them; and many others were founded with an ecclesiastical aim, such as Marburg, Jena, Giessen, Herborn, and Duisburg; for all the sciences, and languages too, were only esteemed as a means for paving the way for the Word of God. This led to a fresh cementing of the alliance between Christianity and antiquity, which thus became the basis of our civilisation as well as of that of the Middle Ages. Even though its primary purpose was polemical, the scientific study of history was fairly established, and the new Church arose on the foundations of the ancient Church.

"The new Church!" To found a new Church was what Luther had least of all desired, but circumstances had brought that about. Luther's idea was, that the Gospel which had created the Church at the first would re-establish it in its rightful place if

the unrighteous supremacy of the Pope were only abolished. During the whole era of the German Reformation the confident hope was cherished that religious unity might be restored by an independent German national council. For this reason all questions of Church constitution and order were left undecided by the Confession. But circumstances imperatively demanded some such arrangements as those made simultaneously in all the Evangelical States, after the Diet of Speyer in 1526, in which Hesse took the initiative, followed by Electoral Saxony, Prussia, Würtemberg, Pomerania, the Duchy of Saxony, the Palatinate, Brandenburg, and the whole of North Germany. What thus originated as a new ecclesiastical arrangement was a national ecclesiastical state, in virtue of its establishment by the political authorities.

It was not looked upon as the organisation of a new Church. The Church was something spiritual and subjective in the opinion of the Reformers, the living power, whose formula was contained in their Confession of Faith.

The various States held one Confession of Faith, which was subscribed by the different princes, who signed it as the representatives of their subjects.

This faith was the truth, acknowledged by the whole body of the people; not merely by the official teachers —it had become the possession of all.

That embodied the essential advance made on the early Catholic position. Every individual member of the Christian people was granted the right to participate in all the gifts of the Holy Spirit; a universal priesthood was recognised, beyond the ranks of the ordained teachers of the Church; every man was allowed the right of immediate approach to God. If we consider the division of the adherents of the evangelical faith into Churches of the various States from this standpoint, we shall see that the arrangement had its advantages. It gave rise to numerous religious congregations in the various States (for there was no organisation of the congregations save in Hesse and in the principalities belonging to the Reformed Church), and the existing characteristic features of our German races were developed in these State congregations. The foundation of that stubborn German particularism, whose ultimate source is religious idiosyncrasy, was thus laid, and that has been an element of German strength, in spite of all its defects. The Confession was the bond of union between these congregations, and it reached far beyond the bound-

aries of Germany, to Scandinavia and Switzerland, and even to Hungary and Transylvania.

About the beginning of the twentieth year of the Reformation, while it was advancing victoriously northwards, a schism took place in Germany, excited by controversy on the doctrine of the Sacrament, and not by any question relating to the ritual of the Holy Supper.

If we consider that controversy now, we must wonder that there was only one such schism. There is really no stronger refutation of the Catholic assumption, that "as many creeds may be derived from the Bible as the number of its readers," than the fact that *only those two* were derived from it; and even that bisection was primarily due to individual, personal, political, social and territorial differences. Zwingli shared all Luther's fundamental ideas, and the different views they held regarding the Sacrament may be accounted for by their respective idiosyncrasies. Luther found in it the pulsing heart of the living body of the Church, while Zwingli saw in it only one portion of the organism of Divine worship. A difference of principle was only developed when Luther imagined, as he contended for his own conception of the Sacrament, that he was striving against Rationalism,

of which he unduly suspected his opponents. They, on the other hand, could not comprehend how Luther could lay the stress of his faith on the miracle-working word of power in his doctrine of the Sacrament. This gave rise to two distinct types of the German Reformation, the Lutheran predominating in the principalities and the Zwinglian in the urban republics.

Like all men of genius, Luther was autocratic in disposition; but he was monarchic in principle. He believed in a certain supernatural adaptation of princes and of magistrates for their vocation.

Zwingli, on the contrary, was an aristocratic republican. He had grown up in a totally different school of political life; and as he had contended against the abuses of the indulgence, independently of Luther, and had drawn his own weapons from the Holy Scriptures as well as he, so had his Reformation been laid out on a different plan from the outset. Its design was political as well as religious. He was anxious to make the Confederacy independent of foreign influence, and to reform it politically; and he entered upon his office at Zurich in that spirit. The change of religion was to bring about a change in the whole conduct of life. He attempted to carry out in his smaller sphere what Luther had only suggested

as a visionary claim of righteousness. Zwingli was thus at once a political reformer and the moving spirit of an aristocratic republic, and therefore the political constitution formulated by him makes no distinction between the ecclesiastical and political spheres, and it may justly be styled a Theocracy, a government of God. Although he did not proclaim Christ King of Zurich, in the ecstatic manner of Savonarola, Christ was practically made King; for His Word, revealed in the New Testament, was the special standard of judicial procedure followed by the authorities of Zurich. This is the point of most profound divergence between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches. The former draws a distinction between the spiritual and secular spheres; it looks upon the spiritual sphere in which faith reigns supreme as infinitely exalted above earth: Zwinglianism and Calvinism hold the same view in theory, but practically both spheres are amalgamated in their systems. Zwingli even made politics serviceable in religious matters; it had to be so, because, not merely the maintenance, but likewise the prosperous carrying out of the Reformation was a question of political existence for the little State which had gained, under Zwingli's administration, the spiritual leadership of the greater cantons of the Confederacy. In proportion

to the greater prudence and slowness with which Zwingli carried out his proceedings was the result attained; his reformation struck root more deeply and spread more widely.

For Luther the Bible was simply the source of all Christian dogma, but for Zwingli it was likewise the norm of all Christian living.

Politics were the cause of Zwingli's early death. Just after he had made out the long and perilous journey to Marburg, to attend the conference on religion in 1529 (where he won the heart of the Landgrave Philip, who advocated the cause of political Protestantism with like faith and courage), the conflict between the forest cantons, which clung to the ancient religion, and the reformed border cantons, resulted in embarrassments which could only be settled by a short and decisive war. That was deferred, and then entered upon by the surprisal of Zurich, when the flower of its citizens fell before the enemy. Zwingli, among others, died like a hero on the battle-field of Cappel in the year 1531. That war decided the confessional separation of Germanic Switzerland, even as to its ultimate range, so early as 1531, while Protestantism continued to make fresh conquests in Germany till the death of Luther.

When Luther died in 1546, just before the commencement of the religious war, he left, in his translation of the Bible, the written language of High German as his legacy to the whole German people. Jacob Grimm has called it "the Protestant dialect." He bequeathed his doctrine to them also, and his example of invincible fortitude, which would submit to no compulsion in matters of faith. That example was splendidly followed after the inglorious war of Schmalkald, where defeat was a foregone conclusion, owing to the want of a united policy among the Protestants, when the Interim, which the emperor attempted to force upon them, was resisted in an almost utterly defeated Germany, which yet stood true to its colours. At that time none were more indomitable in the faith than the clergy of Hesse.

The diplomatic feat of the Elector Maurice of Saxony (of perfidious memory) compelling the Emperor to grant the treaty of Passau, brought about the religious peace, which led to the establishment of the system of Confessional States—the ecclesiastical government which still exists.

Comparisons readily suggest themselves between Luther and AUGUSTINE, the Church father to whom he owed most, and who may therefore be regarded as one

of the fathers of the Reformation, as Luther himself is a father of our modern age. They shared the fundamental religious assumption of the free grace of God being the one saving power for man, and the conviction that man's chief end is the glory of God. But while these views led Augustine to subject himself humbly to the Church—the servant of God—Luther soared aloft with an incomparable fervour of faith to the very heart of God. Faith was for him what it was for St. Paul, what it is in the words of our Saviour—that power which enables a man to throw himself into the arms of the Almighty God, with Whom all things are possible. It was a confident, stedfast trust reaching into the unseen; not the ineffable vision so eagerly longed for in the Middle Ages; not ocular demonstration, but rather moral certitude of Divine realities; and since Luther's time this has been the religious ideal of Protestantism. Religious conviction, instead of tradition, became the central idea of the Church.

Along with all this, however, there was an indifference about political maters, a combination of supineness and of wrangling stubbornness, which hindered any great united action, even among the Lutherans, not to speak of a united Protestant policy; and brought German Protestantism to the brink of ruin,

from which it was only rescued by GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

Lutheranism has not produced any specially distinguished princes and statesmen, save the Swedish king and his chancellor Oxenstjerna. Its strong point has been patient endurance. The energetic Landgraves of Hesse-Cassel and the Princes of the Palatinate and of Brandenburg belonged to the Reformed Church. On the other hand, not a few of its princes were exemplary types of the patriarchal ruler. George, Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, Christopher of Würtemberg, Duke Ernest the Pious of Gotha, were all men who understood the art of training and disciplining their people and of fortifying their lands in times of either moral or political disturbance.

The whole strength of Lutheranism can be better seen, therefore, in its spiritual productions, in which a subjective sense of the assurance and bliss of faith finds vivid utterance, as in the German hymns and devotional literature, and also in the exuberant wealth of church music developed from the hymns. Something of Luther's spirit may be found in PAUL GERHARDT, with his mystic depth and childlike piety; in JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, too, with his church music, taken, more than any other, from the words of Scripture, and

containing in itself a revelation of wondrous depth. What is this music, with its chaste, profound seriousness, its troubles of conscience and its agonies of soul, with the confident joyousness of its trust in God, with its fervent devotion to the Person of the Saviour, with its noble melancholy and its childlike cheerfulness, but Luther born again in harmony?

The FRENCH CALVIN was a new element in the Reformation movement.

His work of disseminating the Gospel in the southern Romance regions, for which he was peculiarly fitted, was stopped by the incipient counter Reformation, but his creation, "the Protestant Rome" in Geneva, became the centre and headquarters of the struggling Protestantism of France, of the Netherlands, and of Scotland and England. Without him the progress of the Reformation would have been checked. Geneva became the heroic mother of the Huguenot Church, and aroused the peoples of the Netherlands and of Scotland and England to take the place which they were destined to occupy in the world's history.

Calvin based his system out and out upon that of Luther. In the first edition, his famous *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was only a systematic elaboration of Luther's lesser catechism. It is evident from

it that the free grace of God in Christ is the foundation stone of his dogmatic system, and not predestination, as is so often maintained.

A new type of reformer appeared in Calvin. He organised the Reformed Church for its struggle with the hostile powers; he constituted the Protestant polity, and he was the father of that blood-besprinkled French martyr church—the cross-bearer, *par eminence*, among her compeers. His policy and his church system were of the aristocratic republican type.

Calvin was the first to organise the Church as a distinct association within the State, while in Luther's view it was simply one department of the State, governed by the sovereign and his theological advisers through the individual pastors.

From the independent organism of the individual congregation, Calvin built up the Church general. The individual congregation was not autonomous; it was the province in which the *Word of God* reigned supreme, as administered through the combined executive power of clergy and elders. This Word of God was not merely preached; it was carried out practically by a corresponding communal discipline. The Church became the disciplinarian of the State; the position held by the clergy and elders was that of

the prophets of ancient Israel. Elected representatives of these congregational courts composed the higher directory of the Synod. This gave rise to the *Presbyterial and Synodic Constitution* — an independent counterpart of the Early Catholic ecclesiastical constitution. Calvin was convinced that that was *the* constitution prescribed by the Bible, and consequently the only sound one, and an indispensable agency for bringing the community under the discipline of God's Word. That, along with its dogmatic system, gives its peculiar stamp to Calvinism. It is the source of the energetic, practical and painfully conscientious type of piety which may be found, even at the present day, in the reformed churches of Scotland, England, and America. The national church system was retained by Calvinism, but beyond that it recognised a legally constituted general council, in which deputies from the various countries could be united in one synod, like the famous Dutch synod held at Dort in 1617.

Calvin preserved the strictest union between Church and State, for the State of Geneva was influenced by religious motives in its political actions. It was a Theocracy. That little stronghold on the hill above the Rhone, with its handful of men and its gaunt,

earnest, distinguished pastor ruling over it and imprinting it with the stamp of his genius for a century and a half, is a spectacle unparalleled in history. For the countless fugitives who streamed thither, it was a New Jerusalem, like the city of God set upon a hill; it was the fortress of the Israel of God, which was fighting and suffering for the faith.

