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The faith and life of the
early church

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The Faith and Life of the Early Church.

THE FAITH AND LIFE
OF THE
EARLY CHURCH

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH HISTORY

BY

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P R E F A C E.

THE following work does not profess to be a complete and detailed history of Christianity in the first century. Its design is, rather, to investigate those features of the history which are of importance and interest at the present time.

Since related subjects had to be discussed in separate chapters, some repetition was unavoidable : some questions which can scarcely be called secondary have had to yield to the demand for brevity. It is hoped, however, that no really essential element belonging to the subject has been entirely overlooked. An inquiry into the origin of the Gospels and their relation to the original tradition would have been in order ; but this would have required much time and space, besides that modern criticism is yet engaged in

a strenuous endeavour to fix the leading points in the history. Dr. Sanday's articles in the *Expositor*, and Prof. Marshall's theory of an Aramaic original, indicate that the time has not yet come to announce definite conclusions on the critical questions involved.

The authorities used in the preparation of the work have been generally recognised in the notes.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY

“In antiquis est sapientia, et in multo tempore prudentia.”¹

THE stream is purest at its source, where its supplies come fresh from the clouds, or from rock-hewn channels untouched by the pestilence of decay. Thenceforth it is stained by the colours of many soils, and its maturest breadth and depth are plethoric with defilement. The primitive settler found the stream pure and attractive, but the citizen of to-day must build reservoirs among the hills if he would obtain the sincere element—free from the poisons of civilisation—and there, in immemorial valleys, he yet finds it flowing sweet and fresh with the dews of creation.

The history of the Church does not contravene such a law of nature as this. Its primal condition was the freest from corruption. The Jerusalem of the first Pentecost was not as sinless as paradise, yet it was the Eden of the Church; the first Christians were not unfallen, but they were “all filled

¹ Job xii. 12.

with the Spirit." Their "Unity" is the ideal which the Church has never ceased to cherish; the purity of their faith and life is her standard of perfection to the end of the ages. It was once held as a pious belief that what was called "The Holy Catholic Church" retained these "notes" of apostolicity. Incredible as it may seem to candid reflection, in some sections of the Church that claim is yet made without any reserve. The corruptions of the Papacy and the priesthood and the Church do not abate the pretensions of the Romanist.¹ The Eastern Church, notwithstanding abounding ignorance and superstition, has no doubt of its right to the title "Holy and Orthodox."

The Reformation was but a response to a demand, which had long been taking form, that doctrine and

¹ The "Church" is said to be *holy* because of its connection with Christ; that assumes that an "outward and visible" institution is organically related to the unseen Saviour. Such writers as Möhler criticise the Protestant doctrine of "imputed righteousness," because of its antinomian consequences, but they condone the doctrine under its "Catholic" form. See Möhler's *Symbolik*, s. 304, 338, etc. "The Church is called holy, because it is consecrated to God, although it contains many sinners; and because it is joined as a body with a holy head, Christ the Lord, the fountain of all holiness, from whom the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the riches of the Divine goodness are diffused; and because it has the legitimate worship of sacrifice and the saving use of sacraments."—*Cat. Rom.* 10, 15.

discipline in the Church should be adjusted to primitive standards. Wickliffe, by his translation of Scripture ; John Huss and others, by their appeal to antiquity, had given some articulate expression to this cry which was coming from the heart of the people. It was the mission of Luther, Calvin, and their friends to give full voice to the challenge which the Church ever since has been stretching all its resources to meet. The ancient Church of Rome had, at the Council of Trent, to redefine its ancient dogmas, and, at subsequent councils, it has announced new dogmas. The divisions of Protestantism are owing to the incessant renewal of this demand, and also to the inability of church-founders to impress their own ideals on their systems. It seems to be necessary that each age should, in turn make its own pilgrimage to the primitive shrine—to draw inspiration and revival for itself from the first fountains of the faith.

The most signal movements in England, since the Reformation, to recover apostolic purity and efficiency for the Church, have been that of Wesley in the eighteenth, and that of the Anglican party in the nineteenth century. We do not overlook the Puritan development in the seventeenth century, but that was, really, a continuation of the work of the Reformers of the century previous. For theology,

and church - government the latter were largely indebted to Luther and Calvin and Knox. But Wesley initiated an independent effort to restore the saving faith and devout methods of the early Church.¹ His acquaintance with ecclesiastical literature was, for his day, fairly critical; he carefully noted the practice of the primitive Church; but he did not regard the "Fathers" as infallible, or as inspired exponents of the Gospel, nor did he consider any post-apostolic usage to be absolutely binding.

But the Anglican movement has disclosed a very different tendency. It has assumed that Ignatius and Chrysostom, Cyprian and Augustine had Divine authority and infallible guidance in their extension of apostolic ideas. The ordinances of early bishops stand on the same footing as the appointments of Peter and Paul. The cultus of the "one, undivided

¹ See Dr. Rigg's essay on the "High-Churchmanship of John Wesley." Mr. Urlin ("J. Wesley's place in Church History") thinks that Wesley regarded Cyprian as a "favourite authority." The following extract from a letter to a friend will show Wesley's final position: "How is it that I assemble Christians who are none of my charge to sing, pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded? You think it hard to justify this in other men's parishes on Catholic principles. . . . *They weigh nothing with me.* I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, but the Holy Scriptures." We need not add that this used to be the rule of the English Church.

Church" of the fourth century is considered to be as necessary to a full Christianity as the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, or any decree of the Twelve. The warrants of grace are descent by episcopal succession, on which Ignatius and Cyprian insisted, and by indubitable sacramental signs which have never changed.¹ When possible, doctrine may be supported from Scripture; but where Scripture is silent, tradition gives adequate authority. Indeed, since the "Apostolate" alone has "the Spirit," it alone can expound the sacred oracles.

We need scarcely say that these are, exactly, the principles of the Church of Rome; yet the Anglicans contend with Rome because it has added to the patristic faith and worship. But the Romanist triumphantly asks: What authority decided that the development of creed and cultus should be limited to the first five centuries? On the other hand the Evangelical or Nonconformist is ready with his demand for the authority of any doctrine or practice

¹ The "Apostolical Succession" is supposed to transmit "the Spirit" in the churches. See Gore: "The Church and the Ministry," ch. ii. "The gift of the Spirit is the unifying principle, but the gift of the Spirit is by the laying on of apostolic hands, and therefore can exist in its covenanted fulness only where the apostolic organisation exists." (Gore: "Review of Hatch's Bampton Lect.," 1882.)

which is not based on the direct teaching of Christ and the apostles.

Various circumstances have favoured the "Catholic Revival" in our century. Though Protestantism, in Puritan and Methodist forms, powerfully moved the masses of the nation, it did so at the expense of church order. Furthermore, its leaven scarcely reached the wealthier and educated classes, who, with a few honourable exceptions, were content with the observance of traditional forms, or were indifferent, or politely infidel. The rude enthusiasm of the revivalist and his flock shocked the sensibilities of the genteel.¹ Since earnest but unpolished teachers were acquiring religious influence over the population, there was a danger, as many thought, that the type of Christian excellence would be degraded. They were afraid that the reception of multitudes into the Christian fold might endanger the State itself, by giving unheard-of credit to the democracy. Moreover, the growth of large religious communities outside the national Church seemed to involve its endowments, if not its existence. In time the Nonconformists might demand admission to the Universities, and to offices of the State! The

¹ See J. Foster's "Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion."

Universities, naturally, had never sympathised with the new Puritanism. Wesley and Whitfield never visited Cambridge, and at Oxford were a reproach. College Masters and Tutors were in the orders of the Church, and no Nonconformist could obtain tuition or a degree. The wealth and *prestige* of these powerful institutions were wholly devoted to the conservation of the English Church and to the advancement of its members. There had always been a High-church party which cherished its own traditions and aims. Its leaders had, on the one hand, a controversy with Rome, but, on the other, they resolutely withstood the Nonconformist. Their monopoly of learning and leisure and libraries gave them exceptional advantages in historical investigation and controversy. A succession of divines—Hooker, Usher, Hammond, Beveridge, and Bingham had laboured with untiring zeal to demonstrate the exact apostolicity of the English Church. But in the first thirty years of this century times had changed. It became evident to the friends of Anglicanism that some new exhibition of its claims must be given or the flood would come and carry them all away.

It is not necessary to rehearse the story of the "Oxford movement." This is done in the writings of Froude, Palmer, Newman, Mozley, Burgon, Rigg, and many others. The development of this "Plan of

Campaign" has had a splendid success—not unattended by reverses, which chasten the elevation of its admirers, nor without the revelation of perils which daunt any but the enthusiastic. It has raised the national conceptions of the solemnities of public worship; it has enhanced the ideal of pastoral diligence, and it has removed a national scandal by the multiplication of places for public worship. It has restored the ancient fabrics, revived a moribund liturgy, encouraged architecture and music, and has carried its contagious passion for the beautiful into circles once exclusively puritanical. But it has also led thousands of the clergy and laity to the feet of the Pope; it has trained thousands more into the reception of doctrines which the Reformed Church renounced, and into the observance of customs which it condemned as superstitious if not idolatrous. By large numbers of both clergy and people the very name of "Protestant" is cast off. It is no breach of charity to say that the prevalent doctrine in the English Church to-day is that Christianity is identical with episcopalianism, and that salvation is not obtained by "faith alone," but by submission to the Church and its sacraments. The old evangelicalism is surrendered to the "sects," who, by the end of this century, will perhaps be the sole representatives of the doctrines of the Reformers.

It will be the privilege of the church historian of the future to trace all the causes and conditions which have contributed to the rapid advance of this development of church doctrine: it may not be difficult to show that the course of events was inevitable. For it was necessary if the exaltation of the episcopalian church was to be maintained, that it should carefully differentiate itself from churches of modern growth. Evangelical enterprise in Madagascar, Fiji, and the West Indies, had by magnificent achievements eclipsed the missionary fame of the national Church; and at home its religious influence was being surpassed by the zeal of dissenters. The latter professed allegiance to all scriptural and catholic doctrine, but declined to admit the exclusive apostolicity of the "threefold" ministry, or the exclusive virtue of its sacraments. It was at this point that superiority for the national Church could be most conveniently claimed. The dissenter might have scripture and primitive simplicity on his side, but, at any rate, he had not the "succession." To this point, therefore, studies were directed. The writers of the third and fourth centuries who originally unfolded the doctrines of priesthood and church-rights were diligently examined and carefully republished. "Tradition" must be the exponent of Scripture: *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus* was claimed as warrant for

such theological, liturgical, and ecclesiastical forms as had the unquestionable merit of being rejected by Nonconformists, yet were free from the corruptions of Romanism.¹

A test of orthodoxy so imposing yet so simple could be appropriated and applied by the lowliest incumbent as readily as by the loftiest dignitary.

But modern criticism has not raised the value of the "Fathers" of the third and fourth centuries as expositors of Scripture, as the inheritors of a pure Christian tradition, or as the unbiassed witnesses of a simple faith. The "unanimous consent of the Fathers" can scarcely be claimed for a single dogma. Who would accept the ecclesiastical principles of Tertullian or the entire theology of Augustine? Few of the church teachers of those times could read the Old Testament in the original.² Jerome and Hilary recovered from Scripture the true doctrine respecting the identity of presbyters with bishops which Irenæus and Cyprian seem never to have known.³ The

¹ Hilgenfeld has observed ("Zum Ursprunge des Episkopats": *Zeitsch. für Wiss. Theol.*, i. 1886) that "only Anglican Protestantism has asserted the catholic precedence of bishops as apostolic." Jerome, Hilary, Chrysostom denied it.

² Bp. Ellicott's article on "Hebrew Learning" in the "Dict. of Ch. Biog."

³ Lightfoot: "Philipp.," p. 97. Wordsworth: "Theoph. Anglic.," p. 94, tries to show that Jerome did not hold this view.

“Apostolical Constitutions” cannot now be adduced, except with careful apologies, as an authority for church law; the “Apostolical Canons” are losing prestige; and the “Clementines” are below zero. Criticism which, to the discredit of English learning, has been carried on chiefly in Germany, has shown that the patristic opinions of the Nicene and Ante-Nicene periods is not an unalloyed store of apostolic wealth. It has, more especially, shown that between the apostolic and patristic periods there is “a dark interval,” and that the relation of apostolic doctrine and practice to those of a later age is not so easily traced as it was once supposed to be. It is now known that between the Christianity of the first centuries, and that of the third and fourth there are dark periods which no testimony illumines, and also contrasts and aberrations which no ingenuity can explain.¹ The Romanist and the Romaniser have now to supplement their ancient motto *quod semper*, with the addition *quod decretum est*.

But if criticism has been so successful in undermining the positions on which so many pious legends

¹ “The evidence is not only imperfect, but also insufficient in relation to the effects. . . . Writers of the stamp of Justin and Irenæus are wholly inadequate to account for either the conversion of the educated world to Christianity or for the forms which Christianity assumed.” (Hatch: “Hibbert Lectures,” p.9.)

were founded, it may be asked whether it has disturbed the original bases of the Christian faith? If it has thrown discredit on the longer Ignatius and the decretals of Isidore, has it left intact the Gospel of Matthew and the pastoral epistles? The rationalist assumes that every composition which professes to relate the miraculous is fictitious. The believer in infallibility so far agrees with him as to declare that "there is nothing between the Pope and Atheism." It is the object of this treatise to examine, once more, the facts and elements of the apostolic history and of its sequel, in order to discover their true significance for the Church of our own day. Few could pretend to engage in such an investigation without some prejudice; yet a fresh exploration of matters, which are of the highest moment for every section of professing Christians may have its interest; it may, if by accident, elucidate some obscure or neglected features of the subject; and it may, therefore, serve the cause of the highest truth. It needs but an average sense of responsibility to suggest that personal prepossessions should be watched, and that a fair account of the subjects as they arise should be presented.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH OF JERUSALEM.

“Les Acts des Apôtres sont le document le plus important pour l'histoire que nous avons à raconter.”¹

TO assume the authenticity of the “Acts of the Apostles,” and to affirm that its author was he who wrote the Third Gospel, is no longer considered uncritical.² As the only “lamp shining in a dark place,” its value to all explorers of original Christi-

¹ Renan : “Les Apôtres,” xi.

² On the critical history, see Weiss : “Introduction to New Testament,” ii. 326-355. Schweigler : “Nach. Zeit.,” i. 90, said : “The first part proves itself on close inquiry to be a Tendenzschrift of such a free composition and of such inferior historical trustworthiness that we must at once lay it aside”; yet he and his allies had to use the history. A tripartite division, answering to Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome, has been observed since Hug (Zeller). Though the parallelism between the discourses and achievements of Peter and Paul has been made much of by critics, they have not agreed upon its explanation. Luke and Acts have, with minor differences, the same vocabulary; and the “we” portions are now admitted by Baur, Zeller, Overbeck, Hilgenfeld, Holzmann, etc., to have been supplied by Luke himself : see Holzmann : “Einleitung in das Neue Test.,” pp. 402-420; Salmon : “Introduction to New Testament,” pp. 306-407.

anity is immeasurable. Without it we should have known scarcely anything of the apostolic Church: yet on some points its communications are very limited. The imperfection of its data must leave us sometimes in doubt, but we must not hastily pronounce apparent contradictions to be irreconcilable discrepancies. Like the "Gospels" the "Acts" was adapted to the requirements of its own generation, and omits many things which the later ages of the Church would have gladly known.

For instance, Matthew and John refer to the sojourn of the disciples in Galilee between the resurrection and the Pentecost.¹ Mark and Luke, on the contrary, assume that they remained in Jerusalem.² Three of the Gospels appear to indicate that the gospel began to be preached immediately after the Resurrection, or, at least, after the Ascension; whereas, Luke in the *Acts* relates that the apparitions continued forty days, and that the descent of the Spirit occurred ten days later still.³ These are but a few instances out

¹ Matt. xxviii. 16; John xxi. 11.

² Mark xvi. 19, 20; Luke xxiv. 49, "Tarry ye in the city until ye be endued with power from on high."

³ Meyer (Luke xxii. 49) supposes that Luke followed a two-fold tradition: one in the Gospel, another in the Acts; but this is not much better than "the efforts of harmonisers," which Meyer deprecates.

of several difficult places in the evangelical history where the imperfection of our knowledge prevents a satisfactory explanation.

However, it seems clear that at the first Pentecost after the Resurrection of our Lord the greater part of the Galilean band of the disciples were in Jerusalem. "There was a multitude of names—about a hundred and twenty."¹ Among them were the fishermen of Galilee, Matthew the publican of Capernaum ; also, the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brethren.² The latter were now believers in the Messiahship of Jesus for the Lord had "appeared to James."³

At this early period it was Peter who assumed the leading part in the testimony of the resurrection, and in the counsels of the disciples. Already they had begun to interpret prophecy as a programme of the history of the kingdom of God. The sin and fall of Judas had been predicted in the "Psalms," and the duty of the Church to fill up his "bishopric" was also plainly set forth.⁴ Accordingly, from the small circle

¹ Acts i. 15.

² Acts i. 13. Cf. Acts xvi. 13, where women attended the *proseuchæ*.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 7. "Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles." It may be inferred that "apostles" here means others besides the twelve, as Acts xiv. 4, 14 ; 1 Thess. ii. 17, etc.

⁴ Acts i. 20, *τὴν ἐπισκοπήν* : R.V. *office*. Syriac : Theshmes-

of those who had actually known the Lord as "He came in and went out," was Matthias chosen to be a witness of His life and resurrection.¹ The new apostle was selected by the "lot" from two names which had been approved by the "brethren." The terms denoting office had then received no technical significance, and the position to which Matthias had been promoted is called "a diaconate and apostleship," or "overseership." The threefold division into bishop, priest, and deacon does not date from the day of Pentecost. Why the number twelve had to be maintained cannot be stated, unless that it was the number of the tribes of Israel.² As yet the Church included only native Jews, and, so far as is known or probable, no proselyte had part or lot in it.

But a great crisis was at hand. The ten days after the Ascension were not so hopeless as the day before the Resurrection. Though the disciples did not know what the consummation might be, there was expecta-

tha=ministerium. R.V. has in 1 Tim. iii. 1, "office of a bishop," in Luke xix. 44; 1 Pet. ii. 12, v. 6, "visitation," for this word. Cf. מְרַבֵּן Num. iv. 16; Clem. Rom., 50.

¹ Jesus had lived in Peter's house at Capernaum, Matt. xvii. 24; Mark i. 29.

² Cf. Rev. xxi. 12 with xxi. 14. "Therefore He chose us twelve whom He named apostles, and afterwards other most approved disciples seventy-two, that He might recognise the pattern of Moses:" Clem. Recog., i. 40.

tion and hope in their prayer. Nor did they wait in vain, for on the day of Pentecost the heavenly power came upon them. They were "all filled with the Holy Spirit."¹ "There appeared unto them tongues parting asunder like as of fire," and they "began to speak with other tongues."²

Much has been written on the precise character and significance of these external signs of the first great spiritual manifestation in the Christian Church. At present we wish to look at the results of this eventful day. A feast like the Pentecost would bring a host of Jewish devotees from various parts of the world to Jerusalem.³ Some would have come at the Passover and yet remained; others would come especially for the joyful "feast of the firstfruits."⁴ Some had come from Parthia, Media, Persia, and Mesopotamia in the

¹ Jerome reports ("Epit. Paulæ") that when Paula came to Sion they showed her the place where the Holy Spirit had fallen on the 120 believers. Some advocates of the "Apostolical Succession" say that though all believers received the Spirit, only the apostles could impart it.

² Acts ii. 4.

³ The day of Pentecost did not always occur on Sunday, but did so that year. Already the "first day of the week" was notable for Christians: Ewald: "Hist. of Israel," vii. 90; Smith's "Bib. Dict.," ii. 786.

⁴ Joseph., "Ant.," xvii. 10, 2; "Wars," ii. 3, 1, mentions an occasion when, through a political excitement, there were "many tens of thousands" gathered at the Pentecost.

East ; others from Northern Egypt or from Southern Asia ; while distant Rome and islands of the Mediterranean such as Crete were also represented. For five centuries Israel had been scattering itself over the Greek and Roman world ; but like the dove of the deluge, it found no rest until it returned to the ark from which it went out. The scattered Jews could not yield their spiritual monotheism for the carnal polytheism of the nations. On the contrary, a few Gentiles in many lands had been drawn to the worship of Jehovah. The multitude, now gathered in or near the temple, heard somehow the strange "sound" that had shaken the synagogue of the Galileans.¹ When they thronged into the place of the meeting, they were met by another phenomenon : every man heard God praised in the language of his own nation, but by men who were reputed to be all Galileans.

All wondered, and some mocked, at the marvels they could not explain. To relieve the tension of the moment, Peter—*facile princeps* in speech or act among the disciples—arose to explain. They had not been idle since the departure of their Master, and the Scriptures had been diligently searched. He had directed them to the sacred oracles, and, "beginning

¹ The "upper room" of the Galileans would probably be regarded as their place of synagogue, and be fully allowed.

from Moses and all the prophets," had shown how "that which concerneth" Him "hath fulfilment."¹ The Galilean disciples seem to have been more familiar with the Greek version of the Old Testament than with the Hebrew.² That version, in whole or in part, had been widely used in both Jewish and Gentile circles during the two centuries B.C. Like the star in the east, it had attracted many wise men to Judæa, and, under its guidance, proselytes of many nations were forsaking idols and turning their faces Zionwards. The mysteries of the Jewish religion, which had been concealed under a dead language and repulsive customs, seemed to be opened to the world when Moses and the prophets were translated into Greek. But this translation had given a new complexion to many of the promises of the Old Testament. The enlarged meaning thereby given to many terms prepared them to pass easily into Christian formulas. "Sin" and "salvation" acquired a significance which no heathen writer had ever infused into them: holiness in God and penitent humbleness in man became the correlatives of a moral excellence transcending all the ethical conceptions of Gentile

¹ Luke xxii. 37, xxiv. 27.

² Mr. Thomson ("Books which Influenced our Lord," 1891, p. 5) supposes that our Lord would learn Hebrew in the synagogue school. Aramaic and Greek were both spoken in the country.

philosophy. One result of the encouragement apparently afforded by the language of the Alexandrian version to the new doctrines was that, after being praised by Philo and Josephus, the LXX. was finally abjured by the Jews. They declared it to have been "corrupted by the Christians"; they banished it from their synagogues and adopted in its stead the translations of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.¹

From this version of the ancient Scripture—familiar to his hearers who had all come from Greek-speaking communities through the world—Peter began to quote the prophet Joel. That prophet had predicted a diffusion of the Spirit of God more wide than their fathers had known. Not only should aged prophets or men specially called and gifted speak for God, but men and women of every age and calling. Already Peter seemed to detect in the prophet's words some instinctive apprehension of the wider destiny of the gospel when he repeats the saying: "And it shall be that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

He proceeds to show that David also had spoken of these times of the Messiah. The history of the great King of Israel offered no fulfilment of the pre-

¹ Buhl: "Kanon und Texte des Alten Testaments," p. 119; Grätz: "Gesch. d. Jud.." iv. 113.

dictions in the sixteenth Psalm : they could have no fulfilment except in the resurrection of the Messiah of which he and his brethren were witnesses. Nay, were not these pious spectators and hearers themselves, who had been brought there with such singular opportuneness, witnesses of His exaltation, since "He hath poured forth this which ye now see and hear." They had that ocular and auricular demonstration that God had "made Him both Lord and Christ." Yet He had been crucified ! Though so plainly described by the prophets, their rulers had rejected Him : from God He had received the highest honour, from man the lowest infamy. This was the point of the apostle's appeal which pierced the souls of his hearers as had the spear of the Roman soldier the side of the crucified ; they were "pricked in their hearts."¹ In after days the doctrine of Christ crucified became a scandal to the Jew, and St. Paul was permitted almost alone to glory in it, but on this memorable occasion it was, in Peter's hands, the "power of God."

About three thousand on that eventful day were brought to repentance and faith, and entered the Church by baptism. They believed in "the name of Jesus Messiah." No theological formulas had yet

¹ The Rev. Vers. properly places "whom ye crucified" at the end of the verse : *aculeus in feno* : Bengel.

been framed ; no doctrinal confession, beyond the acknowledgment that Jesus the Nazarene, who had been crucified, raised from the dead, and exalted into heaven, was the Christ of God. As we shall see, this confession contained potentially all that was subsequently unfolded by Paul and John.¹

This sudden and extensive addition to the Church would, doubtless, present enormous difficulties to regular administration and discipline. It was only "in the temple," perhaps, that the entire community could assemble ; but this they did "with one accord." Afterwards, when many of these first converts had left Jerusalem, "all that believed were together, and had all things common" (Acts ii. 44), and others were added daily. Of the "fellowship" of the primitive Church we shall speak in another place, and now only remark that the principal demonstration of their aggregate unity was in the temple service or near Solomon's porch.² They had to "begin at Jerusalem," and to show that faith in Jesus was the hope of

¹ See chap. xiv.

² Acts iii. 11, v. 13. Wordsworth (Acts ii. 3) evidently has not understood the relation of the Church in Jerusalem to Judaism when he says, "It is not probable that any spiritual dispensation, such as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, would be connected with the temple at Jerusalem." Yet on Acts ii. 46 he can find in the daily attendance at the temple by the Christians "a warning against the sin of schism."

Israel. But there is no positive evidence that any of the "twelve" ever renounced the observance of Jewish rites. We are told how "Peter and John" went "up into the temple at the hour of prayer."¹ When the apostles were liberated from the prison into which the priests had cast them, they were instructed to "stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life."² When again brought before the Sanhedrim, they did not cease to teach in the temple that Jesus was the Christ.³ Their witness was not fruitless even among the sacerdotal class, for "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."⁴ After the death of Stephen, however, the apostles were not allowed to preach in the temple or its precincts. The sect was multiplying too fast to be ignored. Moreover, it was a positive charge against Stephen that he had openly predicted the overthrow of the "holy place." Notwithstanding these suspicions—not always slumbering—the believers continued to attend the temple services, and, as opportunity offered to fulfil the Levitical observances. So pronounced was the devotion to the customs of the fathers that Peter had to make an elaborate defence of his con-

¹ Acts iii. 1.

² Acts v. 20.

³ Acts v. 42 : *εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν.*

⁴ But this is not supported elsewhere, and the wonder of it has led to the reading *Ἰουδαίων* in some MSS.

duct when he, at the conversion of Cornelius, "went in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them." The more rigid Judaists sent an embassy to Antioch to insist that no one should be admitted into the Church who was not circumcised. They interfered again at Antioch when Peter and Barnabas ventured to join in the Lord's Supper with Gentiles. Ten years later, when Paul paid his last visit to Jerusalem, he was told that there were thousands of the people who believed in Jesus, but they were "all zealous for the law."¹ It was for this reason that Paul himself paid for the sacrifices usual on the discharge of a vow.² James, the "brother of the Lord," received the title of "the righteous" because he walked in all the Mosaic ordinances without reproach. When, shortly before the destruction of the temple, the Church in Jerusalem was dispersed, and its chief members fled to Pella, they still retained their Judaic proclivities, and some became the leaders of Ebionite opinion. According to Hegesippus, after the death

¹ Acts xxi. 21 : *μυριάδες εἰσὶν καὶ πάντες ζηλωταὶ τοῦ νόμου ὑπάρχουσιν.*

² "Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them went into the temple, declaring the fulfilment of the day of the purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them." On the legalism of James, see Eus., "Eccl. Hist.," ii. 23.

of James, his kinsman Simeon was elected bishop, and the twelve following bishops were all of the circumcision. The Church at Jerusalem, therefore, never lost its unity ; but that unity, outwardly and formally, was Judaic. They who refer to it as the type and warrant of uniformity in the Church should first consider what its principle of unity was. If that unity was sound, then St. Paul and the catholic Church of the next century became heretical and schismatical. If it was not sound, then no uniformity in government or ritual is absolutely authoritative in the Church of Christ.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

“Whosoever would become great among you shall be your deacon.”—MARK x. 43.

IT is allowed by all that the twelve apostles held a position of supreme dignity and authority in the primitive Church. The testimony of the evangelists respecting the calling and designation of the twelve prepares us for the prominence they assumed at the formation of the Church.¹ The “Acts” show that the “twelve” were the centre of the hundred and twenty disciples who held the faith in the risen Jesus.² From a smaller section, consisting of those who had followed the Master from the beginning of His course to its end, Matthias was selected to fill the place of Judas. At Pentecost and afterwards the enlarging Church “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship.”³ In the new

¹ See Matt. x. 2-42, xxviii. 16; Mark i. 16, iii. 13-19, vi. 7-13, xiv. 17-42, xvi. 9-20; Luke vi. 12-17, ix. 1-6, xxii. 14-38, 47, xxiv. 33-53; John i. 40-51, xiii. 1-11, xx. 19-29.

² Acts i. 12-14.

³ Acts ii. 42.

community a general distribution of property was established, but "the prices of those things that were sold" were "laid at the apostles' feet"; and the apostles administered the "distribution" "as any one had need."¹ It was they who pronounced the fatal sentence on Ananias and Sapphira, who had introduced a spirit of untruth into the holy fellowship.² By their hands "many signs and wonders" were wrought among the people.³ Their prominence exposed them to persecution. The high priest placed some of them in prison.⁴ At a later time James, the son of Zebedee, was executed, and, because it pleased the Jews to have the leading Christians degraded, Herod sought to take Peter also.⁵ When the Samaritans had, through the evangelistic zeal of Philip, received the gospel, the apostles sent Peter and John, who "prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost."⁶

¹ Acts iv. 35.

² Acts v. 3.

³ Acts v. 12.

⁴ Acts iv. 3, v. 19.

⁵ Acts xii. 1, 2.

⁶ Acts viii. 14, etc. Wordsworth and others infer from this incident that Philip the evangelist could not "confer the Holy Spirit." This was the prerogative of the apostles, and the same benefit is now administered by bishops in "Confirmation." But Wordsworth does not notice the fact that in Acts ix. 17 Ananias of Damascus, who is only called "a certain disciple" — *τις μαθητής*, "laid his hands upon" the penitent Saul. He

Even St. Paul fully recognised the position and authority of the "Twelve." In the Epistle to the Galatians he tells us that at first he did not think it needful to go to those who "were apostles before" him; but he did subsequently visit [*interview*: ἀνήλθον—ἰστορήσαι] Cephas.¹ Again he went to Jerusalem, and there met James, and Cephas, and John, who "were reputed to be pillars."² The writer of the Apocalypse commends the Church at Ephesus because it had tried "them who called themselves apostles and are not."³ The same book tells us that the "twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" are inscribed on the foundations of the new Jerusalem.⁴ The universal tradition of the Church, into whatsoever exaggerations it may have fallen, or however false many of its deductions from the fact may have been, bears overwhelming testimony to the pre-eminent elevation and all-commanding influence which the apostles held in the primitive Church.⁵

also added, "The Lord hath sent ME that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." No wonder that later tradition should make Ananias "bishop of Damascus." Lightfoot ("Coloss.," p. 45) says that "to convey the gifts of the Spirit required the presence of an apostle."

¹ Gal. i. 17, ii. 14.

² Gal. ii. 9.

³ Rev. ii. 2.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 12.

⁵ Cf. also 1 Cor. xii. 28, and Eph. iv. 11.

It is because the consent of all parties is ungrudgingly given to this fact that it is the more needful to inquire what the position of the apostles really was. If they possessed the authority to impose dogmas on the understandings and consciences of men; if they held any royal jurisdiction over individuals and Churches; if they alone could dispense the Holy Spirit, it is possible that these rights and powers, in some degree at least, might be communicated to their successors. But if they had not these immunities and prerogatives, they could not transmit them. It will be seen then that our conception of the Church and its rulers will depend upon our estimate of the apostles: and what do we find?

The references to the evangelists already given furnish evidence of the honour yielded to the "twelve"¹ But we find there, also, that during our Lord's life there were "contentions" among them. When they were asking one another "who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven," He said, "Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven."² When the "ten" heard that the mother of Zebedee's children had

¹ Weizsäcker: "Das Apost. Zeitalt. d. Christl. Kirche," pp. 35, 50, etc., assumes that our Gospels were formed to suit the conditions of the Church in the days after the apostles. Even if this were so, it would not go against our position.

² Matt. xviii. 3.

asked for the chief places, "they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto Him, and said: "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister (lit., deacon), and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant."¹ What kind of obedience could these men be accustomed to demand from their followers, when they gave into their hands these sayings of their great Master?

If Peter, supposed to have been the "first of the apostles," had always maintained that position, it would be difficult to understand how James became so important in the administration of the Church. The latter was not one of the twelve, and probably owed his position to his relationship to our Lord. At the first council, he, the first of the presbyters, gave the "judgment" of the Church, and wrote the letter containing the decrees which he had announced.²

¹ Matt. xx. 24.

² *χαίρειν*, Acts xv. 23, may be only a coincidence with James i. 1. The word "decree" was very harmless at first. *τὰ δόγματα*, Acts xvi. 14, referred to the conclusions of the Council—the things which "seemed good," *ἔδοξεν*. In the Church it had not yet attained the significance it had in political circles; as Luke ii. 1, *δόγμα παρὰ καίσαρος*.

When Paul made his second visit to Jerusalem, he found James among the "pillars," and from him and Peter and John, who all seemed to stand on the same level, he and Barnabas received "the right hand of fellowship." We might almost assume that James had a higher authority than Peter; for, before "certain came from James," Peter joined in the Agape (the daily supper and Eucharist) at Antioch, but when they came and criticised his procedure, he began to withdraw himself.¹

So great was the dignity of James, that he was the first to be called the "Bishop of Bishops." This position is assigned to him in the document on which the Romish Church depends for the earliest notice of

¹ Gal. ii. 12. There is no direct evidence that Peter ever returned to the mixed Agape. It is fairly certain that James would never take part in it. Such was "apostolic unity." Who were the *τινες ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου*? Schwegler ("Nach. Zeit.," i. p. 160) says: "Judaisten die ganz vom Standpunkt des Urchristenthums und der Jerusalemischen Urgemeinde aus die Paulinische Heidenpredigt bestritten." Baur, "Kircheng.," i. 52, naturally concurs. But Ritschl, "Entsteh.," p. 128, insists that they were a small group of Jerusalem Christians who were not supported by the "pillars." Lechler, "Apos. Times," 178, infers from *ἀπὸ* that they had been sent by James; as also Meyer, who refers to Matthew xxvi. 47, "a multitude from the high priests"; Mark v. 33: "they came from the synagogue-ruler;" 1 Thess. iii. 6: "Timothy came from you." This disposes of Olshausen's objection that if sent by James *ὑπὸ* would have been used.

any connection of Peter with the city of Rome.¹ In the apocryphal letter of Peter to James, prefixed to the Clementine "Homilies," James is addressed as "lord and bishop of the holy Church." Clement again addresses him as, "James, the lord and bishop of bishops, who rules Jerusalem the holy Church of the Hebrews, and the Churches everywhere founded by the providence of God." Such a jurisdiction James probably exercised over Jewish-Christians, not only in Palestine but in other countries. There was, after the conversion of Cornelius, no demonstration of Peter's primacy in Jerusalem; of its exhibition in Rome there is no record, nor any probable indication. Few of the figments which have beguiled the imagination of historians have been more groundless than this.

But it must not be forgotten that, while all the primitive Christians were attached to the Jewish ritual, yet they were not all of one class. National and local distinctions necessarily existed among them. Some were Galileans, like the apostles; others were of Judæa; some, though natives of some foreign city, were yet "Hebrews of the Hebrews," like Saul of

¹ "This Clementine literature has had a marvellous share in shaping the history of Christianity by inventing the story that Peter was bishop of Rome, and that he named Clement to succeed him in that see."—(Dr. Salmon, "Int. to New Test.," p. 19.)

Tarsus ; or, like Barnabas the Levite, of Cyprus. Others again were "Hellenists"—a name which included more than one class. It comprised, in general, all descendants of Jewish families who resided in countries where the Greek language was spoken. In this way Saul was not only a Hebrew, but a Hellenist. But yet again, it was applied to those descendants of Jewish families who had a Greek father or mother, but still retained the Jewish religion and customs.

One great element in the connotation of "Hellenists," therefore, is their use of the Greek language. The Palestinian Hebrews, it is now generally thought, used the Aramaic as a vernacular in the times of our Lord and the apostles. We can readily understand that the "Hellenists" would become more lax in their Judaism than the "Hebrews."¹ In most of the foreign synagogues some parts of the service would be performed in Greek, although "Moses" might be read every Sabbath day in the sacred tongue. The Hellenists, again, would be attracted by systems of interpretation, like that of Philo, which almost explained away the Law and its ordinances ; and this would bring them into collision with the literalism of the

¹ Ewald : "Hist. Isr.," vii. p. 134 ; Schaff : "Hist. of Ch.," i. p. 87.

stricter Jews. Gentile proselytes, on the other hand, were known as "devout men," and those that "feared God."¹ They were called "Hellenes," or "Greeks," as the former were called "Hellenists," or "Grecians." Some proselytes of this class, who had advanced so far in Judaism that they had come to worship at Jerusalem, "desired to see Jesus," and had an interview with Him.² To this class belonged also the converts at Antioch, to whom the "men of Cyprus and Cyrene" preached, whose case had to be settled by the council in Jerusalem."³

Though the Hellenists in the Church afterwards displayed a tendency to depart from strict Judaism, they were, up to this point in the history, loyal conformists. Some, like Stephen, might already have come under suspicion of liberal tendencies (Acts v. 11). But the increasing Church was comprising more and more of the Hellenists as well as of Hebrews; and the first sign of agitation was the allegation of some Hellenists that, "their widows

¹ Acts x. 2, xiii. 43, xvi. 14, etc.

² John xii. 20.

³ In xii. 20 Westc. and Hort retain *Ἑλλημοιστός* because it is found in B Dⁿ L, but Lachm., Tregelles, Tischend., R.V. follow *Ἕλληνας* with *NA D* with *Ἕλληνας*; as do also Meyer, Alford, Lechler, Farrar, etc. The "Greeks" were neither "Jews" nor "Barbarians," Rom. i. 14, 16; *Hellenist* was antithetical to *Hebrew*, Acts vi. 1, ix. 29; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5.

were neglected in the daily administration.”¹ The principal Christian service was the lovefeast, or Agape, with which the Eucharist was associated, and which was always held at the close of the day.² The “deacons” (*διακονία*) had been administered up to this time by the apostles, or by “elders” such as James.³ But the rapid increase of disciples required that they should transfer this department of their work to other hands. In the difficulty the apostles “call the multitude together.” The Church was still a brotherhood, though some were “greater than the rest,” because they had been “eye-witnesses of” the “majesty” of the Lord, like Peter and John; or, like Stephen, had special gifts in the exposition of the Word. The Church was not then the hierarchy or clergy by itself, and the lowliest member was not denied access to its councils. The name of believers most generally accepted throughout the apostolic age was “brethren.”⁴ The democratic constitution of the Church—which was a thoroughly Jewish

¹ Acts vi. 1; *παρθερωροῦντο*, overlooked, not wilfully neglected.

² See Chap. xiii.

³ Cf. Jas. i. 27: “Pure religion . . . is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.” James v. 14: “Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the Church.”

⁴ Acts i. 15, x. 23, xi. 1, xii. 17, 29, xv. 1, 3, 23, 36; 1 Cor. i. 10; 2 Cor. i. 8; Phil. i. 14; Heb. ii. 17; 3 John 3.

characteristic embodied in their synagogues—prevailed throughout these first days. When Paul and Barnabas came to the great council (Acts xv. 4), “they were received of the Church and of the apostles and elders.” The “Council” consisted of “apostles and elders with the whole Church.” When they returned to Antioch to announce results, they “gathered the multitude together.”¹ On Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem, the writer of the Acts says (xxi. 17), “the brethren received us gladly.”

The fact is that the Master had ordained no exact form of government for the Church. He had commanded His servants to “preach the gospel,” and to “make disciples of all nations”—“teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” But amongst the things commanded there were no ordinances of public worship except baptism and the eucharist. He had promised to be with them unto the end of the world, and that they should receive the Holy Spirit to fit them for their mission.² It was in the nature of the case that there

¹ Acts x. 5, 30.

² On the occasion mentioned John xx. 20, when He said “Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whose sins ye forgive they are forgiven,” etc., the *disciples* were present as well as the apostles ; Thomas was not present. Cyprian (Ep. 72) and his followers build the doctrine of “apostolical succession” on this passage :

should be no ordinances of public worship distinctively Christian, for the believers continued to attend the services of the temple and to support its ritual. Had not the Master done the same thing? Had He not directed His disciples to reverence the "scribes and pharisees" who sat "on Moses's seat," and whatsoever they commanded to "do and observe"?¹ Had He not said that not one "jot or tittle of the law should fail"? Those who were sent out on the first mission were directed not to "enter the way of the Gentiles, nor any city of the Samaritans, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."² The formation of a visible church apart from Judaism was, necessarily, from the standpoint of the primitive Jewish-Christians, a schism. A new society, with synagogues of its own, with a new order of priests, and a graduated hierarchy through which should be "the chief means of communion with

"He speaks to the apostles—only they who are set over the Church are allowed to baptise and to give remission of sins." Hilary (Ambrosiaster, 4th cent.), however, says, "When the Church became established everywhere things were arranged in a different way from the first. For, at first, all (Christians) were teachers, and officiated in baptism. . . . As the Church grew it was allowed to all believers to preach, to baptize, and to explain the Scriptures in the congregation."