Calvin himself viewed it in that light. Although he never felt perfectly at home in Switzerland, and never belied his French breeding, only some great pope or ecclesiastical prince could have been so thoroughly cosmopolitan in far-reaching thought as he was.

The establishment of the kingdom of Christ in opposition to that of Antichrist at Rome—an actual reign of God over the Christian peoples of the world—with political freedom, moral discipline and universal peace, was his aim and hope; while Luther only expected such a reign of right in the world to come after the destruction of the present world, which he regarded as imminent.

As preliminary condition of his scheme, Calvin required a Genevan Republic, freed from the tyranny of Savoy; and for that end he became Master-General of Ordnance, Secretary of State, and Chief of Police

in Geneva. He was the prophet of the French Huguenots. They accepted the Genevan Creed, were organised after its principles, and preserved its indomitable spirit during the Thirty Years' War.

Intolerant despotism had compelled the Huguenot nobility to grasp the sword, and they used it for the maintenance of a position which made the Huguenot Church a State within the State. Theirs was a struggle of the nobility against absolute monarchy and for the preservation of the most sacred rights of conscience. The typical heroes of Calvinism shine pre-eminent in that struggle—the devout, brave, resourceful ADMIRAL COLIGNY, the martyr of St. Bartholomew, and DU PLESSIS MORNAY, the most chivalrous figure of the Reformation century, the theological statesman, and the incorruptible, honourable, private counsellor of Henry IV. before he ascended the throne of France.

Even when Henry, the darling of the Huguenots, thought Paris "worth a mass," and abjured his faith for a second time, the party that had conduced to his triumph held fast to its rights with unflinching firmness, and the France of Henry IV. granted practical toleration of creed, the first case of the kind occurring in a country still predominantly Catholic. The Huguenots had full political liberty conferred on them,

and although their freedom of worship was circumscribed they enjoyed perfect religious liberty. Although Luther certainly approved of that, Lutheranism had not afforded it.

In adding to those heroic names, that of AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ, the leader of the poetic school of the Huguenots, and one of the most influential authors of his day, whose powerful pathos stimulated the great poets of the golden age of French literature, I would simply point in passing to the notable share that austere and sublime Calvinism had in the most brilliant development of French genius.

The heroic struggle of the Teutonic Netherlands for their political and religious liberation from Spanish despotism had a still more successful issue. There is a certain compensation for the inglorious defeat of the German Protestants by Spanish mercenaries in the fact that this struggle was carried on under the leadership of the greatest German prince of the Reformation century, WILLIAM OF ORANGE, born at Dillenburg,—a scion of the Protestant family of Nassau-Orange and a noble and heroic man, who showed himself even greater in defeat than in victory. A powerful maritime Protestant Republic was established on the estuaries of the Rhine; and while Germany was tearing

itself to shreds in the great wars, realism in art and in thought was developing in the Netherlands on the basis of Calvinism, and under the influence of genuine individual religious liberty and perfect freedom of scientific inquiry.

This open eye for the actual and the present has been an element of incalculable value in the Protestant system of thought, although it is neither its first nor last manifestation.

In the year 1648 that branch of the empire was declared independent, just at the period when the last war waged for the Reformation was reaching its climax in England.

In England's "great Revolution" the subjects of controversy were—the privileges of the Parliament versus those of the Crown, and perfect religious freedom versus Episcopacy and Presbyterianism.

In the year 1648 King Charles I. was taken prisoner by the Parliamentary army, under command of the great Independent General, OLIVER CROMWELL. He had organised and disciplined that army, and had led it on from victory to victory by the might of his genius. The Independents were the inspired men of that age. They were Calvinistic in principle, but they abjured the ecclesiastical constitution of Presby-

terianism. They demanded perfect independence for every congregation, great or small. They saw no necessity for an ecclesiastical function, as every one who would submit himself to the teaching of the Bible might learn from it, by the Spirit's help, all that was needful for him.

They were, if one may express it so, English Lutherans, in a more enthusiastic guise. They decided the destiny of England. It is true that neither the political nor religious ideal of the Independents, which were swallowed up in the socialistic and millenarian fanaticisms of their offshoots, were permanently realised; but Cromwell, through his potent personality, put an end to the Civil War. He established peace and order in revolted Ireland, he maintained the Union with Scotland, and ensured the maritime supremacy of England, besides being the protector of Protestanism throughout the world. The simple country gentleman became the greatest field-marshal and statesman of his nation; and invincible faith lay at the root of all his successes. Since the publication of his most private papers it has been evident to what a large extent his political greatness was dependent on his religious enthusiasm.

Cromwell had the courage of faith. He took upon

himself the prodigious responsibility of carrying out, with iron hand, the issues of a Revolution which was direfully complicated and embittered by the perfidies of the King, and by the strife of parties in the opposition camp—even to the point of the judicial arraignment and execution of King Charles.

He then suppressed every Stuart conspiracy, and re-established and maintained peace, order, security, and civil and religious liberty for all peaceful subjects, under the solemn conviction that he bore God's commission for that end.

His policy was based throughout on the conviction that the duty of a Christian government is to guard the rights and liberties of the redeemed people of Christ. As Protector of England, he conducted the government in the King's stead, confiding in the God-given strength which true, earnest religion had infused into his people. He did not abolish the Church Constitution of Presbyterianism, although it was not in accordance with his own convictions, and he opposed all constraint of conscience, satisfied with having secured liberty for his own people.

Thomas Carlyle, who was the first to rediscover this man, says of him: "Where is there another like him, carrying on the business of the world with a

heart filled with the Idea of the Most High. Like the eternal forces, which nothing can withstand, he strides across the battle-field of time."

We thus find, at the close of the Reformation movement—certainly only for a historical moment —a return to the primitive state of Christianity. We see a nation confident that it is *the People of God*, and therefore bound to live in brotherly unity with all the redeemed, and to extend the Kingdom of Christ upon earth; a people who need no specific Church organisation or functions, because they are all taught of God. It was the reign of inspiration, if but for a brief moment, and that moment was the greatest and the most fundamental in the history of England's evolution. The Stuart reaction could not blot out the traces of this epoch, despotically as it carried itself towards the Puritans.

When William of Orange gained the supremacy of England with such ease, it was under the spell of these words, which he caused to be inscribed on the banner of England, "For the Protestant Religion and England's Liberty."

With this incident of the year 1688 the history of the Reformation closes. England had been the predominating Protestant power for a hundred years, and

the Puritan faith persecuted there, in its native land, had laid in North America the foundations of the great Republic, which (not actuated by any indifference, but rather stimulated by an impulse of faith) has taken the initiative in carrying out the principle of perfect religious liberty and the entire independence of the Church from the State.

The Reformation did not contend for liberty in the first instance, but for truth. Her heroes met death in the cause of truth. They strove for liberty only for the sake of truth, for freedom is only valuable, is only a good—the highest good—in alliance with truth; truth of which men are convinced, and with which they are permeated. And the sublimest truth is found in faith—in that assurance which unites the soul with God, which draws mortal man with the forces of Eternity.

To advance religion as the dominating and motive power of a new period of history—the most prolific in great men and in world-stirring events—was the mission of THE REFORMATION.

V.

The Counter-Reformation.

V.

THE COUNTER-REFORMATION.

IN my endeavour to convey a general idea of the progress of Christianity in the world, by a series of studies, too great a gap would be left in addition to the many lesser ones, which are unavoidable, if a brief outline of the Catholic Reformation did not follow the sketch of the Protestant movement.

It has been called the *Counter-Reformation*, from its having originated in great measure as a counterpoise to the Protestant Reformation.

The great nations of Europe have, each in their turn, contributed their quota to religious and ecclesiastical ideas. France and Italy led the van in the Middle Ages, Germany and England in the Reformation era, and Spain became the birth-place of the Counter-Reformation. Two movements originated there, one of which aimed at the *reform of Catholicism*, and

the other at the *restoration of the full power of the Papacy.*

Both were prosecuted during the reign of the Spanish King, Charles V., who, in his capacity of German emperor, materially checked the spread of the Reformation throughout Germany. In Spain, the Hapsburg dynasty revived Charlemagne's dream of founding a universal empire. It was to be under the supremacy of Castille and Arragon, in whose domains the Catholic Church reigned from the rising to the setting sun. At the close of the fifteenth century, the Confessor of the great Queen Isabella—CARDINAL XIMENES—a Franciscan monk, was looked upon as the Reformer of the Spanish Church, in the sense in which the religiously zealous and ascetic prelates, who were hostile to the encroachments of the Papacy, desired reform. Reformers, in that sense, were to be found in every country, and the Abbot Staupitz, well known from his connection with Luther's history, is a typical example of that school. Every fibre of chivalry in the Spanish people was strained and quivering from the struggle waged by them nine hundred years long with the Crescent. No great time had elapsed since the last of the Moors had been driven out of Granada; and the spirit of the nation, which was permeated by the most

highly strung sense of honour with a tendency to extravagant fantasy and religious enthusiasm, kept the aristocratic crusading sentiments of the Middle Ages longer alive in Spain than in any other land. The almost fabulous political events of the closing years of the fifteenth and the opening years of the sixteenth centuries, in which a new India had been discovered in the West, and vast treasures had been seized by a mere handful of soldiers in Mexico and Peru, lent impetus to a faith to which nothing appeared impossible.

The Spanish Church was reformed in the spirit of a religious-believing but thoroughly national and patriotic Catholicism. While the Churches of all the other countries had been compelled to relinquish to the papal power that right of reservation which they had acquired in the great councils, that of Spain had succeeded in maintaining and multiplying hers. The nomination to spiritual offices was in the hands of the ruling powers, Spaniards alone were eligible for the higher ecclesiastical dignities. Pontifical mandates were subjected to the royal approval, and the financial spoiling of the country by the Curia was made impossible by restrictive laws. Even the crusade tax, imposed by the Church, flowed into the coffers of the State. The Inquisition was a department of the State. The

monasteries were reformed and pains were bestowed upon the higher culture of the clergy. New universities were founded, and an alliance was made between the Augustinians, the Thomists, and the Humanists.

Ximenes himself published a new letterpress edition of the Bible in the originals, with the old versions and expositions (*the Complutensian Polyglot*).

In one word, such a reformation was effected as every prelate at the Council of Basle had desired to see carried out in his own country. Respect was paid to the Pope, as spiritual head of the Catholic Church, but in his capacity of Italian sovereign he was no more to the King of Spain than any other European monarch—simply a pawn on the political chess-board, to be used as his caprices and calculations required. German and Spanish troops stormed and sacked Rome in the year 1527.

This Spanish Catholic Reformation was represented on the pontifical throne in the person of Adrian VI.—a Netherlander. He had been the tutor of Charles V., and he was elected from a Spanish bishopric, in 1552, as the successor of Leo X., in spite of the opposing Medicean vote. Although the result was not great he immediately began to pursue those measures for the reform of the pontifical court which had been demanded

by Luther. Even after his death, which came all too soon, the spirit of earnest piety—with the Bible for its standard—remained as a living power in the best section of the higher clergy of Italy. In Rome, Venice, Florence and Naples, there were numerous circles—both lay and clerical—interested in the revival of religion who answered the questions that had been raised by Luther in the spirit of his teaching. These were questions of paramount importance to mankind, such as this: "Is the reconciliation of man to God the result of free grace or of personal merit?" Michael Angelo composed sonnets in which the doctrine of justification by faith is plainly acknowledged, and Italy was deluged with tracts promulgating Bible doctrines in the form in which Luther had issued them before assuming his definite position of Reformer—that is to say, without deducing from them any consequences perilous to the constitution of the Church.

A papal legate—the Venetian Contarini—could conscientiously state his approval of the Reformer's doctrine of justification by faith, at the Conference on religion which was held at Ratisbon in 1541. The hierarchy, even, began to purge themselves from their most crying iniquities, and, since the middle of the sixteenth century, zealous ecclesiastics of irreproachable

morals have filled St. Peter's chair, and the abuses against which Luther contended, with the moral indignation of an honest Christian man, have never again ventured to brave the light of day.