¹ Matt. xxiii. 3.

² Matt. x. 5.

God," was a conception far below the horizon of the Pentecostal Church.¹

The Church took form by the "logic of facts." The dialectics of nature, which are the instruments of the Divine Logos, evolved this new creation. The accretion of increasing members in the fraternal life and fellowship made it needful that management should be concentrated somewhere. The apostles, and other senior members of the Church, had attended to these details for several years, "exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly." But the expansion of the Church had induced friction. To relieve it, the "multitude is called together," and they are requested to select additional officers,

¹ "Without the bishop not only the *bene esse* of the Church is impossible, but the *esse*" (Canon Liddon). On this point the doctrine of the Anglican and the Roman Catholics is not quite identical. Dr. Probst ("Kirchliche Disciplin," p. 35) says: "That is the origin of heresies and schisms that one does not obey the priests of God—that one person exclusively is not regarded as priest at the present time in the Church, and as judge in the place of Christ. The inner union with Christ is conditioned through the outer union with the Church and its head, the pope." The Anglican stops short at the last condition. The Rev. C. Gore, "The Church and the Ministry," p. 69, accepts the definition of the Roman Catholic Möhler, "Symbolik," i. 5, 36, which says: "Catholics understand the visible community of believers, founded by Christ, in which by means of an enduring apostleship . . . the works wrought by Him . . . are continued."

“wherefore, brethren, look ye out from among you seven men.”¹ If the apostolic Church is to be a model for following times, surely it is emphatically so in this part of its method. When occasion arises, the machinery of the Church is to be extended or adapted. Formularies, modes of discipline, official and hierarchical detail, may be set up or laid aside, ordained or remitted as the exigencies of the Church demand. No violation of the genius of apostolic Christianity can be more complete than to insist upon institutions for their own sake, or to reject new appliances which bear the seal of spiritual success.

The word “deacon” did not attain its fixed, ecclesiastical meaning during the apostolic age, but retained (even in Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8) its literal meaning, *a minister*, or *attendant*. The “seven” are not called “deacons” in the Acts, and they received ordination as “elders.”² Philip, one of the seven, is

¹ Acts vi. 3, οὓς καταστήσομεν; the best editors read indic. fut., “whom we will appoint”; not as A. and R.V., “may appoint.”

² Acts vi. 2. Διακονεῖν occurs Acts vi. 2, 4, “to serve tables,” “the service of the word”; Mark i. 13; Luke x. 40; John xii. 2, “Martha served”; Acts xix. 22, xii. 25, Paul and Barnabas “fulfilled the deaconship”; Acts xx. 24, “the deaconship which I received from the Lord Jesus”; 2 Cor. i. 4; Col. iv. 17; 1 Cor. iii. 5, “What is Paul? What is Apollos? but deacons by

afterwards called an evangelist.¹ Irenæus was the

whom ye believed?" If there is a general term for the ministry in the New Testament, it is *deacon*.

Bishop Wordsworth ("Comm. Acts," p. 20) says that it is a matter for "thankfulness that God has preserved in England a Church which has not disqualified herself for interpreting the Acts of the Apostles," since other "communions have disabled themselves for expounding it." Let us turn, then, to this quasi-infallible authority for the explanation of *τραπέζαις*, *tables*, in Acts vi. 2. These, Bishop Wordsworth says, were not for money-changing, but the tables of the Church, "where the holy Eucharist was administered at the daily repasts." "Bishop Pearson observes that these tables were partly common and partly sacred: hoc est, in communi victu, sacramentum eucharistiæ celebrant." Yet St. Peter plainly states that "prayer and the ministry of the word" are more important than the "tables." Bishop Wordsworth tells us (p. 117) that "Christ instructs us that the Christian life is began by Him in baptism, and is continually nourished by Him in the sacrament of the Lord's supper." Yet, here, apostles prepare to leave "the Lord's supper" and to give themselves to the more important duties of prayer and preaching! It may be a sign of the incapacity to which Bishop Wordsworth refers, that we do not seem to learn much from this instance of Anglican exposition.

¹ Tradition has strangely confounded Philip the apostle with Philip the evangelist. Eusebius ("H.E.," iii. 30, 31) reports that Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, told Victor of Rome that "Philip, one of the twelve apostles, sleeps in Hierapolis, and his two virgin daughters"; cf. Augustine (Serm. 266), and Clem. Alex. ("Strom.," iii. 192). But Acts xxi. 7 says that it was Philip the evangelist who had the four daughters. However, Bishop Lightfoot ("Col.," p. 45) locates Philip the apostle, with

first to say that the "seven" were "deacons"; but the tradition became so general that many Churches, including Rome, never had more than seven deacons.¹

But in Acts xi. 30 the term "elder" appears for the first time as the name of an officer of the Church. The disciples of Antioch, who were the first to be called "Christians," resolved to relieve the poverty of the Churches in Judea, and they sent their contribution, through Paul and Barnabas, to the "elders" in Jerusalem.² But we are not told that "elders" had

John, Andrew, etc., in Asia, which became "the headquarters of apostolic authority." But if Philip were only an "evangelist," could he have helped John to found episcopacy? On the whole matter of apostolic tradition, so called, we may ponder the words of Ritschl: "Die Kirchenväter haben von den Verhältnissen der apostolischer Zeit unglaublich wenig gewusst und das, was sie wissen, wissen sie meist falsch" ("Die Entsteh. d. altk. Kirche," p. 124).

¹ Irenæus, i. 26, etc. Vitringa, Böhmer (Lightfoot says "by a strange perversity"), Ritschl, Lechler, McGiffert (Euseb., new edit.), and others identify the "seven" with the elders; Neander, Schaff, Lightfoot, and the episcopalian school generally, regard them as the first deacons. Chrysostom, Hom. xiv. in Act. denies the identification.

² "An office borrowed from the synagogue and established by the apostles in the churches" (Alford, on Acts xiv. 23, who also speaks of their identity with bishops) Acts xx. 28; Tit. i. 5, 7; 1 Pet. v. 2. Lightfoot, "Philip.," pp. 93, 157, says, "It is a fact now generally recognised by theologians of all shades of opinion that in the language of the New Testament the same officer of the Church is called indifferently bishop and elder."

been appointed. It seems strange that the contributions should have been brought to them instead of to the seven who had been elected to "serve the tables." Had the seven left by this time? or is "elders" only another name for "deacons," as Vitringa and others have supposed? The "elders," evidently, were of an importance inferior only to the apostles, for, with them, they received the deputation from Antioch, and joined in the letter sent to the Churches (Acts xv. 23). A yet more striking evidence of their position is afforded by the language of St. Paul at Miletus (Acts xx. 28) when he met the elders of Ephesus. He said to them, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock in which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops."¹

The "elders" have never ceased in the Church. On their first appearance on the scene they hold a position of importance and responsibility. Paul and Barnabas on their earliest mission "appointed elders for them in every Church."² When Paul wrote to

Wesley was convinced that this was the true theory by reading in 1742 Lord King's book on the primitive Church. Eventually he claimed authority to ordain presbyters and superintendents (superintendentes = ἐπίσκοποι).

¹ R.V. follows the Gr. ἐν ᾧ, and Lat. "in quo," correcting the A.V., which had "over which."

² Acts xiv. 23. Wordsworth (Comm.) tells us that "Paul and Barnabas had the episcopal dignity and therefore ordained not

Philippi, he calls the presbyters bishops.¹ St. Peter exhorts the "presbyters" to exercise their episcopacy "willingly and not of constraint."² St. John calls himself a presbyter, and condemns Diotrephes, "who loveth to have the pre-eminence." The earliest Christian writings bear similar witness. Clement of Rome (A.D. 95) speaks of two classes of ministers only, and these are bishops (*i.e.* presbyters) and deacons. The "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," written, perhaps, by the end of the first century, has the direction, "Elect therefore, for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord."

The epistles of Ignatius subordinate the office of

only deacons but priests"—a statement which violates historic sense and plainly reads the notions of later centuries into the doings of the first. Wordsworth does understand *κατ' ἐκκλησίαν* better than Canon Scott ("Speaker's Comm."), who says there was only *one* elder in every church.

¹ Phil. i. 1.

² 1 Pet. v. 1, 2, a very instructive passage, in which all the terms meet: *πρεσβύτεροι, ποιμαίνειν, ἐπισκοπέω*. The "elder" had to rule, to supervise, to manage finance—"not for filthy lucre." While St. Peter calls himself a "fellow-presbyter," the people are called "the clergy"—*ὡς κατακυριεύοντες τῶν κλήρων*. The younger men, *νεώτεροι*, had subordinate duties. R.V. notes that "some authorities omit *exercising the oversight*," and Westcott and Hort omit, as the word is absent from **8** and B. But B. is "distinguished by its omissions" (Scrivener, "Int.," p. 116). Dr. Dobbin calls it "an abbreviated text." There would be dogmatic reasons for omitting *ἐπισκοποῦντες*.

the presbyter to that of the bishop, but no such subordination was generally established before the end of the second century. This has been felt by many to be a fatal objection to the date which the learned Bishop Lightfoot has attached to them. He himself allows that there are no positive indications of "bishops," as superior to presbyters, in Philippi, or Corinth, or Rome, at the beginning of the second century. In Alexandria the "bishop" was elected by a vote of the presbyters in the third century. That fact indeed suggests the course of events by which one elder gained elevation over the rest. The presbyters would often find it needful to concentrate their authority in one representative, who could speak for the whole Church on special occasions, and act in the more solemn functions. But the "president" was at first the pastor of a congregation, and not the overseer of a diocese. "To St. Ignatius the chief value of episcopacy lies in this that it constitutes a visible centre of unity in the congregation."¹ Gradual, yet rapid development first separated the "minister" or "elder" from the ordinary level of church membership. It soon began to be imagined that what the

¹ Lightfoot : "Philipp.," p. 233. It is often forgotten that the bishops of the first three centuries were the heads of separate congregations and not governors of groups of churches : (Hatch : "Organiz. of Ch.," p. 195.)

priesthood had been in Judaism that the presbyterate ought to be in Christianity.¹ Then Ignatius found an analogue for the position of the bishop in the relation of Christ to the apostles. In the doctrinal controversies which arose in the second century leaders like Irenæus and Tertullian found it convenient to make their appeal to those Churches whose bishops could be traced back to apostolic times. Cyprian (A.D. 260) unfolded in all its proportions the analogy between the Levitical orders of the Old Testament and the ministerial orders of the New. He regarded the hierarchy and temple-service of the old covenant as prophetic symbols of the newer institutions. None but the bishop could answer to the high priest: all sacerdotal grace and authority must be derived from him. In the system of Cyprian, says Dr. Lightfoot, "the episcopate is not so much the roof as the foundation stone of the ecclesiastical edifice; not so much the legitimate development as the primary condition of a church."² The effect of this change

¹ The germ of this is in Clement.

² "Philipp.," p. 241. "The writings of Cyprian mark a new stage in the development of ecclesiastical thought and language. In them the phraseology of the Levitical law is transferred to Christian institutions." (Westcott: "Ep. to Heb.," p. 458.) "Cyprian stands out in Church history as the typical bishop, and with his weighty sentences he impressed on the episcopal theory an abiding form." (Gore: "The Ch. and the Min." p. 169.)

was to lower the council of presbyters, heretofore co-assessors with the bishop; there must be one altar and one priesthood. He who was not with the bishop was not in the church. It was a neo-Christianity: but Cyprian and his successors were able to persuade the Church that it was primitive, apostolical, and even "evangelical." The bishop of Rome learned that he could assume the mitre and ephod, and claim authority over all Churches.

Cyprianism is still the prevalent form of Christianity in both the Eastern and Western Churches; even in the "Reformed" Church of England, however much we may regret it, its influence has been and is so predominant that the term "Catholic" has been degraded to the level of a sectarian badge.

The Bampton Lecture of 1880 by the lamented Dr. Hatch was epoch-making in this discussion on the origin and import of the Christian ministry. He had the merit of being willing to trace the Church and her institutions to lowly beginnings. His portrait of apostolical lineaments is not borrowed from ecclesiastical art but from life and history. All the conventional schools were startled, not to say shocked, at his production. Many have not even yet ceased to be astonished at the temerity which transgressed the limits of tradition and dogma, or offended at the meanness which was content to note the

natural gradation of events. Yet his theory was not so novel as the illustrations and evidences which his remarkable erudition enabled him to supply to it. Hooker admitted with Suidas that the name "bishop" "hath been borrowed from the Grecians, with whom it signifieth one which hath principal charge to guide and oversee others."¹ Neander inferred from the use of the word in Greek communities, that the title originated in the Gentile churches.² Lightfoot finds a parallel to the elevation of the bishop over the presbyter in Athenian municipal institutions.³ Hatch followed up these historical notes by tracing out the development of the Church especially in its work of charity. Social misery, wide-spread indebtedness, servitude and ill-paid labour had made clubs, societies, and guilds indispensable to the helpless multitudes of imperial and consular regions. The Church found at once a thousand doors open for its social beneficence and brotherhood, and a recognised type of social order which it could employ for its own ends.⁴ It was not

¹ Hooker : "Ecc. Pol.," ii. 72.

² Neander : "Planting," i. 143.

³ Lightfoot : "Phil.," p. 194.

⁴ Mommsen published in 1843 his "De Collegio et Sodaliciis Romanorum," which investigated club-life in ancient Rome ; and Henrici (in *Zeits. für wiss. Theol.*, 1876) showed the similarity between secular and religious societies.

improbable that the president of its society should take the name already given to the chief officer of such associations. There were associations for many purposes in all parts of the empire: trade-guilds, dramatic guilds, burial-societies.¹ Most of them were religious and were placed under a tutelary deity. The Christian *ecclesia* would be but another "society" added to the myriad already existing. The "bishop" would receive the gifts of the faithful, and, with the aid of his fellow-elders distribute the funds as "every one had need." As the "president" of the community, he would be the chief director of its worship, the arbiter in discipline, and an authority in doctrine.²

The president of an ordinary club bore, usually, one of two names. He was called a "manager" or a "bishop." Both names were in use for municipal chairmen and for those who held office in societies. Administration and finance were the chief items of the responsibility entrusted to such officers. Here Harnack and Sanday depart from the view of

¹ Hatch: "Organiz.," p. 26.

² ἐπιμελετής, 1 Tim. iii. 5: "If a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care (ἐπιμελήσεται) of the Church of God." Josephus ("Bell Jud.," ii. 8. 2 and 3) says the Essenes had a community of goods; and the managers (ἐπιμεληταί) were chosen by all for the ministration of the possessions of the community.

Neander, Lightfoot, and others who supposed that there was an exact identity between bishop and presbyter. Hatch assumes that both were of one class—the elders, who were called “presbyters” when thought of as an *order*, and bishops in regard to their duties. “In their general capacity as a governing body they were known by names which were in current use for a governing body; in their special capacity as administrators of church funds they were known by a name which was in current use for such administrators.”¹

What a dispersion of theories! At this touch of magic the vision of ecclesiastical imagination vanishes. Bishops, instead of deriving their awful credentials direct from heaven, owe their specific title to “current use.” They entered the Church that they might do it service like that which was rendered by similar officers in secular associations. But their pretensions rapidly grew beyond these humble limits. In time they grasped the highest honours and claimed to exercise the most solemn functions of the Church. They claimed to be the “successors of the apostles.” History shows how the modest elder of a Christian community, hidden away in some

¹ Hatch : “Organisation of the Early Christian Churches,” p. 39.

dark corner of the Ghetto became the triple-crowned priest who blesses the people from the balcony of St. Peter's. Hildebrand traces his pedigree to the fisherman of Bethsaida, and Leo X. commands Raffaele to emblazon his courts with the effigy of Paul the tent-maker.

Harnack endeavours to demonstrate that even in the apostolic Church there was some slight difference between "bishop" and "presbyter." He refers to the fact that in Philippians i. 1 bishops and deacons are mentioned but not presbyters, though the latter existed in most places and might, probably, be in Philippi. But Jerome refers to this case in order to prove that the bishops and the presbyters were identical (also Lightfoot, etc.). Harnack also remarks that bishops and elders are mentioned apart in the First Epistle to Timothy (iii. 1, 13, v. 17-19). His views on the subject are, however, complicated by doubts respecting the date of the Acts and Pastoral Epistles. If these belong to the second century, they cannot be quoted confidently to prove anything about the Church constitution of the first.

Harnack also endeavours to show that the presbyters were especially entrusted with discipline; they were officers of the Sanhedrim rather than of the synagogue. The bishop, on the contrary, was the presiding elder, who had to do with the offerings,

with the worship and general administration. The elders and bishops made up the "presbytery" (*γερουσία*, *senatus*). But we know that such a distinction could not exist when Paul said to the "presbyters" of Ephesus: "The Holy Ghost hath made you bishops."¹ Moreover, in the Epistle to Titus, which stands or falls with those to Timothy, the elder and bishop evidently held the same office (Tit. i. 5, 7).

Dr. Sanday approves, in general, of Harnack's conclusions, though he criticises some of them.² He thinks that the bishop had not only to do with the secular management of the Church, but had some authority over persons of lower degree. He ventures to assume that "the bishops were chosen to superintend deacons," and that Lightfoot and Harnack have explained the "organic connection between bishops and deacons." The first deacons, he supposes, were appointed to assist the apostles. But if bishops were afterwards appointed to superintend deacons, who superintended elders? Besides, we should thus have four orders: apostles, bishops, elders, and

¹ Acts xx. 28. Here we may quote Jerome on Tit. i. 5: "The bishops knew they were greater than presbyters by custom rather than by a true ordination by the Lord, and that they ought to rule the Church in connection with them."

² *Expositor*, Feb., 1887.

deacons ; and of these the apostles would have no successors !

Further, the theory of Hatch and Harnack that bishops were placed first at the head of the secular affairs of the Church and had no distinct spiritual functions, can scarcely be maintained. St. Paul's address at Miletus to the bishops of Ephesus implies their responsibility for the religious condition of the Church ; and it is said in the Epistle to Titus (i. 9) that the bishop must be able to "exhort in the sound doctrine and to convict the gainsayers."

Does it not become clearer that no exact delineation of the several offices of the ministry is laid down in the New Testament ? The seven elected at Jerusalem were not called "deacons." Acts xi. 20 shows that the "elders" assisted the apostles in the distribution of the gifts from Antioch, although the seven had been already appointed to duties of this kind. The words "deacon" and "deaconise" in the New Testament have a general significance, and are freely used to describe the exercise of any ministry whatsoever. As we have already shown, "deaconship" is used even for service rendered by the apostles themselves.¹

¹ See Acts i. 17, vi. 4, xi. 29, xii. 25, xx. 24, xxi. 19 ; Rom. xi. 13 ; 1 Cor. iii. 5 ; 2 Cor. iv. 1, v. 18 ; Ephes. iii. 7 ; 2 Tim. iv. 5, "fulfil thy deaconship" ; Rom. xii. 4, magistrates."

Therefore it cannot be successfully contended that "from the Apostles' times there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."¹ Bishop Ellicott tells us that in Phil. i. 1, "the title of office, *bishop*, is perfectly interchangeable with the title of age, *elder*."² Bishop Lightfoot states that it is "a fact now generally recognised by theologians of all shades of opinion, that in the language of the New Testament the same officer in the Church is called indifferently bishop and elder; . . . in every one of the extant commentaries on the epistles containing the crucial passages, whether Greek or Latin, before the close of the fifth century, this identity is affirmed."³

These are remarkable admissions. It might be thought that with these concessions the controversy would end. But episcopacy has been too long established in supreme authority to be relinquished without a struggle. The last appeal is to tradition. Tradition says that St. John presided over the Churches in Asia and appointed bishops. The letters of Ignatius, reported to be a disciple of the apostles,

¹ Book of Common Prayer; Ord. of Deacons, pref.

² Phil. i. 1.

³ "Phil.," p. 93. The Peshito always translates *ἐπίσκοπος* by *Kashisha*=elder; in Tit. i. 5, 7, "appoint elders—for the elder must be blameless."

assert that in the early part of the second century there were "bishops appointed everywhere in the Church."

But there is little evidence that St. John presided over all the Churches in Asia in the way supposed. Tertullian and others appear to have obtained their knowledge of his residence there from the references in the Apocalypse. On such a question, Bishop Lightfoot himself allows that the testimony of Irenæus is of little value. He says, that "towards the close of the second century the original application of the term *bishop* seems to have passed out of use, if not out of memory. So perhaps we may account for the explanation which Irenæus gives of the incident at Miletus (Acts xx. 28): 'Having called together *the bishops and presbyters* who were from Ephesus.'" St. Paul called the presbyters *bishops*; but Irenæus separates them, and makes them to be two different classes!

"But in the fourth century, when the fathers of the Church began to examine the apostolic records with a more critical eye, they at once determined the fact. No one states it more clearly than Jerome."¹ Considering that Irenæus is so constantly referred to as the "disciple of Polycarp, who was the disciple of

¹ Lightfoot, "Phil.," p. 96.

John," it is strange that he should not know the true position of a bishop. Tertullian and Cyprian in the third century followed church-tradition rather than the "Acts" and the "Epistles." It was not for a century or more after Cyprian that Hilary and Jerome recovered from the New Testament the truth of the matter. But it was too late to stem the torrent.

Because Jerome shows no sign of acquaintance with the Ignatian epistles, and is doubtful about the date of the martyrdom of Polycarp, Bishop Lightfoot pronounces him to be, "though well versed in works of biblical exegesis, . . . extremely ignorant of early Christian literature."¹ In this judgment upon Jerome the learned Bishop stands alone among historical critics. Canon Fremantle allows that his translation of the *Chronicon* of Eusebius is uncritical; but his "knowledge was great and his sympathies large."² The correspondence of Jerome with Rufinus and Augustine contains many references to Scripture and church history, and his treatise on "Illustrious Men" shows that he had extensive knowledge of previous times. Dr. Döllinger also testifies that "every one acquainted with the literature of the primitive Church knows that it is precisely in Jerome

¹ Lightfoot : "Ignatius," i. 632.

² "Dict. of Ch. Bi.," iii. 49.

that we find a more exact knowledge of the more ancient teachers of the Church, and that we are indebted to him for more about their teaching and writings, than to any other of the Latin fathers."¹ No doubt it is disappointing that a writer of such repute as Jerome says nothing of the epistles of Ignatius, which Bishop Lightfoot so earnestly desired to defend; but it scarcely seems justice to describe him as "extremely ignorant of early Christian literature."

The grounds upon which the apostolic origin of the "third" order are based are very insecure. Bishop Lightfoot pleads "that if the word deacon does not occur [in Acts vi.], yet the corresponding verb and substantive are repeated."² It may be questioned whether the use of the "verb and substantive" will bear the inference which he suggests. Such a passage as Luke xxii. 26: "He that is greater among you, let him become as the younger (*ὁ νεώτερος*), and he that is chief as he that doth serve (*ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακονῶν*)," certainly shows that the "deacon" was content to occupy a place of service and subordination; but then the apostles, in humility, used the term to represent their own work. If a member of the

¹ "Hippolyt. and Callist.," p. 80.

² "Phil.," p. 186.

Church became by age, or dignity, or ability, eligible to be placed in the rank of "elder," and thus to exercise the office of "bishop," or "ruler," he must fulfil his "diaconship" in lowly love. If any or all of these terms attained exact and technical signification in the Church in after times, it surely must be most unscientific to read the later meanings into the early use. Clemens Romanus did not fully apprehend St. Paul's teaching of justification by faith, and Justin Martyr does not adequately reproduce St. John's conception of the Logos: why should we expect Irenæus to be an infallible exponent of the church principles of Paul or Peter, or assume that Cyprian and Basil understood the original relations of bishops and deacons? "Biblical theology" no longer quotes the whole scripture as one homogeneous treatise, but carefully discriminates the object and scope of each writer. May not Church History renounce its reliance on the "Fathers" as if they were the unvarying exponents of apostolic teaching and practice? Is not the devastation which rationalism has wrought in theology a revenge of reason upon a system which has renounced its guidance?

In conclusion, then, on this point, we may briefly review the history so far as we have been able to trace it:

1. The Church at first consisted of Jews (chiefly

Galileans) only, who had attended the ministry of our Lord, and had been witnesses of His life, death, and resurrection. Soon after His ascension they made Jerusalem their centre. Their assembly would be looked upon as a synagogue or sect of Galileans, or, as they seem to have been called, "Nazarenes." They were punctilious in the observance of the Jewish ritual, and did not display at once any signs of separation from the Jewish Church.

2. They had no officers except the "twelve" who had been specially called out by the Master as His witnesses. These exercised no lordship over their fellow-believers, who were taught to call no man "Master," and had all things common. The apostles received and distributed the contributions of the community. When these responsibilities extended, seven men were chosen, chiefly from the Hellenist section, to assist them. These do not appear to have received any official designation as "deacon," but one of them is afterwards called an "evangelist." Possibly these seven, were now, like the original twelve, separated from all secular labour that they might attend to church work. Soon after we find that others called "elders" had been called to assist in the management of the Church's affairs.

3. As the first members of the Church were Jews only, or Hellenists, or proselytes who had been cir-

cumcised and submitted to the entire Mosaic ritual, there could be "no sacerdotal caste" among them.¹ To take the name or office of "priest" would have placed them in collision with the claims of the sons of Aaron. But the Christians met where possible daily at a common meal, which took in time the name Agape, or Lovefeast. After supper, he who happened to preside passed round bread and wine in memory of the death of the Lord, and prayers and thanksgivings (*εὐχαριστίαι*) were joined by all.²

¹ Lightfoot, "Philipp.," 179.

² *συνδείπνα* were frequent among the Jews and Greeks. Caius Cæs. ordered that the Jews in Delos should perform their worship, and "bring in contributions for common suppers and holy festivals." Renan ("Les Apôtres," p. 81) follows the common error in supposing that after Pliny's letter (Ep. x. 97) the Lovefeast would cease to be held in the evening.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW DEPARTURE: THE INCLUSION OF THE GENTILES.

“Unheard by all but angel ears,
The good Cornelius dwelt alone,
Nor dreamed his prayers and tears
Would help a world undone.”¹

THE providential prominence given to the Greek Bible facilitated the access of Christianity to Gentile circles. Hellenistic Jews, though often tenacious of the letter of the law, had multiplied affinities with Gentile thought and feeling. The first division in the Church, if such it may be called, arose in some estrangement between the “Hebrew” and “Grecian” sections of it. In a time of transition, when new ideas are entering into men’s minds, many become alarmed because they do not know how high the tide of progress may rise. Stephen was charged that he “ceased not to speak words against this holy place and the laws.” This

¹ “The Christian Year”: Easter Monday.

was an exaggeration, but might be founded on prophetic words in which he had announced the coming change.

Yet the new leaven worked slowly. On the death of Stephen persecution assailed the Church. The Jewish leaders began to perceive that the new doctrine with its Hellenistic attachments meant mischief to Jewish unity. Before the blast the Church was scattered throughout Judea and Samaria, "except the apostles."¹ Philip, who, like Stephen, had a Greek name, went into Samaria and "proclaimed unto them the Christ." His evangelism led also to the conversion of an Ethiopian proselyte, whom he baptized and sent "on his way rejoicing." We do not read that any of these new converts were put into subjection to the Jewish ritual. The Samaritans were a circumcised people, and the Ethiopian must also have been obedient to the law, or he would not have been allowed "to worship at

¹ Why did not the apostles leave? Clem. Al., "Strom.," 6. 5, mentions a tradition that the apostles should remain in Jerusalem twelve years. De Wette thinks that the persecution was directed chiefly against Hellenists. Stier suggests that the Spirit commanded them to remain; Alford, that veneration protected them. Among conjectures, Ritschl's ("Ents. d. a. K.," p. 126) is as good as any, viz. that the apostles were not in haste to preach the gospel to men of other races.

Jerusalem." But the barriers of prejudice were being gradually removed.

The next great fact in the history of the Church was the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. He, as a strong adherent of the old faith, had actively opposed the new sect in all its branches. Hebrew or Hellenist alike, who believed in Jesus of Nazareth, was obnoxious to him. He seemed to belong to both parties. By descent he was "a Hebrew of the Hebrews"; but by birth was a Hellenist of Tarsus, a city of Asiatic Greece. As Hellenists like Stephen and Philip were among the first to realize the breadth of Christianity, and to desire its extension beyond Jewish limits, so Hellenists like Saul were violent opposers of any concessions to Gentiles.¹ But the grace of the Spirit, vitalizing the experience of the larger world in which he had lived, giving efficacy to suggestions from a deeper interpretation of the

¹ Acts vi. 9 tells us that the "synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia," disputed with Stephen, and, perhaps, Paul was among them. In Acts ix. 29 we read that Paul, on his first visit to Jerusalem, "spake and disputed against the Hellenists, but they went about to kill him." Matthew xxiii. 15 says that the proselyte made by the Pharisees became "two-fold more a child of Gehenna" than they. This agrees with Just. Mart. ("D. c. Tr.," 122): "The proselytes not only believe but blaspheme against His name twice as much as you—*διπλότερον ὑμῶν.*"

sacred word, awakening conscientious scruples about his part in the death of Stephen, whose impressive martyrdom he had not failed to witness—all this prepared Saul for the awful visitation which befell him on the way to Damascus. He was now ready to hear from Ananias that his mission lay along an untrodden path; he was to bear the name of Jesus as the Christ “before Gentiles and kings.”

It was about the same time that Peter also received his great lesson concerning the dimensions of the kingdom of the Messiah. Instruction quite as impressive, yet less terrible than that given to Saul, the Pharisee of Tarsus, is needful for Simon, the fisherman of Bethsaida, if he is to read aright the terms of the new covenant. By a vision and by the conversion of Cornelius he was taught that “God is no respecter of persons,” and that nothing which God has made “is common or unclean.”¹ How

¹ There was no express law against a Jew eating with a Gentile, but there was always a danger of eating food unfit for a Jew. Jesus not only received sinners, but *ate* with them (Luke xv. 2). Hence, Matthew xv. 11, “not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man.” The Pentateuch does not forbid an Israelite to eat with a man of another nation, nor does Josephus speak of any difficulty. Zeller and others have supposed the “Acts” to be unhistorical on this point, but without reason. The “Clementines” speak of Peter as taking his food alone when sojourning among Gentiles.

strange that lessons so direct and convincing should ever have been forgotten! Yet at Antioch he, by his conduct, denied the confession he had made in Jerusalem. A similar obliviousness had also beclouded some of the teachings which the Lord Himself had given to the apostles. It was not till prophecy had become fact that Peter and the rest knew what their Master had meant when He spoke of death and resurrection. Time and experience, as well as truth, must be factors in a revelation which made it known to Galilean peasants of that day that "neither at Jerusalem nor on this mountain should men worship the Father."

It had however come to the consciousness of many in the Church that faith in Jesus and the observance of the Jewish law were not inseparable. Cornelius had been converted and had received the Holy Spirit even before baptism or circumcision. Many proselytes in Samaria and Syria had accepted the faith. Stephen foresaw that the rejection of Jesus would be the presage of national subversion to Israel.¹ Saul of Tarsus, with Barnabas and others, were giving themselves to the work of the gospel among the Gentiles. But no sudden or violent change was made. The believers, driven by perse-

¹ Harnack, "Dogmeng.," i. p. 218.

cution to Phœnicia and Cyprus and Antioch, preached Jesus Christ, but "to none save Jews," until, increasing in boldness, some who came to Antioch spoke to "Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus."¹ Very likely, these were not avowedly heathen or irreligious persons, but rather some who already had "their faces towards Zion," and were asking their way thitherward. Outer-court worshippers, they were waiting for the "Consolation of Israel," who was becoming the "Desire of all Nations." To these, who if not proselytes of the gate were but one remove from it, it was said, "Repent, and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

At this point we may observe how enormously the territory of the Church had been extended. Most parts of Palestine had now heard the gospel. Galilee had been the home of the apostles, and the principal scene of the ministry of Jesus. It was said on the day of Pentecost, "Are not all these which speak

¹ It is in favour of "Greeks" that Jesus is preached as *Lord* and not as *Christ* (cf. Acts xvi. 31). The documentary evidence is very much divided. But there would have been no need of a note that some one had preached to Hellenists. Sieffert (Herzog, "Real-Ency.," xi. 522) notices that the Church at Jerusalem was not incited to extend the gospel to Gentiles although Cornelius was accepted (Acts xi. 19).

Galileans?" After some years had elapsed, Samaria, Cæsarea, Lydda, Joppa, and other places had been visited by apostolic labourers. Members of the Church, driven from the holy city by persecution, had carried the good seed out to Phœnicia, the western lowlands of Palestine, to Cyprus, the great island of the Mediterranean, and to Cyrene in North Africa. Saul himself was baptized by Ananias, in Damascus, in the north-east; others, again, venturing as far north as Antioch, had founded one of the most celebrated of the churches, where also the followers of Jesus obtained a new name.

Antioch was the capital of northern Syria. The Seleucid kings had made it their residence, and Roman governors had given it roads, aqueducts, baths, theatres, and other accessories of their corrupt civilization. The Herods had also enriched it. Josephus tells us that Seleucus Nicator had patronised and enfranchised the Jews in Antioch.¹ Special civic privileges as well as the commerce of the city would attract large numbers of Jewish people. Its mixed population, its freer atmosphere, and its eclectic spirit, where the gods of Egypt, of Syria, of Greece and of Rome, were all worshipped, presented a fair arena for the introduction of a new religion. Already there

¹ "Ant.," xiii. 3. 1; "Cont. Ap.," ii. 4.

were many proselytes to Judaism—souls sick of heathenism, attracted to the purer fountains of Hebrew inspiration. To such the widening stream of Christianity would seem like a fulfilment of the prophetic word: “In the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert.”

The effects of the gospel among these Gentiles was similar to that elsewhere. The enthusiasm of faith rose to a flame, and in the rapture of their new concord they forgot the old distinction between Jew and Gentile. The story of these proceedings reached Jerusalem, and Barnabas was sent to observe and report; who, when he came and “saw the grace of God, he was glad.”¹ The infallible signs of a work of God were there. A modern “Catholic” would, we suppose, as some Christians of Jerusalem did, have denied that these people were “in the unity.” He might allow that some spiritual blessings had happened to them through “uncovenanted mercy.” The advocates of formal unity have always insisted that there is “only one Church”; in apostolic times they said it consisted exclusively of the direct descendants of

¹ The writer of “Acts” (x. 23) evidently sympathised with Barnabas’s conciliatory tendency. He tells us that Barnabas “exhorted them *all*, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; for he was a good man—*ἀθώσαυηρ ἀγ*,—and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.”

Abraham, or of those who had been formally received into the Jewish fellowship. In later times grace is said to be dependent upon sacraments administered by those in the "succession."¹

But Barnabas saw that "the hand of the Lord was with them." He did not raise the question of their eligibility for church-membership. He remained to minister among them. Nay, he did more; he made a journey to Tarsus and brought thence the converted Saul and, for a whole year their united ministry edified and enlarged the Church. During this period of peace both Jews and Greeks "were gathered together in the Church" (Acts xi. 26).

This was a daring innovation. Here were Paul and Barnabas, and other well-known Jews, associating freely with Gentiles. Nearly twenty years had elapsed since the death of Jesus, and no one hitherto had thought this to be a lawful thing. But the conversion of Cornelius convinced Peter, and, partly, the Church at Jerusalem, that believing Gentiles are to be received into the fellowship of faith. By the term "gathered together" (*συναχθῆναι*) it is meant, as Paul tells us in Gal. ii. 12, they did "eat with the Gentiles."

¹ Rev. C. Gore says: "A ministry not episcopally received is invalid, that is to say, falls outside the conditions of covenanted security" ("Church and Ministry," p. 345).

At Jerusalem Peter was rebuked by the Jewish party because he went as "to men uncircumcised and ate with them." They strongly objected to this fellowship at tables, which joined in a common worship both Jew and Gentile. Paul and Barnabas discerned the significance of their combination of both classes in the Agape-Eucharist, and even Peter, at least at first, taught by the case of Cornelius, accepted the new dispensation.

The Church order at Antioch differed essentially therefore from that in the Church at Jerusalem. In the mother Church the unity was Jewish, and so continued for a century: the new Christianity of Antioch included both Jews and Gentiles. This development was fully accepted by Paul, and for twenty-five years Antioch became his headquarters and its Church his model. It is a mistake to suppose that Paul's Churches were "Gentile" only; they were mixed Churches.¹ His epistles to Rome, to Corinth, to Ephesus, to Colosse, and the rest, all show that his doctrine of unity differed from that which prevailed at Jerusalem. Apparently it was this amalgamation of men of various nationalities at Antioch which gave rise to a separate designation for the disciples: they

¹ Cf. Rom. ii. 21, xv. 5; 1 Cor. i. 23, x. 32, xii. 13; Gal. iii. 26; Ephes. ii. 13; Col. iii. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 7.

“were called Christians first at Antioch” (Acts xi. 26).

Whether the full import of the steps taken at Antioch was not discerned by the Pharisee-party at Jerusalem, or that the case of Cornelius had too powerfully impressed them, there was a temporary acquiescence in the state of things. Moreover the land was desolated by famine, and the wealthier Church at Antioch sent aid to the poorer brethren in Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas came, themselves, with the benefaction, and it would have been ungrateful to raise a “burning question” just then.

But the Church at Antioch was moved to missionary enterprise. Barnabas and Saul were publicly ordained to a special mission by the “laying on of hands.”¹ Their first mission was to Cyprus, of which Barnabas was a native. At Salamis they preached in the synagogues of the Jews, and Sergius Paulus, the Roman consul, was converted to the faith. They then proceeded to Pamphylia, where John Mark, who now saw more fully into the procedure of Paul, ceased to follow them. He seems to have been a Jerusalem Christian, quite willing to join the apostles when they

¹ Bp. Potter (“Ch. Govt., 1730”), supposes this was Paul’s “ordination”; but that would plainly contradict Gal. i. 1 (Lefroy).

preached Christ in the synagogue, but not ready to assist in the conversion of Gentiles who did not conform to the "law." After the council at Jerusalem Barnabas was disposed to give Mark another trial, and to join him with them in a second visit to the Asiatic Churches. But Paul objected, and there arose a "contention" and separation between these noble evangelists. Barnabas took Mark with him to Cyprus, and Paul made Silas his companion in another eventful journey in Asia. The apostolic history makes no further reference to Barnabas. He was credited with an epistle which bears his name, and some attributed to him the epistle to the "Hebrews." Tradition did not fail to invent for him as for other apostolical personalities a fictitious future. Probably he did not live until the destruction of Jerusalem.¹

¹ The case of Barnabas supplies a good instance of the value of tradition. There are no historic sources of information besides the New Testament; but Clem. Hom. i. 9, say that Clement heard Barnabas preach in Alexandria; the "Recognitions," i. 7, say it was in Rome. Both agree that he was a Jew in practice. One tradition asserts that he was martyred in Cyprus, another that he was the first bishop of Milan. Such traditions have always helped the income of churches dedicated to saints. Clement of Alexandria ("Strom.," ii.) calls him an apostle, and (ii. 20) one of the "Seventy." Again (v. 10) he says he had "a clear trace of gnostic tradition." Clement, Origen, Jerome, and Eusebius held that the epistle was by the friend of Paul, and, for this reason, it is included under the

John, surnamed Marcus—having both a Hebrew and a Gentile name—"Marcus, the cousin of Barnabas," was with Paul in Rome when he wrote the Epistle to the Colossians.¹ If so, a great change had come over the apostle's relations with him.² St. Paul reports now that he was "useful for ministering."³ Could this be the same Marcus who was with Peter (in Babylon = Rome) when he wrote his first epistle?⁴ That Marcus is supposed to have been the writer of the second gospel. Papias reports that Mark had not personally followed the Lord, but was the "interpreter of Peter."⁵ At first sight it does not seem

"Apostolic Fathers." This view is maintained by Dr. Milligan ("Dict. of C. Biog."), but most modern criticism is against him. Neander, Hug, Baur, Hefele, Winer, Hilgenfeld, Donaldson, Westcott agree that the epistle objects to Judaism as containing a covenant from God, and the Levite of Cyprus and the friend of Paul could scarcely have held such an opinion. Its trivial interpretations, its lack of accurate information on Jewish matters, and its feebleness in thought and doctrine, are more than enough to counterbalance the external evidence in its favour. The discovery of the "Didache" has given fresh interest to the Epistle of Barnabas.

¹ So "Simon—Peter," "Saul—Paul."

² Col. iv. 24; Phil. 24.

³ 2 Tim. iv. 11. These references are used by the Tübingen writers against the genuineness of the later epistles.

⁴ 1 Pet. v. 14.

⁵ Papias (Eus., "H. E.," iii. 39); Clem. Alex.; Iren. ("Hær.," iii. 1). Tradition said that Mark was the young man who fol-

likely that a friend and trusted follower of Peter would also be a fellow-labourer with Paul. Yet we may infer from Col. iv. 10, where Paul gave special instruction to the Church "to receive him," that there had been some prejudice against him, especially as Paul adds that Marcus and Justus were the only persons belonging to the circumcision who helped him at that time.

Though Paul was now aware that his mission must chiefly be to the Gentiles, yet at Antioch, in Pisidia, he attended the services of the synagogue on the seventh day.¹ There he listened to "the law and the prophets," and was permitted to speak to the congregation. He ventured, in his remarkable address, to assert the superiority of the new dispensation to the old, since through Christ "every one that believeth is justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."² The

lowed our Lord (Mark xiv. 51) ; and Epiphanius thinks he was one of the "seventy" ("Hær.," i. 2, 6) ; but this contradicts Papias. The craving after apostolic patronage on the part of great Churches probably led to the tradition that Mark founded the Church in Alexandria (Eusebius, Epiphanius, etc.).

¹ Acts xiii. 14.

² According to Schwegler, "Nach. Zeit.," ii. 94, 96, this is an un-Pauline view. Paul teaches (Gal. iii. 11) that "in the law no one is justified before God." But (Meyer in loc.) Paul here only states that the gospel is superior to the law in respect

appeal was not without effect, for both Jews and Gentiles desired to hear him again.¹ On the next Sabbath "almost the whole city was gathered together." Many Gentiles who had long looked with eager eyes on the spiritual abundance of the Jew, gladly responded to Paul's more generous gospel. But when the Jews saw the multitude they became angry, and "contradicted, and blasphemed."²

Notwithstanding the bitterness of the Jews when the apostles came to Iconium, they joined themselves to the synagogue again. Both Jews and Gentiles were again added to the Church, but miscreant Jews joined with miscreant Gentiles to drive them from the place. This implacable party also pursued them to Lystra, where, at first, they had been welcomed as gods. However, the gospel continued to extend far into Galatia and Phrygia. At Derbe (Acts xiv. 21) they "made many disciples," no doubt sealing their reception into the Church by baptism.³ Returning

to forgiveness. The "Acts" do not "conceal Paul's doctrine of justification by faith" (Schwegl.). It is said, Acts xvi. 31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved."

¹ R.V.: "As they went out they besought,"—not as A.V., "the Jews only."

² On the significance of the last term see chap. xiii.

³ Matt. xxviii. 19 and John iv. 1 connect *discipling* with baptism. The verb *μαθητεύω* is only found in Matt. xiii. 52; xxvii.

on the route by which they entered the region, they revisited the new-born Churches in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. It would be at the evening Agape that they would address words of confirmation to the disciples, "exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."¹ The fruit of their toil remained in those small communities of converted Jews and Gentiles who now confessed Jesus as Lord. In recognition of their church-hood, they "appointed for them elders in every Church."² The very word, "voted by hand," shows that the apostles used no arbitrary authority, even over infant Churches; the plural "elders," proves that no Church was yet placed under the government of a single bishop.

After all this, how reviving would be the gathering of the Church at the Syrian Antioch, when Paul and Barnabas stood up to rehearse all that had befallen

57; xxviii. 19. *μαθητής* does not occur in the Epistles or Apocalypse.

¹ Acts xiv. 22.

² *χειροτονέω* means "to elect by stretching out the hands," and not to ordain by laying on hands, as ecclesiastical writers, since Jerome and Chrysostom, have assumed. In 2 Cor. viii. 19 Titus is said to be "appointed" by the Church. The spurious subscriptions to 2 Tim. and Tit., which said they had been "ordained first bishop" of Ephesus and Crete, are omitted in the R.V.

them—"all things that God had done with them, and how that He had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles." Another great stage in the progress of the kingdom of the Messiah has been reached, and Grecian Asia has widely received the seed of the Word.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST COUNCIL AND ITS RESULTS.

“Hic locus est, partes ubi se via findit in ambas.”¹

IT is necessary to observe with some care the details of the history at this stage, where each moment is important, and where little information is supplied beyond that which is found in one brief account. This scanty, but invaluable, record has had to sustain in recent times the utmost violence of adverse criticism.² It has been represented as an account prepared by a party of later date, who wished to establish their own view of the reconciliation of Jewish and Gentile elements in the “Catholic Church.” So far as the latter point is concerned, their contention may be allowed to have some ground, inasmuch as the history does serve that very end, but it further demonstrates that the *modus vivendi* was established in the first, and not in the

¹ Virgil : “Æn.,” vi. 540.

² The “Acts of the Apostles.”

second century. We hope to show that at the latter period there were no composite Churches—associating strict Judaists and also Gentiles in the same fellowship.

But the critics have proceeded to allege that the compiler of the “Acts” has wilfully suppressed facts, selected instances, and emphasised chosen details, in order to serve his purpose. These aspersions of Baur, Schwegler, and Zeller have however been retracted by others of the same school; and most writers now generally admit that in the later portion of the “Acts” we have the testimony of an eye-witness, and that in the first part we have information which cannot have passed through many links of transmission.¹

The principal facts in the history of the Church so far are as follows :—

1. The testimony of the “twelve” and of their associates has convinced many thousands of their own nation that Jesus is the Messiah. In Jerusalem, and in other places probably, those who believe form a brotherhood for worship and communion.

2. Among those who believed have been many Hellenists, who have carried the gospel into other

¹ Renan : “*Les Apôtres*,” x., contends that the author of the third Gospel was also the author of the “Acts”; that he travelled with Paul; and also that the first chapters are historical.

parts of Palestine, into Samaria and Syria. In Antioch, the metropolis of northern Syria, even Hellenes, who did not conform to Jewish usages, have believed and have been admitted into the fellowship of the Church. For church administration, helpers, usually called "elders," have been appointed.

3. Through the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who has a new calling as an apostle "to go to the Gentiles," a new era has commenced. By his agency and that of Barnabas the gospel has been carried to Cyprus, Pisidia and Phrygia. Churches in which Jews and Gentiles freely associate as brethren have been formed in those countries.

4. The unity of the Church is founded on the faith that Jesus is the Messiah, and not upon uniformity of worship or government. The Jewish Christian, particularly at Jerusalem, continues in the observance of all the ordinances of the law. He worships at the temple, he offers sacrifices, he abstains from prohibited food, he observes the sacred days and seasons. The Jewish hierarchy could not recognise the office of presbyter or deacon as any part of the Divine institution concerning the priesthood. Peter himself is but a layman when he enters the holy gate, or prostrates himself among the crowd of worshippers in the temple courts.

Further, when the Christian Jews meet, apart from

other Jews, in their own distinctive "synagogue" (Jas. ii. 2), for the "Agape," no Gentile, though he may be a believer, is admitted. Their status in national circles depends on ceremonial purity and respectability. Paul might fraternise with men of all nations; and Peter, when he first came to Antioch, ate with Gentiles, but he drew back when reproached by members of the mother Church, for in Jerusalem they must be above suspicion.¹ Peter could enter the house of Cæsarea, but he could not bring Cornelius to his table at Jerusalem. James and the primitive Christians in Jerusalem adhered to the legal practices, and, most likely, would never eat the Lord's Supper with a Gentile. But at Antioch, at Iconium, at Derbe, mixed Churches were formed. Probably they would

¹ Jerome says that at the Council "right hands were given to Paul and Barnabas by Peter and James and John, lest it should be thought that they had a different gospel, and also that there might be one communion of circumcised and uncircumcised." But Jerome did not see the facts. If he and others had seen them, the history of the Church would have been different. There was "one gospel," viz., "Jesus is the Christ"; but there was not "one communion of circumcised and uncircumcised." Paul and Barnabas were received into the *Koinonía*: was Titus? Modern writers have not seen this subject clearly; e.g., Lechler ("Ap. Times," i. 218) allows that (a) the Gentiles are relieved from the law; (b) Paul's mission is recognised; (c) that Jews are not required to forsake the law; but not (d) that Jews could not eat in the Agape with Gentiles.

continue to attend the "synagogue," in order to hear "the law and the prophets" read; but in the frequent Agapæ, where prayer and exhortation were freely exercised, there was "neither Jew nor Greek."¹ They ate and drank together in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The least of the seeds had now grown up into a tree; from the principal stem a strong and separate branch had sprung.² The unity was no longer numerical or external, but real and internal. In another century it became a serious question whether the old root belonged to the tree at all. At this primitive stage of which we speak the pretensions of the new shoot were mostly in question.

"Certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Paul and Barnabas withstood these apostles of legalism, and were commissioned by the Church at Antioch to go

¹ Acts ix. 2. Saul visited the synagogue at Damascus to find Christians: cf. Acts xv. 22. It was at Ephesus (Acts xix. 9) where Paul became a Dissenter and separated the disciples. Schwegler ("Nachap. Zeit.," ii. 89) asserts that the author of the "Acts" "ein apologetische Interesse verfolgt" when he describes Paul as going to the Jewish synagogue first; so Baur, Zeller, etc. But Paul (Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 24, etc.) had not forsaken his own people by going after Gentiles.

² Rom. xi. 15-21.

up to "the apostles and elders about this question." On their arrival at Jerusalem they found that there were within the Church Pharisees who were ready to withstand them.¹ But the spirit of counsel prevailed. Peter ventured to describe the Mosaic ritual as a "yoke . . . which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." He declares the ground of salvation to be, not the law of Moses, but "the grace of the Lord Jesus." He claimed to have been selected to open the Kingdom of God to the Gentiles, and his mission amongst them had been sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. If "he made no distinction between us and them," why should the Church continue to institute and formulate distinctions?² The

¹ Schaff, "Hist. of Ch." (A.D. 100), p. 337, suggests that these ἀπὸ τῆς αἵρεσ. had been Pharisees (Farrar, "St. Paul," p. 542, "nominally Christians"), but this is conjecture.

² Lechler ("Apost. Times," i. 194 et seq.) carefully deals with the objections to the account, which cannot be wholly reconciled with St. Paul in "Galatians." Peter and James seem to speak on Paul's side, yet the epistle would not suggest this. The "decree" is never mentioned by St. Paul, who expressly says (1 Cor. viii. 8; Rom. xiv. 14) that all food is pure to the pure. On the whole matter Bleek, Wieseler, Reuss, Ritschl, and Meyer agree that St. Paul had the chief apostles with him, really, and this Weizsäcker admits, but thinks that the Church did not go with them. Gal. ii. 9 shows that Paul's mission to the Gentiles was recognised. Lechler thinks these brethren ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου were really sent by him; Ritschl ("Die Entst. d. a.

Church had now obtained its charter. No national distinctions, no outward service can make a man a Christian or disqualify him for being one. The concordat was advocated by James as well as by Peter. Renan thinks the "decree" is a fiction, and that Peter would not have been so timid before those "from James" if the latter had really defended it.¹ But if the account in "Acts" presents some difficulties when compared with that in "Galatians," it also helps us to understand the epistle. It was by the "decree" that Jewish-Christians were authoritatively separated from the Gentile-Christians. The twelve were to go to the former, and Paul to the latter. Peter was therefore formally wrong when he joined the mixed Agape at Antioch, and the Jacobean representatives had that document in their favour.

James had recognised that the time had come for the extension of Christianity without a coincident extension of Judaism. He quotes the scripture which declared that when the house of David was restored, the "residue of men may seek after the Lord." Only "necessary things" are required from the Gentile converts. They are to "abstain from the pollution of

K.," p. 127) that they were false brethren, such as got in at Galatia, and who required Timothy and Titus to be circumcised.

¹ "Les Apôtres," lxxxi.

idols, and from what is strangled, and from blood.”¹ Judas, Barsabas, and Silas are sent with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to report the decision of the Council and to deliver the “decree.” The position taken by the Pharisaic section is emphatically renounced: “to whom we gave no such commandment.”² Judas and Silas themselves meet in the Agape with the mixed Antiochene Church, and “exhorted the brethren and confirmed them.”

¹ Acts xv. 20. Ritschl, Wieseler, etc., hold that the four precepts were Noachic, but Meyer objects. The latter also does not allow that it was a recognition of proselytes of the gate in addition to the proselytes of righteousness. Aug., “Cont. Manic.,” xxxii. 13, says: “The two walls of the circumcision and the uncircumcision, although united in the corner-stone, still retained some distinctive peculiarities, and now that the Church has become so entirely Gentile that none who are outwardly Israelites are found in it, no Christian feels bound to abstain, . . . so general is the conviction that ‘not what entereth into the mouth defileth.’” Can. Apost. 63, and Clem. Hom. vii. 4 speak of the prohibitions as still in force. “The Greek Church regards the decree as binding for all time, the Latin Church followed Paul” (Schaff, “Oldest Church Manual,” p. 183).

² Mr. Findlay says (“Expositor’s Bible”: Galatians, p. 112), “It drew from the authorities at Jerusalem the admission that circumcision is nothing.” Again, p. 132, that “after this the Judaisers did not require circumcision as necessary to salvation, but to perfection.” But the evidence scarcely justifies such a limitation. Acts xxi. 21 shows that all continued to be “zealous for the law.” In his epistles to the Philippians and the Colossians Paul had to contend against the “circumcision.”

The unfortunate difference between Paul and Barnabas led to their separation; but Paul once more departed on a pastoral and evangelistic tour with Silas. This journey became eventful by the public introduction of the gospel into Europe. Passing over familiar ground, they came to Derbe and Lystra. At the latter place they found Timothy—most likely a convert under Paul's former ministry. His mother was "a Jewess who believed."¹ His faith had been in Eunice, and again in Lois, his grandmother. But the father of Timothy was a Greek, and the son had not received the rite of initiation into Judaism. As Paul wished to go in and out among the Jews, he had Timothy circumcised. Then they went on their way delivering "the decrees for to keep."² After this we have no more about this portentous document.

¹ 1 Tim. i. 5.

² Acts xvi. 4. Baur objects to the account in the "Acts" because it says that Timothy was circumcised, whereas Gal. ii. 3. says that it was Titus. There is much difference of opinion about the case of Titus. Bengel, de Wette, Olshausen, Meyer, Alford, Lightfoot, Weizsäcker, say he was not: Tertull. ("C. Marc," v. 3.), Rückert, Farrar, Renan, say he was circumcised. There is ambiguity in—"But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised,"—with—"and that because of the brethren privily brought in"; though it is said, also, "to whom we gave place in subjection, no, not for an hour." The omission of *οἷς οὐδὲ* (Gal. ii. 5) in D has suggested

Their course was directed westward. Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, they came to Troas, a seaport on the Ægean. There the vision which summoned the messengers of salvation into the western world was seen. They came by a rapid course to Neapolis and then to Philippi. This Roman colony had not a Jewish population large enough to support a synagogue, but a few women were found at the proseuche on the Sabbath day. Paul and Silas still felt that the gospel must begin with the Jew. The first convert was a Hellenistic female from Thyatira (*σεβομένη τὸν θεόν*). After her household had been received into the Church, a heathen woman came under the power of the truth. She, a temple pythoness, had inquired, first from curiosity, what these Jewish exorcists professed to be, and had found that they spoke of "salvation." This, she would suppose, was the great formula of their incantation, and she began to use the term in public. It may be that the spiritual sensibility which had made her a medium for sooth-saying, made her also accessible to the new doctrine. When the demon was cast out, she seems to have subsided into a calm, undemonstrative confessor of the

that Paul might have given way for prudential reasons. It has not been noticed that he and Barnabas were received in the *Κοινωνία*, while Titus is not mentioned.

Lord Jesus. The change alarmed her masters, who soon perceived that "the hope of their gain was gone."

The arrest and imprisonment of the apostles did not depress them. In the prison-darkness they did not sadly ponder the adverse providence which had brought them into an enemy's country, nor did they reproach themselves with superstition for following the dream at Troas; they "were praying and singing praises to God." Hebrew psalms, full of language suitable to the oppressed who yet hoped in God, came to their recollection. The "songs of Zion" were indeed "strange" in that Græco-Roman city. Such words and cadences had not been heard before by the inmates of the dismal keep, which had often echoed to the groans of heathen despair. The prisoners "were listening to them" when the earthquake came and set them free.

Their watchword, "salvation," had become known to the gaoler. He might have read it in the indictment or heard it during the trial. In his alarm he becomes a believer in their mystery, and asks, "What must I do to be saved?" The apostolic reply has now gone out to men in every nation who seek this gift of God: "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved."¹

¹ Acts xvi. 31. The Rev. Vers. follows modern editors and

The writer of the "Acts" evidently continues his apologetic method. Some might question the propriety of admitting such "a sinner of the Gentiles" as the gaoler into the Church, but to them the miracles attending his conversion were a sufficient reply. Lydia was already an adherent of the Jewish faith. The female magician was defiled with paganism, but the miracle of exorcism had signalled her conversion. Who can withstand God?

Yet, though the Jews were rejecting the Christ, and the Gentiles were entering the open doors of grace, Paul on his arrival in Thessalonica first visited the synagogue: "as his manner was, he went unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that it behoved the Christ to suffer."¹ As we shall see was his method at Corinth, Paul first laid down his general proposition that the promised Messiah should "suffer." Then, in due time came the particular and

A, B, \aleph , Vulg., Copt. and omit *χριστόν*. The heathen would not understand what a "Christ" was. "Lord" seems to refer to the heavenly glory (Rev. xxii. 20): "Come, Lord Jesus." 2 Cor. i. 14: "Christ" to the earthly mission. Acts ii. 36: "God hath made both Lord and Christ." The Lord does not receive the title *Κυρίος* in Synopt. Gosp. except in Luke, Mark xvi. 19 and John iv. 1.

¹ Acts xvii. 1-9. "Opening and alleging": Meyer and Ewald connect "opening" with "from the Scriptures."

more critical statement "that this Jesus, whom," said he, "I proclaim unto you is the Christ." It was this final declaration which became the cause of "jealousy" and violence. All the Jews were expecting a Messiah, but not one who should "suffer."¹ At Thessalonica, as elsewhere, they would, however, listen to discourse on a novel theme especially as it seemed to throw light on some prophetic utterances. Three Sabbaths were not too many for the discussion of so strange a speculation. But when the apostle came to declare that "this Jesus" of Nazareth—a place of which no prophet had spoken, who had been "crucified" under Pontius Pilate, the representative of Roman oppression, few could receive the saying. "Some of them believed"; but, as in other cases, the faith spread more rapidly among the Hellenists; and "of the chief women not a few." To them the story of the Divine Sufferer did not appeal in vain. But most of "the Jews believed

¹ Stanton, "Jewish and Christian Messiah," p. 122; Westcott, "Gosp. of John," hold that the Jews B.C. did not expect a suffering Messiah; but Wünsche shows that the Talmud had the idea. Just. Mart. ("Dial. c Tr.," 68) says that the Jews admit that Christ "will come to suffer and to reign, and to be worshipped": also (*ibid.*, 89) "It is clear that the Scriptures show that Christ was to suffer; but we want to know if you can tell us anything about the punishment which was accursed in the Law." (90) "For we cannot bring ourselves even to think of this." But this belongs to the second century.

not." The cross was an insuperable scandal: they "set all the city in an uproar" and banished the apostles.

At Berea the members of the synagogue proved to be of a better class. They candidly "searched the Scriptures" to learn if the new doctrine had any foundation there. The result was that many believed, especially Hellenistic women "of honourable estate."¹ But the angry Jews of Thessalonica came hither also, and Paul was compelled to depart.

At Athens, whither Paul was now conducted, he found a synagogue of the Jews. Many waters cannot quench love; and though he knew that in every place rejection awaited him, he must bear his testimony among his own people. But the Athenians in their perennial curiosity came to listen to the strange preacher who had appeared in the Jewish synagogue, and to them he enounced "Jesus and the resurrection." The mystery of God, which their sages had pondered for centuries, they owned was still unread; for they had erected an altar to "an unknown God." But the unknown God had revealed Himself through "the Man" Jesus, whom He had

¹ Acts xvii. 11. *εὐγενής* is only found in Luke xix. 12, and 1 Cor. i. 26, where the word must be *well-born*. The association with *εὐσχημῶν* (cf. Mark xv. 3; Acts xv. 30) seems to prove that this must be its meaning in reference to the Jews at Berea.

appointed to judge the world, and whom He had raised from the dead. Even here some believed, among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite and Damaris.

But there yet remained the largest city of Greece—Corinth, to which Paul was directing his course. He travelled the distance, forty miles, by sea. The city had been rebuilt from its ruins not more than a century before; but its grand position between two seas, and on the northern shore of the Mediterranean, had attracted settlers from east and west. People of all religions—Egyptian, Syrian, Greek, Roman, and barbarian, worshipped within its precincts. The vices of heathenism came to a tropical luxuriance in this “Lutetia” of the Roman world, with its wealth and leisure. The Jewish community would include both rich and poor, educated and illiterate. It was not likely that many “noble” or “wise after the flesh” or “powerful” would accept Paul’s theory. It was amongst an inferior class that his work most prospered, although a few, such as Crispus the ruler of the synagogue, and Erastus the steward of the city, and Gaius (*ὁ ξένος μου καὶ ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας*) in whose house, probably, the disciples of Paul met, were added to the Church. Crispus, Gaius, and Stephanas were the only converts whom Paul himself baptized.

The accounts of the introduction of the gospel into Corinth need to be somewhat minutely examined, as they have been altogether misunderstood or their significance has been only partially apprehended. On his arrival Paul found Aquila the Jew, and his wife Priscilla lately come from Italy, whence Claudius had recently expelled the Jews. This was about 52 A.D. Aquila and Priscilla had Roman names, but Aquila was a Jew. It is not exactly stated whether they were already Christians or became such under Paul's teaching.¹ As Paul had come to Corinth without companions and, perhaps, without funds, he found it necessary to join himself to them, for they, being tentmakers, were of his trade. Silas and Timothy had been left behind at Berea. Timothy had then gone back to Thessalonica that he might learn the state of the Church, which, with the apostles, had been under persecution. In Corinth there was, as yet, no Agape to welcome the messenger of Christ, and Paul entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day a lowly and unrecognised worshipper.

But he could not conceal his mission. The synagogue would contain men of scholarly reputation, and

¹ Kuinoel, Olshausen, Lange. Ewald, Neander, Farrar, think they were already Christians: Meyer and Alford do not think so. They were expelled from Rome as Jews. Rom. xvi. 3 represents them as again in that city.

some trained speakers, with whose command of polished Greek he could not hope to vie. Coming from a distant province of Asia, his ruder speech would soon betray itself, as he opened his embassy for Christ. "He was reasoning (*διελέγετο*, as at Thessalonica) in the synagogue every Sabbath day and was persuading Jews and Hellenes."

As at Thessalonica, he contented himself at first with stating the general propositions that the Christ should come and that He should suffer for man's sin. To these declarations his Corinthian audience would attend with critical earnestness. The first of them was allowed by Jews everywhere. The second announcement involved what was at least an interesting speculation. But the apostle had not come with the "excellency of speech or of wisdom proclaiming the mystery of God." He had no ambition to furnish the rabbis with a novel interpretation, the philosopher with a new intellectual system, or the multitude with a fresh type of rhetoric. He had come to preach Jesus as the Christ and Him crucified. Yet, so far, as we think, he had not mentioned the name of the great Redeemer; he did not yet add, "This Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is the Christ."¹

¹ Eusebius ("H. E.," ii. 25) reports a statement from Dionysius of Corinth that Peter had "planted and taught"

He told them afterwards, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." He was, perhaps, tempted to handle the word of God deceitfully and to walk in craftiness. The position was full of critical peril. He was alone—his brethren still absent—before one of the most influential Jewish communities on earth, and he knew that the testimony of the Crucified would be no sooner heard than rejected with derision and cursing. He was comparatively safe so long as he withheld his principal thesis. Moreover, it was but common prudence to introduce his doctrine gradually to unprepared minds. The gospel was altogether new in Corinth, and Scripture argument was the best preparative which he could supply to his hearers if they were to accept his great message. He said to them afterwards (1 Cor. iii. 1), "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal—I fed you with milk." But how long was this state of things to continue?

It was ended by the apparition of Silas and Timothy. When they "came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word testifying to the Jews that Jesus is Christ." He could not withhold

with Paul at Corinth. The tradition is plainly made up from 1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 6. Cf. Neander ("Planting," etc., i. 379).

the great message any longer.¹ To continue to discourse like a rabbi full of patristic lore, or like a follower of John the Baptist to preach alone "repentance toward God," would never do now that his subordinates had arrived. Moreover, when he planned his visit to Corinth, he had formed no distinct resolution upon any subject except that he would proclaim Jesus as the Christ, and the Christ crucified.² If he attempted further temporising, his fellow-evangelists

¹ Acts xviii. 5. The various readings and comments on this passage show that it has not been understood. The Rec. and A.V. "pressed in spirit" was an attempt to relieve the difficulty. The R.V. "constrained by the word" agrees with the best MSS. Yet Ewald, Reuss, Conyb. and Howson, and Farrar think it means that he laboured now with increased zeal. Bengel accepted the better reading, but interpreted *λόγος* as implying the news brought by Sil. and Tim. Meyer first held for "increased activity," but began to doubt because "the dative with *συνέρχεσθαι* is the thing which presses"; and because the other view gave "no significant relation to the arrival of Silas and Timothy." Ewald, "History of Israel," vii. p. 378, says, "So far . . . scarcely a Judean had been converted . . . now he could labour with all possible effort." Wordsworth supposes that he was relieved from manual labour by the pecuniary supplies from Macedonia (2 Cor. xi. 9; Phil. iv. 14); so Reuss, "Histoire Apostolique"—"cessa de réserver a majeure partie de son temps à son métier de tisserand." But the participle *διαμαρτυρούμενος* (=since he now solemnly affirms) explains the *συνείχετο τῷ λόγῳ*. He began now to state openly what his doctrine was.

² 1 Cor. ii. 1.

would be the first to detect it. They would know what he kept back and the reason of his silence. They would never face persecution again if his courage or fidelity failed him now.¹

The result justified the reticence which he had hitherto maintained. Now that the crowning topic of his gospel was disclosed, and the emphatic testimony was given "to the Jews that Jesus is Christ," their complacency was at an end: "they opposed themselves and blasphemed."² It would be a mistake to suppose that these pious Jews would "blaspheme," in the ordinary sense of that word, or that it means merely to *revile*, or to use abusive language. Theirs was the "blasphemy against the Son of Man."³

¹ Paul's subsequent reference to these circumstances is very instructive. He says (2 Cor. i. 19), "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached by us even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in Him is yea" (R.V.). It may be noticed that the Greek for "was not yea and nay," and for "in Him is yea," is *ἐγένετο ναὶ καὶ οὐ*, and *ἐν αὐτῷ γέγονεν*. This would more properly be rendered "became, not yea and nay," "has become yea in Him." *Γίνομαι* does not often lose its sense of "becoming" as distinct from "being." It is possible that the apostle in *ἐγένετο, γέγονεν* refers to the change in his method after Silas and Timothy arrived. In verse 18 the documentary evidence is against *ἐγένετο*, though it would be appropriate.

² Acts xviii. 6.

³ Matt. xii. 31, 32 ; cf. Jas. ii. 7 ; 1 Tim. i. 20.

They would say "Jesus—Anathema."¹ Paul himself, even when after the strictest sect of his religion he was living as a Pharisee, was guilty of this sin.² He had called Jesus an impostor: he had derided the Holy One.

Weizsäcker completely misunderstands the narrative, and comes to some strange conclusions.³ His mistake, however, shows that the full significance of the account has not been perceived. He says:—

"The narration is beset with other improbabilities. First Paul gained (*gewinnt*) through his Sabbath addresses Hellenes as well as Jews, whilst afterwards this is said only of Jews to whom he presents the Messianic argument. Then a particular day forms a climax into which is crowded his banishment from the synagogue, his entrance into the house of a proselyte, the conversion of Crispus and the subsequent vision. This is the way in which, in the Gospels, a collection of stories is heaped with the art of a conscious pragmatism on a single day [!] . . . With the mention of the arrival of Silas and Timothy the activity of Paul among the Jews is represented without reference to what had been said before. This preceding account (Acts xviii. 1–14) is an interpolation."

But it is not said that Paul had "gained both Jews and Hellenes" before the arrival of his comrades; it is only said that "he was persuading" (*ἐπειθεν*; V., *suadebat*) them. Moreover, the arrival of Silas and

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 3.

² 1 Tim. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 11.

³ "Das apostol. Zeit.," p. 268. The Vulg. interponens nomen Domini Jesu in verse 4 (D, which also has *ἐπειθεν*: Syr. marg.) has little authority, and is clearly a gloss.

Timothy connects itself naturally with what goes before (*ὡς δέ*). There can be no doubt that we have here a very striking instance of what are called "undesigned coincidences" between the "Acts" and the Epistles.

Paul, now compelled to leave the synagogue, "shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."¹ Not far from the synagogue lived one who was a Roman—by name Titus Justus. Paul had been residing with a Jew—Aquila, but he goes now to dwell with a Gentile! Stephanas and his family had joined the Church; and Crispus, who, though only a proselyte, had, by wealth and probity, become the head of the Jewish congregation, joined the "Nazarenes." It is added that "many of the Corinthians were hearing and were baptized." Paul's word was not in word only, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. He was told: "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, . . . for I have much people in that city." This church, which would consist largely of Jews, speedily became the most numerous after that in Jerusalem. The national varieties in its composition exposed it to divisions

¹ Acts xviii. 6.

(1 Cor. i. 12) which cost the apostle so much pain. But its principal members seem to have been Hellenists and proselytes. At Cenchrea, one of the pronounced friends of Paul was Phœbe the deaconess, to whom tradition gave the credit of conveying his epistle to Rome.¹

Paul continued to labour in Corinth for a year and a half. But when Gallio was pro-consul, the Jews thought it necessary to accuse Paul before him.² They charged him with teaching doctrines which were unlawful to Jews. Gallio would not assume the office of a judge of their law and dismissed the case. In the tumult which followed, Sosthenes, who had succeeded Crispus as "ruler of the synagogue," was seized and beaten—a severity which Gallio chose to regard only as a part of the general incident.

The apostle's work in Corinth is, then, for the present accomplished. He desires to return to Syria and Jerusalem. We may be surprised to find that

¹ Rom. xvi. 1. The R.V. follows the best MSS. and omits the subscript, which attributes the transmission to Phœbe. The last chapter of the epistle, in the opinion of some, indicates that the epistle was sent to other Churches as well as to Rome; some dispute its genuineness. However, Renan accepts the tradition respecting Phœbe, saying: "Elle cacha sous les plis de sa vêtement toute la future de la théologie chrétienne, l'écrit qui devait régler la foi du monde."

² Acts xviii. 12.

this champion for freedom—he who so valiantly contended for the liberation of Gentiles from Jewish customs, continued himself to observe the ceremonial law. The Council at Jerusalem had made it clear that Judaism was not necessary for Gentiles, but the Jewish Christians could still practise it. The whole Church at Jerusalem attended the temple still; they paid for sacrifices and honoured the priesthood. Once more Paul wishes to show that he has not laid aside his claims to orthodoxy.

“He had a vow.”¹ It has seemed anomalous that Paul should still patronise the Jewish ritual, and both ancient and modern authorities have endeavoured to shift the obligation to Aquila; but the language leaves little room for doubt,² so broad and “catholic” was apostolic Christianity. It allowed the Gentiles to worship God without dependence on temple rites: it suffered the Jews zealously to observe the paternal tradition. The “Catholic Church” of

¹ Acts xviii. 18.

² *Κειράμενος* in a series of participles all referring to Paul must be applied to him. Beza notices that the Vulgate refers it to Aquila, and that Bede had seen a MS. which applied it to both. Beza refers it to Paul, “qui factus est omnibus omnia.” Jerome, Theophylact, Luther, Calvin, Bengel, Neander, Olshausen, and Alford refer it to Paul; yet Meyer contends for Aquila, whose name stands last. Wordsworth ably replies to this objection.

the next century refused to recognise those who practised the Mosaic rites: to be a Jew was to be heretical. In due course it followed that the Church should become the persecutor of the followers of Moses. To arrest and imprison them, to burn their houses, to bring them to death, became acts of merit. Yet the Church which did these things continued to call itself "Catholic and Apostolic."

In the prosecution of his purpose Paul sailed first to Ephesus.¹ His friends Aquila and Priscilla went with him. On his arrival he visited the synagogue, for there was as yet no separate Church at Ephesus. He found sympathetic hearers in that city, and, having barely opened his commission, departed on his eastward journey with a promise to re-visit Ephesus another day. In his absence the work was carried on by Priscilla and Aquila.² Among those who fraternise with them is Apollos, the Alexandrian orator, who now comes upon the scene.³ He was "a learned man—mighty in the Scriptures." He is only spoken of by Paul and Luke, and by them only incidentally, so that we have no full information respecting his opinions and labours. He already knew something about the new doctrines, for he had

¹ Acts xviii. 18.

² Acts xviii. 19.

³ Acts xviii. 24.

received the baptism of John, and “had been instructed in the way of the Lord.”¹ But he was only acquainted with the “first principles of Christ,”—with “a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands.”² He had taught that “the kingdom of heaven” was at hand, and had advocated the higher morality which John and Jesus had taught. But he had not known how the glory of the Saviour’s person had been unfolded by His resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.

Apollos bore a Greek name, and was “Alexandrian by race,” yet his free admission into the synagogues at Ephesus and Corinth proves that he was a recognised observer of the Jewish law. Priscilla and Aquila were able to induct him into the higher truths of the person of Christ, and gave him a commendatory letter to the Church at Corinth, where his exposition of the new faith soon gained attention. Like him,

¹ Acts xviii. 25. οὗτος ἦν κατηχημένος τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου. Meyer says “catechised by the disciples of John.” Catechesis was specially established at Alexandria—and Bengel locates Theophilus there—“ut veteres testantur—urbs illa doctrinarum.” Some things in “Acts” would be explained if Theophilus had passed through the same gradations as Apollos.

² Heb. vi. 1.

there were doubtless many in various lands who had heard something of the doctrines of John and Jesus, and also of Peter and Paul.¹ Curiosity, or some higher feeling, would often lead to inquiry and faith. Here at Ephesus, on Paul's return, he found some who had received the baptism of John, but had not heard of the Holy Spirit.²

Five years have now elapsed since the "council" was held at Jerusalem. The Gospel, first confined to Palestine, had spread into Northern Syria, then throughout Western Asia, and finally had crossed the *Ægean* into Europe. Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and now Corinth have Churches planted in them. Europe, which is to be the principal home of the Church, opens its doors to the new power. One mightier than Cæsar enters Rome, but it is "without observation"; the little stone cut out of the mountain rolls into Europe, but statecraft at its acutest stage does not detect its advent.

But the Church itself bears the marks of advancing time. It is clearer than ever that the gospel is

¹ The Clementines ("Homilies" and "Recognitions,") say, "A certain report, which took its rise in the East in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, gradually reached us—it was filling the whole world—that a certain person in Judæa, who was beginning in the spring-time, was preaching the kingdom of God."

² Acts xix. 2. We shall say more about these cases.

meant for Greeks as well as for Jews; nay, there are signs that the Jew may eventually reject it, and that the Gentile will appropriate its benefits for himself. Already the Church has lost its formal and visible unity. The older Christians—the Jews and rigid proselytes, worship at Jerusalem, offer sacrifices, circumcise their children, and keep the Jewish Sabbaths and feasts. But the recently added Gentiles are free from the law of Moses. It is enough that they are baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Though these believers study the ancient word which predicted the coming of Christ, they do not ask the sons of Levi to offer sacrifices for them. They meet for prayer and fellowship at an evening meal, when they pass round broken bread and a cup of wine in thankful remembrance of the coming of the Lord, but have neither priest, nor altar, nor sacred place. They do not even look to the “twelve” at Jerusalem for their highest direction and instruction, but to Paul, who “is not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles.”

Can anything be more “unscientific” than to found the pretensions of a visible Church with absolute uniformity of “orders” and services on such a basis as that which these facts present?

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOSPEL IN ASIA.

“More and more it spreads and grows,
Ever mighty to prevail.”¹

PAUL'S work is not done. He has been to Jerusalem, has fulfilled his vow, and now returns to Ephesus about A.D. 55. The city was a great centre of population and wealth, and, what was of greater interest to him, had a large Jewish community. His first converts were “certain disciples” who, perhaps, may have had some association with Apollos, for, like him, they knew only John's baptism.² These were baptized “into the name of the Lord Jesus.”

But Paul went into the synagogue, and for three months was allowed to “speak boldly.” Here he did not attempt to withhold his testimony for a moment. However at length he was once more cast out of the synagogue. In fact he became a “schismatic.” He “separated the disciples”; he became a “non-

¹ C. Wesley.

² Acts xix. 1-7.

comformist"; he opened a "meeting-house." His "conventicle" was held in "the school of Tyrannus."¹ Whether Tyrannus was a Jewish teacher or a Greek rhetorician, the Ephesian Church of Jews and Gentiles gathered in his hall. It was to this Church that St. Paul addressed his famous argument and exhortation on "Unity."² Gentiles, as certainly as Jews, have access to God in Christ, for "the middle wall of partition" had been broken down, since from one Father "every family in heaven and earth is named." But the knowledge of the Divine breadth of the purpose of grace had been hidden from the "ages." To Paul himself it had come as an apocalypse.³ He had been in the deepest darkness concerning this eternal design of the infinite Love, which was now "revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the spirit."

Ephesus proved to be a splendid position for evangelism. "All they who dwelt in Asia heard the

¹ Acts xix. 9 : ἀποστὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀφώρισε τοὺς μαθητάς.

² Epistle to Ephes. i.-v.

³ Ephes. iii. 3. R.V. corrects the false reading Eph. iv. 17 : "henceforth walk not as other Gentiles." The Church included both Jews and Gentiles. Meyer's arguments on i. 2, ii. 11, iii. 1, do not prove that all were Gentiles. This does not affect the question whether the epistle was addressed to Ephesus or to a number of Churches, though the latter view seems the more probable.

word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks." Visitors from many districts, coming to Ephesus by land or sea, were almost certain to attend some of the conferences of Paul, in which he engaged every day. "Special miracles" were wrought by his hand, and Jewish exorcists found rivalry with him to be useless. These supernatural signs had greater influence than Paul's arguments, for "fear fell upon them all." Some who had dabbled in magic confessed their crimes and burnt their books, many of which must have been valuable, for their total worth was estimated at nearly two thousand pounds.

In this great city Paul spent more than two years, after which, his message having been delivered, his apostleship must be extended to other regions. He had been pressed to revisit Macedonia. Aristarchus of Greece was already in Ephesus, ready to depart with him. Timothy and Erastus had gone forward into Macedonia. But an occasion for immediate departure was now furnished.¹

Judaism had always borne its protest against the idolatry of the pagan world, and had been reckoned an intolerant and "malevolent superstition" in consequence. Usually it was considered to be an obscure sect, more curious than terrible; but Paul's preaching

¹ Acts xix. 23, xx. 1.

in Ephesus had threatened the public faith in magic and idols. The multitude determined to assert the pre-eminence of Artemis, their goddess, and refused to listen to Alexander when they knew that he was a Jew. Though the scheme of Demetrius the silversmith was well laid, it happened that the scrivener of the town was a man of sense, and his counsel against lynch law was successful.¹

Departing from Ephesus, Paul revisits Philippi, Thessalonica, and most likely Corinth. His life and ministry were now filled with toil and solicitude. Privations, the perils of travel, the jealous hatred of his own nation, the enmity of false brethren—amongst whom were some Jewish Christians—and the care of the Churches, constituted the continual torture to which his epistles bear witness. But “grace” was “sufficient.” “Always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, the life also of Jesus was made manifest.”² “Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament,” said Bacon, “adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction.” When it was known at Corinth that Paul was about to sail from Cenchrea to Syria, the Jews laid a plot to seize him, and he was compelled to retrace his way to Macedonia on foot. Elsewhere

¹ Acts xix. 35.

² 2 Cor. iv. 10.

we must speak of the Judaisers, of whose activity in Galatia and Rome he heard during this visit into Greece.

At Troas, quite a group of friends was gathering. We may notice that all had Greek names.¹ Here were Sopater of Berea, Secundus, and Aristarchus of Thessalonica, who was a faithful follower of Paul to the end.² Whether Gaius of Derbe was the same person as the Gaius of Macedonia, is disputed, for Gaius was a common name. Tychichus was a trusted friend, who carried the epistles from Rome to Ephesus and Colosse, and, as well as Trophimus, was from Asia, if not from Ephesus. All were probably Gentiles. Trophimus, certainly, was a Greek. It was because Paul took him to Jerusalem and brought him into proximity to holy places that the riot in the city was excited and the apostle arrested.³

The brief visit to Troas was memorable indeed. To what stories of awakening, conversion, persecution and miraculous deliverances would this gathering of friendly souls be called to listen! Reports of Judaising activity in Galatia, Ephesus and Corinth, would mingle with testimonies to the progress of

¹ Acts xx. 4.

² Acts xxvii. 2 ; Col. iv. 10.

³ Acts xxi. 29.

the faith in Philippi, Thessalonica, and elsewhere. Hymns of praise would be followed by prayers for the suffering Churches. The Scriptures would be read again and again for fresh light on great questions, and for encouragement and direction for the future.

The narrative at this point is original and direct. The writer was present on that Sunday evening when Eutychus fell out of the window.¹ Luke, the physician, was there at the evening hour when the disciples came together "to break bread," but his skill availed nothing to the restoration of the dead youth.² All modern expositors are convinced that in the apostolic times the Lord's Supper was associated with a "Feast of Love"; and the advocates of "morning communion" find it impossible to deny that this was held in the evening.³ To this primitive communion we must attach no associations drawn

¹ Acts xx. 7-12.

² ἡρθη νεκρός.