The Emperor was anxious to direct this revival movement into the channel of a conference in council, whose ultimatums should be binding upon the Pope; and this long promised council was convened at Trent in the year 1545. During the three periods of its conferences, extending over eighteen years in all, Catholic dogma was formulated, under the ever-waxing influence of the papal legates, in the manner in which it is still preserved, so that the present phase of Catholicism is really of a later date than the Evangelical doctrinal system, having been promulgated expressly as a counterpoise to it.

The mundane theory of the Middle Ages was retained, but it was presented in a new aspect, dictated by the adversary. This system was not the achievement of one or more skilful thinkers, nor even the utterance of a popular movement, but the laboured work of a diplomatic compromise—a work of necessity and prudence, inspired by dread of Protestantism.

Even so, the decisions of the Council were not accepted by France and Spain, the most zealous of

Catholic States, because the ruling powers deemed them perilous to their own authority in their national Churches.

In the Council much plain speaking was administered by zealous brethren to the assembled fathers. The monstrous declension of the Church, the secularisation of the whole body of the clergy, the greed of the Curia, the ignorance, laziness and lewdness of the secular clergy, the corruption of the monks—in short, of the official Church—being laid by them at the Church's own door. One member was specially solicitous for the due training of an able priesthood in the path of reform which had been already entered upon in Spain. After this there followed a remarkable revival of monasticism in Italy. This reformed monasticism was of an essentially different character from the primitive type; it had special aims in view. Primitive monasticism had been an end in itself, a realistic demonstration of the ideal Christian life, while the modern type aimed at the education of the clergy and dedicated its powers to home and foreign missions, to the conversion of heretics and to works of charity.

Many of these orders were simply communities of priests, for the special representatives of the clerical

office had to be decked out with the virtues of monasticism; and thus the previous distinction between priest and monk began to vanish—the monk, to a certain extent, being merely ultra-priestly and no longer representing a special order collateral with the priesthood.

The orders of nuns, which were formed with the same designs, also acquired a very different standing from their predecessors. The Sisters of Mercy may be taken as a typical instance. They were created by the French Vincent de Paul on a perfectly new system. They were to go about freely, acting as missionaries in labours of love for the sick.

St. Vincent gives this graphic description of his creation: "Their chamber is their cell, the parish church is their chapel, the streets of the town and the hospitals are their convents, obedience is their cloister, the fear of God is their girdle, and holy chastity is their veil." The fountainhead of what we call *home mission work*, the energetic Christian philanthropy which goes out to seek those who have lapsed from the Church and from Christianity, is therefore to be found in those Catholic societies. Only, according to the Catholic view, those lapsed and lost comprise heretics as well as the irreligious and the morally de-

praved. This has led the very greatest men of this reformed Catholicism, whose purity of soul, devotion and charity, we cordially acknowledge — a Carlo Borromeo, a Francis de Sales, and a Fénélon — to treat people, steadfastly settled in the healthy life of the evangelical faith, with the same restoratives that might be applied to perishing souls—a procedure necessarily offensive to Protestants.

Orders were also founded with scientific aims, specially for research in the department of Church History. The most important of these was the Benedictine community in the Convent of St. Maur, near Paris, called the Maurites. They were the originators of the scientific study of documents and of chronology, and they have been pioneers in essentially useful departments of historical criticism.

The restoration of those who had become estranged from the Church was not to be effected, however, solely by spiritual agencies, where, as in Italy, a powerful cultured class was not merely indifferent to the Church, but had actually assumed an attitude of defiance towards it.

The Inquisition had to be brought forward as an ally. It was, as is well-known, a particular form of ecclesiastical procedure, introduced by Innocent III.

for the hunting out of heretics. Cardinal Caraffa, one of the most zealous Catholic reformers, counselled its re-adoption at a sitting of the Curia, and its notorious judicial crusade ensued, resulting in the eradication of every vestige of the spirit of the evangelical reformation from Italy within the space of a few decades.

The assistance of the secular arm was depended upon for its effective working, and this was readily lent in the Papal States, in Spanish Naples, in Venice, and in the lesser principalities. The far-reaching plenary powers of the Inquisition made it possible to seize people of the highest rank; so in cultured Italy, where an often unbridled licence of thought and speech had prevailed at the beginning of the century, a truly slavish fear of transgressing against the precepts of the Church predominated towards its close. The index of forbidden books, published by Caraffa in 1559, inflicted the same summary treatment on books as the Inquisition did on life and limb. It has been remarked that even the free creations of poetry succumbed to this influence, and that a Torquato Tasso, even, became gradually more timid and narrower and more fanatical. That growing narrowness may, however, be ascribed still more to the influence of Spanish models; for Spain superseded Italy as the representative

of Catholic culture about the close of the sixteenth and the commencement of the seventeenth centuries.

The three great Spanish poets of that age, CERVANTES, LOPE DE VEGA, and CALDERON, need only be particularised. Their superabundant creative power and their joy in production point to a correspondingly great intellectual demand on the part of a people whose national life was moved and stimulated to the uttermost by grand ideas. All three began life as soldiers, and served with distinction—Cervantes against the Turks and Corsairs, Lope in the Spanish Armada, and Calderon in the Netherlands. They could occasionally refer to Lutherans in respectful terms, but they considered separation from the one strong rock of the Church to be the height of madness, especially when a public life full of passion and verve, and all aglow with the brilliant hues of southern enthusiasm was seething around it. Cervantes became a Franciscan monk in his later years, while Lope and Calderon entered the priesthood. Their passionate, ardent abandonment to the joy of life, with its affairs of love and honour, its varied adventures, its perils and disillusions its proud national glory, and its outlook on wondrous zones ended in their turning with the same intense devotion to the contemplation of the life beyond.

The same extremes meet in the great Spanish painters. Simple realism and an extremely acute apprehension of fact in their portraits and *genre* pictures come into contrast with the magnificent chiaroscuro of their renderings of enthusiastic, ecstatic emotions and heavenly visions. Murillo, the greatest among them, was master of both styles. The life of the arch little beggars, as happy as kings in their rags, is reproduced by him with the same elemental power which conceived his Ascension of the Virgin.

IGNATIUS LOYOLA, by whom Catholicism was established on its modern basis of unlimited papal supremacy, was a product of this rich and profound national spirit, which exerted its full power for the preservation of mediæval Catholicism.

He planned the crusade of the Catholic Church for the recovery of the spiritual and temporal domains lost to heresy, and his Society—his "Company" of Jesus, as it has been aptly called, the *Order of Jesuits*—marched in the van of that crusading army into which he had endeavoured to mould the Church militant.

In order to annihilate Protestantism he adopted, as far as was possible, the means and motives that had been set in motion by Protestantism. The Order of

Jesuits was not a reconstruction but a new creation, in which a changed condition of the Church was reflected, as in a mirror.

Ignatius had vaguely recognised that Protestantism was the strength and source of a new era of civilisation, and he was resolved that his institution, also, should become influential in the department of culture. He perceived that the spirit of private judgment and of individual faith was the backbone of the Reformation, and he determined to exorcise that spirit by evoking its antidote through a system of careful training.

It had been clearly shown what a strong weapon learning was in the hands of the Protestants, so he determined to meet that with learning in another aspect.

Ignatius is no longer a problem or monster to us. Protestant research has taught us to recognise what is peculiarly great and estimable even in his character. As wounded officer, he lay on his sick-bed, revelling in chivalrous romances and in legends of the saints, till the conviction was forced upon him—bitterly disappointing to his ardent ambition—that his incurably stiff leg meant ruin to his hopes of preferment as soldier and courtier. Then he determined to become

what St. Francis and St. Dominic had been. Like another Don Quixote he hung up his arms at Monserrat and dedicated his life to the Blessed Virgin.

He attained to full and clear knowledge of his own heart through sore discipline and inward struggles in the Dominican Convent at Manresa, and finally became assured of his own salvation. He forthwith determined to make the path of terror and remorse and dread of hell, by which he had been led to assurance of his heavenly election, into a rule of spiritual direction for all who should long for the same assurance.

That was the origin of his *Spiritual Exercises*—his system for ensuring complete mastery over the will and for making it the devoted servant of Christ, or rather of the spiritual director, as His earthly representative. This result was to be obtained by a systematic soul-training continued for weeks, under the superintendence of an experienced spiritual drill-master.

While Luther brought the gift of liberty to Christians out of the depths of his soul agonies, directing seeking souls thenceforth to the well-spring of grace in Holy Scripture wherein they might wash and be clean, Ignatius brought from his the dogma of subjection of

the will to a ghostly superior. The end of this subjection was the service of God and the Church—or, of God *in* the Church; for the Church was infallible in his eyes. He did not conceive of its teachings as a dogmatic system, but rather as a series of representations—actual pictures.

A striking antithesis to Luther, who had also personally experienced the terrors of conscience and of judgment. The realisation of the Saviour of God, speaking pardon by His Word, had brought comfort to Luther; whereas, Ignatius found it in the contemplation of Christ's life on earth.

Truth had to present itself to Him through vision; imagination was his organ of faith. This was the method by which he brought home to himself the realities of hell and heaven, of Christ's life and death, and of the past and future of the Church; and this carefully regulated and disciplined conduct of the imagination communicated tenacious and unbending force to his will. He became a begging hermit—but instead of adopting the usual filthy garments, he dressed with scrupulous neatness. He made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and beheld all the holy places with enthusiasm; and then, the mature man, began the tedious studies of philology and theology at Alcala and

Salamanca. His influence over his fellow-students (suspected to be demoniacal) led them to group themselves around him in conventicles and brought him to the dungeons of the Inquisition. He gained his first recruits for his special scheme in Paris, whither he next repaired to go through a five years' theological course; and he proved the efficiency of his *Spiritual Exercises* on them. In 1534 ten of them—five of whom were Spaniards—agreed to set out upon a missionary expedition among the infidels, who held the promised land; and they resolved to place their services at the disposal of the Pope, if their own design proved impracticable. They met at Venice in 1537, but the war that had commenced between the Venetians and the Turks prevented their departure for the East, and they turned towards Rome.

The noble Cardinal Contarini espoused their cause, and Pope Paul III. granted them his sanction, under the condition—which was soon set aside—that the order should never comprise more than sixty members. In addition to the three monkish vows, they took upon them a fourth — subjection to the Pope—dedicating their lives to the perpetual service of Christ and of the Pope, volunteering as soldiers under the banner of the Cross, and resolving to serve the Lord alone, and the

high priest of Rome as His vicar upon earth. They held themselves ready, in fact, to carry out whatever should be ordered by the existing Pope or his successors in matters relating to the salvation and welfare of souls or the propaganda of the faith. Whenever it was physically possible, they were to set out without hesitation or excuse or delay, to whatever region they might be sent, though it should be at the ends of the earth.

In this we recognise the soldierly character—the military organisation—of the new order, and that for it the Pope was synonymous with the Church. The Jesuits marched forward into the world as the Pope's train-bands.

A passage from a document, published by them at the first centenary celebration of their order, contains this summary of their position, drawn up by one of their number:—"It is undeniable that we have undertaken a great and uninterrupted war in the interests of the Catholic Church against heresy. Heresy need never hope that the society will make terms with it, or remain quiescent. So long as a vital spark is left within us shall we clamour against the wolves and defend the Catholic sheepfold. No peace need be expected, for the seed of hatred is born within us. What Hamilcar was to Hannibal, Ignatius

is to us. At his instigation we have sworn eternal war upon the altars."

Their methods were in keeping with their warlike aims. They had the mobility of the mendicant orders, and the initiated members were pledged to utter poverty. They were likewise ordained as priests, they all studied theology, and had to go through the *Spiritual Exercises.* The oath of the order, which was only administered after long probation, did not suffice to unite the members to the society. As a preparation for that they had to be moulded by searching exercises and training, continued during a course of years. The aim of this spiritual drill was the attainment of perfect self-control, rendering them totally indifferent to all earthly considerations. According to Ignatius, the vow of poverty was merely intended to make the members as impassive as statues, which care as little whether they are dressed or undressed, swathed in rags or bedizened with precious stones. The possession of property by the society was therefore not inconsistent with that vow. The Jesuits aimed at making the whole man into a tool, just as military discipline is designed for making a thoroughly dependable and trustworthy weapon for the defence of the country from the individual recruit. The true Jesuit

was only complete when he lay will-less in the hands of his superiors, who stood for him in Christ's stead. He was required to adapt himself to any rôle, to meet all emergencies, to avoid all that might cause offence or be insulting, to be always composed, and as silent as the grave.