³ Mr. S. Baring-Gould ("Our Inheritance," p. 174) is so resolved on having Morning Communion that he says the Christians met in the evening and waited until midnight for the breaking of bread. In the case of Eutychus, he says, "After midnight, *as we are expressly informed*, ensued the Eucharist." But the reason for the delay was the long address of Paul, together with the accident. He does not see the possible absurdity of his position, viz., that it would postpone the Eucharist to the second day of the week—Monday morning!

from a "mass" in St. Peter's, or from a "morning celebration" administered by a surpliced priest. It consisted of an ordinary evening meal in a private house, at the close of which—or at a certain point in the progress of which—the bread was broken and distributed, and a cup passed round with special prayer and thanksgiving (*εὐχαριστία*). The eucharistic prayer and thanksgiving recognised the goodness of God in creation, in providence, and in the mission of His Son—"the Son of David."¹ There was no "communion in one kind," such as Rome asserted to be legitimate in A.D. 1515. All ate the same bread and drank the same cup.

But these evening hours were not devoted to eating and drinking only. It was the daily or frequent opportunity for hearing the scriptures read and explained, for the mutual discussion of disputed questions, for the narratives of those who had been eye-witnesses of our Lord's life. "Gifts" and "offerings" were presented for the relief of poor brethren, and

¹ See "Didache," ix. 2. A writer in the *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1891, says: "The words of St. Paul, Rom. xv. 16, therefore imply not only that the Eucharist is a sacrifice, but that in his time a liturgy was in existence substantially the same as the liturgy of St. James. . . . The liturgy of St. James goes quite back into the apostolic age." It might as well be said that the New Testament "goes quite back into the Old Testament times," because it quotes from it.

for the charges of the Church. The "elders" were responsible for the receipt and distribution of the funds, and for the provision of things needful for the feast. Exhortation was not exclusively confined to stated officers, but was open to any who had a prophetic charisma. The Churches were advised not "to quench the Spirit."

If a visitor arrived from another Church, he was encouraged to speak. Paul, the pioneer of the gospel, with knowledge and renown like his, would be listened to with fullest veneration. How many things had he to say at this time! By an unexpected Providence he had been brought to Troas again. Here were met disciples from many Churches. He was about to depart to Jerusalem, and thence he desired to proceed to Rome, from which city he might not return for years. The Word of God everywhere had been confirmed and illustrated in the life and death of many believers, and had not been without adversaries. Paul might well be "long preaching."

It was on the first day of the week that the brethren gathered to break bread. It was evening when they met, but Paul discoursed till midnight. All were interested except the youth Eutychus, who, exhausted by the heat of the lamps (*λαμπάδες ἱκαναὶ*) and the lengthened discourse, slept, and

slipped down into the courtyard below. He was taken up dead, but Paul rushed down, and was soon able to announce that "his life was in him." This incident yet further delayed the Agape, and it was break of day when Paul departed.

Having found a suitable vessel, Paul and his friends sailed down the west coast of Asia. The narrative, evidently by one of the party, reports the progress day by day as they passed Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Trogyllium and Miletus. This was a port convenient for Ephesus, which Paul had wished to revisit; but his face was set towards Jerusalem which he had not seen for three years. There he hoped to persuade the authorities to give him fuller recognition, or to accept his wider views of the gospel. He could at least give explanations to the "elders" in Jerusalem which might exempt him from future annoyance from persons professing to come from them.

At Miletus he sends to Ephesus for the "elders of the Church." He reminds them of his constant labour and vigilance, of his impartiality in dealing with Jews and Greeks, requiring from both "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." Though his prospects are full of gloom, he entreats them to care for the flock over which God had made them "bishops," and predicts the rise of

false teachers among themselves. Then, with much emotion, he departed, they sorrowing that they "should see his face no more."

Their voyage was continued to Tyre, where they found disciples, though we have no account of the founding of this Church. Here they remained seven days, and certain prophets warned Paul not to go to Jerusalem. He received a similar warning at Cæsarea, where they remained some days with Philip the evangelist. He belonged to the primitive Church, yet, we are sure, would be in full accord with the larger spirit of Paul's gospel. The prophecy of Agabus moved Paul's companions more than himself, for he was "ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

At Jerusalem the brethren received them gladly.¹ Luke, Timothy, Trophimus, perhaps others, were with Paul. On the day following, Paul introduced his companions to James.² At this interview all who were in the position of elders were present, including the apostles. To this assembly he related "the

¹ Acts xxi. 17.

² Renan, "St. Paul," p. 508, says: "Paul entra dans cette funeste ville de Jérusalem pour la dernière fois, quelques jours, ce semble, après la fête de la Pentecôte, juillet, 58." He also infers that the apostle was received coldly, and had to pass the first evening alone.

things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his deaconship.¹ For this success they “glorified God,” yet their congratulations were mixed with anxiety.

Paul’s success among the Gentiles had already been reported at Jerusalem. It was known that he had been in collision with the authorities of the synagogues in Corinth and in Ephesus. Many had spoken of the freedom of his intercourse with Gentile believers, and of his liberal inclusion of men of every nation in the spiritual Israel. Not only had he consented that Gentiles should enter the Church without conformity to the law, but they alleged that he had encouraged Jews to lay aside the praxis of Judaism. The narrative at this point deserves careful consideration.

I. The number of Jewish believers was now very great. Paul was told: “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law.”² Perhaps the “many thousands” is not to be taken in exact literalness. Meyer says it is “hyperbolic.” Dr. Schaff assumes that all Jewish Christians were in favour of Paul, except a few Pharisaic Judaisers, who were “a small but very active and zealous minority,

¹ Acts xxi. 19: *διακονία*.

² Acts xxi. 21.

full of intrigue.”¹ But the statement of James certainly implies that the majority (“all”) were “zealous for the law.” Jewish Christianity was a greater fact in the first century than some Church-historians have been willing to allow. The Apocalyptic number—one hundred and forty four thousand—might have had something beyond symbolic significance. The Church which fled to Pella, and which survived for three centuries, must have had the strength of numbers at the beginning. But, how singular was its history! After boasting of its orthodoxy, and risking all for its attachment to the Jewish law, it was, in after days, rejected by the Church as heretical, and denounced in the synagogues as treason. The followers of those who would not have a Gentile in the Church became, in their turn, the victims of Gentile exclusiveness. There can be no doubt that in the times of Ignatius and Justin Martyr it was becoming unlawful to receive a Jew into the Church.² The “irony of fate” has seldom been so pronounced.

As we shall see, the Jewish community divided or was dispersed into various sections. They made their

¹ “History of the Church” (1-100), p. 338.

² “Ignat. ad Mag.,” ch. 8, 9, 10; “Ad Philad.,” ch. 6; “Ep. ad Diog.,” 1, 3, 4. Justin would receive them on condition that they did not proselytize, “Dial. c. Tryph.,” ch. 47.

mark on the primitive Church, but chiefly as the originators of the early heresies. For centuries they contended against the higher doctrine of the person of Christ. Their literature—the Clementines, and apocryphal “Gospels” and “Acts”—has served to enhance the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, of episcopal authority, and even of the Papal supremacy through Peter.

2. The Jewish Christians were “all zealous for the law,” so far as their observance of it was concerned, but “all,” including the apostles, did not insist on its enforcement on Gentiles who had embraced the Messianic faith. Their complaint against Paul was, that he taught Jews to mix with Gentiles and thus to forsake the law. The “multitude” had consented to the decree made eight years before, which allowed easy terms to the Gentiles who came into the Church.

Through this “zeal for the law” St. James, and probably most of the original disciples and apostles, never ceased to conform to the Judaic institutions. They would never take the Lord’s Supper with Gentiles. At Jerusalem no one could join the Agape-Eucharist unless he was circumcised. Paul and Barnabas might take their own course abroad, but Jerusalem could not imitate their freedom.¹ Conse-

¹ Sieffert, art. “Petrus” in Herzog, “Real-Enk.”

quently, when Paul associated with "Trophimus the Ephesian" in the proximity of the sacred places, it was not to be borne.

All interested in the "unity" of the Church should ponder these facts: "these things were our examples."¹ What was the Church "one and indivisible" at this moment? Did it consist of James and his friends at Jerusalem? Many of them thought so, and we know what the terms of the unity which they laid down were. Or, after all, were the mixed Churches of Paul in the "visible unity"? Yet further, what was that Church of the following centuries which called itself "Catholic"? That Church allowed no one adhering to Jewish customs to be baptized. After Justin's time it was scarcely allowed that one living as a Jew could be saved. In the times of Tertullian and Cyprian no one living after the manner of James the Just would have been called a Christian. What then is, or was, the "visible unity" of the Church?

3. But Paul himself had not thrown off formal allegiance to the Levitical order: "he had a vow." In company with four others he undertook the temple charges usual in such cases. During the time of separation no wine must be drunk, no razor must

¹ 1 Cor. x. 6.

come upon the head. At the close of the period a he-lamb, a she-lamb, a basket of unleavened bread, with other things must be offered; so that the "charges" for four persons would be considerable.¹ All this Paul was content to pay if peace could be obtained.

He was "to the Jews as a Jew" that he might save some. Conformity enabled him still to visit the synagogue and to receive recognition as a son of Abraham. He allowed Jewish converts to follow their own course, but he could not condemn them if they imitated his liberty. On the other hand, the Church at Jerusalem still considered it expedient, if not absolutely imperative, that its members should walk after the law blameless. If formal Judaism had been renounced by all the Christian parties, the re-appearance of Judaistic and anti-Pauline parties in the next century would have been a greater mystery than ever.

We learn, further, that the security which Paul was willing to purchase by submission to the scruples of some Jewish Christians was not obtained. There were "Jews from Asia" who, like him, had come to the holy city on pious errands, and had known him in Ephesus. He had been seen by them in company with Trophimus, an uncircumcised Ephesian, and, it

¹ Num. vi. 14.

was suspected, had brought him into the temple. This was enough to raise the fanaticism of devotees longing to distinguish themselves in the defence of decaying Judaism. Paul was furiously assaulted, and, except for interposition of the Romish captain, his life would have ended.

As it was, his liberty was gone: henceforth he is "the prisoner of the Lord." The Romish officer thought he had arrested a Galilæan or an Egyptian demagogue who had been trying to delude the people. But his prisoner addressed him in Greek. This was no rustic enthusiast, no prophet from the wilds, no foreign bandit, but a Roman citizen, who could speak in the language of the civilized world. When, however, Paul addressed the concourse from the stairs of the castle of Antonio, he spoke in "the Hebrew language."¹

¹ Prof. Neubauer, M.A., writing on "The Dialects Spoken in the time of Christ" ("Studia Biblica," Oxford, 1885, i. pp. 39-74), shows that the post-exilic Jews used Hebrew which was gradually mixed with Aramaic; that the northern Israelites would naturally employ the Aramaic of their own and surrounding districts. "When Syriac became the official language in Asia, many Jews made themselves acquainted with it" (p. 48). Prof. Neubauer concludes that the apostles spoke the current Aramaic at Pentecost. He notices that the chief captain was surprised that Paul knew Greek, and that the Christian watchword, *Maran Atha*, was Aramaic.

From the address we learn that he had been "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel—instructed according to the strict law of the fathers, being zealous for God": that Ananias of Damascus was "well-reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there"; that Paul had visited Jerusalem some time after his conversion, and it was made known to him that his word would not be received there. The pupil of Gamaliel, the son of Pharisees, the zealous vindicator of law and tradition, must bear the cross for the rest of his days; like his Master, he must be "crucified to the world"; he must be a missionary to the Gentiles! The crowd listened until he reached that hateful word "Gentiles" and then their patience was gone. They cried, "Away with him"; by their law he ought to die.¹

When the captain would have examined him by scourging, Paul pleaded Roman citizenship. The next day he was brought face to face with the Sanhedrim. When he spoke of the sincerity of his past life, Ananias, the high priest, commanded that he should be smitten on the mouth. Paul retorted in haste, for he was not infallible any more than Peter. It is a

¹ Ritschl ("*Ensteh. d. a. K.*," s. 140) remarks that the "decree" had created a fresh difficulty; Gentile Christians required recognition as in the true Israel, and unbelieving Jews must be rejected.

curious commentary on his words: "God is about to smite thee, thou whited wall," that Ananias was soon after deposed, and finally assassinated by Sicarii. The apostle was more fortunate in his appeal to the Pharisees present, with whom his doctrine of a future life gave him affinity rather than with the Sadducees of the priestly party. But he could not escape from the mortal hatred of the Jews, except by being conveyed to Cæsarea, where he had to stand before the procurator Felix.

Before Felix Paul was impeached by no less a prosecutor than Ananias the high priest, with other elders, and a famous orator named Tertullus.¹ The encomium of the latter on the administration of Felix is contradicted by Tacitus and Josephus. The point of his accusation was, that Paul was "a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes," and that he "assayed to profane the temple." "Nazarenes, which came afterwards to be the title of Jewish Christians only, was as yet the name given by the Jews to all the followers of Jesus. The name "Christian," given in Gentile Antioch, could not have had a Jewish origin. The Jews would not have thus surrendered the Messianic title to a despised sect; moreover, in

¹ Tacitus, "Ann.," xii. 54; Joseph., "Ant.," xx. 8, 9.

“Nazarenes” there was contained a denial that Jesus belonged to the family or city of David.

Paul did not blush to own that he belonged to a “sect” or heresy. Bigotry usually chooses the most offensive epithets. Paul knew what it was to glow in the persuasion that he belonged to “the people of God.”¹ National and ecclesiastical pride had reached its maximum in the circle to which he had belonged. Excommunication, “boycotting,” ostracism, persecution even to death, were the ready and familiar instruments of those who “trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others.” No passions strike deeper than those to which religious hatred appeals. Hostilities of this class survive into our own age. The rivalries of great European Churches respecting the guardianship of the “Holy Places” in Jerusalem produced the last European war in which our own country engaged. The jealousy of the imperial patron of the Greek Churches on the one hand, and that of the imperial patron of the Papacy in Eastern Europe on the other, have raised armies which are a menace to the world and a scandal to the Christian name. The continental Churches still have billets posted up which offer a hundred days’ “indulgence” to all the faithful who will pray “pour l’exter-

¹ On “the people,” see Neander ; “Planting,” i. 281.

mination des hérétiques." No man can be a Nonconformist in England even now without incurring serious social and educational disadvantages. The silent, yet sure growth of liberty has changed the old conditions, certainly ; but intolerance will not be banished until the best men in all Churches are willing to renounce it, and begin in earnest to study the charity of Christ and Paul.

In his defence Paul alleges that he still "believed all written in the law and the prophets."¹ He had brought alms to his people, he had "purified" himself by sacrifices, he had raised no sedition, he was a Jew still. But Felix had reasons for delay. Some of the money which Paul had collected might fall to his lot. But in one interview the guilty Roman was conscience-stricken, and he summarily dismissed the apostle from his presence.

Two years later Festus took the place of Felix, and before him Paul is called to plead once more against accusers from Jerusalem.² By this time Paul was prepared to reject the judicial authority of his people. He appeals to Cæsar. This new step in his departure from Judaism would be regarded as a serious aggravation of his apostasy. He objected to Christians entering into law-suits in Gentile courts ; but in

¹ Acts xxiv. 14.

² Acts xxv. 10.

Jewish eyes also it was equally discreditable to carry a cause before a heathen judge.¹ Festus determined that Paul should go to Cæsar, but thought it policy, first, to bring him before another local authority. Agrippa II. happened to visit Cæsarea at the time, and to him Festus states his case. To Festus the principal point in the charge made by the Jews against Paul seemed to be that "one Jesus" who was dead Paul declared "to be alive."

Before Agrippa, who had been educated in Judaism, Paul was glad to rehearse his history. He would understand many things which a Roman would never perceive. Paul told him of his own youth spent in Jerusalem, of his ardent devotion to the Pharisaic side of their religion, especially to their great doctrine that the dead should rise. He confessed that he had been a persecutor of Christians until he had been divinely arrested on the way to Damascus, and had been commissioned to evangelize the Gentiles, and to turn them "from darkness to light," for they too should enter into "an inheritance among them that are sanctified." Festus listened with amazement to this fervid harangue, and pitied the enthusiast whose "learning" had brought him to madness. But

¹ Paul said in Rome, Acts xxviii. 19: "Not that I had aught to accuse my nation of."

Agrippa knew that his words were of "truth and soberness"; he "believed the prophets." Yet, with sophistical skill, he evaded the appeal of the accused apostle, saying, "with but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian!" He might some day begin to listen to the teaching of religion, but of all absurdities, to become a Christian would be the last! But even he agreed that Paul had done nothing worthy of death, and might have been set at liberty except for his appeal to Cæsar, so to Cæsar he must go. The gospel, now largely rejected by the Jew, must enter upon a larger field among the Gentiles. Jerusalem, the old centre of the Church, was soon to be forsaken, and the vineyard given to others.

After much peril and suffering, Paul arrives on the shores of Italy.¹ At Puteoli he met with "brethren," with whom he and his friends tarried seven days; and at the "market of Appius and the three Taverns" other brethren from Rome came to meet him. Already the nucleus of a Church existed in Rome. Jews and proselytes from Rome were among those converted on the day of Pentecost. Three years

¹ Acts xxviii. 14. With him were Luke, Timothy, and others of the brethren mentioned in Phil. ii. 25-30, iv. 18; Col. iv. 7-14; Eph. vi. 21; 2 Tim. iv. 10-12.

before his arrival Paul had written his immortal letter to the believers in Rome. Whether these believers constituted a Church based on the Jewish-Christian principle exclusively, like that at Jerusalem, or, whether it was a mixed Church, like those which St. Paul instituted, is rather an important question.

1. It could scarcely have been a Jewish-Christian Church to which St. Paul would say, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye"; and "Is God the God of the Jews only? is He not the God of the Gentiles?"¹ He would not have asked such a Church, "What advantage then hath the Jew?"²

2. Yet, if a mixed Church, the members must have been, generally, proselytes or Hellenists, or at least Gentiles who were familiar with the Jewish Scriptures, and easily moved within the circle of Jewish ideas.

3. We learn that the "chief of the Jews" in Rome only knew Christianity by distant report. Of this "sect" they only knew that "everywhere" it was spoken against. Could there, then, have been a "Church" in Rome? But if not, who were the "brethren" who met Paul at Appii Forum? Some suppose that the reply of the Jewish representatives was "scarcely honest."³ Others observe "a cautious

¹ Rom. xiv. 1.

² Rom. iii. 1.

³ Conyb. and Hows., "St. Paul," p. 679.

official reserve in their demeanor.”¹ Neander thinks that the poor Christians might easily have escaped the notice of their wealthier fellow-nationalists.² None of these answers seems to be satisfactory. It seems more probable that the “Church” did not then exist as a separate community. The “brethren” met in each others’ houses, and there communicated “to the necessities of saints,” and were “given to hospitality.”³ According to Romans xvi. 5, Aquila and Priscilla had a “Church in their house.” Paul himself had “his own hired dwelling” where he “received all that went in unto him.” This would allow Jews to invite their countrymen to their Christian celebrations, and Gentiles who could “eat all things” had their own Agapæ. All might, from time to time, attend the synagogues for the reading of Scripture and the prayers; but there was no united Agape, although the apostle recommends those who are free from Jewish prejudice to receive “him that is weak in the faith.” Hence it is clear that the Roman Church was not predominantly Jewish, and that St. Peter, so far, had not laboured in that city.

¹ Meyer, Acts xxvi. 15.

² “Planting of Chr.,” i. 311; also Ewald, “History of Israel,” vii. 445.

³ Rom. xii. 13.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

I. THE PAULINE CHURCHES.

“Neither I nor any other like me can emulate the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul.”¹

THE history supplied to us in “Acts” closes abruptly. Many questions might have been answered if St. Luke had added two or three chapters. We should have been glad to know whether St. Paul was ever released from his captivity ; if so, whether he revisited the Churches in Greece and Asia Minor. Did Peter at last come to the support of the Jewish Christians in Rome? Did he and Paul die for the Master about the same time, and was one buried on the Vatican Hill, and the other on the Ostian way?² What became of the remaining apostles, what were their spheres of labour, and, especially, what was the relation of the beloved disciple to the Churches of

¹ Ep. of Polycarp.

² Euseb., “H.E.,” ii. 25.

Asia? On these points there have been bequeathed to the Church not accurate knowledge but vague traditions and vain conjectures. The names to which these legends have been attached have been enough to gain them respect. It was hard to believe that pious reverence could have linked itself with fraud on behalf of such names as those of Peter, Clement, and Ignatius. The work of critical undoing began at the Reformation; but the Christian faith, which can eventually stand alone on the rock of truth and fact, has not yet seen an end of its fatal fellowship, with untruth in the form of pious legend, or an end of its effects.

Paul found an inviting opportunity for labour during his captivity in the years A.D. 62-4. Jews and proselytes from every land visited the imperial city. Many "Greeks," weary of heathen corruption, having heard of the God of Abraham and Moses, came to learn more about the promised salvation. But his adversaries would not let the "Apostle to the Gentiles" dwell in peace. His freedom under bonds became manifest throughout the whole pretorium where he was under supervision.¹ Since he was bold to preach the gospel, the valour of his rivals increased, and they ventured out into the open also.

¹ Phil. i. 13.

They preached Christ, however, "out of envy and strife," and "faction," professing to represent the traditional gospel of Jerusalem, of "the twelve," of St. James and St. Peter. They claimed an authority superior to that of Paul; they were in the "succession." Against the "dogs" of the "concision," St. Paul earnestly warns the Philippians.¹ If any man had a right to boast of tribal descent, of family honours, of legal purity, he more; but he counted these things as "loss for Christ."

This seems to be the earliest trace of a distinctively Jewish-Christian element in Rome. Some Roman-Catholic writers allow that there may have been both a Petrine and a Pauline section in that Church. This view is not unfavourable to the traditional combination of the names of the two great apostles; it reduces, somewhat, the enormous discrepancies in the history of the Church; and it gives some plausibility to the pretensions of Ebionite sects like those who accepted the Clementines.

To this period belong, without doubt, the epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. It was amid such circumstances as those which he found at Rome that Paul elaborated his theory of "unity."² As we have shown, it had been an "apocalypse" to him that

¹ Phil. iii. 2.

² Ephes. iv. 13.

the Gentiles were to enjoy the fullest participation in the gospel of peace. The convictions of his birth and education had been diametrically opposed to such a theory, and he knew that it had been hidden from the Church in times past. In God's own time it had come to light that the Gentile is to be "blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ." The Jew could not boast of any spiritual good which the Gentiles did not receive by faith. In the original purpose of God, which was more ancient than any covenant with Abraham or Moses, He had "predestinated" men of every race to redemption—to forgiveness, adoption, sanctification, and the inheritance of life: and had designed "in the dispensation of the fulness of the times to sum up all things in Christ." Some of His readers were "Gentiles in the flesh," called, in reproach, "uncircumcision," who had been "separate from Christ, and alienated from the commonwealth of Israel," but now were brought into fellowship with the saints. The Jew who still continued to observe the Jewish law, and the Gentile who laid that ritual aside, were "one new man." Through the one Christ, both have "access in one spirit unto the Father."¹

¹ Weizsäcker: "Das Apostol. Zeitalt.," s. 495, says that "the Church of Ephesus and Asia was of Pauline foundation, which

Perhaps the epistle was not addressed solely to Ephesus, but was intended for a wider circle of readers. If so, its doctrine of unity becomes the more important. The exact circumstances, to which the arguments were applicable only existed in the apostolic age. The writer evidently wishes to banish from Christian thought any dependence on national descent; he would bring all "to apprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Yet men of various nationalities, beset by various even antagonistic affinities and sympathies, could only "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" by "walking worthy of their vocation" in this world-wide society, and by the cultivation of all "lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." But the "body" was

is a difficulty in regard to the Johannine epoch. . . . The epistle gives a view of the existing relations, which does not answer at all to St. Paul's time." But the fact, rather, is that there were no mixed Churches in the second century, to which period he ascribes this epistle. The composite "unity" scarcely survived St. Paul. Pfeiderer, "Das Christenthum," s. 684, makes the same mistake. He further makes the epistle to be dependent on the Pauline writings, including the "Hebrews," and to be opposed to a Judaizing gnosis. Nothing can be clearer than that the gnosis which it opposes existed in St. Paul's time.

one. The Jew ought not to reject the Gentile, nor the Gentile the Jew, since there was "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."¹

Among so many believers, not only national distinctions but personal proclivities might be impediments to unity. The ordinary differences among men, always and everywhere, may imperil the peace of society. Moreover, the gifts of the Spirit vary as much as do individual character; and there would be a tendency in each to exalt his own office or gift (Rom. xii. 3). Some were "apostles," some "prophets," some "evangelists," some "pastors and teachers." This variety of spiritual endowment was given to perfect the saints and to edify the body of Christ, "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the [more complete] knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."²

¹ Dr. Gloag: "Intr. to Cath. Epp.," p. 125, says "that there is not the slightest intimation that in the Apostolic times the Jewish and Gentile Churches formed separate congregations: they were united in one body." But it is against probability that all Jewish believers would eat with Gentiles. Besides, "Churches" in the modern sense did not exist everywhere. Believers met in private houses as a rule. Moreover, the Pauline Churches had an organization of their own.

² Ephes. iv. 13. The A.V. "*in* the unity of the faith" misrepresents the original. Even the "Vulg" has *in unitatem fidei*.

In this sketch of Christian unity Paul nowhere speaks of the government of the Church by bishops.¹ He recognises apostles,² prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, but no other powers or dignitaries. Some expositors think they can find bishops included under the first term, some under the second or third, yet more under the fourth and fifth. Even if their inclusion under one or another of these terms were possible, it would not establish the great "Catholic" doctrine that "without the bishop the Church cannot exist." The writer demolishes the false unity that was based on Jewish exclusiveness, but seemed not to foresee the more fateful caricature of Christian unity that ascended in its place. His doctrine respecting the diversity of gifts proceeding from the one spirit, ought to have had more influence on that "controversy about the ministry," which arose afterwards.³ However, he passes over the "three orders" on which, for fifteen hundred years after, it was supposed that the security of the Church depended.⁴

¹ The picture of a Church without bishops is a strong argument for the early date of the epistle; it would not correspond to conditions of the second century.

² In Eph. ii. 20; iv. 11, "Apostles" do not indicate the Twelve, but a special class—the prophet-evangelists.

³ Ep. of Clem. i. 44.

⁴ Hooker: "Eccles. Pol.," bk. vii., says, "A thousand five

“Bishops, priests and deacons” are the only orders omitted, by name, from his catalogue of church-officers. The “presbyters” of Ephesus, whom he called, when at Miletus, “bishops,” he does not mention. The only explanation of this must be, that neither “apostle,” nor “elder,” nor “bishop,” nor “deacon,” had yet received its fixed ecclesiastical meaning, but still retained its untechnical significance, descriptive of the various relations or duties which belonged to certain members of the Church.¹ No interpretation of these important terms can be more false than that which persists in reading into them the ideas of a later time.

The threads of thought which appear in the epistle to the Ephesians, are also woven into that to the Colossians. The death of Christ was intended not only to reconcile God and man, but man with men :

hundred years and upwards the Church of Christ hath now continued under the sacred government of bishops. Neither for so long hath Christianity been planted in any kingdom throughout the world but with this kind of government alone ; which, to have been ordained of God, I am for my part as resolutely persuaded, as that any other kind of government in the world whatsoever is of God.” In favour of the primitive character of episcopacy, Hooker quotes the pseudo-Ignatius.

¹ Liddon (“Bampt. Lect.,” p. 334) refers to this passage for proof that Christ “instituted the hierarchy of the Church”—*i.e.* the three orders.

He "having made peace through the blood of His cross."¹ The doctrine of the "cross" involved the surrender of the privileges and prerogatives which belonged to the Jew through the law. Christ had suffered the curse of the law, so that the "law" had done with Him and with those who believed on Him. Paul's sufferings had been incurred for the universality of the gospel. He was "the prisoner of the Lord on behalf of" the Gentiles. If he had preached a gospel for the Jew only, he might have laboured in peace.

But there were adversaries. The Colossians were in danger of being "moved away from the hope of the gospel."² The Church at Colosse consisted both of Jews and Gentiles.³ The latter would be told by the Judaizers, who were ever on Paul's track, that they could not be saved unless they came "within the covenant of Israel." Some of these apostles of reaction had armed themselves with a new weapon—the philosophy of the rabbinical schools. Their traffic in the "rudiments of the world" (*στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου*) betrays their subservience to that tendency in Jewish

¹ Col. i. 20.

² Col. i. 23.

³ Principally Gentiles: Col. i. 21-27; ii. 13. After Paul's separation from the synagogue at Ephesus he does not seem to have gained many Jews. His mission succeeded best among Hellenists and Hellenes.

thought which already had mixed astrology, magic, and mysticism with biblical ideas.¹ They would allow that Jesus had an Æon resting on Him, and had a heavenly mission. But St. Paul asserts that "the pleroma of the Godhead" dwells in Him. Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, "are made full" in Him. Even the uncircumcised are "circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands." They had been "forgiven all their trespasses," for He had "blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was contrary to us . . . nailing it to the cross." Paul gave to them the counsel which he had given before to those in Rome, that no one should "judge" them "in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a Sabbath day, which are a shadow of the things to come."² The Jew might observe the national ritual if he chose, but he must not compel the Gentile to observe it also.

The exhortation to forbearance was, under these

¹ Col. ii. 14. The Greek interpreters generally explain *τοῖς δόγμασι* of the doctrines of the gospel, which replaced the dogmas of Judaism. Bengel makes them *decreta gratiæ*, and Wesley follows him: Ephes. ii. 15; Col. ii. 14. (Yet Bengel shows that the *enmity* was that between Jews and Gentiles.) The history of dogmas owes much to this misapprehension.

² Weizsäcker, "Apost. Zeit.," 563: "Die Elemente der Welt kann nach dem Galater-brief auch jüdischer Cultus zurückgeführt werden."

circumstances, very reasonable. He would have them to put on "love which is the bond of perfectness," and "the peace of Christ" to "arbitrate in their hearts." Here the apostle is speaking of the "Agape" where both parties met, "unto which," he says, "ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful."¹ The two great sections of humanity were made one; and this unity did not centre in bishops, whom he does not mention, nor in apostles, but in Christ. Their thankfulness would be especially manifested in their common feast—the Agape-Eucharist. On these occasions "the word of Christ" was to "dwell among them richly—teaching and advising one another in every sort of wisdom, singing in their hearts to God with psalms, hymns, and spiritual odes."² Then follows an exhortation which expositors have usually stripped of its original associations, and reduced to a general religious instruction: "And everything whatsoever ye do in word or deed,

¹ Col iii. 15. *Βραβεύτω* suggests arbitration between parties: the "peace" was already in their hearts and should decide in mutual intercourse. The connection of terms related to the Christian assembly has not been noticed. "Agape," "Eucharist," "word," "teaching," "admonishing," "psalms and hymns and odes," "word and deed."

² Lightfoot, Ellicott, translate *ἐν ὑμῖν* as "within you," but Meyer and Alford by "in you as a Church," which approaches the above interpretation.

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." There can be little doubt that the "word" (λόγος) refers to the prayer and exhortation which any one might offer in the congregation, and the "deed" to their gifts towards the Agape provision, or to the need of the Church and its poor. An epistle containing references to the fellowship of Jewish and Gentile believers must have belonged to the apostolic age.¹ The reference to the Agape, as we shall show hereafter, does not by itself imply a date so early as has been generally supposed, but Christians observing the law were gradually ostracized. After the apostolic age, and

¹ Rationalistic criticism on this epistle to the Colossians has beaten a retreat. Baur held it to be a reply to the Gnostics of the second century, as did Schwegler, Mayerhoff, and even Weizsäcker ("Apost. Zeit.," pp. 560-563). The latter ascribes it to the tendency in Asia Minor to exalt apostles. Peter and John were already great, and now Paul is brought forward. Yet he allows that the representation of the parties in the Church does not correspond to history. Pfeiderer ("Das Chr'm," s. 683) allows "dass ihm ein echter Paulusbrief zu Grunde liegen"; and Holtzmann ("Einl. in d. N.T.") thinks it has only been interpolated by the author of Ephesians. He says that its Gnosticism is of a form older than Christianity (p. 281). Ewald and Renan defend the Pauline origin. If the above picture of the primitive Agape had not been overlooked, it would have prevented the error into which the Rationalists have fallen. The freedom of the Christian congregation seems to have been

especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish Christians were repudiated as Nazarenes and Ebionites.

We now encounter the question whether St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome terminated for a season, during which he visited the Churches of Greece and Asia, or whether it continued unbroken until his martyrdom. Did he himself, on a personal visit, locate Timothy at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 3), and afterwards address to him the first epistle? and did he go as far as Crete and leave Titus there? Did he, finally, address a second epistle to Timothy, leaving in it his last words?

In any case the pastoral epistles supply a view of the ideas and feelings of the Pauline Churches. The Jewish philosophy referred to is not so different from that at Colosse but that it might exist in Paul's time, whereas in the second century such systems had taken a much advanced form. The church government is that of the first century and not of the second. The epistle to Titus says that he was left in Crete to appoint Presbyters, and Paul adds, "The bishop must

lost in the second century, as Montanism advanced on the one hand, and Episcopalianism on the other. The Pauline union of Jews and Gentiles appears to have died out by the end of the first century.

be blameless." The sectaries there meddled with "fables and endless genealogies." They were plainly occupied in the Jewish interest, for they desired to be "teachers of the law, though they understand not what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm."¹

The gospel in these epistles is the universal gospel of Paul. The "grace of God hath appeared bringing salvation to all men."² "God willeth that all men should be saved," since there is but "one God and one Mediator."³ But this true relation of the Mediator to the entire race had not been understood until it was announced in Paul's gospel. Here are his words: "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony to be borne in its own times; whereunto I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth."⁴ This

¹ 1 Tim. i. 4. Ellicott says "the myths were Judaic." Leo and Theodoret and most church writers have said Paul was opposing Judaism proper.

² Tit. ii. 11.

³ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

⁴ 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. Commentators have not all seen that in *τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῦς ἰδίους* "the emphasis rests on the universality," as Huther says. Beza's references to Rom. xvi. 25, Eph. iii. 19, Col. i. 26, etc., show that he was on the right track. The "testimony" was that "for which" (*εἰς ὃ*) the apostle was called.

“testimony” of a salvation for all men without submission to the ceremonial law had not been borne until he was called to be an apostle. As in his epistle to the Ephesians, the apostle says that the doctrine of one Saviour both for Jews and Gentiles had been hidden from the ages, but was now made known by the Spirit. But there were some who diffused false doctrine. They forbade marriage, and also prohibited “meats” which God had “created for reception with eucharistic thanksgiving.”¹ Another ominous development is also indicated as consisting in “profane babblings and antitheses of the Gnosis which is falsely so-called.”²

In the second epistle Paul complains that “all in Asia turned away from him.”³ This was, possibly, the state of things to which he refers in Col. iv. 10, viz., that only Mark and Justus belonging to the circumcision worked with him. As he came nearer to the end of his career his sufferings were increased by the infidelity of his fellow-workers: “At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me.”⁴ But the Lord stood by him and strengthened him, so that “all the Gentiles might hear.” To this great aim he was “faithful unto death.”

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 3. Cf. “Didache,” xi. ; “Constit. of App.,” vii.

² 1 Tim. vi. 20.

³ 2 Tim. i. 15.

⁴ 2 Tim. iv. 16.

To Titus he speaks of the "message" with which he had been entrusted—a mystery "promised before times eternal—but in its own seasons manifested."¹ Titus was to appoint presbyters, who would officially, as he explains, be bishops, or overseers, in every city. The bishop must be able to teach and to "convict gainsayers." Here we may, without any doubt, notice an advance in the idea of the office of the "elder." He was no longer a church member of age and character who might or might not be charged with the management of church affairs. He must be apt to "teach" those who came for instruction, and to refute those who opposed. "For there are many unruly men, vain talkers, and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision": "giving heed to Jewish fables"—"whose mouths must be stopped."² The grace of God was "saving" for men of every class, and did not come by works of righteousness, as of the law, but by "mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."³ Yet believers are to "maintain good works" and to "shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the Law."⁴

¹ Tit. i. 3.

² Tit. i. 10, 14.

³ Tit. iii. 4, 5.

⁴ Tit. iii. 9. Harnack ("Dogmeng.," i. 98) allows that "the

In these pastoral epistles, then, we find St. Paul moving in his usual circle of ideas. His gospel is for the Gentiles. He proclaims Christianity as a universal religion. At the date of these writings his adversaries had somewhat varied their arguments and terminology, but they are still the advocates of the narrow system maintained by the bigots of Jerusalem at an earlier period. The epistles are so decidedly anti-Jewish as to encourage, at first sight, the Tübingen contention that the strife between Paul and the Jewish Christians was unreserved. But the Tübingen writers, and indeed many others, hand their origin over to the apocrypha. We see no reason for this either for linguistic or historical reasons.

The "Church" as represented by these epistles, like that of the "Acts" and of the other New Testament writings, had no elaborated or rigid form of government. If there was any model, it was the synagogue with its elders, and not the temple with its hierarchy. The principal responsibility for doctrine and order was with the elders (presbyters = bishops = superintendents = overseers). In Philippi, Ephesus, Corinth, and Crete there were "deacons" or "ministers." Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, and

foundations for Hellenizing the gospel in the Church were already laid in the first century ; *i.e.* A.D. 50-150."

Apollos were reckoned to be "apostles." Others had endowments of prophecy, tongues, healing, or administration. Any Christian who possessed a charisma was soon called upon for its exercise. All who believed were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, and all joined in the Eucharistic feast. Beyond this they had no precise ritual; no order of worship could be absolutely enforced since the Mosaic ceremonies had lost their authority. Nothing further seemed to be required since all had the common persuasion that the Son of God would shortly be revealed from heaven.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

2. THE HEBREW CHURCHES.

“Dark clouds hung over the close of the apostolic age. . . . Christianity is historical, and subject to the common influences of life.¹”

AFTER this rapid survey of the condition of the Churches raised by the zealous labours of St. Paul and his helpers, let us turn to the Churches which elected to follow the earlier tradition. Of these the principal instance was in Jerusalem, though there might now be communities of Jewish Christians in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Antioch, and elsewhere.

Though the epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most important sections of the New Testament, its date, the name of its author, and the exact circumstances of its composition passed away very early from the memory of the Church. The few items of evidence have been keenly criticized, but it is now most

¹ Westcott, “Ep. to Heb.,” pref., xxxvii

generally allowed that it was addressed to believers resident in Jerusalem, or related to the Church in that city, by some one who had learned the Pauline gospel.

Its readers did not belong to the first generation of Christians ; since they had been instructed, not by the Lord Himself, but by His followers.¹ Some of their leaders had already passed away. They had passed through a "great conflict of sufferings" since their conversion, but it is not known to what occasion this reference is made. They are addressed as "brethren," but are always supposed to belong to the family of Abraham. The case of the Gentiles is not discussed. When it is said that "Jesus, . . . by the grace of God . . . tasted death for every

¹ Heb. ii. 3. Dr. M. Dods gives a careful summary ("Intro. to N.T.") of the canonical history of the epistle, but favours Mr. Rendall's theory that it was first sent to Antioch. The other view given above is supported by Weiss, ("Intro. to N.T." ii. 29); Riehm ("Der Lehrbegriff des Heb.," 1867, s. 29); Huther, Delitzsch, etc. Holzmann ("Einleit. in d. N.T.," p. 343) remarks that inquirers "have wandered over the whole face of the earth" to find the readers of this epistle. Many have referred to Alexandria (Wieseler, Baur, Hilgenfeld, Conybeare and Howson, and Plumptre); others to Rome (Kurtz, Zahn, Alford, Holtzmann, Weizsäcker, etc.). No one now asserts the Pauline authorship. Some incline to Luther's suggestion that it was from Apollos, but this view lacks authority. Renan ("L'Antéchrist," p. 211) holds that Barnabas wrote it to Roman Christians.

man," it is especially asserted of the Jewish nation.¹ The incarnation came through the Jews: "Since the children are sharers in flesh and blood . . . not of angels did He take hold, but of the seed of Abraham."² When the writer refers to the "Cross," he always remembers its "shame," for it is not likely that the Jewish Christian shared in St. Paul's glorying in the "Cross."³ The word is not used by James; Peter prefers "tree"; and St. John in the Apocalypse never uses the noun, and in the gospel only four times. The infrequent reference to the cross (*σταυρός*) in the later Jewish-Christian writers is a marked note of their character. It is certain that the use of the sign of the cross could not have originated among Jewish Christians. The "Catholics" may have used it at first to distinguish themselves from the Jews.

The object of the writer is to exalt the personality of the Messiah Jesus, and thence to demonstrate the evil consequences of rejecting Him. He, being a Son, is greater than the prophets. The characteristics of the Divine "Logos," which Philo had de-

¹ Heb. ii. 16.

² Westcott says "the true Israel-believers." Estius is to be preferred: *carnalis Abrahæ posteritas*.

³ Heb. vi. 6, xii. 2.

lineated, all belonged to him. Philo spoke of the Logos as "the Divine organ by which the cosmos was prepared," the "image" which the cosmos followed. It was the "brightness" of the glory of God; the "character" impressed upon His seal.¹ The Logos, he said, was the "firstborn," or "most ancient Son of God"; "the great High Priest."² It was by the Logos—as an instrument sharpened to the keenest edge, that God penetrated things sensible until He reached the indivisible. Therefore it was a "critic of the desires and thoughts of the heart"; and, as Bishop Westcott says, "five successive epithets—living, powerful, very sharp, penetrating, critical," used by Philo for the Logos, are appropriated for Christ by the epistle to the Hebrews. But Philo spoke of the Logos only as the subjective Reason, and not as the active Word of God. The coming of the Son alone could make this higher meaning of the term intelligible.

The writer shows carefully also how superior the Christ is to angels. Following the tradition

¹ Philo, "De Cherub.," 35; "De Monarch.," ii. 5; "De Plant.," N. 5; "De Conf. ling.," 14.

² Philo, "De Somn.," i. 38. Harnack ("Dogmeng.," i. 66) says: "Greek theologoumena do not appear in the Johannean theology; even the Logos has little that is common with the Philonic beyond the name."

which had been specially preserved in the Alexandrian version, he attributes the "Law" to a dispensation under angels.¹ They gave the law to Moses; under their guardianship the nation had been preserved; but now all things are committed to the Son who is greater in the house than the servants.² Many had been sent of God, but He is "the Apostle"; there had been many priests, but He is "the great High Priest."

It has been thought that some other destination than Jerusalem is indicated by the fact that the allusions to the worship are taken, not from the temple, but from the tabernacle. But the temple was post-exilic, and, to some extent at least, a departure from the earlier and more typical national service. Besides, the priesthood of Jesus conforms to a type earlier than the Levitical; it answers to the priesthood of Melchizedek, who "blessed" Abraham.³ As the "holy places made without hands" are superior to the perishable tabernacle which their fathers carried about, so is the sacrifice of Christ better than any hecatomb or holocaust. God now enters into a

¹ Gal. iii. 9; Acts vii. 53; Jos. "Ant.," xv. 5, 3; "The Jews learnt their most holy things in the laws from angels"; cf. LXX., Deut. xxxii. 8; Dan. x. 12.

² Heb. iii. 1.

³ Westcott, "Ep. to Heb.," xl.

new covenant with His people, and the old is near to vanishing. By this he does not assume that the Hebrew ritual is about to be exchanged for a more spiritual form of worship, or that no Christian could now practise the ancient ceremonies. The "removal of things shaken as of things made" was to take place at the Parousia, when not only the earth should tremble, but also heaven.¹

The great object of the author is to warn his readers against apostasy, especially as they were not advanced students of the system to which they had professed attachment.² Some already had begun to forsake the Christian assembly. They attended Jewish services for prayer and Scripture-reading, but they avoided the further risk which would have been incurred by attendance at the Christian convention.³ They went to "prayers" in the temple or synagogue, but did not "break bread at home" with their fellow-Christians.

We do not see that anywhere the writer invites his readers to forsake Judaism absolutely, though some of his phrases appear to point in that direction. "It is better," he says, "that the heart should be strength-

¹ Heb. xii. 27.

² Heb. vi. 1.

³ Heb. x. 24, 25 : ἐπισηναγωγὴ suggests, perhaps, an *additional* gathering. The combination of "love and good works" suggests that the *Agape* was now receiving its name.

ened by grace than by meats, which have not profited those who walk in them.”¹ But this may refer to some minute observances of scrupulous sects, such as the Essenes. Again, he says, “We have an altar of which they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle.”² Does this mean that no priest could join the Christian Eucharist? That would contradict the Acts of the Apostles.³ “It does not appear,” says Bishop Westcott, “that the writer of the epistle implies that Jews by birth, who still observed the law, could not

¹ Heb. xiii. 9. Dr. Moulton (Heb. xiii. 13) says, “Each one must for himself make choice either of the synagogue or of the Church of Christ; between the two there can be no fellowship.” Bishop Westcott (“Ep. to Heb.,” Pref., xxxviii.) also says, “The Jewish converts had had ample time for realizing the true relations of Christianity and Judaism. Devotion to the Levitical ritual was no longer innocent if it obscured the characteristic teaching of the gospel. The position which rightly belonged to a young and immature Christianity was unsuited to those who ought to have reached the fulness of truth.” But the difficulty is, to see how the Church at Jerusalem, while James or Simeon was at the head of affairs, could conclude that the “ritual” should be forsaken. Dr. M. Dods (“Int. to New Test.,” p. 183) remarks: “The writer occupies a position regarding the law which is slightly in advance of Paul’s. . . . The coming of Christ involves the obsolescence of the law . . . the Jew was as free from it as the Gentile.” Surely, such a position was not likely to be accepted at Jerusalem before the destruction of the city—if then.

² Heb. xiii. 10.

³ Acts vi. 7.

enjoy the privileges of Christianity.”¹ If he had gone so far, he would have challenged the practice of James and of the entire Church at Jerusalem to the end. All he urged was, that they should not fail in their confession of Christ, who had “suffered without the camp”; and they must share His reproach “For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after that which is to come.”² These Christians, evidently, were expecting that only the heavenly Jerusalem could take the place of the earthly, and were not prepared to enter into the spiritual breadth of Pauline Christianity.

The epistle of James is not lengthy, but has great interest as an emanation from that primary Christian circle of which we know so little. The prominence to which James, the brother of the Lord, so soon attained was greatly owing to his natural relationship to Jesus.³ He was not a believer in the Messiahship during our Lord’s life, but was convinced by His appearance after death.⁴ After the death of James,

¹ Westcott, “Ep. to Heb.,” p. 437-9.

² Heb. xiii. 14.

³ So with regard to Simeon, his successor (Eus., “Hist. Eccl.,” iv 22). On the opinions respecting the relationship, see Schaff, “Hist. of Ch.,” i. 272; Lightfoot, “Gal.,” p. 253; Farrar, “Early Days,” p. 265; Epiph., lib. i.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 7 (ἔπειτα ὤφθη Ἰακώβω).

the son of Zebedee, he stepped into high position. When Paul visited Jerusalem, three years after his conversion, he saw no one but Peter and James the brother of the Lord. Fourteen years later he found James, Peter, and John to be the "pillars." James took a leading part in the council, pronouncing the verdict in the case, and, perhaps, composing the epistle containing the decrees.¹ On Paul's last visit, James again appeared as one who could represent the Church, advising him to conform to Jewish ritual.²

We have no further information in the New Testament respecting him. The next testimony is from Hegesippus, a century later, who reports that the piety of James obtained for him the title of the "Just," and the "Bulwark of the people."³ He was consecrated from birth as a Nazarite, who never shaved his head or indulged in wine or luxurious bathing. He was a pattern of Jewish piety—his knees hardened with kneeling, and had great influence with all devout Jews. At last, in a day of tumult, he was cast down from a pinnacle of the temple; for the leading Jews had once more begun

¹ Acts xv. 23.

² Acts xxi. 21.

³ Eus. "H. E.," ii. 23. Josephus ("Antiq.," xx. 9. 1) says that James was stoned under Ananus the Sadducee and priest, and that he and others were condemned as "breakers of the law."

to fear that the increase of believers in Jesus threatened to exhaust the nation.

The Clementine literature of the second and third centuries overflows with admiration of James. Peter addresses to him a letter in which he complains that "some among the Gentiles have rejected my legal teaching, and have joined themselves to the lawless and beggarly teaching of the man who is my enemy."¹ This suggests that both James and Peter were at variance with Paul. It is further stated that James allowed the "doctrine" to be communicated to the faithful and circumcised only. Clement addresses James as "the lord, the bishop of bishops, who rules Jerusalem, the Holy Church of the Hebrews, and the Churches everywhere excellently founded by the providence of God." Singularly enough the writer next proceeds to claim the foundation of the Church for Peter. Among other things, he states that Jesus would not have healed the Syro-Phœnician woman unless she had given up Gentilism; that Simon Magus had been a disciple of John the Baptist; and that Peter said, "He who keeps not the law is manifestly a deserter."² It is upon some such authority that Polycrates reports that James, like John at

¹ Ep. of Pet. to Jas., ch. ii.

² Ep. of Clem. to Jas., i. ; Clem. Hom. 16, 19, 23.

Ephesus, bore the petalon, *i.e.* a golden plate on the forehead, like the high priest.¹ Such inventions have played an important part in the history of sacerdotalism.

There is not much to be learned from the epistle of James respecting the distinctions of party in the primitive Church. It is addressed "to the twelve tribes of the dispersion," *i.e.* to members of the Jewish Church and nation who believed in Jesus as the Christ.² It very clearly re-echoes the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, especially on the value of prayer. The Gospel is spoken of more as a law of conduct than as a "scheme of salvation." It is "the perfect law of liberty." As Jesus had compared the

¹ Eus., "H. E.," v. 24.

² On the "twelve tribes," a common designation for the Jewish people, cf. Acts xxvi. 7. Therefore, Pfleiderer, who thinks "in den zwölf Stämmen eine Bezeichnung für die Christen überhaupt zu sehen" ("Urchrist.," p. 869), must be mistaken, though the same view has been held by de Wette, Lücke, Brückner, Ewald, etc. The Rationalists, pleading for a late date, follow this view, *viz.*, Schwegler, Hilgenfeld; but Holzmann, and Weizsäcker are so puzzled with the address that they call it a fiction! Whitby, Lardner, Wordsworth, and Stanley think the epistle was sent to the Jews generally, and Weiss even follows that opinion. But the majority of critics, among whom are Michaelis, Neander, Ritschl, Reuss, Schaff, Bleek, Huther, Salmon, Gloag, Lechler, and Farrar, hold that it was addressed to Jewish Christians.

careless hearer of His word to a house built on the sand, and the obedient hearer to a house built on the rock, so James holds that the blessing is not for the "hearer that forgetteth," but for the "doer that worketh."¹ As believers were, chiefly, of the lower class, the dignity if not the merit of poverty is set duly forth.² The doctrine of "justification by faith only" is strenuously opposed, but not in direct antagonism to St. Paul.³ By "faith," James evidently means a mere profession of belief; St. Paul speaks of faith as a full and obedient confession of Jesus as Christ, as Son of God and Redeemer.

By its omissions the epistle has startled many. Because it did not plainly assert the divinity of the Saviour, or the atonement, Luther spoke of it as a "right strawy epistle." Here is nothing about the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, or about the hope which the Gentiles had in Christ. The brief treatise in fact was meant for a section only of the Christian community; and the cosmopolitan aspects of Christianity are not discussed as they are in the Pauline epistles. It rises no higher than the

¹ James ii. 25.

² Therefore the epistle was attributed by Schwegler to the Ebionites.

³ See a good review of opinion on this subject in Gloag's "Int. to Cath. Epp.," pp. 64-79.

practical level of those primitive Christians who could not enter into a profound disquisition upon dogmas.

The apostle says nothing about apostles, or prophets, or deacons. He does mention "the elders of the Church"; but by the *ecclesia* he meant the Christian congregation, and by "presbyters" he meant those senior members of it who had gained veneration in it.¹

The first and second epistles of Peter address a similar circle of readers. Though their doctrine comes very much nearer to that of St. Paul, we can scarcely suppose that they were intended for the Pauline Churches in Asia Minor. It is not likely that Peter would speak of Gentiles as "the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion." His readers were probably members of the Jewish families who had heard the gospel in Judea, or had been visited by messengers from the Jerusalem Church.²

¹ The Roman Catholic doctrine of "extreme unction" is founded on James v. 14. The Council of Trent pronounced an anathema on all who denied that the "elders" were such as had been ordained by a bishop. The "Apost. Const.," viii. 4, 29, points to the tradition, derived no doubt, like most Christian superstitions, from Jewish sources. Oil, salt, etc., were sacred to the Elcesaites. It may also be noted that the Christian meeting is called a "synagogue" in James ii. 2.

² We may again refer to Dr. Gloag's "Introd. to Cath. Epp."

The roots of the epistle are in the Old Testament. Believers have come to a "living hope," of an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."¹ This could never have been said of the mundane Canaan; for it had been devastated by the heathen, defiled by the people's sins, and now its glory was fading like summer grass. By the Christ believers have been "redeemed" from the bondage of time and sense as their fathers had been from Egypt; not by "silver and gold," but by the precious blood of Christ, the true Passover. This was not a gratuitous and unauthorized interpretation of the ancient promise, furnished because the literal fulfilment had failed. The prophets had "inquired diligently" concerning this "salvation," and the "angels desire to look into" it.² Christ had been foreknown from the foundation of the world, and therefore before a promise had been made to Abraham, or Moses, or David concerning a temporal kingdom. He is the "living stone," rejected of men, but precious to God and to His Church. Every one

(pp. 127-133) for an account of the opinions held about the *readers* of 1 Peter; but we cannot accept his conclusion that it was addressed to "Christians in general," though that view is widely held.

¹ 1 Peter i. 3, 4.

² 1 Peter i. 3-12.

who believes belongs to a "royal priesthood, a holy nation."

It must be allowed that some expressions favour the view that the readers were Gentiles. It is said (1 Pet. ii. 10) that they "in time past were no people, but now are the people of God." But this may mean that these Jewish people had been reclaimed by Christian teaching from lives almost wholly heathen. They had "wrought the desire of the Gentiles," and had "walked in lasciviousness," if not in "abominable idolatries."¹ But now he exhorts them to have "their behaviour seemly among the Gentiles."

These Christians were subject to persecution, and were animated by the example of the Saviour. The "cross" is not mentioned, except as the "tree" upon which, in His own body, Christ bore the sins of His people. But the chief use of the sufferings of Christ is as an example of patience under affliction. They furnished the exhibition of that spirit of obedient resignation in which the terrors of the world must henceforth be met. Neither is the author reticent about "the glory that should follow." The resurrection of Jesus is the secret of a new life. He is "on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven,

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 3, iii. 9-12.

angels and authorities and powers being subject unto Him."

To these believers in Asia was sent a salutation from those in "Babylon."¹ This is a memorable reference. If it dates from Rome, it makes it probable that Rome is the Babylon of the Apocalypse, and would be the single statement in the New Testament to favour the opinion that Peter went to Rome before the close of his life. It would agree with the statements of Papias and Irenæus respecting the connection of Mark with Peter at Rome. This, after all, is more probable than that it should refer to Babylon in the East. There were Churches in Mesopotamia very early, but there is no evidence of Peter's life and labour there.

Though apparently addressed to Jewish communities, the two Petrine epistles do not take up the question of the salvation of Gentiles, nor do they assert any obligation to follow the Jewish ritual. It is difficult to determine how far Peter and his brethren at Jerusalem were influenced by the career and character of Paul. The latter was no doubt the instrument for leading them into wider views of the purposes of God. Sympathy with Paul in his

¹ 1 Pet. v. 13. "Babylon in our John is a figure of the city of Rome" ("Tertull. c. Marc.," iii. 13).

great trials—especially in his dangerous captivity, might dispose Peter to bear testimony to him as “a beloved brother,” whose epistles contained so much that was “hard to be understood.”¹ But the chief apostle left the *κοινωνία* and *ἀγάπη* at Antioch, and there is no positive evidence that he ever returned to the fellowship of the Gentiles.²

A yet further amalgamation of the apostolic schools seems to have manifestation in the writings of St. John. The fourth gospel exhibits the Christ as the Logos, “enlightening every man who comes into the world.” He “came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not.” “But to as many as received Him to them gave He power to become children of God.”³ To Nicodemus it was said, that a man does not inherit salvation by natural

¹ 2 Peter iii. 16.

² Weizsäcker, “Apost. Zeit.,” s. 162, says that “there was a separate gospel for each party,” but this cannot be allowed. Still, Galatians ii. 9—“that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision”—shows that there was separateness of action. Ewald, “Hist. of Isr.,” vii. p. 358, thinks the visible unity was preserved, and Peter went amongst the Gentiles as Paul continued to preach to Jews in synagogues; but of the former there is no record. Ewald (p. 460, *ibid.*) believes that Peter was at Rome in the days of Claudius (so Jerome!). Neander, Lechler, etc., think Peter was in sympathy with Paul.

³ John i. 11; 1 Pet. i. 23.

birth, by descent from Abraham, but must be regenerate of water and of the Spirit.¹ "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that," not Jews alone, "but whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."² When the Samaritan woman objected: "Ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship," Jesus said, "Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."³ According to the first gospel, the disciples were directed not to go into "a way of the Gentiles," nor to "enter into any city of the Samaritans," but to go rather to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁴ Mark gives an account of the healing of a woman who was a Greek of Syro-Phœnicia, and Luke expressly recounts a visit which Jesus made into Samaria.⁵ John enters into details respecting a journey through this region, yet even then it was declared that "salvation is of the Jews."⁶ The same narrative informs us that Jesus healed a "king's officer."⁷ But it also discloses frequent con-

¹ John iii. 5.

² John iii. 16.

³ John iv. 23.

⁴ Matt. x. 5.

⁵ Mark vii. 24-30; Luke ix. 51-62.

⁶ John iv. 22.

⁷ John iv. 46.

roversies between Jesus and the Jews.¹ They "went about to kill Him," and He said that they should "die in their sins." He ventured to tell them that there were other sheep not of that fold, and that those should be brought into the flock under one Shepherd.²

In another place we are told how Caiaphas, "high priest that year," uttered an unconscious prophecy respecting the extension of the Messiah's kingdom: "He prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that He might gather into one the children of God that are scattered abroad."³ The writer of the Gospel does not state how this universal evangel was to be made effective.

On the other hand there were "certain Hellenes," who had come up to worship at the feast, and must therefore have been circumcised, who desired to see Jesus.⁴ In the following discourse our Lord speaks of the fruitfulness of His approaching death: "Except

¹ John v. 10, vi. 41, vii. 25, ix. 40.

² John x. 16. The Vulgate translated both *αἰλή* and *ποιμὴν* by "ovile: qua voce non grex ipse, sed ovium stabulum declaratur; quod unum vix unquam fuit, et non modo falso, sed etiam stulte et impudenter Romæ collocatur" (Beza). The Vulgate also introduces *et* where there is no *καί*. Rec. has *γενήσεται*, but R.V. has the better reading (B D L **N**³ 1, 33, verses), "and they shall become one flock." The reference is to Jews and Gentiles

³ John xi. 47-52.

⁴ John xii. 20.

a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone ; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." By this principle He justified His own sacrifice, and also the sacrifice which He demanded from His followers.¹ He said elsewhere, "He that loveth his life shall lose it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." The parable might also have its application to the Judaic institution, which seemed to perish with Jerusalem, but revived and flourished more widely in the Church of the Messiah. The death of the cross removed the ancient barriers: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."² We may suppose that a more exact statement of the conditions under which men of every nation should be received was not then suitable. Of such matters it was said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now : howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth."³

Schwegler questions whether John, who is spoken of as an apostle of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 9) could have changed his standpoint and become the advocate of a catholic Christianity.⁴ But the Christology of

¹ John x. 24 ; cf. John xvi. 7, etc.

² John xii. 32.

³ John xvi. 13.

⁴ "Nacahap. Zeit." ii. 351.

the epistles shows that the beloved disciple was far removed from narrow, Ebionite views, and indicates a capacity for progress. There can be no doubt that John means the entire human world by *κόσμος*. For its sins "Jesus Christ, the Righteous," is the "propitiation." The dominant note in his epistles is tuned to the harmony of *love*, and implies that antagonisms of race, and all else which opposed spiritual unity, must be suppressed. The unity of the Church henceforth must rest, not on the concordat at Jerusalem, but on the deep foundation of the gospel: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God."¹ Not descent from Abraham, nor conformity to the ritual of Moses, but faith in the glorified Jesus, must be the bond of the heavenly brotherhood.

Every one allows that one of the most mysterious books in the canonical Scriptures is the last.² There is room for some congratulation, however, in the fact that modern criticism has been gradually approaching a substantial consent about the authorship and date of the Apocalypse.³ That it was composed by John,

¹ I John v. 1, iii. 23, v. 5.

² "Tot verba tot mysteria" (Jerome). "I have scarcely any opinion to give concerning this book. . . . I do not understand it" (Dr. A. Clarke).

³ Lucke, Schwegler, Baur, de Wette, Renan, Bleek, Reuss, Volkmar, Bunsen, Düsterdieck, Stier, Neander, Maurice, and

the son of Zebedee, even Baur and Renan allow ; and men of many schools of opinion agree to fix its date

Davidson agree that the Apocalypse was written in the time of Nero. The early churchmen had no independent tradition, but made their own inferences from the internal evidence. Hence Irenæus, and Eusebius (who followed him) supposed John to have been banished under Domitian ; Clem. Alex. and Tertullian and Origen are silent about the date—the latter observing that John does not mention the emperor then living. Weizsäcker observes (" Das Apost. Zeitalt.," p. 503) that the colour and spirit of the age indicated in the Apocalypse belong to the time of Nero. He also observes that Christ is spoken of as the "Lamb"—a title of Christ found only in the Fourth Gospel and in 1 Peter i. 19 ; cf. ii. 21-25. The only apparent reference by St. Paul to this image is in 1 Cor. v. 7 : " Our passover *πᾶσχα*, also hath been sacrificed—Christ." Baur conjectured that this was the original allusion which the author of the Apocalypse had borrowed ! It is noticeable that the term is only used by those who are said to have heard it first from John the Baptist—John i. 29, 35. It is also curious that a Philip was one of the early disciples (John i. 43), and that a Philip had to expound Isaiah liii. 7, 8, to the Ethiopian, (Acts viii. 32). Pfeleiderer (" Development of Theology," p. 250) says that " Völter and Vischer have shown the probability of a plurality of authors and a Jewish work as the basis of the Apocalypse." Harnack also has been convinced by the arguments of his disciple, Vischer. The only use of this speculation which is practicable at present is, however, to set it against the theory of those that hold that it was written by John the Presbyter, an opinion held by Bleek, Credner, Ewald, and Weiseler. Dr. Schaff has changed his opinion respecting the date. In his " Hist. of the Apost. Ch." (1854, ii. 67) he held that

between the end of the reign of Nero, June, 68 A.D., and the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70.

But the opinions respecting its first readers are not so coincident. Renan re-echoes the view of the earlier members of the Tübingen school, who held that it represented the primitive Ebionitism of the Jerusalem Church. They insisted that it could have been addressed to Jewish Christians only, since, they allege, it calumniates St. Paul, and omits him from the number of the apostles; it denounces all Christians who are not Jews; its ideas and language are derived from Jewish prophecy; and Jewish associations cling to it on every side.¹ Weiss, on the other hand, contends that the readers were "without

it was written under Domitian, A.D. 90. This was proved by Irenæus, "who had the best opportunity to collect authentic accounts from one like Polycarp, a personal friend of the apostle." "Criticism wrongs itself by slighting the clear testimony of history," Dr. S. adds. But in his "Hist. of the Christ. Ch.," p. 427 (1883) he accepts the date under Nero as "the more probable view"; and remarks that Irenæus was "mistaken on more important points of history" than even this.

¹ Rev. ii. 2, iii. 9. Renan, "L'Antéchrist," p. xxviii., says that John, "après Jacques, le plus ardent des Judéo-Chrétiens; L'Apocalypse de son côté respire une haine terrible contre Paul. . . . Le livre répond à merveille au caractère violent et fanatique qui paraît avoir été celui de Jean." But this is not history. However, Renan argues that its Ebionitism proves the apostolicity of the book.

doubt preponderatingly Gentile Christians, but not exclusively so.”¹ It is clear that both these theories cannot be correct. But there can be no solution of the difficulty until we decide whether the Churches to which the Apocalypse was written were identical with those which were planted by Paul, Silas, Timothy, and others, according to the narrative of the “Acts of the Apostles.” The general opinion is that they were.² If this is maintained, the whole contention of the Tübingen school fails; if it is not, the traditional view of the primitive Christian unity must be modified.

It is certain that the whole subject has been obscured by an illusory conception of what was “the visible Church.” There is some difficulty in supposing that the Christian communities supervised by Paul and Timothy in Asia down to about A.D. 64 would be transferred to the care of a Jewish-Christian apostle like St. John in the course of two or three years. He would live with Jewish brethren and “eat” with them. It is not necessary to suppose that in Ephesus, and Laodicea, and Smyrna, all the “brethren” met in one assembly, and sat down at one table. The Jewish Christians

¹ “Hist. of New Test. Can.,” ii. p. 77.

² Schaff, “Hist. of the Ch.,” i. 424.

might still attend the synagogues, but hold a Christian service "at home" in addition. The gathering of a large concourse of persons would expose them to suspicion and injury. There was not one congregation in Ephesus, or Philippi, or Corinth, presided over by one bishop: that was the monarchical Church order of the following centuries. So that it is quite possible that John might go to reside in Asia about the time specified. He would not, as a pious Jew, forsake the synagogue of his people. He could, with brethren of his own nation, join in the Agape-Eucharist. His history and venerable character might soon make him an authority with Gentiles, who could sit at his feet as he testified of things which Jesus had said and done, but who would never imperil his ceremonial purity by attempting to eat with him. The Gentile community would have their own elders, and their own separate fellowship (*κοινωνία*).

The question is complicated with the history of Timothy. Paul says in his first epistle to Timothy (i. 3) that he had left him at Ephesus, on his last journey to Macedonia, that he "might charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies." This, of course, implies that a Jewish party in Ephesus was then seeking to lead the Pauline Christians back to formalism, and also that Timothy had some authority

as the delegate of Paul in his absence. But here again tradition has exalted Timothy into a bishop over a Church definitely and formally established. It has been overlooked that the formal bonds which held believers of different nationalities together must have been of a very loose contexture. Besides, on these points, Paul addresses the Church as well as Timothy: "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus."¹ The strain put upon these epistles to make them responsible for monarchical episcopacy has brought their canonicity into peril.

The residence of St. John in Asia has been the subject of an extensive controversy, which even now cannot be said to be closed. It is by no means certain that tradition has not confused the apostle with the presbyter of the same name.² However, allowing

¹ I Tim. iv. 6. "St. Paul's own language implies that the position which they [Tim. and Tit.] held was temporary" (Lightfoot, "Phil." p. 197). "A vicar-apostolic, rather than a bishop" (E. H. P. in Smith's Bib. Dict. iii., 1507).

² St. John's residence as bishop of Asia rests on the testimony of Irenæus, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, and Papias. Though Irenæus is said to have been a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John, he makes singular mistakes. He refers to the "Pastor" of Hermas and the LXX, as inspired, traces the Nicolaitanes to Nicolas, one of the "seven," asserts that our Lord lived to be fifty years old, and puts the chiliastic dream of Papias about the vine with

some value to the theory of the beloved disciple's residence in Asia, it does not follow that he held an archiepiscopal authority over all Churches and Christians whatsoever. That would imply a Church organization far too highly developed even for the later apostolic age. The "Church in the house" was the rule rather than the exception. There were no public buildings for worship, and the members were too poor to hire large apartments for their assemblies. Moreover, the writer of the Apocalypse does not

10,000 stems in the lips of our Lord. From this, as Canon Farrar says ("Early days of Ch.," p. 398), "we know what estimate to put on his appeals to apostolic tradition." The tradition of John's banishment under Domitian (A.D. 81-96, Iren. iii. 3, 4; i. 1; Victor., "In Ap." x., xi; Murat., "Frag.;" "Tert. c. Marc." iv. 5; Clem. Alex., "Quis Div.," 42; Eus., "H. E.," iii. 23) seems to have been based on inferences from the Apocalypse itself. Modern critics of almost all schools reject the tradition that John was in Patmos under Domitian, and date the Apoc. in about 68 A.D. The ghost of "John Presbyter," who Eusebius ("H. E." iii. 39) thinks might have written the Apoc. (Jerome ascribes to him the second and third epistles) is not yet laid, as Dr. Farrar ("Early Days of Ch.," p. 615) and Dr. Salmon suppose ("Dict. of Ch. Bi.," iii. 397); cf. Gloag, "Cath. Epp.," p. 329.

Bishop Lightfoot ("Philipp.," p. 310) says that Tertullian shows "that the sequence of bishops traced back to its origin will be found to rest on the authority of St. John." But Tertull. evidently has only the Apocalypse as his authority; for he adds, "We have John's foster Churches, though Marcion rejects his Apocalypse."

address the Churches as their bishop, but as a "prophet."¹ The representatives of the Churches whom he calls "angels" were, as the word literally means, "messengers" of the gospel.² Eusebius tells us that "Timothy is recorded as having received the episcopate at Ephesus, as Titus also was appointed over the Churches in Crete," and that "he was martyred at Cæsarea."³ But, very often such "traditions" are only false inferences from some statement in the New Testament. Is it likely that St. John would write to these Churches, over which Timothy had presided only a short time before, and never refer to him? If we do not accept the Tübingen judgment, that the language of the Apocalypse is decidedly anti-Pauline, we cannot overlook such omissions as these.

It scarcely relieves the difficulty to fall back on the old supposition that the book was written in the time of Domitian, A.D. 98. The references to the history

¹ Rev. xxii. 9.

² The earlier interpreters, generally, regard the "angels" as bishops: Tertull., August., Chrysost., Usher, Bingham, Wordsworth, etc. Rothe ("Anfänge," s. 423) explains by "eine Prolepsis der Bischöfe." Many modern authorities regard them as "der personifizierte Gemeingeist" (Dusterdieck, "Offenb.," s. 138; Farrar, "E.D." p. 439), Bp. Lightfoot ("Phil.," p. 198) thinks the term symbolical, and that "it is scarcely possible that the episcopal organization should have been so mature when it was written."

³ Eus., "H. E.," iii. 4, viii. 3.

of the Roman emperors and the yet standing Jerusalem forbid this. The contrast in style between the Apocalypse and the gospel seems to require, for the development of the latter, a longer period. We have no evidence that John ever ceased to live as a Jew. If he had been the minister of mixed Churches, he must have eaten with uncircumcised men. No doubt he accepted, in later years, as indicated in his Gospel and Epistles, the universality of the Christian religion, but he might yet remain a "pillar" of the Jewish Christian Church. The Jewish tone and spirit of the Apocalypse are undeniable. Its allusions and interpretations belong to the schools of the prophets and rabbis. Heaven is the "new Jerusalem." The Redeemer is "the root of David," "the lion of the house of Judah," "the Lamb of God." The firstfruits of the gospel are twelve thousand from every tribe, and, after this, "a great multitude which no man can number." It is well-known that the Christians of Asia Minor quoted the example of St. John in favour of their Jewish custom in the observance of Easter.¹ In the seventh decade of the first century the division between the Jews and Gentiles in the Christian

¹ Baronius; "Annales," ii. 36, says that the apostles tolerated the Jewish Christians in Asia, who were very numerous, in keeping the Paschal day after a Jewish manner.

Church was not obliterated. But the next seventy years, full of disaster and change, to the Jews especially, wrought a great change. The Christians among the people of scattered Israel dwindled down into small sects in a few localities, and the Gentile believers had greatly increased.

Like the readers of the epistle to the Hebrews, these Christians were under strong temptations to forsake the simplicity of Christ. Their old companions of the synagogue were eager to welcome their recovery from the apostasy, for which they had often reproached them. The charge against the Ephesian Church was, "Thou didst leave thy first love"; and against that at Laodicea was, that they were "lukewarm, neither hot nor cold." The Jerusalem Council had proscribed things "sacrificed to idols," but Antinomianism and incipient Gnosticism had already crept into Jewish society. Acquaintance with the whole range of Old Testament ideas and sayings is assumed. The book is a mosaic of the ancient prophecies and scarcely any part from Genesis to Chronicles fails of its references. The tabernacle and the temple, the altars of sacrifice and incense, the priest and the passover lamb, and the blood of victims, the scroll inscribed with law or prophecy, the holy city and its impregnable walls—all are here. The "elders" of the twelve tribes are before the

throne, and the foremost citizens of the holy place are the children of Israel. The chiliastic predictions answer to the expectation of those who look for a literal restoration of the Kingdom of David. His Son should rule the nations with a rod of iron. When the day of His wrath—"the wrath of the Lamb"—was come, none should be able to stand: "And the nations were wroth, and Thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear Thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth."¹

¹ Rev. xi. 18.

CHAPTER IX.

THE AGE AFTER THE APOSTLES.

“We have not here an abiding city.”¹

AT the passover of the year 70 A.D., Titus appeared before the walls of Jerusalem. There were, as Josephus says, about three millions of people in the city, including visitors. This great multitude was at once exposed to the united horrors of war and famine. To accomplish his work of destruction more thoroughly, the general built a wall round the fated city, so that none could go out or come in. When that was done, the Romans were able to proceed with their assault, and even to set some of the principal buildings on fire. Before the great conflagration took place a false prophet persuaded some thousands of the people to lock themselves in the courts of the temple, for they should soon see the Messiah. On that very day the tower of Antonia was stormed and taken, and the Romans carried their siege to the door of the temple. It was soon reduced by fire,

¹ Heb. xiii. 14.

and the doors of the sanctuary were forced. Of the temple not one stone was left upon another, and a million victims perished, while everything that had been thought holy in Jerusalem was destroyed or carried away.

What was the fate of the Church in Jerusalem? Did the Christians perish with the rest of the people? It is possible that some Jewish Christians would be among the visitors to that final passover, and would share in the great calamity. But tradition speaks of a remnant that escaped: "The people of the Church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, granted to approved men before the war, to leave the city, and to dwell in a certain town of Perea, called Pella."¹ Such a monition had already been given in the Gospels: "When ye see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judæa flee unto the mountains."²

The history of the world was changed when Titus resolved to destroy the temple. In their wars the Romans were not usually eager to overthrow temples and sacred places. But Titus had been assured that

¹ Eus., "H.E.," iii. 5. 3.

² Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14; Luke xxi. 21.

“the Jews would never cease to rebel while the sanctuary was standing where they all met.”¹ That shrine was the symbol and centre of that religious superiority which the Jew claimed. All their pretension and prestige vanished when the glory departed from Zion. Pilgrims from every part of the earth would no more resort to a shrine which God had forsaken. Among the results of the destruction of the city of David we may recognise :

1. The political dissolution of Israel. “Since that time there have been many Jewish communities but no Jewish State.”² The sceptre finally departed from Judah.³ No king could reign, for there has been no priest to anoint him, or to represent him when

¹ Jos., “Bell. Jud.” vi. 4. 3. Perhaps there is some doubt whether Titus had intended to destroy the sacred places completely : Schürer, “Hist. of the Jewish People,” Div. i. vol. ii. p. 245.

² Gfrörer, “Gesch. d. Ch. Kirche,” i. 252. Schürer (“Hist. of Jewish People,” ii. i. 268) remarks that the abolition of the Sanhedrim and of sacrifices were the two facts of highest importance.

³ The interpretations of Gen. xlix. 10 are innumerable. Pearson, “Creed,” 2 ; “Horne’s Int.,” ii. 244, and others show that Onkelos and other Targumists refer it to the great King. The early Christian apologists (Iren., iv. 10 ; Just. M. ; “Ap.” i. 32, 54 ; “Dial. c. T.” ; Orig. c. Cel., i. 54 ; Tertull. c. Mar. c. iv. 40) frequently refer to this prophecy, but it is not quoted in N.T. Dillmann, in loc., says, “Shiloh ist hier zu verstehen (Eich., Bleek, Hitzig, Ewald, Delitzsch) in acc. loci. Subject über zu שִׁלֹה־אֵלֶּיךָ ist naturgemäss Juda.”

royalty was in suspense. The mission of the house of David was fulfilled, and as the Jews themselves allow, no king but the Messiah can reign at Jerusalem. JUDÆA CAPTA signified the final extinction of the secular hopes of the Jew.

2. The religious prestige of the Jew received an injury almost as fatal. The leaders of the nation had encouraged the faith that the city could never be utterly subjugated. Desolation might come, but a remnant would return and build; but the Romans had only too much power to fulfil their own grim resolution, and to render restoration impossible. The consequent exchange of veneration for contempt would soon make itself felt in regard to the religious authority of Judaism. The conversion of Gentiles to Judaism had been going on for centuries. Thoughtful heathen had been led from classical literature to sacred, and had found the waters of Siloam sweeter and purer than the streams of Parnassus. Men who could no longer render divine honours to Jove learned to adore Jehovah. The cosmogony of Israel was more credible than those of Egypt, Babylonia, or Greece. The simple histories of Scripture threw light on periods about which Greek or Egyptian records gave only mythological fables. The Jewish theory of the relations of God and man attracted any who had received moral culture. It not only condemned

murder and theft and unchastity, as did the best of the Gentile systems, but it brought its accusation against the evil dispositions which led to these results. Heathenism had no malediction for sinful thought, though it condemned the transgressor and his deed ; but the prophets of Israel had carried the authority of moral law into the spiritual court, and had declared that "the thought of foolishness is sin." The "chance" of the Epicuræan and the "fate" of the Stoic had no inspiration like the doctrine of a Providence which cared for all the children of men.

Therefore, when the Old Testament was presented to the Gentile world in the Greek tongue, a growing multitude was attracted to the "brightness of its rising." Its mission of enlightenment had been carried on for some two centuries with varying success.¹ At the beginning of the Christian era there would scarcely be a synagogue in Asia or Europe without its proselytes, who formed a large element in the attendance at feasts in Jerusalem.²

This process of conversion was checked, first, by the formation of Christian Churches ; but not

¹ Havet, "Origines du Christianisme," iv. 2, with his usual extravagance, contends that Christianity only entered into the propaganda of Judaism."

² Acts ii. 5, viii. 30.

entirely so, for Jewish teachers still claimed superior sanctions for their teaching. But when the holy city was destroyed, all this came to an end. The oracle itself was silenced: the city which was to be "an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations," became a proverb of reproach. Inquirers would now go to the Christians, who had hope when the Jew was in despair. This will partly account for the maledictions which even the Jewish Christians began to receive from the synagogue.¹

3. The effect of this catastrophe upon Christianity was profound and universal. It fulfilled the predictions which Jesus Christ had pronounced upon an unbelieving nation. His word, henceforth, seemed to be endorsed by the very finger of God.

But, in one respect, Christian thought would undergo a great change. Believers had looked for the second coming of the Lord, to bring a final crisis to the world and the Church. Now Jerusalem had

¹ Epiph., "Hær.," xxix. 8. Graetz, "Gesch. d. Jud.," bk. iv. 109, says, "It is very remarkable that there were proselytes in the East, in Asia Minor and Rome, in the first half century after the destruction of Jerusalem." He holds that it is doubtful whether the Christians were cursed three times a day in the synagogue as Jerome reports (p. 105); yet (p. 103) he says that R. Tarphon declared that the Christian writings were worse than those of the heathen, and ought to be burned; cf. Gfrörer, "Kirchengesch." i. 252; Just. Mart., "Dial. c. T.," 16.

perished, and the Jewish nation was scattered, but the world went on its way. Summer and winter, seedtime and harvest followed each other as before. No one henceforth could predict the hour or the day when the Son of Man should come. The Church had not been lifted up "to meet the Lord in the air," but still pursued her pilgrimage on the dreary level of earthly toil and conflict. Was her future henceforth to be identified with that of human progress?

Moreover, the Church had lost its local head and centre. Jerusalem, where Jesus had taught and suffered, and risen again, was sacred ground. Since the day of Pentecost the Church had found there its chief witnesses and its typical success. There the apostles had lived and laboured; thence had gone out missionaries, who had evangelized all nations. If the later history of that Church had not maintained its ancient level, it had never wholly lost its pre-eminence.

From this time the way was open for the ascendancy of another Church. What was so likely as that Rome, the metropolis of the empire, should acquire the forfeited authority? The acquisition of this ascendancy was the work of the following centuries, in which Rome claimed more than Jerusalem ever possessed; but if Jerusalem had not fallen, the ambition of Rome

would never have been kindled, and the Church would have had another history.¹

One of the greatest results of the destruction of Jerusalem was the release from any dependence on Judaism now furnished to the Church. We cannot be surprised if a situation so novel, so unexpected, should be misinterpreted by the men of that time.

¹ Lechler, "Apost. Times," i. 246, remarks that Neander says little of the "significance to the kingdom of God" of the destruction of Jerusalem. Perhaps Neander, being of a Jewish family, did not care to refer to his nation's great calamity. Baur, "Kircheng. d. 3 ersten Jahrh.," i. says little about it. Schwegler, "Nachap. Zeit.," ii. 191, expressly opposes Rothe's view ("Anfänge," s. 346) that the destruction of the city led to the unification of Jewish and Gentile Christianity. Rothe allows that the "data are scarce," and, strangely enough, refers to the Ignatian epistles for proof that Jewish and Gentile Churches had united. That which they prove is, however, that from the Churches known to Ignatius, those who practised Judaism were excluded. Lightfoot, "Gal.," p. 34, follows Rothe, and speaks of the "Emancipation of the Jewish Churches." As he allows that the history of the Church at Pella "in the ages following is a hopeless blank," he has nothing but conjecture to rely upon. Unfortunately, this unfounded supposition obscures the whole history. Renan sees very clearly the importance of the destruction of the city: "The ruin of Jerusalem was for Christianity an unequalled fortune," "L'Antéchrist," p. 545; "S. Paul," p. 495. Gieseler, "Ch. Hist.," i. says little on the subject. Ritschl ("Eusteh.," s. 259) thinks it was not the destruction of the temple, nor the removal of the sacrifice, which decided the fall of the Jewish Church, but the rebuilding of Aelia and the banishment of the Jews.

It was, perhaps, natural for Christians, looking upon the miseries which had fallen on the Jews as signs of the Divine displeasure, to conclude that no sympathy should be shown to them.¹ Indeed, very soon no dislike was reckoned to be too malignant, no injury too severe for one of the despised race. Above all, no one continuing in the practice of Judaism could remain within the Church.