The agencies at their disposal were preaching (mainly to cultivated audiences), hearing confession, and acting as professors of the higher education. The spirit of the upper classes was to be brought back to the stronghold of the Church by a regulated system of spiritual fostering.

The society comprised various circles. The innermost and smallest was that of the fully initiated Jesuits, *The Professed* of the four vows. Next to them were *The Coadjutors*, spiritual and temporal, bound only by three vows, and subject to dismissal. The widest circle was composed of *The Affiliated*, whose relations to the society were not perceptible to the outer world. Ministers, government officials, judges and ecclesiastical dignitaries belonged to it. Besides these, were the *Novices*, who might rise gradually to the higher grades or inner circles after a probation of years, during which they were tested by ever changing trials.

A whole hierarchy governed the several circles—

Masters of the Novices, Rectors, Superiors, and Provincials—each of whom had a sort of adjutant, and all of whom controlled and spied upon one another. A General of the Order, elected for life, was at its head, and even he was watched over by two assistants or admonitors. His government was chiefly carried on by a system of compulsory correspondence of the whole order, regular reports being sent in monthly, giving details of character or conduct concerning individuals, and chronicling all events that transpired within the society.

Obedience was esteemed their cardinal virtue. Obedience was sacrifice; and the sacrifice of action, of will, even of opinion was required. Ignatius thought that the same system might be adopted with rational beings as that of the heavenly bodies, where all conjoined form one great mechanism, in which the movement of the secondary stars is regulated by the primary. But perfect uniformity of judgment between subordinate and superior was requisite for that, as the organ of will is not likely to submit itself unless the organ of judgment has been previously subjected to the superior. Christ Himself was to be seen in the person of the superior, rather than a mere man liable to sin and err.

The privileges obtained by the society were most comprehensive. They enjoyed all the rights of the secular clergy, but were exempted from all ecclesiastical organisation, and from the penal and inspecting jurisdiction of the episcopal functionaries, as well as from all burdens and taxes, and the necessity of appearing at synods and taking part in processions. The greatest indulgences were granted to them and to their penitents, and their opponents were put under the ban of excommunication. Their universities received equal rights with the others, and the General could appoint professors at his own discretion.

All their universities had prescribed courses of study and manuals of instruction, and they entered into competition with the schools founded by the Reformers. Their educational method, in which great stress was laid upon mental polish, elegance of Latin pronunciation, and refinement of manners; and which cultivated mathematics and natural science in preference to history, combined, as it was, with frequent brilliant exhibitions, found favour with the nobility, and every such establishment was an outpost of the almost omniscient General.

The Society of Jesus, which had obtained a firm footing in the chief cities of Italy so early as the year

1550, met with scant approval in Spain. Charles V. was suspicious of it, Philip II. showed it no favour, and Melchior Cano, the most illustrious of Spanish theologians, protested against it with honest indignation, saying, "They do not make better Christians, but bad knights. I have always considered that the natural powers were perfected rather than destroyed by grace, and that Christian discipline should not annihilate the knightly temperament, but should make ruler and king into still better ruler and king. They, however, convert the knights whom they get into their hands from lions into pullets, and from pullets into timid chicks." This criticism makes the point conspicuous in which Jesuitism differs from all the previous orders. It severs religion from all natural ties, from language and customs, and from national and family life. It aims at making a tool of the whole man—a means to an end—neither understanding or requiring to understand; he must dedicate himself with religious devotion to every task imposed upon him, careless of results, because it is for God's glory. It annihilates individuality, in order that the Divine Sun may shine through a human being as through colourless glass; but that is a cold light, for it shines through empty space. What can it enkindle

but the desire to rule over others after being thus ruled?

The Jesuits managed to acquire a footing in Germany in 1549, when they reorganised the University of Ingolstadt, and, by the year 1616, they had already formed twenty-three settlements in that country. They restored Austria, which had been almost protestantised, and also Bohemia, to the Catholic Church. Catholicism was maintained in Bavaria and in the spiritual principalities of Germany solely through their influence, and they were the mainsprings of the anti-Protestant policy in Switzerland. In France they inspired "The League" in the Huguenot war. They stole into England in disguise during Elizabeth's reign, and were accessories to the Gunpowder Plot.

In Poland, where the nobility had been mainly Protestant, they got the higher education into their hands in 1565, and thus ruined the national culture, according to the opinion of a Polish historian. The Thirty Years' War was essentially their work. When Ferdinand II., one of their pupils, assumed the government in Styria there were, including himself, four Catholics in Graz, and he had guaranteed religious liberty to the Estates. When he died there were no

Protestants left. He had violently uprooted Protestantism at the instigation of the Jesuits.

When Ignatius died in 1556, the order reckoned more than 1000 members, in 100 settlements and 12 provinces. The number of *The Professed,* however, was only 35! Four of these provinces lay beyond the seas, for Francis Xavier, the first adherent of Ignatius, with aid from Portugal, had begun his foreign mission to the East Indies as early as 1542. From that he had gone on to Japan, and he died when he was about to break ground in China.

In Brazil the Jesuits organised a state which was governed by themselves in patriarchal style. "They forced their way into all the lands which had been opened up to European enterprise by the great discoveries of the former generation. They were to be found in the depths of Peruvian mines, in the markets of the African slave caravans, on the coasts of the Spice Islands, and in the observatories of China. They made proselytes in regions into which none of their compatriots could be tempted to venture, even by avarice or the lust of spoil. They preached and disputed in tongues utterly unknown to all the other natives of Europe."

The position of confessors and directors of princes,

taken by the mendicant orders towards the close of the Middle Ages, was attained by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, and held by them till well on into the eighteenth. The perversion to Catholicism of many individuals belonging to princely houses (which is going on even at the present day) must be laid to their account.

Jesuitism is the extreme antithesis of Lutheranism. Luther believed in the all-subduing power of God's Word, even where no earthly means were visible. The Jesuit believes, too (we have no right to refuse credence to his conviction), that his is a cause bound to triumph, but only when he has used all possible means, when he has secured all the mines and gear for blowing up the enemy. He is out and out a politician. That is his strong point, and the secret power wherewith he fascinates politicians; but it is also his limitation. There is no place left for the living God in such a religion; it takes for granted that He has abdicated in favour of His earthly vicar and his adjutants, who imagine that they direct the destiny of nations by invisible threads.

In the France of Louis XIV., which had assumed the place long held by Spain as intellectual leader of Catholicism, violent contests were waged between the

papal power, which was then representative of the Jesuit interest, and Catholicism. The important privileges of the French Crown were maintained in opposition to the Church, and were multiplied during Louis's splendid régime. A thoroughly national clergy, led by their bishops, supported the king, who sacrificed his most industrious and faithful subjects, the Huguenots, to the exigencies of the unity of the faith. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, celebrated by Bossuet, the greatest bishop of France, as an act of faith, was certainly a proof of intense Catholic feeling.

At the time of its promulgation, nevertheless, the French episcopate, under Bossuet's leadership, entered the lists in the interests of the French monarchy against the Pope. This opposition was not a religious movement, like that of the great councils, but altogether political and national.

The following were the privileges which the Gallican Church maintained to be the basis of her constitution, and which were defended with enthusiasm in France: "The Pope has no power in secular matters. The decrees of the Council of Constance concerning Œcumenical Councils are still valid. The Pope in his own person, and apart from the authority of the Church, is not infallible." Louis XIV. was only forced to

make terms with the Pope at a later period, and to retract these propositions, more or less expressly, through the stress of political embarrassments. They fell into oblivion along with the ancient régime.

Bossuet was the most brilliant personality of seventeenth century Catholicism, the most thorough embodiment of the placidly aristocratic and victoriously progressive Church. He looked down upon the strife of parties in the Protestant camp with a mixture of contempt and compassion, but yet he deigned to confute their doctrines, entering into the subject very thoroughly, considering the man and his position.

In view of the impotence of the existing Protestant historical criticism, his *History of the Changes in Protestant Doctrine*, to which he opposed the immutability of Catholic truth, touched the sore. His *Statement of the Catholic Faith*, a little book of sixty pages, written in classic French and without polemical intent, is said to have won two of the grandsons of Du Plessis-Mornay, the Huguenot leader, and Marshall Turenne, for the Church.

He revived the Augustinian mode of viewing history, at a period when that method of confronting the Church and the world had been left far behind, and when Protestantism had proved that there is a religious element

in all moral duties, and likewise a moral obligation in all pertaining to religion to react upon the world.

Along with the Christian renaissance of Roman rhetoric, as exhibited on the classic French stage, there came a revival of the early Latin Christianity, both of French development. Bossuet only appeared once in the guise of ally of the Pope, and that was in the controversy with his great colleague, Archbishop Fénélon. That greatest of the spiritual fathers of France, for a time the darling of the Court, who had proved himself a bold prophet of the truth, even towards Louis XIV. (as has been shown by the famous letter, first published in 1825), had taken part in a mystical movement of Spanish origin. This mysticism recalls that of the German Master Eckhardt of the fourteenth century, and, like it, was suspected of depreciating the means of grace instituted by the Church. Fénélon taught that God was to be loved for His own sake, not for the blessedness He was expected to bestow. The whole theory connected with that idea was declared erroneous by the Pope, who took action on the instigation of Bossuet. Fénélon submitted to that verdict, and himself announced the decretal from his own archiepiscopal throne, and presided over the burning of his book in his palace court.

The Jansenitic controversy followed these disputes in order of time, but preceded them in importance; and that most intense of all the internal conflicts which the French Church has undergone lasted till well on into the eighteenth century.

The spirit of Augustine permeated the Church once more. A Netherlandish bishop, Jansenius, after earnest study, had written a full statement of Augustine's doctrine of irresistible grace, which was published after his death. This statement was received with approval by many of the illustrious theologians and thinkers of France. That party name for Augustine was not confined to his more profound speculations, but also embraced the ideal of the early Catholic Church system, as opposed to that of the Jesuitical papacy. The Jesuits managed to gain a section of the bishops for their side, and to obtain a papal anathema against five propositions of Jansenius. The Jansenists maintained that those propositions were not to be found in the book; and they would not discuss the legal question of the papal verdict till that simple matter of fact was disposed of; yet the State authorities ordered all ecclesiastical functionaries to submit to the Pope's decree.

In the beginning of the year 1656, "Letters to a

Provincial Friend," treating of this controversy in lively dialogues, sometimes with irony and scorn, sometimes with profound seriousness, began to appear under the pseudonym of Louis de Montalte.

They proceeded to attack the system of the Jesuits, and to hold up its principal weak points to the ridicule and moral indignation of cultivated Europe.

Their author was the great mathematician and philosopher, BLAISE PASCAL, who, after sore conflict with scepticism, had attained to a believing conviction of the truth of the Christian religion from studying the Bible and the apostolic fathers. The Jesuits have never rallied from these assaults on their weak points. The moral conscience—we may say the moral logic even—of the rest of the world, not merely of its Protestant portion, was elevated by Pascal above the stage at which it was morally possible to do a deed forbidden by the individual conscience, if authority could be pled for it and if a good intention were its main motive, or, that could deem an act, reprehensible in itself, a permissible sin if it could be proved to serve a good end. This exposure of the ethics of Jesuitism, which were amassed in countless folios, this branding of a worldly-minded, accommodating moral system, which thus

strangled all individual conscience, made the world aware of the dangerous tendencies of the order; but, in spite of that, it survived all attacks. Jansenism was stamped out by violent measures; but when the last traces of its theology and scriptural exegesis which were so inimical to Jesuitism, were being eradicated from France, a still more terrible foe had reached maturity, and was waiting to grapple with it—that was the spirit of the *Aufklärung*, or *Illuminism*, in face of which it could no longer hold the field.

Illuminism was an intellectual movement permeating Europe, and opposed to the close connection between clericalism and political life. It proceeded either on the assumption that religion is an innate property of human nature, or on the hypothesis that it is based solely upon reason, not upon a positive revelation as maintained by the Church.