Dr. Schaff says, "The destruction of Jerusalem, therefore, marks that momentous crisis at which the Christian Church as a whole burst forth for ever from the chrysalis of Judaism, awoke to a sense of its maturity, and in government and worship at once took its independent stand before the world."² Something like this was, no doubt, the fact; only it should be remembered how difficult it is to trace the process of this rapid development. As Ewald says, "The drops of historical information and reminiscence do not in this instance combine so as to make a strong continuous stream; . . . the living stream

¹ Just. Mart., "Apol.," 53: "How could we believe in a crucified man . . . unless we saw that things had happened [according to his word] . . . as the devastation of the land of the Jews, and men of every race persuaded by his teaching." Epiph., "Hær.," xxix. 8; Iren., iv. 4: "Jerusalem was deservedly forsaken."

² "Hist. of the Church," i. 404.

of historical life loses itself irrevocably in dust and sand.”¹ The history of the Church at Pella “is a hopeless blank,” says Bishop Lightfoot. The failure of original documents, the accretions of interested tradition, the misconceptions of prejudice and partisanship, and all conditions favourable to the eclipse of true history are here at their maximum.

All that fire and the sword could do to obliterate a people and their memory from the face of the earth was wrought on the Jews and their commonwealth. The few survivors were poor, dismayed fugitives, who lurked in the back streets of cities, or wandered through foreign lands as soothsayers, or merchants in strange wares. In these distresses the Jewish Christian would share with his fellow-countrymen; while by his own intolerance and bitterness he had alienated the sympathy of his Gentile co-religionist. The latter would hear with silent awe of the overthrow of the city of David, which demonstrated the truth of the word of Jesus, and seemed to be a meet reward for the crucifixion of the Saviour. There would be gratulation mixed with the wailing of the futile believers over the fall of the city and temple of the Jew.²

¹ “Hist. of Isr.,” viii. 14.

² At a later time Minuc. Felix (“Oct.” c. 33) says, “Read their Scriptures, . . . or the Roman writings, . . . or F.

The apostolic Church of Jerusalem vanished when the city was overthrown. Henceforth it was without "local habitation and a name." But oblivion was not bitter enough a fate for this primitive and typical Church—the mother of all Churches now filling the world; she must suffer reproach and dishonour. Her children became a proverb and byword among the followers of Jesus Christ. By the "irony of fate" the representatives of that community, which once excluded all but circumcised Jews from its membership, were themselves in turn excluded from the Catholic Church. Whereas, in the first years of the Church, it was unlawful for a Christian to neglect the observances of the Jewish law; at the beginning of the second century no one could be a Catholic Christian who practised them! That which was the indispensable condition of Church membership at the first period was, one hundred years later, an absolute disqualification. Was there ever such a revenge in history? Was paradox ever more complete, that the first orthodoxy of the Church should become its "first heresy"?¹

Josephus, . . . and you shall know that by their wickedness they deserved this fortune; . . . they forsook before they were forsaken."

¹ Ritschl, "Enst. d. Altk. K.," p. 254: "The standpoint of the original apostles did not escape the stigma of heresy."

We can easily believe that the calamities which befell Jerusalem and its people would, for a season at least, check Judaizing operations within the Church ; but, unfortunately, there is no proof that these events led to the conversion of many Jews to a broader view of Christianity.¹ More directly they contributed to the extension of those allegorical and philosophical interpretations of the Old Testament, and even of the New, which, as we shall see in the sequel, produced many of the earlier heresies.

Because the evidence has been deficient, it has been the fashion of historians down to our own day to accept a traditional but inadequate theory of the change which now took place. We must not disallow the claim of German investigators, chiefly of the Tübingen school, to the honour of having brought the realities of the primitive age out of the mists of tradition.² They have shown that there was a con-

¹ As Lightfoot supposes, "Gal.," p. 311. Dr. Gloag, "Int. to Cath. Epp.," p. 49, says: "It is probable that many of the Jewish Christians renounced their distinctive customs"; but he gives no evidence. Graetz, "Gesch. d. Jud.," iv. 78, falls in with the view that the overthrow of the temple disposed many Jews to become Christians—that most of the Essenes and followers of John the Baptist did. The Tübingen writers and Renan seem to be his authorities for saying that not only the poor but the educated now joined the Church, and that in Rome as many as one-half of the Church was Jewish.

² It was usually assumed by all Church historians that the

nection between the Jewish-Christian schools of the first century and those of the second. That connection was for many centuries quite unsuspected, and by some authorities it is even yet denied. The Tübingen theory, in its completeness, had only a brief day. It represented the apostolic Christians as Ebionites, who joined to Judaism the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, refused to receive Gentiles into their fellowship, and opposed the doctrine and procedure of St. Paul. It traced the Gnostic theories to the operation of Greek speculation in Pauline circles, from which, through a fusion with the milder Ebionitism, arose in the second century the Catholic Church; and it proceeded to treat the books of the New Testament as chiefly post-apostolic compositions representing the various phases in the process of this great combination.

Here, at any rate, was a clear and definite scheme of a possible history. Its defects and excesses have been discovered, and the criticism of half a century has proved its inadequacy. Yet things are not as they were. The orthodox theory of a faultless unity of creed and liturgy and discipline throughout the apostolic age has vanished as completely as the Tübingen hypothe-

apostolic Church had an unbroken unity of faith and practice : cf. Lechler, "Apost. Times," i. 88.

sis.¹ But Baur, Schwegler, and their fellow-workers were "path-breakers." They made a way over ground which had been shunned as impassable. Christian historians had passively followed Irenæus, Epiphanius, and Eusebius, who taught that the Nazarenes, the Ebionites, and the Gnostics had descended from Cerinthus, Simon Magus, Valentinus, and the rest. The two former were confuted by St. John and St. Peter, the last by following Church teachers. Why inquire further?

But it is at this point that further inquiry is imperatively needed, and we do not apologize for the somewhat detailed investigation which follows. How great was the necessity for criticism the following

¹ "Criticism has put a lens to our eyes and disclosed to us on . . . primitive Christianity rents and craters undreamt of in our simplicity" (S. Baring-Gould, "Lost Gospp.," vii.). "It was a pleasing dream which represented the primitive Church as a society of angels; and it is not without a struggle that we bring ourselves to open our eyes and behold the reality" (Conyb. and Hows., "St. Paul," c. xiv.). "However great may be the theological differences and religious animosities of our own time, they are far surpassed in magnitude by the distractions of an age which, closing our eyes to facts, we are apt to invest with an ideal excellence" (Lightfoot, "Gal.," p. 374). This concept of "ideal excellence" was, no doubt, owing to testimonies from uncritical times, like that of Hegesippus (A.D. 180): "They called the Church as yet a virgin, for it was not yet corrupted by vain discourses."

extract from so high an authority as Mosheim will show.¹ "The first rise of this sect [Nazarenes] is placed under the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 130). For when this emperor had razed Jerusalem, . . . the greatest part of the Christians of Palestine, to prevent their being confounded with the Jews, abandoned entirely the Mosaic rites, and chose a bishop named Marcus, a foreigner by birth. . . . This step was highly shocking to those attached to the Jewish law. These, therefore, separated themselves from the brethren, and formed at Pella particular assemblies in which the Mosaic law maintained its dignity. . . . This body of Judaizing Christians . . . was afterwards divided into two sects, Nazarenes and Ebionites."

This picture is drawn from the conjectures of early and uncritical Church writers. Who does not know that the first Christians were called Nazarenes, and that therefore the sect did not arise under Hadrian? Nor is there any evidence that the Palestinian Christians forsook Mosaism in order to evade the fate of the Jews. The election of Marcus, a Gentile, shows that the new Church at Aelia was not Jewish-Christian. The flight to Pella took place before the destruction

¹ Mosheim, "Ch. Hist.," i. 1-5 : "The Erasmus of the 18th Century"; Harnack, "Dogmeng.," i. 23.

of the city. The New Testament indicates that the "body of Jewish Christians" contained two sections—one not so extreme as the other, and that the name "Nazarenes" existed then, if not that of the "Ebionites."

We may now turn to a much more recent authority. Bishop Westcott says, "Some modern writers have confounded together the different steps by which the Jews and Gentiles were received into the Christian Church. Since it is of great importance to a right understanding of the early history of Christianity that they should be clearly distinguished, it may not be amiss to mention them here :—

1. The admission of Gentiles to the Christian Church, Acts x., xi.

2. The freedom of Gentile converts from the ceremonial law, Acts xv.

3. The indifference of the ceremonial law for Jewish converts, Gal. ii., iii.

4. The incompatibility of Judaism with Christianity." ¹

The four stages of the progress by which the Catholic Church reached its position could not be stated with greater clearness. One or two points, however, require examination.

¹ "Canon of N.T.," p. 67.

1. Not only "some modern writers have confused the different steps" of this progress, but scarcely any writers, ancient or modern, have rightly understood its later stages. Such a delineation as that which Bishop Westcott gives was scarcely possible before the researches of Neander and Baur.

2. The description of the third step, as implying "the indifference of the ceremonial law for Jewish converts" is a little misleading. St. Paul's converts had reached this stage before his last visit to Jerusalem, but not the Jewish Christians generally. Even yet the "thousands of those (Jews) who believe are all zealous of the law." The Church at Jerusalem never considered that the "ceremonial law was indifferent" for its own members.

3. The statement No. 4 is more than a little surprising. Dr. W. adds: "The first three, that is, the essential principles, are recognised in Scripture; the last, which introduces no new element, is involved in the history of the Church. This is an instance of the development which organizes but does not create."

But did not the exclusion of the Jew and his ceremonial introduce a new element? No such element existed in the first days, when only the circumcised were baptized. It did not exist in the Pauline Churches, for in them both Jew and Greek were

reckoned to be one in Christ. Were there not three systems in the succession? viz.,—

a. That of James and Peter, which included only those who, believing in Jesus, conformed to the Jewish ritual.

b. That of Paul, which included all who believed, whether they did or did not conform to the Jewish ritual.

c. After these two systems came a third—that of Ignatius and Irenæus, which included only such as did not use the Jewish forms. Here then appears the “new element.” That which the apostles and all the first believers had held to be indispensable to the Christian profession for themselves, was now declared to be wholly incompatible with it.

Bishop Westcott allows that the Church of Jerusalem clung to the law until the city was destroyed. He then proceeds to observe that when the Jews were excluded from the new Aelia while Christians were admitted, the “Judaizing party made a last effort to regain their original power.”¹ But this shows that the “Judaizing party” had not relinquished their principles, as is commonly supposed; and that the Judaizers of the second century were the natural

¹ “Canon,” p. 68.

successors of those of the first. We can all agree with Bishop Westcott's previous remark on this great transition: "It is difficult to trace the progress of its consummation, though the result was the establishment of the Catholic Church."

It is natural that we should next turn to Bishop Westcott's illustrious predecessor, who, in his essay on "St. Paul and the Three," discusses "the first three stages of this transition."¹ He states that the Judaizing opponents of Paul "evaded rather than defied the decree. They may have no longer insisted upon circumcision as a condition of salvation, but urged it as a title to preference."² The Church at Jerusalem, "lacking the daily experience of contact with Christians of other lands," felt strongly the claims of the national law, conformed, as did St. Paul, to its customs, and "expected the advent to put all things right." Bishop Lightfoot proceeds to say that "the Christians, foreseeing the calamity, had fled before the tempest; and at Pella, in the midst of a population chiefly Gentile, the Church of the

¹ "Ep. to Gal.," p. 301.

² Mr. Findlay, in his excellent work on "Galatians," p. 130, says that after the council the Judaizers did not require circumcision as necessary to salvation, but to perfection. But the references in Philipians and Colossians seem to go beyond the latter.

circumcision was reconstituted. Its history in the ages following is a hopeless blank.”¹

We are therefore left to conjecture respecting this most solemn crisis in the genesis of the Church. The great river that had issued from the temple doors sinks into a desert of sand without an oasis to betray where its wealth had been lost. Yet Bishop Lightfoot has a conjecture. He thinks that one effect of the destruction of the city and temple would be to make these Jewish believers see “that all other sacrifices were transitory shadows, faint emblems of the paschal lamb. In the impossibility of observing the Mosaic ordinances except in part, they must have been led to question the efficacy of the whole.”² But there is no evidence of this great change. On the contrary, Bishop Westcott has told us that about A.D. 132, when the Jews were excluded from the new city by Hadrian, the Jewish party strove to regain their ancient power. It is true that the believing Essenes objected to sacrifices as unworthy of God; but that was characteristic of that party, and not a result of the overthrow of Jerusalem. Bishop Lightfoot himself admits that “to what extent the majority still conformed to the Mosaic ordinances we have no data

¹ “Galatians,” p. 312.

² *Ibid.*, p. 314.

to determine.”¹ But we do know that the information, so far as it goes, represents the Jewish believers as being “all zealous for the law,” and that, according to Eusebius, the thirteen bishops after James were all of the circumcision. So that the supposition of a wholesale conversion of Jews after the destruction of the city vanishes into thin air.²

No English scholars have done more to elucidate the circumstances under which the New Testament was written than the present and late bishops of Durham. All inquirers in this domain must be indebted to their aid ; but the light they have thrown upon our question renders it impossible to be content with its state as they leave it.

Another episcopal authority who has gained no slight honour by his investigations into the facts of the early Christian history is Dr. Salmon. He does not, however, give us much information respecting the fate of the Jewish Church ; and of its relics he seems to have a low opinion. He tells us that there were two kinds of Ebionites, or Jewish Christians.

¹ “Galatians,” p. 315.

² Eusebius positively states that “the whole Church consisted of believing Hebrews” until the siege of Hadrian ; that the city was afterwards “inhabited by strangers,” and that in the Roman city the Church was “collected there of the Gentiles” (“H. E.,” iv. 5, 6).

“One kind we may call Pharisaic Ebionites,” who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, but maintained the full observance of the Mosaic law. But, he adds, “They appear never to have been of much influence and before long to have died out.” Dr. Lightfoot, however, to whom Dr. Salmon refers us for information respecting these Pharisaic Ebionites, tells us (“Galat.,” p. 322) that they were “the direct spiritual descendants of the Judaizers of the apostolic age who . . . dogged St. Paul’s footsteps. . . . If Ebionism was not primitive Christianity, neither was it a creation of the second century. As an organization, it first made itself known, we may suppose, in the reign of Trajan; but as a sentiment it had been harboured within the Church from the very earliest days.”

According to this view, then, the Pharisaic Ebionites only became an “organization,” a “sect,” in the time of Trajan, A.D. 98-108; but the “sentiment” had been in the Church from the beginning. It seems, therefore, that the Judaizing Christians, so numerous and widespread in the days of St. Paul, who had fled to Pella and other places at the destruction of Jerusalem, who had kept up the succession of their bishops in the Jewish line, now receive a new name: they are called Ebionites. Yet, having become an “organization,” and having re-

ceived a name, Dr. Salmon tells us "they appear never to have been of much influence, and before long to have died out!" His authority for that statement he does not furnish, but we know that Ignatius denounced them; that Justin Martyr (A.D. 140) condemned them; that Irenæus (A.D. 180) and Hippolytus (A.D. 200) describe them as still existing. This gives rise to the suspicion that these Pharisaic Ebionites cannot be disposed of quite so easily as Dr. Salmon would like.

Of the later Ebionites Dr. Salmon tells us that "the Jewish sectaries, being few in number and not widely diffused, were little known to the Church at large until the end of the second century or the beginning of the third, when an extreme section of them assumed an aggressive attitude and attempted to make converts in Rome."¹ Further, he says (p. 22) that these later Ebionites "were a continuation of the Jewish sect of the Essenes, and had no right to represent the original antagonists of St. Paul at Jerusalem." That this account is full of the

¹ "Introd. to the N.T.," p. 204. Stanton ("Messiah," p. 166) says more justly: "The Ebionites of the next century were in no sense the representatives of original Jewish Christianity. . . . They were the true successors of the Judaizers of apostolic days."

greatest improbabilities will appear from the following considerations :—

1. That “Jewish sectaries,” either of the Pharisaic or Essene class, were “little known to the Church until the end of the second century,” is contradicted by the testimonies already given, and by the whole tenour of the history.

2. It is not likely that, at the end of the second century, an aggressive sect in favour of Jewish opinions should arise in the Church without some organic connection with, some links of descent from, the earlier Judaizers.

3. Dr. Salmon (“*Introd. to N. T.*,” p. 472) agrees with Bishop Lightfoot in his view that there were Essene Judaizers at Colosse in the first century. Was there absolutely no historical connection between these Essene Judaizers in Paul’s time and those of the “Clementines”?

4. Bishop Lightfoot, with others, thinks that large numbers of Essenes attached themselves to the Christian Church after the destruction of Jerusalem. Perhaps this may be doubted; but if it were true, was it likely that this Essene element would be “little known to the Church till the end of the second century”?

5. Dr. Salmon admits, that “if it had not been for the calamities which befell the Jewish people, it is

quite conceivable that Christianity might have developed in some form similar to that in which pseudo-elements presents it." ¹ That is to say, the elements of both Pharisaic and Essene Ebionitism existed in the Church at Jerusalem ; and so strong were these elements that, except for the providential overthrow of the city, they would have decided the future character of the Church. Does it not, therefore, seem contradictory to assert, so strongly as Dr. Salmon does, that "the school hostile to St. Paul, which found expression in the Clementines, cannot be regarded as the representative or continuation of the body of adversaries with whom he had to contend in his lifetime" ? ²

Dr. Salmon admits that we have "very few documents dating from the last quarter of the first century and the first half of the second" ; and that "the Church passed through a tunnel" during that period.³ This only shows the need of careful investigation and the unprejudiced estimation of the smallest items of information that may be forthcoming. Moreover, when certainty ceases, probability

¹ "Introd. to N. T.," p. 592.

² "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," i. 575. The "Apost. Const.," vi. 6 connect the heretics with the days of the apostles : "The Ebionites who have newly risen amongst us."

³ *Expositor*, July, 1887.

must be our guide. Is it likely that Jewish Christianity would be lost during the dark interval, and that another similar yet entirely disconnected system somehow or other arise in after days? Further, on Dr. Salmon's theory, can any account of the steps by which Jewish Christianity became heretical be given? It is rather singular that Dr. Salmon, while he holds these views, yet accepts Bishop Lightfoot's conclusions respecting "The Essenes" and "the Colossian heresy," which show that "Essene Judaism was gnostic in its character," that it was working perilously among the Pauline Churches in Asia, and that this heresy "will take its place in a regular historical sequence."¹

Dr. Lechler endeavours to trace the effect of the subversion of Jerusalem on the various sections of the Church. After the insurrection of Barcochba, he says, "The Christians who assembled in the new heathen city chose for the first time a Gentile Christian, Marcus, for their new bishop, whereas formerly they had none but circumcised bishops."² But Eusebius, whom he quotes, reports that only Gentiles

¹ Lightfoot ("Col.," p. 106); Salmon ("Introd. to N. T.," p. 472) quotes Lightfoot against Davidson, and says, "I believe the bishop to be in the right."

² Lechler, "Apost. Times," ii. 26.

could settle in the new city.¹ That is, the persons who had circumcised bishops were the older Jewish Christians: those who occupied *Ælia* subsequently, were Gentiles who did not observe the law. Why should two separate parties be confused under the general term "they"?

At the risk of appearing tedious, we may once more review the history:

1. All Christians were, at the beginning, Jews by birth or by conversion as proselytes of righteousness. All were "in the temple daily," where none but Jews and strict proselytes were allowed.

2. The people of Samaria, who received the gospel under Philip, were circumcised; and the Churches of Judea and Galilee and Samaria, which Peter visited, were composed of Jewish people—all this having taken place before the conversion of Cornelius.²

3. A new era commenced with the conversion of Cornelius, and the mission of Barnabas and Saul.³ Hellenes, as well as Hellenists, were freely admitted into Christian fellowship. By the decree of the Council (Acts xv.) Gentiles were freely admitted into Christian fellowship at Antioch and other places, without submission to the Jewish ceremonial. The

¹ Euseb. "H. E.," vi. 14.

² Acts viii., ix.

³ Acts x., xi.

emancipation, however, was not complete. It gave liberty to the Gentile ; it reserved to the Jew the right to follow his ritual.¹ The Gentiles might form themselves into Churches, but the Jews might still refuse to eat with them. Soon after the Council Peter came to Antioch, and at first associated with all the believers ; but when "certain came from James" he withdrew. We have no direct information respecting his subsequent procedure.²

4. Notwithstanding the apparent settlement made at the Council, there was a strong party in the Jewish Church which continued to urge the demands of the law. Eight years later, when Paul visited Jerusalem for the last time, he found "all zealous for the law."³ During the apostolic period the Judaizing Christians

¹ Lechler, "Apost. Times," i. 118. On p. 226 he speaks of "Palestine communities which numbered converted Gentiles," but this is not clear.

² Clem. Hom. i. 22, etc., shows Peter as very careful to attend to the ritual for food. Iren., "Her.," iii. 12-15 (against Marcion) urges that the apostles must have regarded the God of the O. T. as supreme, for they continued to observe the law : "The apostles allowed the Gentiles freedom, but they continued in the ancient observances." Schaff, "Hist. of Ch.," i. p. 349, remarks that "this point is often overlooked," and that probably the separation of Paul from Barnabas was owing to this cause.

³ Acts xxi. 20.

had a propaganda throughout the Christian world.¹ It will be best to take the various centres seriatim :

a. Antioch. Strife had existed in this Church before the first Council. Those who had demanded circumcision for all believers had come "from Judæa," but without direct authority from the mother Church to this end. It is intimated that these persons belonged to the Pharisees.² Men of this sect would not have joined the Church if they had been required to sacrifice Judaism. Those who caused Peter to dissimulate were said to come "from James." Whatever this may mean, it is probable that James would not consider it expedient for Peter to eat with Gentiles, even though Paul did. But "the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him," and also Barnabas.

Thenceforward the Jewish believers would not join in the Agape with Gentiles. In so large a city as Antioch there would be room for separate synagogues, or the brethren would "break bread" in their own houses. Of this division, "the memory was perpetuated by the tradition which divided the Church at Antioch into two parishes with two bishops,

¹ "It was a counter-mission systematically organized" (Sabatier : "The Apostle Paul," p. 135).

² Acts xv. 5.

Euodius and Ignatius, the one instituted by Peter, the other by Paul." ¹ If this was so, the absolute repudiation of Jewish Christianity by Ignatius is an extraordinary fact. Such exclusiveness brands him as one of the foremost heretics of the early Church.² Bishop Lightfoot allows that the conflict between the two parties in Antioch "began earlier and probably continued longer than elsewhere"; and then, without further explanation, concludes that "the names of her bishops—Ignatius, Theophilus, and Serapion—vouch for the doctrine and practice of the Antiochene Church in the second century." But what became of Euodius, ordained by Peter, and of his fellow-Christians?

b. Ephesus. "In Asia Minor the influence first of

¹ Eus., "H.E.," iii. 22; Orig., "Luc.," hom. 6, say that Euodius was first Bishop of Ant., Ignat. the second. Athanas. and Chrysost. do not mention Euodius, but "Apost. Const.," vii. 46, has: "of Antioch Euodius ordained by me, Peter, and Ignatius by me. Paul." "Baronius and others suppose Euodius to have been the bishop of the Jewish, Ignatius of the Gentile converts" (Schaff, "Hist. of Ch.," ii. 655).

² Ignat. ad Magn., 8: "If we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace." Ch. 9: "If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have gained a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but observe the Lord's day, how shall we live without Him?" Ch. 10: "It is absurd to profess Jesus Christ and to Judaize." The longer recension puts it yet more strongly.

St. Paul then of St. John must have been fatal to the ascendancy of Ebionism.”¹ But we have no certainty that St. Paul and St. John moved exactly in the same spheres. Judaizers were busy in the apostolic age. Paul warned the Church at Ephesus that “grievous wolves should enter in,” and men “speaking perverse things.” He counsels them not to be “carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error.”² The use of such terms as “æon” and “pleroma” shows that gnostic elements were at work. In Colosse, again, there were teachers who beguiled “through philosophy and vain deceit”; and modern authorities agree that these teachers held Judaism, Essenism, and gnostic tenets in combination.³

The heretics referred to in the pastoral epistles belonged to a Judaizing school, for they inculcated abstinence from meats, and were full of “profane and old wives’ fables,” of “questionings and disputes of words.”⁴ They gave “heed to fables and endless genealogies,” and desired to be “teachers of the law.” The epistle to Titus speaks of “many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers.”⁵ If any credence is to

¹ Lightf., “Gal.,” p. 335.

² Acts xx. 29. Ephes. iv. 14.

³ Col. ii. 8. Lightf., “Col.,” pp. 72-113.

⁴ 1 Tim. i. 4, 7.

⁵ Tit. i. 10.

be given to the story of St. John's meeting with Cerinthus in the bath, the scene must have occurred in Ephesus. Lechler conjectures that "we must always look upon this as a fact, that the believing Jews of the Diaspora gradually fell away from the Mosaic law and Jewish customs."¹ This is a "conjecture," and not a "fact"; but it shows at least, that the "believing Jews of the Diaspora" held their customs for a long time.

c. Corinth. The Church at Corinth was very early divided into parties. Some were of Paul, others of Apollos; others again were of Peter, or "of Christ."² We shall discuss, elsewhere, the more precise meaning of these terms, but may assume here that the last two were inclined to Jewish-Christian opinions. It is probably but a reminiscence of the Petrine party in that Church which Dionysius preserves when he says that both Peter and Paul planted the Church in Corinth.³

d. Rome. Renan asserts that the original Church at Rome was not Gentile but Jewish.⁴ There is no proof of this, any more than of the statement that "they were attached to circumcision and external

¹ "Apost. Times," i. 151.

² 1 Cor. i. 12. Lightf., "Gal.," 372; cf. chap. xv.

³ Eus., "H. E.," ii. 25.

⁴ "Conférences d'Angleterre," p. 65.

rites, and Ebionite in their abstinence and doctrine." Such Christians were not those who met St. Paul on his arrival or to whom he wrote his epistle. In the epistle he does not appeal to the "decree," but discusses "meats" as an open question. During his stay the Judaizers became numerous and active. When he wrote to Philippi, he had to say that some "preach Christ of envy and strife."¹

Bishop Lightfoot says, "The arrival of the Gentile apostle in the Metropolis, was the signal for the separation of the Judaizers, who had hitherto associated with their Gentile brethren coldly and distrustfully."² When Paul wrote to Colosse, he could only mention Marcus and Justus of the circumcision who were his helpers.³ Yet St. Paul would have been the last to say that the Jewish believers who did not agree with him were out of Christ. The two, even when divided in views and usage, were one. His charity was, however, soon forgotten. The "Catholics" began to treat their Jewish brethren as heretics, and assumed a name which condemns the exclusiveness indelibly associated with it.

Bishop Lightfoot proceeds to suppose that when St. Peter came to Rome he would give the right hand

¹ Phil. i. 15.

² "Gal.," p. 336.

³ Col. iv. 10, 11.

of fellowship to Paul, yet devote himself to work among the Jewish section. "Christian Rome was large enough to admit two communities or two sections in one community, until the time was ripe for their more complete amalgamation."¹ This grants nearly all that we are pleading for; but we can see no probability that there was "one community (*κοινωνία*)." Besides, even Dr. Salmon allows that in the second century the Jewish-Christian or Ebionite schism became more emphatic if it did not then arise. Where then did the "complete amalgamation" take place? History bears no trace of this event. It becomes clear, rather, that the Gentile ascendancy suppressed and excluded the Jewish element from the Church. Similar schemes of "reunion" have been entertained in our day.

This probable co-existence of two separate Christian communities in Rome completely contradicts the supposed formal unity of the Church there. The tradition of St. Peter has so little history to support it that Romish writers are somewhat favourable to the idea of a twofold Church at the beginning. It explains partly the discrepancies in the lists of the early bishops.² If Linus was ordained by Paul and Clement by Peter, it helps the matter a little. Then

¹ Lightfoot, "Gal.," p. 337.

² *Ibid.*

Clement, it is supposed, was the great agent of "conciliation."¹ But Ebionite activity did not cease during the second century.

Whether the "Clementines" had a Roman authorship or not, they have served the interests of the Romish Church, and there must have been a party there who received them with favour.² "They really come from an unknown, philosophically educated author, probably a Jewish Christian of the second half of the second century."³ While they speak of James as the "Bishop of bishops," yet they confirm the tradition that Peter exercised his ministry in Rome. However commingled with gnostic or Essene elements, these Ebionites of the second century certainly held the main tenets of the Judaizers of the first.

We have evidence therefore that in the later apostolic age the Judaizing party had representatives in every part of the Christian world, though the

¹ Lightfoot, "Gal.," p. 338.

² For the Roman origin of the "Clementines" see Baur, Schliemann, Ritschl, Hilgenfeld, and Milman; for a Syrian, Uhlmann, Lightfoot, Salmon ("Dict. of C. B.," i. 576). On the "Mandæans," a sect which retains some features of Jewish Christianity, see Kessler's article in "Herzog," and that in "Encyclop. des Sciences" (Lichtenberger), ix. 60.

³ Schaff, "Hist. of Ch.," ii. 439.

Tübingen school was wrong in its assertion that the whole Church was altogether Ebionite in the first century. Yet nothing is more certain than that the Church at Jerusalem continued the observance of Jewish rites until the destruction of the city. The apostolic Christians in Jerusalem did not deny the possibility of salvation to those converted among the Gentiles, but they could not receive them into Christian fellowship. Some of their followers carried matters to extremes, and sought, with wonderful diligence, to persuade Gentile believers that they ought to keep the law. The theology of some of these zealous advocates of the law was so shallow or so distorted that we cannot believe that they would have the approval of James or the twelve. The moral procedure of some was so faulty that it was condemned by Paul, by Peter, and by Jude. Church membership was, however, so loosely defined at first that some of these teachers of a legal or even anti-nomian gospel might yet plead that they were "of Peter" or "of James."

History, then, compels us to recognise the continuity of the Judaizing party in the Church from first to last. However diversified in the course of doctrinal development, their identity is not to be denied. As we have already seen, Dr. Salmon and others, in their anxiety to refute Baur and Renan,

dispute any organic connection between the Judaizers of St. Paul's time and those of Irenæus and Epiphanius. But the signs of relationship are too close to be dismissed in any summary fashion. Their traits and characteristics are too positive to be mistaken. In spirit they have not ceased out of the Church until our own day. They were the originators and first professors of the doctrine of "Apostolical Succession." They pleaded that Jesus Himself observed the law and said no tittle of the law should fail.¹ The Saviour came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.² The apostles, they said, observed the law, and Peter always washed his hands before dinner.³ These Judaizers ascribed their books to apostles. They had "Gospels" and "Acts" of John and Peter, Thomas and Thaddæus. Clement, the disciple and *protégé* of Peter, became a favourite saint. Cerinthus pretended to have been a disciple of John. Basilides said he had been taught by Glaucas, an interpreter of Peter.⁴ However widely these sectaries wandered from apostolic truth, they claimed to be in historic descent from the "twelve"

¹ Tertull., "De Presc.," 48 ; Orig., Matt. x. 24.

² Orig., "De Princ.," 42 ; Matt. xv. 24.

³ Epiphan., "Hær.," xxx.

⁴ Clem. Al. ("Strom.," vii. 17) ; *vid.* Harnack, "Dogmeng.," . 188.

in Jerusalem. On a similar plea of merely historical succession the Roman Catholic who believes in transubstantiation may trace his ecclesiastical pedigree to primitive Christians who never heard of it. Unfortunately the error of the Jewish Church in preferring historical succession to spiritual conformity was not sufficient to warn Christians against the delusion which confounds formal association in the Church with real fellowship with Christ. Two thousand years of history have not been too much for that lesson.

We must next inquire yet more particularly into the succession of events by which Jewish Christianity became heretical.

CHAPTER X.

JEWISH CHRISTIANITY HERETICAL.

“ There is left on earth
No one alive who knew (consider this)—
Saw with his eyes, and handled with his hands
That which was from the first, the word of life ;
How will it be when none more saith,
‘ I saw ’ ? ”¹

THERE is no moment in the history of the Church which demands more careful consideration than that at which we have now arrived ; but there is none which has been more constantly overlooked. Its neglect is greatly responsible for the error of Tübingen writers, who supposed that Catholic Christianity was the result of a deliberate amalgamation of two divergent types of Christian opinion and life. The same cause led to the attitude assumed by the Catholic Church towards Jewish Christians. That attitude involved both a departure from the Pauline teaching and the *πρώτον ψεύδος* which brought Catholicism, at length, to be synonymous with exclusiveness and persecuting intolerance.

¹ Browning, “ Death in the Desert.”

On the first point we have already seen that historians have generally assumed that the Jewish Christians, after the destruction of the holy city, largely renounced Judaism. So fair a writer as Dr. Schaff has said: "The Jewish Christianity represented in the apostolic Church by Peter and John combined with the Gentile Christianity of Paul to form a Christian Church in which neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availed anything, but a new creature."¹ It may seem presumption to say that this is fancy, and not history; yet what else can we say? When did this great combination take place? Some have thought that Hegesippus and Aristo of Pella represent the Jewish Christians who thus surrendered formal Judaism for the sake of Christian unity; but there is too little known about either to establish a theory of any kind. Rothe and others have conjectured that, either shortly before or soon after the overthrow of Jerusalem, there was a "second council of Jerusalem," when all the surviving apostles met, and decided that the observance of the law should cease, that episcopacy should be the universal government of the Churches, and that there should be something like uniformity in liturgical service.² But the occurrence

¹ Schaff, "Hist. of Ch.," p. 431.

² Rothe, "Anfange d. Chr. K.," p. 356, accepts Eus., "H.E.," iii. 11, that after the destruction of the city "there was a report

of this council, for which Eusebius is responsible, is not defended even by episcopalians.

(λόγος κατέχει) that the apostles, disciples from every place, and the relatives of the Lord assembled in one place and elected Symeon to be successor to James as bishop." This would leave the Church without a bishop for some years. Rothe supposes further that other bishops would be appointed, and John would be transferred to Asia Minor: "Thomas, according to tradition, received Parthia as his allotted region; Andrew received Scythia, and John Asia"(Eus., "H.E.," iii. 1). These traditions evidently belong to a later time, when the idea of diocesan episcopacy had arisen. Rothe also appeals to Irenæus (Pfaffian fragments) in which the "second ordinances of the apostles" are referred to; but these fragments of Irenæus are more than doubtful. "Ordinances" of the apostles are better understood since the appearance of the "Didache." The "Apostolical Constitutions" and "Canons," and similar forgeries, which profess to give the decrees of this second council at Jerusalem, are the *supply* which the demand for apostolic authority for Church ordinances has produced. Unfortunately, though their foundation was so slender, they became the law of the Church. "Canon Law," which some are so sedulously studying in our day, rests on these antiquated inventions.

Rufinus (in "Symbol. Apost.," c. 2, A.D. 400), asserts that the "Apostles' Creed" was prepared by the twelve soon after Pentecost. His bold and unfounded assertion, with all its improbabilities, has been eagerly appropriated by Church historians. Baronius ("Annal.," ii. 22) accepts all canons which "have passed into common use in the Church," and says that in the second council the apostles resided at Jerusalem fifteen days! Lipsius ("Dict. of Chr. Biog.," i. 17) shows it to be probable that the story of the division of the nations among

Dr. Lechler, who is a supporter of what may be called orthodox views, fully recognises the difficulty of the case. His own theory, however, that the orthodox Christians on both sides maintained *fellowship*, and that after the destruction of the city, the moderate Jewish Christians renounced Judaism, leads him into inconsistency. We had better quote him at some length :—

“How shall we picture the Church in *Ælia Capitolina*? The choice of a non-Israelite, as head of the Church at Jerusalem, demanded on the part of a Jewish Christian a victory over self, a suppression of hereditary, national feeling, of which at most only some of the Jewish Christians would be capable. But apart from the choice of a Gentile Christian as bishop, no Jew was permitted to set foot in the city . . . only such Christians might settle there as could in no sense be looked upon as Jews, that is Gentile Christians only, and at most such Jewish Christians as were connected with the Jews solely by their descent, but not by the customs, usages, and observance of Mosaism. Thus, where a Christian descended from the Hebrews was concerned, the fact of dwelling in *Ælia* implied a complete renunciation of the law and of Judaism, a standpoint which, as already stated, we can only accept in the case of a few Jewish Christians ; for it would in reality be nothing less than going over to the Gentile Christians. Thus Gentile Christianity took the place of the mother Church, and Jewish Christianity was thrust out of Jerusalem.”¹

the apostles first appeared in a gnostic work—the “*Sortes Apostolorum*.”

¹ Lechler : “*Ap. and Post-Ap. Times*,” ii. 265.

Detailed criticism is not necessary ; Dr. Lechler gives up his case when he says that his conjecture could only apply to "a few Jewish Christians."¹ It

¹ Lechler refers to Eus., "H. E.," iv. 5, vi. 4, and to Sulpic. Severus (366-410 A.D.). The former only attests that the Church at Jerusalem was Jewish until the days of Bar-Cochba, and the latter confirms this view. The latter says, that when Hadrian closed the city against Jews, "it profited the Christian faith, for almost all who then believed Christ to be God observed the law. Providence permitted that the Church might be liberated from the law. Then Marcus was the first Gentile bishop." If this writer is to be believed, Jewish Christianity was so prevalent that only Providence saved the Church from it.

Gieseler, "Ch. Hist.," i. p. 98, supposes that the Ebionites separated from the Nazaréans about A.D. 120. He bases this on the report of Hegesippus (Eus., "H. E.," iv. 22), that till the time of Trajan the Church was a virgin and free from heresy. To this period also he refers the origin of the Essenes, Elkesaites, etc. But this does not explain how the Jewish Christians, once recognised as orthodox, came under the stigma of heresy. Graetz, "Gesch. d. Jud.," iv. 183, says that the effect of the war of Hadrian was that "viele scheinen zu den Heiden, Samaritanern und Christen übergangen zu sein"; but, unfortunately, he refers to the Apologies of Aristides and Quadratus as evidence that Christians wished now to persuade Hadrian of their entire separation from the Jews. As a proof that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem had given up the law, and accepted all Church dogmas, he refers to the election of Marcus, the Gentile bishop, the authority for which is Eusebius. The "Apology" of Aristides (R. Harris, 1891, p. 48), says the Jews "have gone astray from accurate knowledge," and "their service is to angels and not to God." The writer was a Gentile Christian.

is clear that there is no evidence of any general surrender of Jewish practices by the Jewish Christians. Lechler himself shows that there is no ground for Schliemann's contention, which Lightfoot, Salmon, and English churchmen generally, have followed, that "in the year 138, when the Christian inhabitants of *Ælia Capitolina* completely renounced the law and Judaism, the separation took place between the stricter and the more tolerant Jewish Christians, and Ebionism became a sect."¹ He further contends that all must—

"Agree in the recognition of the truth that Judaistic Christianity was in existence since there were Christians, and that the distinction of a harsher as opposed to a more tolerant tendency was present among Jewish Christians as early as the apostolic era. The apostolic convention was undoubtedly the occasion on which this difference once appeared, thus forming the first problem in the development of Jewish Christianity. The destruction of Jerusalem . . . must be regarded as the second crisis. . . . The third knotty point is the establishment of an entirely Gentile Christian Church on the ruins of Jerusalem by which Jewish Christianity was also suppressed externally. The fourth and final step was the formal separation of the Ebionite and Nazarean parties. But since we cannot show by historical testimonies the definite point of time in which that step took place, we believe it must be assumed that the development took place gradually."²

¹ Lechler, ii. 264; Schliemann, "Clementinen," pp. 408, 474, etc.

² Lechler, "Ap. Times," ii. 265.

So that at last we are brought to this conclusion : this supposed fusion of Jewish Christians with Gentile Christians did not take place after the destruction of the city, nor after the rebellion of Bar-Cochba ; it was, says Dr. Lechler, a "gradual" operation. We wish to know something more about this process, and we cannot do better than collect the scattered notices respecting the Jewish Christians to be found in early Christian literature.

We have already shown that there was a strong Jewish party within the Church, or holding nominal connection with it, who made themselves felt wherever the name of Christ was mentioned. They were found at Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth, and Rome. According to Dr. Salmon, this powerful party had no representatives in the second century ; for he says that the Ebionites of the second century had no right to represent the Judaizers of the first. We are to believe that the original Jewish Christianity was all lost in the confusion which overthrew the city, or in that of the insurrection of Bar-Cochba ; yet, marvellously, Judaizing sects sprang up, as out of the ground, in the second century. We have but to look at the facts to see how unhistorical is this idea of a rigid uniformity in the primitive Church.

I. After the final visit of St. Paul to Jerusalem (A.D. 58) we have no trace of any association of the

Gentile Churches with the mother Church. St. James followed the Jewish ritual to the close of life. Thirteen of his successors were, we are told, all circumcised men, and the Church at Jerusalem continued to observe the national worship, and its original terms of membership. No member of the Church at Jerusalem could eat the Lord's supper with a Gentile, and retain his ceremonial purity. Devotion to the national unity seemed to require this consistency from those who believed in Jesus as the Messiah among the Jews. But this consistency cost this Church its place among the Churches. As the early Protestants began to regard the Church out of which they sprang as Antichrist, so the "Catholics" at the beginning of their history were the subjects of a similar reaction. They began to brand as heretics those who professed to imitate the piety of Peter, James, and John. The Gentiles held that the law was to be interpreted spiritually, and that the Jews who clung to the letter had not the illumination of a true faith.

2. The destruction of the city and the previous flight of the Christians from Jerusalem to settlements in the East, are quite sufficient to account for the sudden obscuration of its Church. All testimonies agree that the Christians fled to the regions eastward of the Jordan and the Dead Sea—to Pella, Basanitis,

Cocaba, Berœa, Decapolis, and Cœlo-Syria. Irenæus, Hippolytus, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome, all locate the Jewish Christians and the later Nazarenes and Ebionites in those districts. Epiphanius says: "There was its beginning (Nazarenes) after the removal of the disciples from Jerusalem, for all the disciples dwelt there."¹ Dr. Lightfoot remarks, that "both their locality and name carry us back to the primitive ages of Jewish Christianity. Can we doubt that they were the remnants of the fugitive Church which refused to return with the majority to the new Gentile city, some because they were too indolent or satisfied to move, others because the abandonment of the law seemed too heavy a price to pay for Roman forbearance."² This is irresistible except on one point: there is no evidence that the "majority" returned "to the new Gentile city." Dr. Lechler has assured us that the number must have been very small indeed, if any.³ However, it is clear that the "Nazarenes" and the "Ebionites" had their principal location in the same region where the Chris-

¹ Epiphanius, "Hær.," xxx. He says there were "Nasarenes" before Christ, but the Nazarenes were after Christ, and differed from Jews only by their faith in Jesus as Messiah.

² Lightfoot, "Gal.," p. 318.

³ See p. 187.

tians of Jerusalem gathered after the overthrow of the city.

3. The evidence, so far, points straight in the direction of an identity, or at least of an organic connection, between the Jewish Christians who had to flee from Jerusalem and those who were called Nazarenes and Ebionites by later authors.¹ It would be quite uncritical to accept the statements of Epiphanius on such a subject without reservation. "The accounts he gives of the Jewish-Christian and Gnostic sects of the second and third centuries exhibit a marvellous mixture of valuable traditions with misunderstandings and fancies of his own," says Dr. Lipsius.² His furious zeal against heretics made him the prototype of inquisitors and ecclesiastical persecutors, who knew how, when the time came, to translate his fiery invectives into actual inflictions. Now that the day for the secular destruction of heretics is gone, they can still be assailed with contemptuous and spiteful epithets from his voluminous vocabulary. He had "a strange fancy," says Lipsius, "for calling his adversaries by the names of various animals," and such

¹ "Hujus [Cerinthi] successor Ebion fuit, Cerintho non in omni parte consentiens" (Tertull., "De præscript.").

² "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," ii. 133. "He was an honest but credulous and narrow-minded zealot for church orthodoxy" (*Ibid.*).

terms as "serpent," "viper," "wolf," and "lion," with others from the same menagerie, have passed into commonplaces when heretics need to be described. They who believe that all who differ from them must be hateful to God, will find abusive illustration and invective in great abundance in the pages of Epiphanius.

Yet he was doubtless a sincere man. Bishop Westcott says that Epiphanius, in his controversy with Origen "characteristically misrepresents the truth."¹ This severe criticism may be sound; yet the obliquity of this church writer, once so much venerated and trusted in, was more mental than moral. Moreover, he was possessed by the spirit of his time. He became famous as a great heresy-hunter, who, in the ardour of his chase, regarded neither swamp nor fence. He despised the ordinary circuitous routes of the historian, and made a track for himself. He had a feeble sense of perspective, and the heretic of his own day was brother to the heretic of three centuries before. Tertullian and Jerome had been accustomed to speak of Valentinians as "Valentinus," and of Marcionites as "Marcion." Epiphanius took up the fashion. He apostrophises "Marcion" and "Ebion" as though they were men of his own day.² Though

¹ "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," "Origen."

² Cf. Hieron, "In Jes.," i. 12: "Audiant Ebionæi qui post

Cerinthus could have lived only in the later apostolic age, Epiphanius says that he was the Judaizer who raised the first tumult about circumcision (Acts xv.), who opposed Peter when he went to Cornelius, who accused Paul when he last visited Jerusalem, and who withstood Paul in Galatia and Corinth. Superficial philology made him uncertain whether "Merinthus" was the same as "Cerinthus." No matter; he was the opponent of Paul in Jerusalem and in Asia: "the whole evil fashion of their teaching has the same character."

The method of Epiphanius, therefore, was not chronological. He grouped into a class or under one name all who professed similar principles. He makes the Elkesaite Essenes of the third century to be identical with the Therapeutæ of Philo.¹ Then, he says, "the Nazarenes are the nearest to them, who, whether prior to, or contemporary with, or later, they belong to about the same age. For we cannot affirm which precedes or succeeds, but they lived in about the same age and had the same dogmas. These took not the

passionem Christi abolitam legem putant esse servandam. "Tertull. c. Marc.," v. 19: "Sed Marcion principalem suæ fidæi terminum de epicuri schola agnoscat."

¹ Epiph., "Hær.," xxix.; cf. Drummond, "Philo." On the history of opinion on the "De vita contemplat.," see Edersheim's learned article in Smith's "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," iv. 369.

name of Christ or Jesus, but of Nazarenes ; all Christians were then called Nazarenes.”¹

This is somewhat confusing, because Bishop Lightfoot and Dr. Salmon tell us that it was the Ebionites of a later time who were “nearest to the Essenes,” and that in fact Ebionitism was due to a considerable conversion of Essenes to the Christian faith.² But Epiphanius states that the Nazarenes—under which designation all Christians were formerly known—were most like the Essenes.

At this point the sciolism of Epiphanius betrays him. He tells us that “for a short time they were called Jessenes, until the disciples began to be called Christians at Antioch. But Jessenes, I think, are called from Jesse . . . and Jesus in Hebrew means Curator, Physician. Thou wilt find, O philologer, if thou wilt seriously study Philo in his book concerning the Jessenes, when he speaks of their preaching, monasteries, etc. (Therapeutæ), that he speaks of Christians. . . . They called themselves Nazarenes.”³ But notwithstanding many blunders, Epiphanius does not attempt to disconnect the

¹ Epiph., “Hær.,” xxx.

² The Essenes are not mentioned in the N. T., but their influence upon the Christian system from the beginning is undeniable.

³ Epiph., “Hær.,” xxx.

Jewish Christians of the second and third centuries from those of the first. His system tended to confuse men of different schools, yet much may be learned from his accounts.

4. In favour of the theory that the later Jewish Christians were lineal descendants of the earlier is the fact that many of them were called by the same name. The name for those who were first called Christians at Antioch was "Nazarenes." It was objected against Stephen that he had said that "Jesus the Nazarene shall destroy this place."¹ St. Paul was described to Felix as a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes."² Epiphanius tells us that all Christians were at the first called Nazarenes, and Jerome and Augustine discussed the orthodoxy of those who still bore that name. This makes it the more remarkable that neither Ignatius, Irenæus, Hippolytus, Origen, nor Eusebius ever uses this term for Jewish Christians. Justin Martyr, though he describes two classes of Jewish Christians, never uses it. It may be that this name, having been applied to our Lord and to the apostles, was too honourable to be applied to

¹ See also Mark i. 24, x. 47; Luke iv. 34, xviii. 37; John xviii. 5-7; Acts ii. 22, iii. 6, iv. 10, xxii. 8.

² Acts vi. 14.

those who were under the charge of heresy.¹ In their later history the Nazarenes were rejected by the Church and by their Jewish brethren alike. "Even to-day, through all the synagogues of the East, there is a heresy which is called by the Jews *Minæi*, and by the Pharisees is still condemned, consisting of those whom they vulgarly call Nazarenes, who believe in Christ as the Son of God. But whilst they wish to be both Jews and Christians they are neither Jews nor Christians."²

5. It is also clear that the Jewish Christians of every sect adhered, generally, to the observance of the law. "The Jewish converts have not departed from

¹ An art. in "Encyc. Brit." on the "Nazarenes" begins by calling them "an obscure Jewish-Christian sect or heresy existing at the time of Epiphanius," yet goes on to say that they were "the direct representatives of the Jerusalem Church of the first century." Blunt's "Dict. of Sects" says they were Jewish Christians who continued to observe the law of Moses after the mother Church of Jerusalem had abandoned it." (!) The name "*Minaer*," by which the Jewish Christians were known among the Jews, appears to have been the usual term for heretics from Judaism: Graetz, "Gesch. d. Jud.," iv. 93. The latter also remarks that "the Catholic Christians no longer looked upon the Ebionites as the original stock from which they had sprung, but as a recently formed sect." Tertullian ("C. Marc.," iv. 8) recognises the name: "The Christ of the Creator had to be called a Nazarene . . . whence the Jews also designate us, on that very account, Nazarenes, after Him."

² Jerome, "Ep. ad Aug."

the law of their fathers, but live according to its prescriptions. . . . Nay, Peter himself seems to have observed for a considerable time the Jewish customs, . . . not having yet learned to pass from the law that is regulated according to the letter to that which is interpreted according to the spirit."¹ That is the judgment of Origen, who also says that Celsus did not appear to know that there were Israelites converted to Christianity who yet followed the law of their fathers.² Epiphanius tells us that the Nazarenes "accept Jewish dogmas—of circumcision, the Sabbaths, and the festivals."³ Augustine says that there are "even now heretics who call themselves Nazarenes, but by some are called Symmachians, who have the circumcision of the Jews and the baptism of the Christians."⁴ All the fathers who speak of the Ebionites bear testimony to their rigid adherence to the traditional laws, to which also they demanded conformity from all Christians.⁵

6. All the Jewish Christians used an Aramaic or Hebrew Gospel, said to have been written by Matthew. Epiphanius was almost the first to discriminate care-

¹ Origen, "C. Cels.," ii. 1.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 3.

³ Epiph., "Hær.," xxx.

⁴ August., "Cont. Cresc.," i. 31.

⁵ Iren., i. 26; Tertull., "De Præsc.," 33; Hippol., "Ref.," vii. 34; Eus., "H. E.," iii. 27; Theod., "Hærat. fab.," ii. 2.

fully between the Nazarenes and the Ebionites ; but we can scarcely believe that the name had lapsed until it was taken up by an insignificant sect at the end of the third century. The distinction made by Justin, Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius leaves room for the inclusion of the Nazarenes among the Ebionites ; but why they did not use the name we do not know. Epiphanius says of the Nazarenes that "they have the greater part of the Gospel according to Matthew in Hebrew, as it was written at first in Hebrew letters and is yet preserved, but I do not know whether they cut out the genealogies from Abraham to Christ."¹ Jerome also says : "They have the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew words and letters. Who translated this into Greek is not certain ; but this very Hebrew version is kept now in the library at Cæsarea, and Pamphilus, martyr, openly exhibited it. The Nazarenes, who dwell in Berea, a city of Syria, and who use this volume, gave me an opportunity of transcribing it."² Irenæus, who only speaks of Ebionites, relates that they used the Gospel of Matthew.³ He also says that "they who do not recognise Paul as an apostle reject the Gospel which

¹ Epiph. "Hær.," xxix. 9.

² Jerome, "De Vir. illust.," c. 3.

³ Irenæus, i. 26. 2.

we have come to know through St. Luke.”¹ Eusebius informs us that “they who use the Hebrew Gospel esteem the others but lightly.”² He quotes Papias to the effect that “Matthew wrote the oracles in Hebrew, and every one interpreted them as he was able.”³ Epiphanius further explains that the Nazarenes had most of the Gospel, but the Ebionites falsified and mutilated it.⁴ Origen also says that “the first Gospel was written by Matthew . . . and was prepared for the converts from Judaism and published in the Hebrew language.”⁵

We do not enter here into the vexed question of the relation of this Hebrew or Aramaic Gospel to our canonical Gospel of Matthew. The above testimonies are sufficient to show that both the Nazarenes and the Ebionites favoured the same gospel narrative.

7. The Jewish Christians held peculiar views respecting the person of Christ. There needs no argument that the majority of the Ebionites denied the supernatural birth of Jesus and His pre-existence as a Divine Person. They regarded Him as a “mere man,” born of Joseph and Mary. The tendency to divide between the human and the Divine elements

¹ Irenæus, iii. 15.

² Eus., “H. E.,” iii. 28.

³ *Ibid.*, iii. 29.

⁴ Epiph., “Hær.,” xxix. 9, xxx. 3, 13.

⁵ Orig., “Matt.,” in Eus., vi. 25.

in the Person of the Saviour appeared in the apostolic age, and was unmistakably opposed both by St. Paul and St. John.¹ Cerinthus is the first who is reported to have formally made this division. He said that Jesus was the son of human parents, but the "Christ" or heavenly "anointing" came upon Him at His baptism and left Him at His crucifixion.² In this way it was denied that the "Christ" had suffered and died: the reproach of the cross was evaded.³ This idea, that the "Christ" was a heavenly endowment, or Divine æon resting upon Jesus, but not essential to His person, runs through all the early heretical systems, including the gnostic. It is the one thread which unites them all, whatever their divergencies and modifications. Hence we may conclude that all these primitive heresies sprung from the antagonism to the thought that the "Blessed" had been crucified, and therefore "accursed of God." That antagonism, naturally, belonged to the Jewish mind. The cross was the stumbling-block at which the Jewish faith in Jesus as the Messiah faltered and fell.

Eusebius says there were some Ebionites "who did

¹ See chap. xiv. on the "Christhood of Jesus."

² Iren., "Hær.," i. 26, iii. 21, 1, iv. 33, 4, v. 13. Hippol., vii. 22, x. 18. Tert., "De carne Ch.," xiv. 18; Epiph., "Hær.," xxx; Eus., "H. E.," iii. 27, v. 8.

³ Gal. v. 2.

not deny that the Lord was born of a virgin and of the Holy Spirit." Origen also describes the Ebionites as "twofold—who either acknowledge with us that Jesus was born of a virgin or deny this."¹ Yet, neither he nor Eusebius calls these more orthodox Ebionites Nazarenes. Jerome speaks of the Nazarenes as denounced in the synagogues, and reports that "they believe in Christ as the Son of God, and born of the Virgin Mary, and that it was He who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, in whom we also believe." But their orthodoxy did not bring them recognition as members of the Catholic Church. Their nonconformity with Church order was a fatal barrier to communion: "whilst they wish to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither Jews nor Christians." He expressly tells us that the ground of their rejection by the Catholic Church was that they persisted in the observance of the Mosaic law: "On this account alone these believers in Christ are anathematized by the fathers, that they mix the ceremonies of the law with the gospel of Christ, and so confess the new that they do not omit the old."² Epiphanius also calls them "an impious sect." The relation between this tenet of the later Jewish

¹ Orig., "c. Cels.," v. 61.

² Jerome, "Ep. ad Aug.," 112. 13.

Christians and the views of the earlier on the same subject will be examined in the chapter on "the Christhood of Jesus."

8. The Jewish Christians, generally, rejected the writings and denied the apostolical authority of St. Paul. Irenæus says that "the Ebionites maintain that Paul was an apostate from the law."¹ "The Severians (Encratites)," says Eusebius, "abuse St. Paul and reject his epistles, and do not accept the Acts": while the Elkesaites "reject the Apostle wholly."² Epiphanius relates that this sect accuse St. Paul of being a false apostle, a Gentile of Tarsus, who, being disappointed of marrying the high priest's daughter, became an enemy of the law."³

But it is in the "Clementines" that the opposition to St. Paul reaches its fullest exhibition. These documents have played a very important part in the controversy raised by the German rationalistic school, as, in earlier times, they supplied a lever for the elevation of the papacy. No one now places upon them the extravagant estimate given sixty years ago by Baur and Schwegler, who represented them as an exact portraiture of the creed and life of the primitive Christian Church.

¹ Iren., "Hæc.," i. 26, iii. 15.

² Eus., "H. E.," iv. 30, vi. 38.

³ Epiph., "Hæc.," xxx.

The "Homilies" and "Recognitions" are supposed to be developments of an earlier work known as the "Preaching of Peter,"¹ which is quoted with some respect by Clement of Alexandria, though Eusebius and Origen deny its authority. We may observe that among the various schools of Christian thought in the second century there had arisen the great question of interpretation. How was the Old Testament, the sacred book of the entire Church, to be explained? Paul, in the epistle to the Galatians, and the writer of that to the Hebrews, had already opened the way for a spiritual interpretation, and Philo and his school had reduced almost all things in the ancient Scriptures to allegory. How far was this to go? and what interpretation was to be considered authoritative? The epistle which passes under the name of Barnabas, spiritualizes the law and condemns all who cannot use this method. The number of Abraham's servants, 318, represents, in Greek letters, the name of Jesus Christ and the cross. Moses and Hur praying with outstretched arms, and the brazen serpent, were symbolical of the crucifixion.

¹ *Κήρυγμα Πέτρου*. Ewald, "Hist. of Isr.," viii. 460; Kurtz, "Ch. Hist.," sec. 27, 28; "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," i. 567; Leicher, "Ap. Times," ii. 268, 371; Pressensé, "Early Years of Ch.," iii. 85; Herzog, "Real-Enkyk.," iii.; Schaff, "Hist. of Ch.," ii. 435.

It seemed to be necessary in those days that a book of Christian wisdom, or of religious teaching, to be authoritative, must be attached to the name of an apostle or of some well-known follower of the apostles. Any new edition of the "Gospels" or "Acts" must be named after one of the twelve. As we have seen, the "Gospel" which was most generally used by the Jewish Christians was ascribed to Matthew. The Gnostics, Basilides, Valentinus, Marcion, each professed to be following apostolic teaching. The epistle of Barnabas gained authority because it was said to have been written by the friend of Paul. The document called "the Second Epistle of Clement" is now confessed to be spurious, as are also the "Two Epistles to Virgins," which have been ascribed to him.¹ The document known as "the First Epistle of Clement" is ascribed to one of the early bishops of Rome, whose history "is invested with a mythic dignity which is without example in the ante-Nicene Church."² Origen conjectured that he was the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, but most authorities agree now that this is impossible. Notwithstanding, this was the general opinion

¹ This Second Epistle of Clement is placed with the books of the N. T. by the Alex. MS., fifth century.

² Westcott, "Canon," p. 22.

among earlier Church writers ; and it is on this account that the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians is placed in the writings of the "Apostolic Fathers."¹ But the epistle does not mention his name, nor does it refer to the writer as a bishop of that Church. However, by the end of the second century Clement had become the object of veneration, especially to Jewish Christians ; and the "Homilies" and "Recognitions" make him the hero of their story and the authority for their doctrine.

But the doctrines of the Clementines are not absolutely identical with those of the Jewish Christians of the first age. Essene and Gnostic elements had more largely commingled with faith in the Messiah.² Some of the later members of this sect also seem to

¹ The term "Apostolic Fathers" was first introduced by Ittigius, the editor of "Cotelier," A.D. 1699.

² Graetz, "Geschichte d. Jud.," iii. 332, contends that Jesus, John the Baptist, James, and most of the original Christians were Essenes. They were, certainly, more like the Essenes than the other Jewish sects ; see Gfrörer, "Kirchengesch.," i. 221. But our Lord was not an ascetic, nor a celibate, nor a hermit ; see Dr. Ginsburg's article, "Essenes," in "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," ii. 207. Dr. J. E. Thomson ("Books which Influenced our Lord," p. 110) says, "There is a verisimilitude in the statement that [Jesus] was an Essene." He argues that all religious people were connected with some sect in our Lord's days ; but for the reasons given above we do not agree that our Lord belonged to the Essene sect. Cf. Harnack, "Dogmeng.," i. 53.

have accepted the teaching of the book of Elxai, which claimed to contain a revelation by an angel in the time of Trajan.¹

The "Clementines" attack the Apostle Paul under the name of Simon Magus; they never mention Paul by name. Their fictitious narrative is evidently compiled from the Acts and Epistles; *e.g.* five thousand disciples remove from the house of James in Jerusalem to Jericho. There they are secretly informed by Gamaliel that the "enemy" (Paul) had received a commission from Caiaphas that he should arrest all who believed in Jesus.² Again it is related that "James, the archbishop, standing on the steps, had shown for seven days that Jesus is Christ, and when all were preparing to be baptized 'an enemy' did all these things mentioned."³ Another passage says, that while James was speaking in the temple "one of our enemies" excited a riot.⁴ The caution is also given, "Believe no teacher unless he bring from Jerusalem the testimonial of James, the Lord's brother, or of whomsoever may come after him."⁵ The doctrine of "apostolical succession" appears in

¹ See "Elkesaites," in Smith's "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," ii. 95.

² "Recog.," i. 71.

³ "Recog.," i. 73; cf. Acts ix. 2.

⁴ "Recog.," i. 70; cf. Acts xvi. 30.

⁵ "Recog.," iv. 34; cf. 2 Cor. iii. 1.

its primitive simplicity, as the following extract will show: "Let neither prophet nor apostle be looked for at this time beside us. For there is one prophet whose words we twelve apostles preach, for he is the appointed year of God, having us as his twelve months:"¹ for this doctrine Paul could never be the chosen patron.

Not less decisive in their antagonism to St. Paul are the "Homilies." The epistle of Peter to James, prefixed to them, says: "Some from among the Gentiles have rejected my legal preaching, attaching themselves to certain lawless and trifling preaching of the man who is my enemy . . . in opposition to the law of God which was spoken by Moses, and was borne witness to by our Lord in respect of its eternal continuance." Elsewhere, Paul's conversion by a vision is criticized. "If our Jesus appeared to you in a vision, it was one who is enraged with an adversary. . . . But can any one be rendered fit for instruction through apparitions? . . . For you now stand in direct opposition to me, who am a firm rock, the foundation of the Church. . . . But if you say that I am condemned (*κατεγνωσμένος*, Gal. ii. 11), you bring an accusation against God."

The epistle of Clement to James, prefixed to the

¹ "Recog.," iv. 34.

“Homilies,” records that Peter ordained Clement as his successor in the Roman “chair”; but both the “Homilies” and the “Recognitions” locate the discussions between Peter and Simon Magus in the East.¹

As we have already mentioned, Dr. Salmon contends that “the school hostile to St. Paul, which found expression in the Clementines, cannot be regarded as the representative or continuation of the body of adversaries with whom he had to contend in his lifetime. Their connection was with the Essenes, not with the Pharisees.”² But, while allowing that these later Jewish-Christians commingled with their traditional opinions certain speculative or practical tendencies of their time—whether Essene, ascetic, or antinomian, it seems to be gratuitous and arbitrary to assert, without any evidence adduced, that they were in no sense a continuation of the sect which is shown to have been always in existence.

Bishop Lightfoot, however, tells us that the Nazarenes “fully recognised the work and mission

¹ Hilgenfeld formerly thought that the account of S. Magus in Acts viii. was founded on the account of Paul’s mission to Jerusalem with alms; but he has confessed his error (see his “*Die Ketzergesch. des Urchrist.*,” 1884, s. 164).

² “*Dict. of Chr. Biog.*,” ii. 575.

of St. Paul.”¹ This would be a very important point of difference between them and the Ebionites, if it could be substantiated; but when we come to look at the evidence, it does not seem to be very ample. He first mentions Jerome, who says that the Nazarenes explain a passage in Isaiah (ix. 1) by the extension of the gospel under St. Paul, “who was the last of the apostles,” and that by his instrumentality the people of Zabulon and Naphthali were “liberated from the heavy yoke of Jewish traditions.”

But this might have been said without implying that the Nazarenes had themselves wholly forsaken Jewish customs. Moreover, the sect with which Jerome met in the fourth century might have been anxious to show that their views did not differ much from those of orthodox Christians.

It is not improbable that there were some Jewish believers after the apostolic age who continued to represent the views of Peter and John. They observed the Jewish law, but did not demand conformity from the Gentiles. This makes it the more surprising that the Catholics, including Jerome,

¹ “Gal.,” p. 318; cf. Farrar, “Early Days,” p. 497; Lechler, “Apost. Times,” ii. 285; Schaff, “Hist. of Ch.,” ii. 431. Ritschl, “Entst. d. A. K.,” 152, says, “The Nazarenes recognised St. Paul.”

treated them as heretics. They might believe in Jesus as the Christ and as Son of God, but they were not in the Church. Justin Martyr speaks of them in his time as persons "who might perhaps be saved."¹ Like the Nonconformists now, they might hold every article of the Catholic creed, yet their separation from church order put them "outside the covenant."

In this sect, perhaps, originated the singular document known as the "Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," which presents a singular association of Jewish and Christian opinions. Its integrity is still discussed by the critics.² Yet it must not be forgotten that Eusebius and Origen attribute to all classes of Jewish Christians a strong antipathy to St. Paul. As M. A. Reville says, "L'histoire du Judéo-Christianisme, qui agit fortement sur la chrétienté des deux premières siècles et se perpétua sans éclat jusqu'au septième, est obscure. Celle du parti Nazaréen est obscure entre toutes."³ There may, however, have been a few Jewish-Christians, who, like Hegesippus, and Aristo of Pella, of Hebrew

¹ "Dial. c. Try.," c. 47.

² "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," iv. 865; Ritschl, "Der Entsteh.," s. 171; Schurer, "Hist. of the Jewish People."

³ "Encyclop. des Sciences Religieuses," ix. 544.

birth, accepted the wider views of Christianity which Paul had taught, and who had ceased to observe the Jewish law. But it seems also to be clear that the majority of Jewish-Christians, especially after the destruction of the city, emphasized the importance of the law, and consequently rejected the teaching of St. Paul.

9. We think, therefore, that the Jewish-Christians, in general continuity, may be traced from the days of the apostles, and for several centuries after them.¹ In the apostolic age there were differences among them. Some accepted the "decree" (Acts xv.), and others continued to oppose the extension of the Pauline gospel among the Gentiles. In Colosse and Ephesus they had already appropriated the tenets and phraseology of Gnostic or Essene philosophy; and the Pastoral Epistles notice their legalism and their veneration for "genealogies" and "old wives' fables." At a later day teachers like Cerinthus formulated doctrines which reduced the "Christ" to an emanation from the Divine which had fallen upon

¹ So Uhlhorn; Herzog, "Real-Enk.," iv. 15: "The different parties of Jewish-Christians are not to be so sharply separated from each other as the fathers make them . . . they are only varieties of the now separated Jewish-Christians, who had a common discipline, a common use of the law, and a common opposition to the Cath. Ch."

the "Man" Jesus—doctrines which were opposed by St. John himself. But when the apostles had disappeared, and Jerusalem was overthrown, the Jewish-Christians were as sheep without a shepherd. Eusebius gives from Hegesippus the names of thirteen bishops of the circumcision who succeeded James. After this, singular to relate, there is no mention of any bishops among Nazarenes and Ebionites. Had they none; or did they revert to the synagogue government of elders? ¹

It seems clear that from this time the party lapsed into many sects and divisions. Epiphanius relates that Ebion succeeded the Nazarenes, a "many-headed serpent which came to life again; he took dogmas from Essenes, Nazarenes, and Nasoreans, in form a Corinthian, in iniquity a Carpocratian, in name a Christian, as bad as a Samaritan."² When we consider that it is doubtful whether Ebion ever lived, this portrait seems somewhat vivid; yet it

¹ Epiph. ("Hær.," xxx.): "Ebion spread his error in Asia and Rome, but its principal growth was in the East. . . . They had presbyters and archisynagogues; they call their churches synagogues." Schürer ("Hist. of J. P.," ii. 64) mentions an inscription found near Tunis: "Asterius filius Rustici acrosynagogi." With it was portrayed the seven-branched candlestick and the Christian monogram.

² Epiph., *ibid.*

shows that many branches had grown out of the original stock.¹ Hegesippus also reports that Thebutis, being disappointed of a bishopric after the death of Symeon, divided the Jewish Church. The same authority also states that until the apostles disappeared "they called the Church as yet a virgin, for it was not corrupted by vain discourses."²

It is easy to understand that, after the overthrow of Jerusalem, its Church would be completely demoralized. The system of worship for which the Jewish-Christian had contended was hopelessly abolished. In the agitated years, after the victorious siege, there could be neither Church nor bishop to give direction to or to exercise authority over the scattered and humiliated believers. Some might seek refuge in Jewish synagogues in Asia or Europe and a few might be willing now to cast in their lot with Gentile-Christians. But there is no evidence that in any large numbers the Jewish-Christians joined the Gentile Church.

They were now left to ponder the ignominious destruction which had come upon the city and

¹ Graetz ("Gesch. d. Jud.," iv. 93) notices the "fermentation of opinions" that followed the fall of Jerusalem. Judaism, Christianity, Alexandrian and Greek philosophy, and other elements formed a chaos *der entgegengesetzten Gedankenbegriffe*.

² Euseb., "H. E.," iv. 22.

temple of their fathers. They were tempted to seek consolation in allegorical and cabbalistic interpretations of the prophecies of the ancient word, which seemed to have failed wholly of any literal fulfilment for the people of Israel. They had rejected the enlightenment which had been afforded by the life and writings of St. Paul. The emphasis which their system placed upon conformity to the letter of the law would naturally lead to an inferior view of the salvation grounded upon Christ, and then to a lowered conception of His Person and Mediation. In this predicament they would present most susceptible material for the infection of Gnosticism, which promised to explain the Incarnation and Redemption itself in terms borrowed from Alexandrian or rabbinical speculation.

We have said that, after the final visit of St. Paul to Jerusalem, in A.D. 58, we have no authentic account of any intercourse between the Gentile Churches and the mother Church. When the city was destroyed, communication would be finally severed. In the Gentile Churches, the writings of St. Paul would be revered and read, and the antagonism of the Jerusalem Christians to him would not be forgotten.¹ It was easy then to exaggerate his own

¹ See the Clementine literature.

polemic against Judaism, and all would not know that he had himself conformed to it on many occasions.¹ His doctrine of freedom would, by a slight perversion, become a new law of outward conformity; any one who did not cease from the external observance of Judaism would be regarded as an unspiritual person.² It soon became doubtful, first, whether those who observed Judaistic ordinances could be saved; and second, if it was not dogmatically certain that all such were not in the Church, and therefore not in Christ. For whereas, in the beginning, Christ was the "door" into the Church, now the Church was the gate into His kingdom, the keys of which were held by the successors of apostles.³

The epistles of Ignatius are so pronounced in their condemnation of any conformity to Judaism that we cannot believe that they belong to the early date claimed for them by Bishop Lightfoot.⁴ They seem

¹ The first notice of this fact is in Origen, A.D. 220.

² Ignat. ad Magn., c. 8; Barn., "Epist.," c. 2, 9, etc.

³ Ignat. ad Phil., c. 9: "He is the door of the Father, by which enter in . . . the apostles and the Church." Herm. Pastor, "Sim." ix. 12.

⁴ It is the belief of many church writers that Bp. Lightfoot's work has settled the date and genuineness of the Ignatian epistles; but Canon Jenkins' "Ignatian Difficulties" (D. Nutt, 1889) show that "historic doubts" are not at an end. No Continental critic except Zahn (who, indeed, converted Dr. Light-

to contemplate a possible attendance at synagogues on the part of some Christians, but this is forbidden. All are required to gather with the bishop. "Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable; for if we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace."¹ Is it likely that such a rule should have been accepted at Antioch by one who, tradition says, was ordained by Paul? Is it not also said that Euodius was ordained by Peter, and that, most likely, to preside over the Jewish-Christians in Antioch?

It is said, again, "If any one preach the Jewish law unto you, listen not to him."² "If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath (Ep. Barn., 15: "we keep the

foot from his former opinions about the superiority of the Syriac to the Greek) accepts the date A.D. 107. Neither of these writers has explained how Clement should describe the Church as presbyterian in A.D. 95, and Ignatius in A.D. 107 should declare it to be episcopal everywhere. One of Bp. Lightfoot's strongest arguments is, that Ignatius speaks of the Agape as still connected with the Eucharist, and that the two were separated early in the second century. We may refer to chap. xiii. for the evidence that that separation did not take place until after the second century. We may refer also to Dr. Killen's "The Ignatian Epistles entirely Spurious" (Clark, 1886).

¹ Ignat. ad Mag., c. 8.

² Ad Philad., c. 6.

eight day”), but living in the observance of the Lord’s day—how shall we be able to live apart from Him?”¹ “Let us live according to Christianity . . . Lay aside the evil, the old, the sour leaven, and be changed into the new leaven, which is Jesus Christ. It is absurd to profess Christianity, and to Judaize.”²

But Ignatius was not only opposed to Judaism ; he did not believe in the private meetings of Christians. The “Church in the house” had been an apostolical institution. It had been a powerful instrumentality in the simple and lowly days of the new religion. It had furnished the secrecy which sheltered from the terrors of prosecution. It had developed the hospitality which was a characteristic of primitive Christianity, and was recommended to all.³ But it was attended with the peril of division, and was opposed to concentration and good order. It is not known that the Christians had any separate buildings for their worship during the first two centuries ; and the gathering of large congregations would expose them to the vigilant observation of their persecutors. So late as the date of the second epistle of John “the elect lady” is counselled not to receive into her

¹ Ad Mag., c. 9.

² *Ibid.*, c. 10.

³ Rom. xii. 13 ; Uhlhorn, “Charity of the Ancient Church.”

house any that do not "abide in the doctrine of Christ."¹

However, when Ignatius wrote, these more private meetings were discouraged. All must come to one place, and bring their offerings to one altar, and neither baptize nor hold an Agape without the bishop.² "Do not endeavour that anything should appear reasonable and proper to yourselves apart; but coming together into the same place, let there be one prayer, one supplication, one mind, one hope, . . . all run together as into one temple of God, one altar."³ "Have but one Eucharist."⁴ It is tolerably certain that no direct disciple of the apostles would have denounced Judaism after this fashion, or have made worship in one place imperative. The date of the famous epistles cannot,

¹ 2 John 10; A.D. 80-90. Hilgenfeld, Davidson, etc., say the date is 130. Westcott ("Epp. of John") regards this passage as presenting a "picture of family devotion," but that is as little likely as that the third epistle—to Gaius—was sent to a family, and not to a Church. Bp. W. allows that the "general tenour of the letter favours the opinion that it was sent to a community, and not to one believer." If so, is "the problem of the address insoluble, and have we lost the key?" If sent to a Church in a house, there is not much difficulty.

² Ad Smyrn., c. 8.

³ Ign. ad Mag., c. 7.

⁴ Ign. ad Phil., c. 4.

therefore, be placed so far back as the first decade of the second century.

The epistle of Clement does not discuss the question. It makes a copious use of the Old Testament, and draws some analogy between ministers of the gospel and Jewish priests; but we shall say more about this document in the next chapter.

The epistle of Barnabas plainly abjures the ceremonial law: “[God] needs neither sacrifices, nor burnt offerings, nor oblations. . . . He has therefore abolished these things that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of necessity, might have a human oblation.”¹ He quotes the prophets against the Jewish fasts, and shows that circumcision, the sabbaths, and all legal institutions were symbolic of Christian truths. He warns believers against the error of the Jews, who say, “the covenant is ours”; for “their covenant was broken in order that the covenant of the beloved Jesus might be sealed on our heart.”²

Another early production, “the Epistle to Diognetus,” says that Christians do not worship the gods of the Greeks, nor follow the “superstitions of the Jews.” The writer thinks that if the Jews

¹ Barn. Ep., 2.

² Ep. Barn., c. 4.

offer only sacrificial worship they greatly err. "Their scrupulosity concerning meats, sabbaths, circumcision, fasts, and new moons is utterly ridiculous. . . . Christians are assailed by the Jews as foreigners, and are persecuted by the Greeks."¹

But the most important witness to the state of opinion in the middle of the second century is Justin Martyr. He remarks that the Jews have rejected Christ, but the Gentiles, who had known nothing of the prophecies, had received Him.² The Christians do not observe festivals, or sabbaths, or circumcision, because "the covenant which comes after in like manner has put an end to the previous one," and believers are the true, spiritual Israel.³ He does not say that no Jew shall "inherit anything on the holy mountain of God," but they who have persecuted Christ must repent. When Trypho asked whether they could be saved, who believed in Jesus and yet followed the ancient ceremonies, Justin replied that he thought they could, if they did not attempt to lead back other Christians to

¹ The Ep. to Diognetus probably belongs to the later part of the second century, though formerly ascribed to Justin or some earlier writer.

² Justin, "Apol.," c. 49.

³ Justin, "Dial. c. T.," 10, 11

Judaism.¹ He admits that some Gentile Christians affirmed that no Jew, though he was a believer in Jesus, could be saved; neither would they "venture to have any intercourse with or to extend hospitality to such persons."² To this Justin could not assent; yet he believed that the Jews who did not believe in Jesus could not be saved,—“especially those who have anathematized and do anathematize this very Christ in the synagogues, and everything by which they might obtain salvation and escape the vengeance of fire.”

This testimony is important. It shows how far removed the Gentile-Christians were from intercourse with the Jews or the Jewish-Christians. It also proves that opinion was tending towards the position that conformity with the Jewish ceremonial was incompatible with Christianity. But Justin did not proceed so far as Ignatius and Barnabas. When we come to the end of the second century, we find in Irenæus and Hippolytus an acquaintance with Jewish-Christians only as heretical. The triumph of the “Catholic Church” was now complete; and none who literally followed the example

¹ Justin, “D. c. T.,” 46.

² *Ibid.*, c. 47 : καὶ μηδὲ κοινωνεῖν ὁμιλίας ἢ ἐστίας τοῖς τοιούτοις τολμῶντες. Epiphanius held that the Jews could not be saved.

of Jesus or the twelve apostles, by conformity to the Mosaic law, could be a member of the Church.

The "Catholic Church," therefore, was not the result of Ebionitism and Gnosticism, nor of the Petrine and Pauline communities. It was a development of Gentile-Christianity. This did not prevent its being thoroughly impregnated with the Jewish spirit, or its acceptance of the Levitical sacerdotalism and worship as models, though it cleared itself from all association with the peculiar observances of the Jew. If the depths of the Pauline theology were not fully explored in that early time, it was understood that "Christ was the end of the law to every one that believeth." Henceforth, no Jew could enter the Church without forsaking his nation. "So it has happened that the Gentile-Christian Church by the exclusion of the Jewish-Christianity from itself, locked away the explanation of its own position in the apostolic Church. It made a standpoint heretical which had been accepted by the apostles themselves, and yet made the apostolic tradition the highest standard of the Catholic Church, thus favouring the formation of traditions about the apostles and their time but making critical inquiry into the formation of the Churches impossible."¹ Another serious consequence

¹ Ritschl, "Entsteh. d. A. K.," s. 257. Harnack, "Dogmengesch."

was, that "the middle wall of partition," which Paul had declared to be done away in Christ, was re-erected. The Jewish-Christian, by his narrowness and intolerance, was greatly to blame for this; but the "Catholic" deserves yet more reprehension because "he knew His Master's will" better than the other. A yet further result of this alienation was, that the conversion of the Jew was postponed many centuries.

i. 220, remarks that Catholicism has no element which marks it as Jewish-Christian—there was only a progressive Hellenizing. He therefore objects to Baur's theory. Ritschl also remarks (S. x.) that Thiersch first stated the real problem which Church historians and "Handbooks" had overlooked. These usually "look at the Catholic Church and its antithesis to heresy and Gnosticism, but one finds no intelligence that this must derive its foundation from Christianity, and must relate itself to the forms of the apostolic consciousness." Harnack ("Dogm.," i. 218) rightly questions whether "Jewish Christendom by its peculiar opinions was a factor in the development of Christianity to Catholicism."

CHAPTER XI.

EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE.

“Ye are our epistle . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of God.”¹

THE preservation of the books of the New Testament, all of which belong to the first century of our era, has more than a little of the miraculous about it. All contemporaneous Christian writings have perished. An epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and, perhaps, one to Laodicea, are not forthcoming. There may also have been other documents written by apostolic hands which have not reached us. The members of the apostolic Churches were generally poor, without church-buildings, schools, or libraries, and were often fugitives from persecution. The ministers were mostly itinerant, and were glad if they had a few precious books and parchments in their possession. The absolute disappearance of all other literature is a solemn witness

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 3.

to the value set upon the sacred books in those days of fiery trial.

Considering this extreme dearth of literature illustrative of the earliest days of the Church, we cannot be surprised at the interest shown when Bryennius, the Greek patriarch, published in 1883 the text of the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." In 1875 he had published a fuller text of the two epistles of Clement than had been known before, and announced that the "Teaching" was in the same manuscript. A legion of editors and critics at once seized on the new-found treasure, and scores of books and pamphlets, discussing its contents and value, have appeared.¹

Before the apparition of this new star in the patristic firmament there had been presentiments of its existence. Documents like the "Ecclesiastical Canons" in Egypt, and the "Apostolical Constitutions" and "Canons" which came down from the fourth and fifth centuries, indicated some earlier prototype. In Irenæus, Eusebius, and Athanasius

¹ See "The Oldest Church Manual," by Dr. P. Schaff (Clark), 1885; "The Teaching, etc.," by H. de Romestin, M.A. (Parker), 1884; *Idem*, by Can. Spence (Nisbet), 1885; "Doctrina Duodecim Apostol.," edidit. F. X. Funk [R.C.], Tübingen, 1887; Dr. Salmon, art. in "Dict. of Christ. Biog.," iv. 806; Harnack, in Herzog, "Enkykl.," xvii. 656.

there are allusions to a work bearing the title, "Ordinances," or "Doctrines" of the apostles. Clement of Alexandria and Origen refer to it as they do to Scripture. A Roman Catholic divine, Dr. Krawutzcky, compiled from the Epistle of Barnabas a version of the "Two Ways," which constitute the first part of the "Teaching," and it proved to be an approximate anticipation of the work itself. It is amusing to find that he was startled by the ghost he had raised; and, when the "Didache" appeared, he denied that it could be authentic, since it mentioned neither Peter nor the Pope! However, Harnack and others allow that this prognostication does credit to the "higher criticism."