It made its appearance after the great religious wars, permeating the higher classes in every quarter, and being considered a symptom of superior intelligence and of a well-balanced mind. It was a manifest token of the new demand for some comfort in life, apart from that which the Church had at its disposal, and it proved to what a great extent the ideas

of the new philosophy and of natural science had taken possession of what is called "good society."

Fed by countless rivulets and streamlets, it expanded into a torrent, which surged impetuously over the whole system of Church and State. Where a course was cut for it nothing essential was changed in the ecclesiastical and political organisations, although it entirely submerged them for the time being; but where its flow was hemmed by ecclesiastical or political monopolies, it was stemmed till that terrible breaking of the dykes came—*the Revolution.*

Even Illuminism had its positive religious aspect (which must be touched upon at another time), but it first appeared in history as a campaign led by some brilliant spirits against ecclesiastical superstition —church dogma and morals—and political aristocratic privileges. It originated in Protestant England, thence found its way to France, and subsequently to Germany. Its influence did not reach beyond the limits of literary culture,—the cities had a monopoly of culture,—and its manifestations differed vastly in the various countries.

The conflict against the Catholic Church and its intolerance, against political despotism, and last, but not least, against Jesuitism, was carried on in France

under the leadership of Voltaire, once a pupil of the Jesuits and the greatest of French authors. He made use of all sorts of weapons—of poetry, satire, sarcasm, and righteous indignation. Illuminism became the prevailing tendency in all literature and the modish style in cultivated society, even in that of the higher clergy.

In the new encyclopædia it made itself serviceable to general knowledge, as if knowledge and Illuminism were one and the same thing; and thus it paved the way for that intellectual condition in which the theories of a new system of human life, more closely conformable to nature, were accepted as the ready-made programme of a political social revolution. These theories were poured forth with the fervid eloquence of a prophet by the Genevan Rousseau, who had been bred a Calvinist; and fanatical atheism, which had grown to maturity under the influence of a withering-up Jesuitism, finally undertook to put them into practice.

Since that period the fever of revolution has become endemic in the states and countries which had the greatest alloy of Jesuitical Catholicism.

A consequence of the prevailing Illuminism, and of the ever-increasing absorption in commerce and in

financial business, was the suspension of the Jesuit Order. This was first brought about by the rationalistic rulers of the despotic states of Portugal, France, Spain, and Austria, and ratified finally by Clement XIV., the Pope of Illuminism, on 16th August 1773. The reason given by him for his action was: "That the Society was no longer producing good fruits, or fulfilling the useful end for which it had been founded; and that it was scarcely possible, or rather quite impossible, to hope that the true and lasting peace of the Church could be restored as long as it existed."

There immediately followed a revival of the early Catholic ideas; but, as religious feeling was at an even lower ebb in the Catholic than in the Protestant Church at that time, it devoted itself exclusively to the emancipation of the Episcopal power from the Papal supremacy. The Napoleonic Revolution, which made away with all the spiritual principalities, closed that chapter of history.

The religious revival of the nineteenth century (which will be the subject of our concluding study) has also been the means of elevating the ideals of the Catholic Church, and the world has scarcely ever been so favourably situated for the re-establishment of a general universal Church, independent of all national

and political conflicts, during the history of Christianity as then. This idea was the expression of the profound yearning of the enthusiastic spirits who, at the beginning of the century, longed for a universal religion and a universal peace.

That its realisation was made more impossible than ever, and that the spirit of Protestantism had new vigour infused into it, was the consequence of an ecclesiastical development which Catholicism underwent under the direction of the restored papal power. On that occasion it was Napoleon who saved the Pope. He did certainly treat Pius VII. very badly when he was his prisoner, but through the French Concordat with him the old Gallican Church was annihilated and the formula was drawn up, in accordance with which the transactions between the Government and the papal power are now generally carried into effect. Terms were made with the Pope with a view to the regulation of Church influence in France. The Pope let it be known, however, that he held himself bound by no treaty, and when there is a sufficient weight of popular opinion on his side he can checkmate the political powers.

The restoration of the States of the Church in the year 1814 became an episode of the past on 22nd

September 1870. As the Curia was utterly incapable of governing a modern State, this emancipation from secular rule has proved extremely advantageous to the papal power. For in this modern world and with the methods of this modern world, which almost absolutely ignore questions of creed, and which, with its political emancipation of the people, so frequently leaves the most fateful decisions in the hands of majorities or in the power of the press, the Papacy has succeeded in regaining the fulness of power involved in its privileges and a resulting influence on political life, unknown even in Catholic countries since the Reformation era. The most effective agent in attaining this position has been the order of Jesuits, restored by Pius VII. immediately after his return to Rome.

Even the Jesuits seem to have gained experience from their fall; they have been tempered by the sharp supervision of Protestantism, whose moral principles govern the modern world, and by their struggle with spiritual opponents.

The spiritual history of Catholicism during this century has been defined for us by opponents of Jesuitism, but with the concurrence of its friends, as a substitution of the idea of the Papacy for that of Early Catholicism.

The ideal conceptions of the Catholic Church which were first set afloat by the school of German Romanticism were supplanted by a new programme, the work of the Sardinian COUNT DE MAISTRE, establishing the dogma of papal supremacy on rational principles. These views assumed a strange aspect in the greatest religious spirit that France has produced in the present century—the Abbé de Lamennais—according to which the infallible Pope is held to represent the collective wisdom of the Church. To give them effect the so-called liberal programme of separation of Church and State was accepted along with all other liberalisms.

This theory of the Papal Infallibility has now become dominant in the Catholic Church. It celebrated its triumph in 1870, when it was promulgated as a dogma of the Church. This was proof positive that Early Catholicism had been finally set aside in favour of the Papacy.

Since the secular rule of the Popes ceased their spiritual power has increased. The *Kultur-Kampf*[1]

[1] The struggle between State and Church, on the part of the former for supremacy, on that of the latter for practical independence. The Church in this case means the Roman Catholic establishment, for the Protestant State Church of Germany has long been delivered over, bound hand and foot, to the political rulers of the country.

The filling of the vacant see of Cologne with a nominee of Rome, and the measures taken by the Prussian Government to nullify the

came opportunely to its aid in Germany—the country from which it had most to fear; for the threatened internal conflict among the enlightened German Catholics, who were greatly agitated by the declaration of the Papal Infallibility, was warded off when Rome succeeded in convincing the Catholic public that their existence as a Church was menaced. Only then was Germany at one with the Pope. The astute leaders of Catholic policy will see to it, in the future, that some such external contest is at hand, over which the internal dissensions may be forgotten. These, of course, always exist—as, for instance, disputes between the Jesuits and the other orders.

The ideal of a Papal Catholic nation, in which the interests of the Church predominate over those of the nation, appears to have been attained in Germany, and if the tokens are not misleading, Germany may now be looked upon as the centre of the Roman Catholic world.

Catholic foreign missions are also being developed, and precisely in those regions which have the grandest future before them—in China and the East Indies. The empire of the Pope, formerly confined to the West,

appointment, were the first trial of strength between the contending powers, and marked the beginning of the Kultur-Kampf—the *struggle* of modern *culture*, as represented by the civil power against the privileged position of the Church—*Note by Monsieur Charles Federer.*

has now become a spiritual cosmopolitan power in the five divisions of the globe, the like of which has never before been known in the world's history. Two hundred and eighteen millions of Catholics, scattered over the whole world, obey the spiritual and often also the political mandates of the Bishop of Rome. A vast tribute in money and valuables flows freely into his coffers. He is one of the richest men in the world, and he has only to tremble lest a diminution of his subjects' faith in him should diminish his revenues —the Peter's pence. All the secrets of the world stream into his private chambers, and he has at his disposal an astute and silent diplomatic force with which that of no other monarch can compare. He is a mystery to his subjects — controlled by none, accountable to none, known by none.

We must keep these facts in view, in order to understand aright what impression it must have made on the Catholic world when the German Empire—the adversary he had to dread most, with the exception of Russia—accepted the Pope as umpire in the disputed question of the *Caroline Islands;*[1] and when all the

[1] The question of the sovereignty over the Caroline Islands, lately in dispute between Spain and Germany, and which was submitted to the arbitration of the Pope.

sovereigns of Christendom, save the king of Norway and Sweden, did homage to the present Pope on the occasion of his priestly jubilee—a purely ecclesiastical celebration.

The Catholic mind can scarcely have come to any other conclusion than that pronounced by WINDHORST: "The Pope governs the world."

Thinking of Him who said, "My Kingdom is not of this world," we come to a very different conclusion: "The world governs the Pope." This universal power is interesting to us, but it does not inspire us with awe. We know how entirely this structure, which has attained to such a giddy height, is dependent not merely on political conditions, but, before all, on the existence of a spiritually powerful Protestantism.

We may challenge Catholicism to point to any religious fervour, moral power, or philosophical acumen in Catholic thought, which has not grown in Protestant soil or been first fostered into bloom therein.

This leads us on to our final subject—that of the living power of Christianity in the last century.

VI.

Christianity during the Last Century.

VI.

CHRISTIANITY DURING THE LAST CENTURY.

IN April 1788—a century ago—the world had entered the sign of the French Revolution, but knew it not.

In France, that ministry of Necker was in power which was about to open the sluices of the revolutionary movement by convening the Estates of the Realm; but the rest of Europe was sunk in profoundest peace under absolute monarchies. In Holland, Prussia had just secured an easy victory for the House of Orange, and it had also concluded an alliance with England, which united the chief powers of the Protestantism of the period.

Germany was utterly engrossed with its literary affairs. Goethe was writing from Rome, announcing his speedy return from Italy. The German Renais-

sance—the reversion of our poetry to the antique—was dawning. *Iphigenia* and *Don Carlos* had been published, and Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* was coming out. The cultured community was revelling in the enjoyment of æsthetic pleasures. Rationalism was beginning to make itself heard in the Churches, the old hymns were being altered past recognition, and the fashionable sentimentality was affecting even the sermons and the prayers. Humanity and Cosmopolitanism had become the religious ideals of the thoughtful. The Deity was conceived of as the Architect of the Universe (as the order of Freemasons styled it)—a conception idealised by Mozart in the exquisite music of his *Magic Flute*. He pictures the Divine Being enthroned on the highest platform, in a temple of Wisdom, and surrounded by philosophically cultured cherubim; while all the peoples of the earth, "from the Mongol to the Greek Seer," toil upwards, by a series of countless steps, towards His throne, becoming purified as they ascend.

The goal which, it was hoped, might be attained in the nineteenth century, was universal peace, brought about by general culture and philanthropy. With all this, it was imagined that the kernel of Christianity was being preserved, for the Sage of Nazareth was

granted even by those believers (for believers, in a way, they were) the supreme place in the hierarchy of virtuous spirits, who ruled over the world in fraternal unity from their dwelling 'mid the stars.

This dogma made no distinction between Catholic and Protestant. Confessional controversies were at an end, and it was only for the pleasure of outwitting the Pope that any interest was taken in the Conference of German Archbishops, held at Ems in 1786, with the object of founding a German National Church, independent of the Pope. The cultured classes felt that they had got a stage beyond Churches. Toleration was the universal creed, and idyllic delight in nature was esteemed the true Divine worship. The Church of history existed only for the theologians. The religious orator, who came upon the stage in 1799—the theologian SCHLEIERMACHER—could only appeal to "the cultured scorners of religion."

The rage for the antique in the plastic arts was turning all heads. If a church were built it had to resemble a Doric or Corinthian temple. Instead of the cross, the sphinx, the obelisk, the broken column, the urn stood guard over the graves. That was how matters stood with the great majority of the cultivated classes.

The country people were abiding patiently in their oppressed, unfree condition, still learning their old catechisms and the grand old hymns, and still praying with the aid of such devotional books as Habermann, Starck, and Arndt; feeling themselves uncomprehended, in their inmost being, by the aristocracy of intellect, they were gathering in conventicles, where a pietistic revival was preached to them.

If we look around us to-day—a century later—we find the Church system, in its historical form, re-established in every quarter; the Confessions living a healthy separate existence, and combating each other as valiantly as in the Reformation era; while the Protestant Churches occupy a prominent place among the authorities, which are again treated with respect. We are building again in the Gothic and Romance styles, with profuse decoration. The ancient Church style is revived in the language of hymns and prayers, and the devotional books of the age of Illuminism have been supplanted by others which make use of the old phraseology. The old Church music is restored, and the *chefs-d'œuvres* of a Bach are performed with a perfection and a devoutness such as he himself never experienced. The restoration movement is making headway in every quarter; originating with the cultured

classes, it is filtering down to the lower grades. This restoration of the Church and of religion is most perceptible in the concrete influence which it brings to bear upon national culture in Protestant countries. The negative tendencies which have to be combated are, as a rule, more powerful in Catholic than in Protestant spheres. The popular piety, which manifests itself by occasional outbursts, is decidedly stronger in the Evangelical Churches. That is how matters stand near the close of this century.

My task is to sketch in outline the various steps which have led up to such a changed condition.

The two religious movements into which the eighteenth century divides itself, as it were, are *Pietism* and *Illuminism* (*The Aufklärung*).

Pietism has left the structure of the State Church system [1] uninjured, even when it was uncongenial to it; but it has pitted the religious sentiment of the laity against the dogmas of the theologians. It has permeated the higher classes of Northern and Middle Germany, by means of conventicles and private societies (bearing some resemblance to the old religious orders), and even among the people it has gained a firm footing in South Germany and in the Baltic Provinces. In

[1] This applies to Germany exclusively.—*Translator's Note.*

the Moravian community, founded by Zinzendorf, it has not so much organised a particular Church as improved upon the Church, by gathering the people of the Lord from the various Churches, and making a union of believers, whose sole end and aim in life is love to the Saviour and the propagation of faith in Him, by missionary work in the world. Pietism has also had a very fruitful influence upon English Methodism, first uniting those two tendencies which have continued to walk hand in hand during the nineteenth century.

Upon Pietism, which had evidently paved the way for it in great measure, Illuminism followed with marvellous celerity.

It found its way into ecclesiastical German Protestantism as an orthodoxy of Rationalism and Optimism.

I mean by Illuminism the following:—Till that period the main element of the German Protestant Church system had been steadfast adherence to the theology of the Confessions. I use orthodoxy in the simple sense of the word, without underlying suggestions. Pietism had made membership of the true Church—the *converted* being understood—to depend on the perfectly novel condition of inward piety, especially on the undergoing of pessimistic religious

emotions. As a counterpoise to that, Protestant Ecclesiastical Illuminism decided anew that the acknowledgment of a doctrine was the essential thing, and this was the doctrine introduced by LEIBNITZ, and elaborated by WOLFF—the reasonableness of the Christian dogmas. From this standpoint of the reasonableness of dogma the way led of itself to the dogma of reason, to the worship of reason as the highest court of appeal in the religious life.

The rose-coloured view of life pervading the Theodicæa of Leibnitz—a philosophy of Optimism—became the concomitant religious sentiment of Rationalism in contrast to Pietistic Pessimism.

Opposition to ecclesiastical formula or to the confession was not suspected here. Anyone may be convinced of that by considering the poetry of Gellert, which is perfectly correct in doctrine, although permeated by the spirit and tone of Illuminism.

This intellectual tendency, which swayed almost the whole sphere of theology and culture, was the cradle of modern classic poetry and of German science, and it thus gave a new aspect to life, which was not without effect, even on such opponents of Illuminism, as Hamann and Lavater. Even the poetry of KLOPSTOCK, which was designedly based on the religious

and ecclesiastical traditions of the Reformation, speaks from the platform of a new ideal of life. This ideal of life held itself aloof from the authority of the Church. It had forgotten how closely the life of Church and State had been intertwined since the Reformation. The ecclesiastical sentiment had vanished, and the national was still unborn. The new ideals of humanity, cosmopolitanism, and toleration seemed to illumine a higher stage of human life from which distinctions of nationalities and creeds had vanished. Everyone was by nature primarily man—secondarily German, French, or whatever he might be; thirdly, Lutheran, Calvinist, or Catholic; and lastly, a citizen of some special State.

Even in Prussia the State was looked upon as a kind of strait-jacket in which the "man" had to be confined for some hours daily, by way of discipline. Those are certainly the views that form the background of our classic poetry. Without their idealism, which soared far above the actualities of life, neither that art nor philosophical and historical sciences of such elevation and independence could have been developed in the utter vacuity of the public life of that epoch. The German Illuminism, which had been introduced by Leibnitz, came to an end with KANT—the philosopher of Königsberg.

Illuminism was consummated in Kant. Himself a rationalist, he conquered Rationalism, and thus inaugurated the intellectual life of the nineteenth century. The kernel of Kant's *Critique of Reason*—the investigation into the bases of all knowledge—was the separation between faith and knowledge. He maintains that the outwardly or inwardly cognisable can alone be object of knowledge, in so far as these alone fall within the range of certain innate conceptions of the understanding. But precisely in this our natural organisation lies the limit to all knowledge. We do not know the world as it is, but only as it appears to us. Our knowledge of it is purely relative. We simply make pictures of things for ourselves. Beyond this phenomenal knowledge, however, there is a moral certitude by the aid of which we can be convinced even of things which we cannot cognise.

As object of this moral faith, Kant specified the rationalistic triad: God, freedom, immortality—the ideas postulated by the moral reason. It is evident that totally opposite conclusions may be drawn from this premiss. The theologian Schleiermacher drew the conclusion in favour of religion, and designated the susceptibility to the mystery of the universe, inherent in greater or less degree in man, as the

source of religious emotion from which a religious conception of the world is developed, which nowhere collides with science, because it moves in the fourth dimension, if I may use that expression by way of explanation.

While the foundations of a new Science of the Real were being laid, room was thus left, even in the sphere of thought, for the peaceable existence of religion, entirely apart from science. In the first place, however, it must be allowed, Kant's reform of philosophy gave rise to the most daring attempt that has ever been made by men to comprehend in their philosophy the entire universe in all its heights and depths. Soaring on the wings of the ingenious conceptions of the universe, contained in the modern poetry, the philosophers attempted to emulate the mediæval philosophy of faith—scholasticism—without borrowing any ideas from the Church, and to conceive of *the world as a Universe of Reason* (*ein Ganzes der Vernunft*). By combining the acquisitions of poetry and art with those of positive historic science and even with religious views, the semblance of a "science of the sciences" was produced, which was destined to embrace all knowledge, and, for a generation, the problem of the world was supposed to have been solved. Illumin-

ism again became supreme. The death of the great philosopher Hegel (1831) marked the close of that Alexandrian universal empire of science. From its ruins the practical sciences of Nature and History have arisen and developed vigorously.

But that last and most brilliant blossom of Rationalism had already been influenced most profoundly by another movement — that of *Romanticism* — which, towards the close of the century, surged through civilised Europe like a mighty river, simultaneously with the transformation of the cosmopolitan French Revolution into a nation-murdering Cæsarism.

Romanticism was the restoration of the belief in the mystery that envelops the existence of man, which had been assailed by the self-analysis of a rationalising philosophy. It was a recognition of religion as the mysterious fundamental basis of all human life. It recognised the creative, fruitful, natural forces in art, language, law, and national life, which produce unconsciously and involuntarily and by inherent tendencies the grammar and jurisprudence, the ideals and characteristics of nations. The modern development of the philological, historical, and legal sciences have proceeded from Romanticism; the revival of music and the plastic arts and the renascent sentiment of

nationality have also been fostered by it; creative fantasy took the place of constructive reason, nationality that of humanity, the Fatherland that of the world. The political War of Liberation was preceded by spiritual emancipation from the yoke of Illuminism.

After establishing the reign of reason above the shattered privileges of the two dominant orders, after abolishing throne and altar, the French Revolution had entered upon a warlike propaganda, akin to that of Islam, for the new universal ideals of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. The new Cæsar borne aloft on its wave—Napoleon, the greatest *condottiere* ever produced by Italy—sought to make France, as the incarnation of humanity, and, through France, his own will, a law to Europe. For this end he acted the part of executioner to all the rotten State systems of Central Europe; and he carried out his providential function so despotically that he lashed the latent national spirit into life, which stretched him in the dust in the end.

A general revival of religion, which could scarcely have been expected in a Church that had fallen a prey to Illuminism, was combined with the German War of Liberation, as well as with those of Spain, of

the Tyrol and of Russia. Neither the few pietistic sects, nor the special strongholds of Romanticism—the universities of Halle, Berlin and Heidelberg—can be credited with that revival, for it really welled up from the nation's heart; it was a movement of the unlearned people, who hailed the new manner of speech used in the utterances of the cultivated classes, out of benevolent consideration for the people, as something comprehensible. The people had always held fast by the old-fashioned Church system, and thus the Protestant State Church system came safe and sound out of that Napoleonic revolution, which had ruined the Catholic Church system with the universal secularisation. More than that, a resurrection awaited it. The transformation of the old *Christian State* of the Reformation into the absolute Territorial State, of the "*Ruler by the grace of God*" into the Police, had converted the Church too into a portion of the police system. That liberation from the tyrant's yoke, which had been made possible by appealing to the latent national forces, made the restoration of that species of despotism, as of every other pre-Napoleonic despotism, an impossibility. The construction of a new Church was out of the question, for the old Church had not been annihilated; there

was no other plan possible save reconstruction,—reform from within,—and that was carried out. The whole religious and ecclesiastical system was expanded within the frame of the old State Church, just as the living body expands by that gradual transformation which we call growth, in which new particles are perpetually replacing the old. This may indeed be specified as the noteworthy religious fact of our century; evangelical Protestantism, deducible in part from the Reformation movement, but still more from the Bible, has become a civilising principle throughout the world, bound up with the national or racial life of the various countries. The present German, Scandinavian, and English Protestantisms are totally different from the old Lutheranism, Calvinism, or Puritanism. Each of these concrete forms is a not easily definable, but powerful individuality.

In these phases of Protestantism, however, the motive powers of Pietism, Illuminism, and Romanticism are more predominant than those of the Reformation. The eighteenth century lives on in a singular way in the nineteenth. To these forces another has been added—a turning again to the Bible. It must be confessed that (leaving some private religious circles out of consideration) this return to the Bible exists, as

yet, to any large extent, only among theologians. The German nation is still unaffected by it. The conceptions of the Bible still await resurrection in the religious national life of German Protestantism. We have still to look for a modern Luther who will reveal the Gospel to us again in such familiar and homely style that it will once more touch the hearts of the humblest, as of the highest, with convincing power. All the issue of our Biblical studies is, as yet, merely the pitiful product of theological ingenuity. We know now that the Reformation only restored to us the Pauline—the Apostolic Christianity; we are waiting for a revelation of the Gospel, for the perfect understanding of the person of our Saviour, even in the midst of the modern world!

The life of Protestant Christianity is enacted, so to say, on three stages.

The first is the sphere of the inner life, into whose depths the eye of the historian may not reach. Here is the well-spring of the movements which rule it as a whole. The second is the sphere of national Church life; the third is the sphere of the general Christian life of the world. The flourishing system of Church alliances, as well as the more intellectual development of ecclesiastical art and science, belong to this com-

mon Christian province, which extends far beyond the boundaries of countries and creeds.

The State Church system of Protestantism consists in the relation between Church and State.

The restoration of this relationship is the most difficult of political questions, because a formula has not yet been found which will suit two such different systems as the "Catholic Church," which is a State within and supreme above all States, and the Evangelical Church, which was the State itself till the present century. It is mainly in that aspect that the peculiar power of Protestantism continues to exist in the State. The Prussian State is the most remarkable creation erected on its basis. The adoption of the Reformed Confession by the reigning dynasty of an essentially Lutheran country led to the granting of equal rights to the adherents of both of the Evangelical Confessions; and the acquisition of Catholic territories led to the toleration of Catholicism. Notwithstanding this, the Prussian State continued to be instigated by the theocratic ideal of the Reformation era—to attempt to impose a uniform political religious system upon its subjects. The King considered himself the head of all the Churches in his land, and demanded from all alike self-sacrificing readiness in all affairs of

State. This was really the old ideal of "ruler by the grace of God," without the name, in accordance with which the State, as a Divine ordinance, demands the unconditional submission of all, even to the extent of military service being binding upon all. In this spirit, but strengthened by timely reforms, Prussia entered on the War of Liberation, and these ideas have affected her subsequent development. According to them, the German empire must be an ordinance of God for us Protestants, while it is only an artificial product of political diplomacy for Ultramontane Catholics. The political philosophy of Hegel has only attempted to construct theoretically and in ideal dimensions what already existed in fact.

None of the Prussian kings failed to recognise that this political principle was rooted in Protestantism, and yet Frederick William III., inspired by the admiration for the old ecclesiastical forms, aroused by Romanticism, and by his own gentle devout nature, which discerned the deep community of spirit between Christians of different creeds, approached the Catholics with open arms. He also united the Protestants in his domains into one Church—that is to say, in one communion as regarded public worship and the Holy Sacrament, without detriment to their confes-

sional divergences: this was the Prussian Union. The discovery of the Romanticists that religion was an entity distinct from confessions and theologies was made the organising principle of the Church and of public worship by a king who, himself a member of the Reformed Church, was yet justified in esteeming himself one of Luther's truest admirers and discerners. He believed that the Church would gain a fresh development of power through union; he therefore interested himself personally in the reform of public worship. The exercise of liturgical and dogmatical prerogatives, which had been obsolete for a century, by the Sovereign, aroused a storm. It is quite conceivable that the opposition of the Old Lutherans looked like rebellion to the king, and as such he crushed it by untimely military measures.

The very man who had the most intense longing for religious peace, by thus asserting his sovereign supremacy over both Churches, stirred up the Confessional controversy in the Evangelical Churches, and stimulated Ultramontanism in the Catholic Church, by the dispute about the Cologne bishopric. When we look more narrowly at the Old Lutheran opposition, we see the spirit of Pietism, with its hand grasping the Confession of Faith, confronting this

claim of the ruler of the land to be *Summus Episcopus*, and also the reconstruction of history, as applied to the Confessional dogma, introduced by Romanticism. Dogma again became a power in theology, if not in the life of the people. The Union proved a success in a few West German territories where the population contained an admixture of both confessions; in Nassau, in the Bavarian and Hessian Palatinates, and in Baden. In those States it was by no means solely the product of Romanticism, it was also the result of Rationalism, which had created a spirit of indifference to confessional divergences, and was therefore mainly theological in its origin.

The reign of Frederick William IV. was even less fruitful of benefit to the Church than that of his father and brother. He may be styled even more appropriately the Royal Theologian than the "Royal Romanticist," for the connecting link of all the many-sided spiritual and artistic interests of this most gifted of the Hohenzollerns was intense religious life and a certain intellectual trend towards theological speculation. The Catholic Church, alone, had him to thank for the nobly-conceived but fatal emancipation, which afterwards called forth the repressive measures of the ecclesiastical and State contest (*der Kultur Kampf*).

His "Midsummer Night's Dream" of a church constitution (which he sketched in a letter to Bunsen),[1] is woven from New Testament conceptions, interpreted by him in the early Catholic spirit.

He wished to re-establish the episcopate, leaving it free to develop itself naturally—a plan proved by history to be impracticable—without creating the various subordinate offices of the hierarchy, and his design did not include the liberation of the Church from the State. In this sense he sympathised with the constitution of the Anglican Church, and this led him to give expression to the idea of a possible constitutional union of the two greatest Protestant Churches, besides their practical union for a common evangelisation of the East, in the founding of the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric in Jerusalem.

The dislike of Liberalism for Romanticism, as well as the opposition of the German Pastorate, proved an insurmountable obstacle to an idea which has been quietly buried in our days; for the pastorate is more oligarchic than hierarchic in its leanings, and recognises no other ecclesiastical function save that of the almost unlimited sway of the pastor over the congre-

[1] *Correspondence of Frederick William IV. with Bunsen*, edited by Ranke.

gation. Since the outburst of 1848 political liberalism has solved the Church constitution question, which was raised by Frederick William III., by the introduction of the presbyterial and synodical constitution, which is less an imitation of the old system of the Reformation than an application of political-constitutionally limited monarchy to ecclesiastical affairs. Its results are not to be despised, because no use worth mentioning has been made of the liberty of leaving the Evangelical Church, since it has, in almost every part of Germany, given up playing the *rôle* of compulsory institution, to which all had to belong, will or nil.

The most powerful ecclesiastical province of Protestantism in Europe is that of England and Scotland, after Germany, with which Lutheran Scandinavia on the one side and the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and Austria on the other, may be combined, forming as they do an almost homogeneous development. (I do not speak of America for lack of reliable information.)

In England all religious movements have issued from *Methodism*, which, within narrower compass, has again revived the suppressed Puritanic spirit. The question of personal salvation and redemption is the one and all in Methodism. For that it subjects itself

to a soul discipline akin to that prescribed by Jesuitism. It advances its claims in the same propagandist spirit. It recks not to whom it turns, let him be a member of a Christian Church or an utter heathen. In its estimation, a man has only so much religion as he carries ready for use in his hands or on his tongue. It possesses no psychologically matured certainty of Divine grace, like Lutheranism or Calvinism, but rather a mathematically ascertained assurance of salvation, like that of Jesuitism. It therefore manifests itself in sudden conversions by such drastic measures as street, field, and lay preaching. Its last phase is the Salvation Army, which seeks, by all sorts of concessions to the liking of the English mob for noisy public demonstrations, to attain the great end of saving souls, without any Church training.

Methodism has not merely the merit of having put new life into Foreign Mission enterprise, but it has also exerted a paramount influence on the phenomenal philanthropy of England. It procured the abolition of slavery, and it agitates for the reform of poor laws and prisons. The circles in which it finds footing are the same in which Puritanism flourished — the middle classes of the towns and of the rural districts.

A Romanticist revival among the higher classes

issued from Oxford, where some eminent theologians were brought under the guidance of NEWMAN, and, through the study of the older English Church history and the Patristic writers, to the conviction that the English Church was not a branch of the Protestant, but rather of the Catholic Church. For some the movement ended in the Church of Rome, others became leaders of the so-called High Church party in the Anglican Church, which has gone so far as to accept the mass, the celibacy of the clergy, convents, and masses for the dead. It is only distinguishable from the Church of Rome by its non-recognition of the Pope, and from the Oriental Church by its ritual.

In opposition to it, an intellectually powerful Protestant Anglo-National party arose, led by the great teacher and historian, THOMAS ARNOLD, which sought to animate the English National Church and the national consciousness with the spirit of political and social reform. In the course of half a century the High Church movement has led thousands over to the Catholic Church, among whom professors, clergymen, scholars, and military men may be reckoned. Its influence has been great on the higher classes, even on the very highest, notably among aristocratic ladies.

The social reform, or Broad Church movement, has produced, among other fruits, the Anglo-Christian socialism which attempted to bring about a reconciliation of the Fourth Estate with the Church during the Chartist disturbances, by stirring up the Church and clergy to agitate for legislative measures in favour of the working classes. ROBERTSON, MAURICE, and CHARLES KINGSLEY, the poet and parson,—familiar names even in Germany, — belonged to the various branches of that party.

Religion in Scotland has had a totally different development from that of England; for there the national Presbyterianism has held its own as the religion of the people, unshaken by Illuminism; and the influences of Romanticism were also resisted by the democratic character of the Church and nation; whilst the didactic spirit, inherent in Calvinism, had, from the beginning of the century and onwards, grasped and enforced the idea of the Christian community being bound to care for the poor, and also to make use of industrial progress for the elevation of the intellectual and spiritual condition of the masses. This vigorous, intense enthusiasm burned with a wondrous glow in men like the philanthropic Dr. CHALMERS, who created the new system for the relief

of the poor at the beginning of the century, as well as in the greatest of Scottish thinkers, THOMAS CARLYLE; and it was combined with a strikingly common sense way of seeing into the real state of matters. The Disruption of a Scottish Free Church from the body of the State Church was purely the result of constitutional questions. Both Churches emulate each other in labours of love.

From Scotland, too (we may remark in passing), came EDWARD IRVING, who strove to draw down the Holy Spirit, by restoring the ancient system of the Apostolic Church, and to equip the Ark of Noah for the salvation of the elect at the impending dissolution of the world. His system was a mixture of sound realistic scriptural exegesis and of turbid fantasies.

The principle of religious liberty has been practically realised during the past generation, even in Catholic and Romance countries, in Austria, Italy, and Spain; and, so far as it has gone, it may be said that the star of toleration presides over this century. That has made a much more marked development of individuality possible, and it has also greatly increased the mutual influence of man over man. The Christian spirit goes its way, through the spiritual forces, now

politically enfranchised, aggressive like them, and like them, also, dependent on the efficiency of prominent personalities. While the ecclesiastical condition of Protestantism seems, externally, to be dividing and splitting more and more as the individual Churches more and more differentiate themselves, instead of uniting into one great body, he who studies the inner connection will perceive the most remarkable reciprocal action of an ever-deepening concord.

It resembles the historical development of Greece. When the Grecian States were dissolved and made subject to foreign dominion the Hellenic spirit and language began to dominate the world. While the Protestant Churches are breaking themselves into fragments, Protestantism is becoming the dominating spirit of the world.

There are no great outstanding reformers, recognised as authorities, beyond the bounds of country and nation, like the founders of Pietism and Methodism of last century, but, on the other hand, Christian movements in one country are immediately re-echoed in another. Foreign and home missions, provision for needy Christian brethren, and evangelising agencies (especially those in Romance lands) are pursued in an essential oneness of spirit and with mutual considera-

tion, even where there is no common organisation. These are the four fields in which the influence of Protestant Christianity on the ethical culture of the world is most perceptible, and it is the conception of the Brotherhood of Humanity, revealed by Illuminism, which, in the hands of Pietism, has produced the most striking results in these fields.

The conception of Humanity has two roots—one in heathenism, in the Stoic philosophy, where it was the expression of a pantheistic monadism; the other in Christianity, where it infers the obligation to treat all men as such as are of the called to the Kingdom of God. Illuminism adopted the conception from Christianity, but it interpreted it philosophically and gave it the signification of cosmopolitanism. *The Cosmopolitan Humanity*, the doctrine of the rights of man, was made the banner of the *Revolution*.

The revival of the national spirit has superseded the cosmopolitan ideal of humanity, but the Christian ideal of the brotherhood of man has been left intact, because it can be reconciled with the national conception; for the love of man (philanthropy) is not merely love of the brother in Christ, but love of every man, with the aim of winning him for Christ. That is the Pietistic conception. In it a vision of a new world

looms up, composed of those who have been won for Christ—in its phraseology, "the Kingdom of God."

Pietism in the nineteenth century was at first a lay movement, originating in certain religious coteries, belonging mainly to the more cultivated classes. It only found a wider field in West and South Germany and in Switzerland. It permeated certain universities at a later period, where it waged war on Illuminism with theological weapons, over which it gained a practical victory *by adopting its ethical motives.*

Since Christianity and the Church had a being there have been no such vast enterprises as those which are now conducted, practically by Pietism, in the home and foreign mission fields. These enterprises have no subsidiary aims, no worldly, selfish, or political ends in view—their sole object is to elevate and bless brother-man for the sake of God, and to win him for the Kingdom of God.

The founding of the BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY in 1804, just in the beginning of the century, proved to be the pioneering of many enterprises. It has a typical significance, for all Protestant denominations have taken part in it from its commencement. Its aim is limited to disseminating the Bible in all possible languages, and, in fulfilling that, it has given

a written language to more than a hundred aboriginal races, thus making the oldest and best of books the foundation stone of their civilisation. It does not propagate the Church, but the "Word of God," in sowing the seed given by the Saviour. That it sows broadcast, in the grandest confidence that, as the Word of God, it will prove its own efficiency.

This primary and world-embracing Protestant enterprise is carried on irrespective of creed, and in the firm faith that nothing save the spirit of the Gospel can be imbibed by the heathen peoples from the Bible. The Pope's regularly recurring anathema of the Bible Society is a decided proof that this work does not merit the meagre esteem in which it is held by many cultivated Protestants, who consider the Bible in itself too difficult of comprehension to be productive of great blessing.

The Protestant missionary sallies forth all alone into heathendom with his Bible. The Catholic missionary carries the Church with him as the first and essential thing, whereas the Protestant gathers individual souls and lets the Church develop gradually.

All the Prostestant churches, sects, and denominations, take their share in the work of foreign missions. They devote labour unspeakable and vast offerings

to that cause. The yearly budget now amounts to £1,500,000. The fields laboured in have, as a rule, no organic connection with the home Churches from which the missionaries are sent. The missionary societies are, ecclesiastically speaking, perfectly independent associations. They are church-founding powers. The diffusion of Christian civilisation among aboriginal races is combined with more direct missionary effort. Their aim (if I understand it aright) is to develop the peculiar characteristics of these races on Christian lines, without attempting to fashion them after an Indo-Germanic type. The distinction between these missions and those of the early Middle Ages is that these are almost entirely free from any political by-ends, as they do not act as political pioneers for the countries which send them forth. Nevertheless, as the most numerous and important missionary societies are English and American, their missions do tend, indirectly, to pave the way for the Anglo-Saxon race throughout the world.

In spite of the importance attained by individual personality in Protestanism, the great labours of the missionary societies appear to be almost impersonal. The workers who fall in the field or become incapacitated are quietly replaced by others, and their

memory is only preserved within a limited circle. The most meritorious conduct excites little sensation, and the grandest heroism is looked upon as a matter of course. In the eager forward march there is no time to spare for describing in detail the full history of the opening up of perfectly new regions by the mission pioneers.

The Home Mission enterprises in Christian lands are equally important in their own sphere. These comprise all efforts for redeeming and for training, however diverse their origin may be. PESTALOZZI, OBERLIN in Steinthal, FALK in Weimar, VON KOTTWITZ in Berlin, may be specified as the chief inaugurators of home mission work in Germany. It was only gradually that the inner bond connecting the houses of refuge, industrial schools, asylums, and hospitals was recognised, and then all were embraced in a homogeneous system of religious work, organised in behoof of the morally degraded and for the restoration of the lapsed and of such as could only be won by religious influences to the bosom of the Church and nation. WICHERN was the first in Germany to identify this subsidiary national idea with the work of redemption. FLIEDNER, founder of the Deaconess Institute, kept the upholding of the Church specially

in view, while Wichern aimed rather at the healing of national and social sores by means of the Gospel of the grace of God, which not only blots out sin, but also subdues it. VON BODELSCHWINGH keeps both of these ends before him in his work. Every Protestant country has its own special hero in this field. England has its GEORGE MÜLLER in Bristol, Holland its HELDRING, France its BOST, etc. etc.

This work strikes right down into the socio-political sphere. The transformation of the methods of the poor laws into education of the poor, the amelioration of prison life, and the treatment of the wounded in the field (all originating in England), owe their dissemination to the stimulating force of such Christian agencies. It is no small thing that the Red Cross of the Genevan Convention is now, at last, planted on the battle-field, bringing with it brotherly love, and love even for the enemy, into the very midst of the horrors of war.

Under the pressure of this philanthropic movement, thus reproducing itself in a series of purely humane associations which are neither religious nor ecclesiastical, but which, as a rule, leave the finding out of specially necessitous claims to the sagacity of Christian love, the State has advanced (and nowhere more decidedly so than in Germany) to a system of legislation, which

adopts direct Christian principles as the motives of its actions.

Protestant Christianity exhibits new traits in this department. It never demands primary acknowledgment of the Church; it does not aim at any proselytising or gaining converts for a creed; it seeks nothing more than room for the exercise of its teaching powers. The propaganda of love takes precedence of that of religion, and this latter consists in simply pointing to the Gospel—the fountain whence love flows.

It is from no lack of toleration, but rather from an efflux of delicate feeling,—which forbids all attempts at proselytising, where no desire for our help is expressed, —that the home mission efforts of Protestantism are expended mainly on Protestants. The reluctance of Protestantism to give up any of its baptized members, however degenerate they may be, is evidence, at any rate, of stronger faith, than if economic necessities, say in the case of Catholics, were taken advantage of to secure conversions at an easy rate. In spite of their being no ecclesiastical pressure to stimulate them, frequently, too, in face of public disfavour, these home mission agencies are continually extending and sending forth new shoots.

If in this connection I merely refer (without entering into special details) to the succour which Germany extends to needy brethren in the faith through the *Gustav-Adolfsvercin* (Gustavus-Adolphus Association), my reason is that I am addressing its most devoted adherents, who require no detailed description of its aims.

It builds churches, in the literal sense of the word, and the stimulus it has thus given to ecclesiastical architecture has brought about a revival of ecclesiastical and indeed of plastic art in all its branches. Catholics and Protestants emulate one another in this sphere, and it is characteristic of the Catholic Church that it employs more heads and hands here than the Evangelical Church does. And yet the Bible, and along with it the great national poets, have been the real well-spring of this enthusiasm, which flowed from the fountain-head of modern German art—the colony of German artists resident in Rome in the first decades of the century.

Although it is true that our great classic musicians, who flourished at the close of the last century, were all Catholics, the Romanticists were chiefly North German Protestants, and it is to them that we owe the revival of the ancient Church music and of the popular German

melodies. There has never before been such a renaissance in any department of art of seemingly lost creations of genius as that of this music, which has been caused to ring forth again in our midst.

The greatest intellectual fellowship prevails in Protestantism in the sphere of science—theology—and for that Germany is the central point. The collective theologies of the Protestant countries can be comprehended from a German standpoint, but it requires no knowledge of foreign theologies to understand that of Germany. The fatherland of Luther is original in this department as well as in that of church poetry and music. Every keen religious controversy in Germany is about doctrine, consequently theological in its origin.

The history of the Protestant theology of this century is an epitome of the whole intellectual and literary history of Europe, and therefore cannot be entered upon here. Its very essence may, however, be found gathered into this proposition: *The question of theology is that of the relation of faith and knowledge.*

When a new cosmic philosophy arose with Kant, religious faith was also taken within its sweep, its content was analysed, and, as an independent entity, it had to vanish. Science usurped the place of faith.

That had happened before in the Gnosticism of the second century. The religious philosophies of Kant as well as those of Fichte and Hegel, are—Gnosticism.

This characteristic of the theology, culminating in the modern philosophical Illuminism, was clearly evidenced when David Strauss—the subtle Tübingen lecturer—published his *Life of Jesus critically treated.* The significant element of that work, as of his subsequent *Christian Religious Doctrine in its Historical Development and in Conflict with Modern Science,* is this: —they demonstrate faith to be an empty delusion, on the assumption that the world's mystery has been fathomed—fathomed by the speculative philosophy of Hegel. According to the standard of that philosophy, all the New Testament narratives concerning Christ are impossible; consequently such events never happened, and the only question of importance left for Strauss to settle was, "What can have been the origin of such fables?" He answered that question by his mythic theory, and proceeded to analyse the hypothetical origin of every gospel story with remarkable subtlety.

The great problem, "What is left if the whole faith of Christianity (which has become a world-conquering power solely through this faith) has only been self-

deception?" is a problem that does not exist for him; for he assumes that there is no longer any mystery about the world—it has evolved itself by an unconscious logical necessity from the stone and the plant up to the human beings and the stars. Everything has had a logical sequence, and nonsense has its place in that logical sequence as well as sense. He inferred that the narratives of the life of Jesus were involuntary delusions, reduced at a later period into systematic order, and he applied this principle to the whole system of Christian doctrine.

By this reasoning he cut away the ground from all previous theology that had been satisfied with foisting a philosophical or other rational construction on the doctrines of the Bible and the Church. The bold critic had made an utter end of Rationalism in every shape and form. Thenceforth the two fundamental philosophical questions stood out clearly: that concerning *The Person of the Saviour* as the source of Christian history, and that concerning *The Relation of Faith and Knowledge* in general. A series of theological schools have attempted to answer these questions, and the various lines struck out by them now seem to converge more and more towards the point from which Kant proceeded in his day.

The absolute philosophy which imagined that it had thoroughly grasped the meaning of the world—that which apprehended the world as an organic unity of reason—has vanished like smoke. It has been supplanted by exact natural science, for which knowledge is coextensive with experience, *i.e.*, experiment and the necessary hypotheses for the connection of two points of experience not yet demonstrated by experiment.

Those limits of cognition, established by Kant in his day, have been adopted by science. It is not denied that, beyond all that can be exactly cognised, there may be really fathomless depths of being. Kant's footsteps have been followed still further. Every actual thing cognised by us is conditioned by the organs of apperception—our cognition is subjectively limited by the aspect which things present to us. We have now given up the attempt to get at what lies behind phenomena.

An independent field is thus left beyond the limits of any certain or possible cognition, and religion will be able to hold its ground on that field if it abstains from meddling with science, and if it confines itself to the answering of questions of *Conscience*, and does not attempt to answer questions of *Science*.

Scepticism may, of course, take possession of that

field lying beyond the limits of cognition as well as faith, and it has actually done so; but scepticism resembles that giant who could only be strangled in the free air. It will lose its power if it is brought into the open air of heaven, which is permeated by the forces of enthusiastic longing for great and truly good and therefore godlike ideas, into an atmosphere enlightened by the sun of a divinely inspired love. *Historical Science* has taken its place side by side with *Natural Science* as an inquirer into the evolution of Spirit. In its philological department the results of its researches into primeval times are most imposing, and those of its latest offshoot, *religious science*, are no less striking.

It cannot and will not account for religion. Neither historical nor natural science attempt to account for things, they simply point out their connection. Causality and connection are not elucidation, but they point to the forces operating in history. These active forces, together with orally transmitted ideas, are the creative personalities, and these creative personalities, who cannot be accounted for, are the problems in actual fact, or, to speak in religious phrase, the miracles of God in the world. Whoever has beheld such a personality knows what revelation is.

The vast results of natural science and of the technology founded upon it have, in the meantime, intoxicated many to such a degree that they have exalted the new science to the level of a new faith. Materialism —which has no necessary or logical connection with natural science, but which, on the contrary, springs from a thoroughly dogmatic philosophy—has asserted itself as such a faith.

Strauss has accepted this new faith, and that is proof positive that it is neither more nor less than his old system in a different dress—a structure re-erected on the hypothesis of the evolution theory, which must be valued in proportion to the exact facts comprised by it, and which are known independently of it.

On the other hand, there are numerous tokens that precisely among the representatives of the sciences that have a great future before them—the natural and historical sciences—an appreciation of the moral grandeur of Christianity is awakening, as transcending everything that has ever existed in the world.

Christianity is marching onwards toward the threshold of another century, not depressed and anxious and with muffled colours, as the Church crept over the frontiers of the last century, but openly and freely, with the banner of the Gospel unfurled—

the reconciliation of God with man, and of man with man.

A century ago, the French Revolution, the Revolution of the Third Estate, was in progress. To-day we hear that revolution is again imminent—*the Revolution of the Fourth Estate, the social revolution*, more threatening even than that former cataclysm.

He who has not heard the sounds in the air is certainly dull of hearing. When the potent theories of social upheaval (which have been allied with Atheism and Materialism in the most ancient as well as in the most recent times) have once fairly taken hold of the great masses of the people, the Church will be as powerless as the State to disarm the battalions of the working classes. Time will tell if repression by means of social reform be still possible, if a rational training in Christian contentment be still possible; if not, the storm is bound to burst.

It is no theologian but a radical philosopher, FREDERICK ALBERT LANGE, author of *The History of Materialism*, who, in view of this issue, remarks: "We close at a time when the social question is agitating Europe. It is a question so broad in its scope that all the revolutionary elements of science, of religion, and of politics, seem to have found it to be a fitting battle-field for a

great decisive combat. Whether this combat may end in a bloodless war of intellects, or whether, like unto an earthquake, it may cast the ruins of a past age thundering to the dust, burying millions in their wreck, it is certain that the new era will not conquer, save under the banner of some great idea, which will sweep away egoism, and will set human perfection in human fellowship for its goal, in lieu of that restless labour which seeks personal profit alone." That great ideal has been given in the Gospel. It will survive the greatest crises of the future, as it has survived those of the past, waxing in power over the intellects, and tranquillising the hearts of those who trust in it, even in the midst of the storm.

So the long line of events which history has unrolled before us may confirm us in the confidence with which the founder of the princely house of Hesse resigned his life: *Verbum domini manet in æternum*—THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURETH FOR EVER.

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