It was quite as strange to churchmen of the second and third centuries as to those of the nineteenth, that the apostles had said so little about church government and the forms of worship. They did not understand that, by the division of the believing Church into Jewish and Gentile sections, the original rulers had been providentially prevented from the subjugation of the spiritual system of Christ to any legal or ceremonial institutions. The first Christian confessors had to be content with preaching Jesus as the Christ. The twelve, who allowed believers to continue in the observance of Mosaic rites, could not set up another priesthood and ritual; while Paul and the

Gentile Church, having escaped the bondage of Judaism, could not surrender the "freedom wherewith Christ had made them free" for subservience to another hierarchy and ritual. But when Irenæus and Tertullian appealed to apostolical Churches for the standard of doctrine, it was not difficult to suppose that the ritual of these Churches would have some authority. Productions like the "Teaching," which professed to supply apostolical directions for Church service and order, however imperfect, came to be of value. Under clerical manipulation their defects were rapidly made up; and in a century or two what had been the manual of a Christian sect in Syria developed into the "Constitutions of the Apostles," which aspired to legislate for the universal Church. From similar inventions grew the "Liturgy of St. James," and the "Liturgy of St. Mark," and, finally, the "Mass."

The "Didache" was probably produced in Syria or Egypt in the early part of the second century. Its early date seems clear (1) because it quotes no book of the New Testament by name, but only the "Gospel"; (2) the Eucharist was still part of the Agape; (3) it scarcely distinguishes between the ministry and laity, while the only church officers are bishops and deacons, besides the itinerant evangelists who are called prophets; (4) it does not refer to the

heresies belonging to the second century; and (5) public prayer is still extempore, though the Lord's Prayer is read, and some model prayers are supplied.

Though the work contains traces of St. Paul's language, it is called the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles."¹ This indicates a leaning towards the Jewish-Christian side, though it is evidently intended to lay down rules for the admission of Gentiles, its title being "to the Gentiles." In its original form it may have been more decidedly Jewish, for there are signs of the interpolator in the present treatise.² It requires that all believers lead a moral and useful life. This had been the doctrine of "the Two Ways," and it is here enforced by portions from the Sermon on the Mount, and by special counsels

¹ Acts ii. 42 : διδασχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων.

² Indications of compilation are, (1) the use of the "Two Ways," which appears in so many forms (see Deut. xxx. 19; Jer. xxi. 8; Matt. vii. 13, 14; 2 Pet. ii. 2; Ep. Barn., 17, 19; Hermas, vi. 12; Test. of Twelve Pat.; "Apost. Ordin.," c. 4; "Apost. Const.," vii. 1; Hom. Clem. vii. 7; Clem. Al. "Strom.," 5), and may have been a pre-Christian production. (2) It also quotes itself, as in chap. 2. "And the second commandment of the Teaching is, Thou shalt not kill." (3) In chap. 7 the full baptismal formula is used, but elsewhere (chap. 9) baptism is said to be in "the name of the Lord." (4) The unbaptized are excluded from the service—a later practice. The "Maranatha" in ix. 6 indicates a Syrian trace.

against idolatry, witchcraft, and heathenism. Honour is to be paid to the Gospel messenger, "Remember him night and day that speaks to thee the word of God."¹ The worshippers are recommended to gather every day.² Beneficence is to be constantly exercised: "If thou hast anything, thou shalt give with thy hand a ransom for thy sins," "thou shalt share all things with thy brother." Extreme abstinence in regard to food is recommended: "If indeed thou art able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, thou wilt be perfect; but if not, do what thou canst, but against idol-offerings be exceedingly on thy guard." Dr. Schaff thinks that this "yoke" may be the ceremonial law; but the "Teaching" does not teach explicit Judaism, and the ceremonial law would scarcely be spoken of as "the yoke of the Lord."

The formula of baptism is that of Matt. xxviii. 19—"the first proof of the use of this formula," says Dr. Schaff. Baptism is to be administered in "living water," in a flowing stream like the Jordan; or, failing this, in water cold or warm; or water might be poured thrice upon the head. The candidate should fast for three days before baptism.

¹ Ch. iv., cf. Heb. xiii. 7; Hom. Clem., iii. 71.

² Ch. iv. 2; Ep. Barn.; Hom. Cl., iii. 69.

The Eucharist is to be held on "the Lord's day": "And on the first day of the week come together and break bread and give thanks, having before confessed your transgressions that your sacrifice may be pure." The direction in iv. 2: "Thou shalt seek day by day the faces of the saints," excludes the supposition (Dr. Schaff) that the daily service was now being discontinued, though the service of the first day had special honour.

The Eucharist consisted of the breaking and distribution of bread, with wine from a common cup, followed by thanksgiving, *εὐχαριστία*. The order is as follows:—

1. The first thanksgiving, or Eucharist, is for the cup, as in Luke xxii. 17-19; 1 Corinthians x. 16; and praises God for the holy vine of David His servant, made known through Jesus.
2. The second is for the broken bread (*κλάσμα*), and thanks God for life and knowledge.
3. The third, "after being filled," praises "the holy Father," who has caused His holy name to tabernacle in them, who has made all things and given food to all.

These thanksgivings were followed by a prayer for the Church, by "Hosanna to the God [var. lect.] of David, Maranatha." Then the prophets might "eucharize" as much as they wished. At this time,

probably, the original practice of free prayer (1 Tim. ii. 8) was giving way. The presiding officer offered the prayers and thanksgivings (Clement, Just. Mart.), and certain forms of prayer were beginning to be fixed. But the "prophet," as an inspired person, was still allowed the ancient freedom.

In this document also appears the first faint outline of the doctrine that the Eucharist had taken the place of the ancient sacrifices: "Eucharize, having before confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure" (xiv. 1). A passage (Mal. i. 11-14: "In every place incense is offered unto Me and a pure offering"), which has become famous in sacerdotal controversy, is here quoted in a simple and innocent sense. In accordance with the sentiment of the first two Christian centuries, the "sacrifice" of the Church was prayer, charity, and praise.¹

Besides the twelve apostles mentioned in the title, the "Teaching" recognises ministers in the Church who still bear this name: "Now with regard to the apostles and prophets according to the decree of the gospel so do ye. Let every apostle that cometh to you be received as the Lord. . . . And, when

¹ Funk, "Doct." xii. ; "Apost.," p. 43 ; "Locus vel ut sacrificium encharisticum prædicens sæpe a patribus allegatur." It became the usual proof of the sacrifice in the "Mass."

the apostle departs, let him take nothing except bread until he reach his lodging; but if he ask for money, he is a false prophet." The apostle and prophet seem to be here almost the same persons, though in the New Testament they are separate.¹ They were the ministers who still preserved the original characteristics, as being called by the Spirit: "Every one that speaks by the Spirit is a prophet." But other officers were now called by the Church: "Elect, therefore, for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord." They are to be "meek, not lovers of money" (1 Tim. iii. 4).² They are also allowed to "minister the ministry (*λειτουργίαν*) of the prophets and teachers." This indicates some fusion of the primitive classes: the apostles were

¹ In the N. T. *ἀπόστολος* keeps its literal meaning = messenger. In Acts xiv. 4, 14; 1 Thess. ii. 6; Rom. xvi. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 5, 7, Barnabas, Apollos, and Silas are *apostles*. The *ἄγγελοι* of the Apoc. Churches are similar: cf. 2 Cor. viii. 23; Eph. ii. 20; iii. 5; iv. 11.

² "Elect," *χειροτονήσατε*, is used Acts xiv. 23; 2 Cor. viii. 19; Ignat. and Phil.: "It will become you to elect a deacon to act as the ambassador of God (*πρεσβεύσαι*)." This, the Long Rec. improves into "elect a bishop." "Ap. Const.," vii. 31 has "lay hands on" for "elect by hand." Funk, p. 43, thinks the bishops and deacons were appointed to administer "the Eucharistic liturgy," as Clem. Rom. (1 Cor. 42); but he admits that *χειροτονέω* must mean *eligere*, though afterwards it meant "initiation into orders."

prophets; the prophets teachers and bishops; and deacons took their place in their absence. Where there was no resident prophet the firstfruits might be given to the poor. The contributions to the ministry are compared with the offerings under the law: "Thou shalt give the firstfruits to the prophets, for they are your chief priests."¹

From this interesting document we may learn how limited was the Christian knowledge of some of the early communities or Churches. They recognised

¹ The passage (xi. 9-11) has been much controverted. Schaff translates *πᾶς προφήτης ὁ ρίζων τράπεζαν ἐν πνεύματι οὐ φάγεται ἀπ' αὐτῆς*—"And no prophet that orders a table in the Spirit eats of it unless he is a false prophet." Schaff explains by "a lovefeast ordered in ecstasy," but the meaning of *ρίζω* is not clear. Again, in 11, "Every approved prophet who makes assemblies for a worldly mystery, but does not teach others to do what he himself does, shall not be judged by you." The crux is *ποιῶν εἰς μυστήριον κοσμικὸν ἐκκλησίας*. The principal interpretations are, "Symbolical actions like those of prophets" (Bryennius, Zahn, Spencer); "Abstinence from marriage" (Harnack); "A lovefeast, of which the teacher does not, for ceremonial reasons, partake." Schaff suggests this (but prefers the first explanation). It has, however, great probability. Some corruption of the text is probable, and chap. 9 might mean that a teacher ordering a table might yet decline to eat of it; and chap. 11, that the teacher might eat himself, but not require others to do the same. The word *κριθήσεται* suggests Rom. xiv. 10, which has a similar connection.

the "twelve," but knew little or nothing of Paul and his writings. They yet had apostolical ordinances and the ministry, but were not free from scruples about meats. They knew Jesus as Christ and Lord; but no reference is made to salvation through His death and intercession. They were in danger from false teachers, and history shows how some of them soon lapsed into Ebionite and Gnostic error—only a few emerging into the light and liberty of the sons of God.

THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT.

The absence of authentic information respecting the last days of the apostles and the Christians of the New Testament Church is almost inexplicable. The fact is, however, most ominous in respect to their probable fate. They vanished in prison, in the amphitheatre, in the mines, in slavery: they "died in the Lord," and only their "works" follow them. Yet it is strange that they left no abiding local traditions. The writers of the following centuries evidently knew little about them beyond the notices in the New Testament. The traditions of Mark in Egypt, of Thomas in India, of Thaddeus in Syria, and of Peter in Rome, are almost equally valueless.

It is possible that the entire tradition of John in Asia rests on the reference in the Apocalypse to Patmos and the seven Churches in Asia. Dionysius the Arcopagite was credited with being the first bishop of Athens, and a large work on "Celestial Hierarchy," forged in the sixth century in his name, became the authority for angelology in the Western Church, and assisted the development of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and of church art. The whole story of Simon Magus appears to have been derived from the notice in the "Acts." Scarcely a name appears in the pages of the New Testament which has not been made the nucleus of a church legend.

On such treacherous ground every caution is needed when we come to inquire respecting the genuineness and authenticity of such a document as the "Epistle of Clement." If we ask, Who was Clement? did he write this letter? does it reveal much respecting the "Faith and Life of the Early Church"? we must not neglect the warning which modern criticism has made so emphatic.

1. Who was Clement? Dr. Westcott says: "The history of Clement of Rome is invested with a mythic dignity which is without example in the ante-Nicene Church"; and "traditions which belong to very different men were soon united to confirm the dignity

of the successor of Peter.”¹ Then, as the question is complicated, it may be convenient to take it in different parts.

a. Was he a Jew? He speaks of the “fathers” as a Jew or Hellenist would, and shows great familiarity with the Jewish Scriptures in the Septuagint form, but no corresponding classical lore. He is also supposed to have been connected with the Jewish side of the Church in Rome. Lightfoot concludes that he “was a man of Jewish descent, a freedman, or the son of a freedman, belonging to the house of Flavius Clemens, the emperor’s cousin.”

b. Was he the Clement mentioned by St. Paul in Philippians iv. 3: “With Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life”? This was the view of the older church writers since Origen; although it was not likely that a labourer at Philippi would become so famous at Rome, or that a disciple of Paul would be ordained by Peter. Besides, Clement, the “foreign secretary” of the Roman Church, was known to Hermas in the second century. Yet Irenæus (iii. 3), building on the supposition that he was Paul’s fellow-labourer, says: “He had seen the blessed apostles, and conversed with them, and had the preaching of

¹ “Canon,” p. 22.

the apostles still ringing in his ears, and their traditions before his eyes." ¹ All the considerations which have influenced modern critics to fix the date of the epistle at the end of the first century, serve to contradict the ancient opinion that its author was Clement, the Philippian Christian.

c. Was he the person to whom the "Clementines" are referred? This is no doubt the intention of these writings; but everybody allows now that they are fictions, which were elaborated two or three generations after the time of Clement. Lightfoot also urges that the author was a Syrian, who did not know Roman history. They attempt to exalt Clement by a relationship with the imperial family; but Flavius Clemens, whose wife was banished for being a Christian, died under Domitian (A.D. 95), while the Clementines make Clement to be a relative of Tiberius. Baur thought there might be some-

¹ Dr. Salmon ("Dict. of C. Biog.," ii. 555) is of opinion that Irenæus had Phil. iv. 3 in his mind when he spoke of Clement as the hearer of the apostles. This, then, was another of Irenæus's "mistakes." Dr. S. also says that he was influenced by the work which afterwards became the "Recognitions." Of Linus nothing is known except what is said in 2 Tim. iv. 21. The critics who object to the genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles allege that the reference to Linus was inserted in "Timothy" from tradition. The true account appears to be, that tradition borrowed from the epistle.

thing in this theory of imperial relationship, and even makes the reference to Clement in Philippians an objection to the date of that epistle, because it seemed to betray a knowledge of the current tradition. But the history was exactly the reverse. The tradition of the Romish Church confounded Clement both with the Roman consul Flavius Clemens, and with the friend of Paul in Philippi.

d. Was Clement Bishop of Rome? This is the doctrine of the Romish Church, and is generally held by those who uphold the theory of the apostolical succession. But it is involved in the utmost confusion and contradiction. Lightfoot, who thinks that he has established the correctness of the list of early popes, has to renounce the tradition that Clement was ordained by Peter: "The later traditions, which represent him as having been consecrated bishop by one or other of the apostles, cannot be literally true; but they are explained by the underlying fact of his discipleship."¹ There are three lists of almost equal authority. The first is that of the early tradition, supported by Irenæus, Hegesippus, Eusebius, Jerome, etc. Its order places Linus, Cletus, Clement, Euarestus, as the successors of Peter. Of Linus, Irenæus (iii. 2, 3) says that

¹ "St. Clement" (1890), p. 73.

“Paul makes mention in the Epistles to Timothy.”¹ The probability is, that the whole story of Linus has originated here, especially as the “Apostolical Constitutions” (vii. 46) says, “Of the Church at Rome, Linus, son of Claudia, was first ordained by me, Paul; then, after the death of Linus, Clement was ordained second by me, Peter.”² Eusebius, following the enlarged tradition, gives Linus an episcopacy of twelve years.

But the Clementines allege that Clement was the successor of Peter, and this view was held by Tertullian and others. Lightfoot is content to call this a fiction. He holds that the first list has more authority. The third list, which is known as the Liberian (after Liberius, pope, A.D. 354), he describes as a “blunder.” Yet it has been highly favoured at Rome; it is “circumstantial, early, and local”; Pope Damasus had it illuminated in the catacombs; Optatus and Augustine accepted it; the catalogues of following centuries copied it; and it is followed by the *Liber Pontificalis*, a work of highest authority in the Roman Church.

Dr. Salmon says: “Among the most authentic

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 21.

² Also Ps. Ignat. ad Trall. 7: “Deacons . . . Timothy and Linus to Paul, Anacletus and Clement to Peter.”

proofs of the connection of Clement with the Romish Church may be placed the mention of his name in its liturgy. . . . The Romish Canon of the Mass to this day recites the names of Linus, Cletus, Clement, and we shall presently see reason to think that the names occur in the same order so early as the second century.”¹ His reason is, that if this liturgical order had been fixed after the time of Hippolytus, who was “the first scientific chronologer of the Romish Church,” it would have followed his order in making Clement second after Peter. It is thought that his arrangement influenced that of the Liberian list.

But Hippolytus was not so influential in the Church at Rome. His own See is doubtful ; by some he is regarded as an anti-pope ; and he was, undoubtedly, in violent collision with Callistus. Moreover, he, at the beginning of the third century, had no better authority than Irenæus and Origen ; and, finally, there is no fixed liturgy which carries its date farther back than the fourth century.

If our question was, whether Clement was “a bishop” in Rome, we should not seriously object ; but there is no satisfactory evidence that he was “the bishop” of the Church there. The epistle does not

¹ “Dict. of Ch. Biog.,” i. 554.

mention his name. The writer does not speak as a monarchical bishop, and mentions only two orders of ministers—the bishop being but a presbyter. Bishop Lightfoot says: “The later Roman theory supposes that the Church at Rome derives all its authority from the bishop as the successor of Peter. History inverts this relation, and shows that the power of the bishop of Rome was built upon the power of the Church. It was originally a primacy, not of the episcopate, but of the Church.” The epistle of Clement attributes its authority to the Church only. Ignatius (*Ad Rom.*) does not mention the bishop, but of the Church says, “She hath the presidency in the place of the Romans.” Origen speaks of Clement as he who “became bishop of the Romans.” The metropolis of the world, where Christianity speedily and largely extended, could soon claim to be the first among Churches. It was an afterthought that this pre-eminence might be traced through Clement to Peter.

e. Did Clement write this letter? The tradition that he did is universal. Traces of its language are found in Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp. Hermas refers to him as the minister who communicated with other Churches. Hegesippus (*Eus.*, iv. 22) refers to the letter of Clement to the Corinthians. Dionysius (*Corinth*, 170 A.D.) says it was read in the Church.

Irenæus (iii. 3, 3) speaks of Linus, Anacletus, and Clement, who wrote "a most satisfactory letter."

Most recent writers allow the date to be about A.D. 95. Uhlhorn, Hefele, and Wieseler say 64-68; Schwegler, Baur, and Volkmar, the time of Hadrian. What is said about persecution agrees with events under Domitian. Since bishops and presbyters are assumed to be equals, and the biblical quotations are given without reference to author or place, and are chiefly from the Old Testament, it seems necessary to place it within the first century.¹

The name of Clement does not occur, nor the name of any bishop. The Church at Rome was still probably under presbyterian government. It is from "The Church of God which sojourneth in Rome to the Church of God which sojourneth in Corinth."

f. What is its doctrine? Christian truth is brought into relation to historic facts rather than to theological system: the letter is practical rather than doctrinal. Dogmatic theology had scarcely arisen; no Gnostic errors are opposed, and no syllabus of the faith had been constructed. Once there is a refer-

¹ In one place the ep. speaks of the temple offerings in the present tense, *προσφέρονται*. This might be the work of some one writing in the name of the Philippian Clement. Lightfoot ("St. Clem.," ii. 125) refers to passages in Josephus, Barn. 7, and Diogn. 3, which tend to remove this impression.

ence to the Trinity: "Have we not one God, one Christ, and one Spirit of Grace?"

The Christology is debated. He does not call our Lord "Logos," but our "High Priest," "the Protector and Helper of our weakness." He emphasizes the mediation of Christ in general, and shows that all things are "through Jesus Christ." His use of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Pauline writings shows that he believed in the pre-existence of Christ.¹

His statements on the mediatorial work are not always explicit, but refute the notion that he was an Ebionite explaining away the death of Christ. He speaks of "the blood of the Christ," and "the sufferings of the Christ." Faith is not with him as it is with St. Paul; it is more akin to that which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things

¹ See Donaldson, "Ap. Fathers," p. 158; Harnack, "Dogmeng.," i. 129; Lightfoot, "St. Clem.," i. 398; Dorner, "Pers. of Ch.," i. 1, pp. 301, 356. Clement uses as titles of the Saviour: "Jesus Christ our Lord," once; "Lord Jesus Christ," 13 times; "the Lord Jesus," 3 times (twice with reference to Acts xx. 35); "the Lord," 3; "the Christ," 10; "Jesus Christ," 7; "in Christ," 8; "Christ Jesus," 2; "our Saviour Jesus Christ," 1; "Jesus the Christ," 1; "Christ," 1. In no case does "Jesus Christ" seem to be a proper name: the old significance appears in such phrases as "Jesus the Christ," "the flock of the Christ."

not seen." Of Abraham, it is said (c. 10), "On account of his faith and hospitality a son was given to him." Again (c. 32), "We, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart, but by that faith through which from the beginning Almighty God has justified all men." After an exhortation to a holy life, he says, "This is the way, beloved, in which we find our Saviour, even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of all our offerings. . . . By Him the Lord has wished that we should taste of immortal knowledge."¹

"The very way in which Clement mentions the death of Christ shows that he attached a mysterious efficacy to it, but he does not explain the mystery."² The aspect in which he views the death of Christ is more Petrine than Pauline. He says (c. 7) that the "blood of Christ being shed for our salvation won for the whole world the grace of repentance." He quotes the account of the great Sufferer (Isa. liii.), and concludes, "You see . . . what is the pattern (*ὑπογραμμός*, cf. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, ii. 21) that hath been given to us." He does not use the word

¹ Clem. "Ep.," ch. 32.

² Donaldson, "Apost. Fathers," p. 161.

“cross” (ὁ σταυρός). Strictly speaking, the Pauline doctrine never seems to have been understood at Rome.¹ The Council of Trent was probably correct when it asserted that the doctrine of justification by faith alone was inconsistent with its tradition.

¹ Harnack (“Dogmeng.” i. 144) remarks that neither Clement nor Barnabas shows a correct acquaintance with Paul’s doctrine of justification.

CHAPTER XII.

BAPTISM.

“What is the use of that baptism which cleanses the flesh and body alone? . . . You have understood all things in a carnal sense.”¹

IT was the dawn of the gospel day when John the Baptist went forth into “the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.”² He added, however, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”³ Nevertheless, all who feared God were required to submit to his baptism of repentance and preparation for the coming kingdom. He came in the “spirit and power of Elijah,” having a commission “to prepare the way of the Lord”; “there came a man sent from God whose name was

¹ Justin M., “Dial. c. Tr.,” 43.

² Mark i. 5.

³ Matt. iii. 11.

John." It is sometimes forgotten that the Divine dispensation under which our Lord lived was that of John the Baptist. Hence Jesus said, "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John"; and "among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater."¹ Therefore it was that Jesus came to be baptized of him, that He might "fulfil all righteousness." "The Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him."² In our Lord's last controversy with the Scribes and Pharisees in the temple He asked them the question which they dared not answer: "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or from men? answer Me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say from heaven; He will say, Why then did ye not believe him?"³

It was for this reason that our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." At that time Christian baptism had not commenced. The disciples of Jesus (John iv. 1) really administered the baptism of preparation, or John's baptism. The third chapter of St. John's Gospel (ver. 23) says that "John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim,"

¹ Matt. xi. 11.

² Luke vii. 30.

³ Mark xi. 30, 31.

at that time. Nicodemus understood and *marvelled*. Was that the way into the kingdom? Must he, "the teacher of Israel," join the motley crowd which followed the enthusiast in the wilderness, in order to enter the kingdom of God? Even so; for "the wind bloweth where it listeth." The breath of heaven was not now secluded under the temple roof, where the altar smoked and the holy books were opened, but had gone out into the wilderness, where the outcasts received its inspiration. If he would have the "Spirit," he must go where the Spirit was. Let him receive the baptism of water, and that should prepare him for the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost.

This passage is usually advanced by the advocates of baptismal regeneration in favour of their theory. If that doctrine is not taught here, it is scarcely to be found in the New Testament. Yet recent commentators, because they are willing to appreciate the context, have wavered in its interpretation. Westcott, Alford, and others allow that it may have some reference to the baptism of John. Then, since Christianity, as a religious system, is spiritual rather than symbolic, it is not very probable that an outward ceremony, however simple, would be made the initial condition of salvation. It was because the inspirations attending the new faith were so exalted, and the life-transformations consequent on conversion

so marvellous, that the early writers began to speak of baptism as the cause, or instrument of the great change rather than its appointed sign. No writer of the New Testament falls into this great error. But Justin carelessly speaks of baptism as the "illumination," and "regeneration" of Christians. It was Augustine who formulated the church doctrine: "Baptisma . . . contra originale peccatum donatum est, ut quod generatione attractum est, regeneratione detrahatur."

It must also be allowed that, so far as the effects of baptism are concerned, the New Testament only speaks of adults who professed repentance and faith. Church teachers, however, apply its expressions, which can only refer to cases where there was baptism *plus* repentance and faith, to the case of infants, where baptism is *minus* repentance and faith. It is certain that such a method of calculation would not be recognised in any other province of human thought or interest. At the very beginning Peter said: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."¹ If he says afterwards, "water, which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism," he adds that it is "not the putting away of the filth of the

¹ Acts ii. 38.

flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God.”¹ If St. Paul says that believers in Christ are “buried with Him in baptism,” he explains that they are “raised with Him through faith in the working of God.”²

“Regeneration” is, though it represents a great fact of Christian experience, a figurative term, as are also the terms used by St. Paul, “the new creation,” and “being risen with Christ.” “Regeneration” was used chiefly by the “twelve,” and became the favourite term with church theologians.³ The fathers, for some reason, did not speak of “Baptismal Creation” nor of “Baptismal Resurrection.” Commentators have usually assumed that these terms represent the same aspects of conversion. But “the new creation” implies something more than the “new birth”; the guilt of sin as well as its defilement, are included in the “old things” which pass away.⁴ St.

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 21.

² Col. ii. 12.

³ Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 5; Jas. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 John ii. 9; iv. 7. On the “New Creation” cf. 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Ps. li. 10; Gen. i. 3; Ep. Barn. 6.

⁴ Dr. Westcott (John i. 18) discriminates between the Pauline and Petrine terms; but see Weiss, “Bib. Theol.,” ii. 154; “Speaker’s Comm.,” Jas. i. 18; Huther, iii. 5; Lightfoot, Gal. vi. 15. Dr. Beet (1 Cor. iv. 15) finds an approach to the doctrine of the new birth by Paul, but a “direct reference” only in Tit. iii. 5. *παλιγγενεσία* may be accidental: cf. Jos., “Ant.,”

Paul scarcely uses the term "Regeneration," but his expressions are seldom employed by the early Fathers. Barnabas (c. 6) says, "Therefore He renewed (*ἀνακαινίσας*) us"; and, "Behold we have been refashioned . . . by the faith of the promise, and are made alive by the word." Hermas (Pastor) enigmatically says "The seal then is the water; they descend into the water dead, and they rise alive." Justin Martyr uses both the Galilæan *ἀναγεννᾶν* (Ap. i. 66) and also some Pauline expressions, as, "being made new." That he did not separate repentance and faith from baptism is clear, since he tells us ("Apol.," lxi.) "As many as . . . believe, . . . and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting for the remission of sins. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated (*ἀναγεννῶνται*) in the same manner as we ourselves." All that is said of baptism in the New Testament or in the writers of the first century implies that the subjects who realized the benefits of salvation in connection with it were those who had intelligence to comply with its conditions.¹

xi. 9. Liddon (Bamp. Lect., p. 345) says "The instrument of regeneration, . . . according to St. Paul, is the sacrament of baptism."

¹ There is a remarkable passage in the "Holy Theophany,"

On the baptism of children, we may quote Dr. Schaff:—

“We have presumptive and positive arguments for the apostolic origin and character of infant baptism ; first, in the fact that circumcision as truly prefigured baptism as the pass-over the Holy Supper ; then in the organic relation between parents and children ; in the nature of the new covenant, which is even more comprehensive than the old ; in the universal virtue of Christ, as the Redeemer of all sexes, classes and ages, and especially in the import of his own infancy . . . in his express invitation to children . . . in the words of institution . . . in the express declaration of Peter that this promise was ‘to their children,’ in the five instances in the New Testament of the baptism of whole families . . . and finally, in the universal practice of the early Church, against which the isolated protest of Tertullian proves no more than his other peculiarities.”¹

This is an able and condensed summary of the arguments in favour of the baptism of children. If the ordinance were denied to them, it would attribute to the outward rite a significance which does not belong to it. Children have, undoubtedly, a right to be admitted into the congregation of the Lord’s

attributed to Hippolytus, chap. 10: “He who comes down in faith to the lover of regeneration, and renounces the devil and joins himself to Christ, who denies the enemy and confesses that Christ is God . . . he returns a son of God and joint-heir with Christ.”

¹ Schaff’s “Hist. of Ch.” (1-100), 470.

people, and the Church has no other rite by which they can be visibly recognised.

The opinion that baptism came in the place of circumcision seems to have been founded on Colossians ii. 11: "Ye were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands . . . being buried with Him in baptism." So Epiphanius ("Hær.," xxx.) says, "Circumcision had its period: it was replaced by the greater circumcision, that is, the ransom of regeneration." Justin Martyr ("Dial.," 43) observes, "We have received not moral but spiritual circumcision . . . through baptism." Of course such a view could not be held among those who favoured Jewish Christianity; they rather connect it with the abolition of sacrifices. Hence the "Homilies" say (i. 54), "The rising of Christ was at hand for the abolition of sacrifices, and for the bestowal of the grace of baptism," and (55) "The High Priest found fault with the baptism of Jesus as recently brought in in opposition to the sacrifices."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE AGAPE AND THE EUCHARIST.

“Consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.”¹

NO custom of the primitive Church has been more obscured by superstition than the Agape-Eucharist. Scarcely any development in nature or history is more wonderful than that which connects a “high celebration” of the “Mass” with the simple feast of the first believers. The doctrine which is supposed to be the chief content of this symbolic rite has not been more entirely changed than the form of its observance. Into the successive stages of this extraordinary transformation we need not enter: we now only have to examine the earliest history of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.²

¹ Heb. x. 24.

² Neither the Latin *sacramentum* nor the Greek *μυστήριον* is used for baptism or the Eucharist in the New Test. The former was not used for either before Tertullian. The latter said (“Cont. Marc.,” iv. 40), “‘This is My body,’ *i.e.* the figure of My body . . . wine is used as a figure for blood. . . . He used the figure of wine to describe His blood.”

In Acts ii. 42 we are told that the first body of disciples "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." The word "fellowship" (*κοινωνία*) has been a difficulty with expositors and historians. Lechler, in his first edition, spoke of it as "most difficult"; but in the later (English) edition he interprets it as "inner community of spirit and faith." Wordsworth regards it as "visible communion with the apostles," and Meyer as "mutual brotherly association." Other passages in the New Testament will enable us to see that it includes all these things. The "teaching," the "breaking of bread," "the prayers," the praise, and the charity, which belonged to it at the first, never left it in apostolic times.¹

The charity of the Church in its first estate was so abounding that "not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." Lands and houses were sold, and their value laid at the apostles' feet. The first controversy arose when many Hellenists had entered the Church, and some of these thought that "their widows were neglected in the daily ministra-

¹ "The significance of the social element in the early Church has properly been made prominent in the later works (Renan, Heinrici, Hatch) on the subject." (Harnack, "Dogm.," i. 104).

tion.”¹ This shows that the tide of beneficence continued to flow, and that the original practice was maintained. When a time of straitness set in at Jerusalem, the Church at Antioch sent relief (*εἰς διακονίαν*) by Barnabas and Saul.² When Paul was at Troas, the brethren met on the first day of the week “to break bread,” and his “teaching” was prolonged until midnight, when the accident happened to Eutychus. There had arisen also the great controversy whether it was lawful for a Christian “to go in unto a man uncircumcised and to eat with him.” Of this we have spoken elsewhere.

St. Paul tells the Romans that “it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution (*κοινωνία*) for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.”³ To this Macedonian generosity he refers in another place, where he speaks of their “*fellowship* in the ministering to the saints.”⁴ He goes to on declare that “he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” When Paul and Barnabas received the “right hands of fellowship” at Jerusalem, they were exhorted to “remember the poor.”⁵ For the Philippians Paul was thankful on

¹ Acts vi. 1.² *Idem*, xi. 30.³ Rom. xv. 26.⁴ Cor. ix. 13.⁵ Gal. ii. 9.

account of their "fellowship in furtherance of the gospel."¹ To Timothy, he says, "Charge them that are rich . . . that they be . . . willing to communicate."² Elsewhere he directs the Romans to "communicate to the necessity of the saints, to pursue hospitality."³ He informs the Philippians "that no Church had fellowship (*ἔκοινωνήσεν*) with him in the matter of giving and receiving,"⁴ except them. To the Galatians he says, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."⁵ The "fellowship" begun in Jerusalem evidently retained its beneficent characteristics in the Pauline Churches.⁶

We have seen that the disciples also when they met at Troas did not omit the "breaking of bread." Was this an ordinary meal, or was it the Lord's Supper? There can be no doubt that it was both. The Eucharist, or thanksgiving (*εὐχαριστία*) was a special offering of praise, when they thus socially assembled, for the lovingkindness of God, especially in remem-

¹ Phil. i. 5.² 1 Tim. iv. 18.³ Rom. xii. 13.⁴ Phil. iv. 15.⁵ Gal. vi. 6.

⁶ Hom. Clem., c. 69, "If you love the brethren, take nothing from them, but share with them such things as ye have. Feed the hungry; . . . above all else . . . come together frequently. . . . Let none, therefore, forsake the assembly on account of envy."

brance of the death and resurrection of the Lord. The time chosen for the celebration was the evening of the day, because then the Lord Himself had eaten the final passover. During the apostolic age the Eucharist did not constitute a separate ceremonial, but was always connected with the evening meal.¹

The Christians in the various cities and towns had no separate buildings for their gatherings, so that the "Lovefeast," which was identical with the "Lord's Supper," and was concluded by the Eucharist, was held in private houses. The proceedings were informal; prayer and exhortation were free, or guided by the Spirit. To the Corinthians, Paul says, "What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation."² Elsewhere

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 21 leaves no doubt that the Eucharist was part of the Agape. Sozomen, "Hist. Eccles.," vii. 19, states that in his time the custom was occasionally continued in some places; "in many cities and villages in Egypt the people gather on the Sabbath evening, and in addition to the usual custom, having had a feast, they partake of the mysteries." Chrysostom ("Hom.," 27, in I. ad Cor.) says that in his time the feast followed the Eucharist, so Theophylact (1 Cor.) The Council of Carthage laid down the rule that the Eucharist was only to be taken fasting; and from that time the true character of the Christian feast was forgotten.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 26-33.

he advises the Church not to "despise prophesyings," nor to "quench the Spirit."¹ Sometimes there were those who "spake with tongues," as at the beginning. When an evangelist, or prophet, or apostle was present, it would be natural for him to conduct the proceedings; to "take the bread and break it and give thanks"; to "take the cup" and "give thanks," and "shew forth the Lord's death."² In their absence Paul's will was, that "the men should pray everywhere," but that the "women keep silence in the Churches."³

In Corinth freedom degenerated into disorder, and the "fellowship" was marred by divisions. The men of various parties did not wait to join in the same Eucharist, but "each one taketh before other his own supper, and one is hungry and another is drunken."⁴ He reminds them of the original institution of the sacred meal, and its solemn obligations. At Ephesus also, there may have been excesses; for Paul says, "Be not drunken with wine wherein is riot, but be

¹ 1 Thess. v. 12-28, where are associated the ministry, mutual exhortation, thanksgiving, prophesying, and the holy kiss.

² Just. Mart., "Apol.," 67, the "President" offered prayer: "Didache," x. 7, the prophet may eucharize as much as he pleases.

³ 1 Tim. ii. 8, 12; 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

⁴ 1 Cor. xi. 21.

filled with the Spirit.”¹ At Thessalonica some took a mean advantage of the charity of the Church : they feasted but did not work ; but the apostle laid down the rule, “ If any will not work, neither let him eat.”²

There are many passages in the apostolical epistles which can only be understood by a reference to the Church gathering for these social services. In Col. i. 4, St. Paul speaks of their “ love toward all the saints ” ; again (iii. 14) he exhorts them “ to put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body [both Jews and Gentiles] ; and be ye thankful (*καὶ εὐχάριστοι γίνεσθε*). Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom [*i.e.* the spoken word] ; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.” Farther, it is said, “ Whatsoever ye do in word [*i.e.* in the form of prayer and exhortation], or in deed [*i.e.* by contributing to the Church’s funds], do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks (*εὐχαριστοῦντες*) to God the Father through Him.”³

¹ Ephes. v. 18.

² 2 Thess. iii. 10.

³ See Clem. Al., “ Pædag.,” ii., where these words are taken in their proper connection with the Agape.

In the parallel passage in Ephesians (v. 1-21) we find the same adaptation to the circumstances of an apostolical community. They are to "walk in love" (*ἀγάπη*—love in exercise, as appears from what follows) because Christ loved them and "gave Himself" for them, "an offering and sacrifice to God." Amongst them had been tendencies to evil, and they are warned against uncleanness, covetousness, idolatry; and even excess in their holy feast. They are not to be drunk with wine, but to be filled with the Spirit, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," "giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord." The Philippians (iv. 4) also he bids "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving (*εὐχαριστία*) let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." This "peace of God," then, was not only a personal, but a social experience. So in Col. iv. 2, we find similar language: "Continue [ye] stedfastly (*προσκατερέϊτε*; cf. Acts ii. 42) in prayer, watching (plur.) therein with thanksgiving (*εὐχαριστία*), together (*ἅμα* = *simul*, Vulg.) praying for us also." Such passages have been too often separated from their original

associations as addressed, not to individuals, but to Churches.¹

At the beginning the disciples were "daily in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house." Seven years later, as we are told (Acts vi. 1), there was a "daily ministration." The Hebrew Christians were advised (iii. 13) to "exhort one another day by day." Justin Martyr ("Apol.," 67) says: "But afterwards continually (*ἀεὶ*) remind one another of these things. They who have wealth assist all the needy, and we are always (*ἀεὶ*) with one another." Barnabas ("Ep.," c. 19) directs the Christian thus: "Thou shalt seek out every day the faces of the saints, labouring by word and going to exhort them, and meditating to save a soul by the word."² This daily communion continued, when and where possible, into the following centuries; since in Cyprian we find it said, "We ask that this bread shall be given to us daily, that we who are in Christ, and daily receive the Eu-

¹ Ellicott in Phil. iv. 7 interprets *ἡ εἰρήνη τ. Θεοῦ* as "the deep tranquillity of a soul resting upon God"; so Olshaus., "Meyer, Alf.;" but the "peace" was not merely subjective; cf. Eph. ii. 14, "He is our peace, who made both one"; and Col. iii. 15, "Let the peace of Christ rule . . . to the which ye are called in one body."

² The "Teaching" (iv. 2) has this sentence almost exactly. Ignat. at Eph. 13, "Take heed frequently to come together for thanksgiving (*εὐχαριστ.*) and praise to God."

charist for the food of salvation may not be separated from Christ's body." ¹ But the principal gathering of the Christians was on the "Lord's day."

The following is Justin Martyr's description of a Sunday service, which will show how the original elements of the "Agape-Eucharist" were preserved, with some modification, in the second century. Here are the "teaching," "the prayers," the "breaking of bread," the contributions—all of which were included in the primitive *κοινωνία*. But it is not said, now, that they have "all things common," but the wealthy give as they think fit; there are no "tongues," or promiscuous prayer or exhortation, but the instruction and prayers are by the "president." This, then, is the account: "On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles, or the writings of the prophets, are read . . . Then the president instructs. . . . Then we all rise together and

¹ Wesley's sermon on "The Duty of Constant Communion," was written in 1733, but printed in 1788, when he said, "I have not yet seen any cause to alter my sentiments. . . . With the first Christians the Christian sacrifice was a constant part of the Lord's Day service. For several centuries they received it almost every day: four times a week always, and every saint's day beside." Cyprian's remark is in his treatise on "The Lord's Prayer."

pray, and . . . when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president, in like manner, offers prayers and thanksgivings according to his ability [extempore, not formally prepared: ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ]; and the distribution to each; and the participation is from that which has been eucharized [Luke xxii. 19: "He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave"], and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons" ("Apol.," 67).¹ This transference of the more important Eucharist to the first day of the week would soon be found to be a convenient arrangement; and Pliny ("Ep.," 97) relates that the Christians met on "an appointed day" in his time. It was only by degrees, however, that the daily observance was remitted.

It was the temptation of the Hebrew Christian to avoid attendance at the Christian "Agape," but to continue that at the synagogue on the Sabbath. Therefore (Heb. x. 19-39) he is reminded of the sacrifice and priest of the better dispensation through whom Christian worship is offered. He is exhorted to "hold fast the profession" of the faith, to incite

¹ This practice survives in some Churches in the distribution of loaves to the poor after the celebration of the Sacrament. Bullinger ("De Origine Erroris," 1539) refers to it: "Hinc fortassis ad nos ritus ille," etc.

and provoke his brethren to "love and good works," and not to "forsake the assembling" together, "as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another."¹

The members of the Church were often reminded that the "end" was near. So St. Peter (I Ep. iv. 7-11) would have believers to "be of sound mind, and sober unto prayer: above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love hides a multitude of sins."² What this *ἀγάπη* was is explained by the next verse: "Use hospitality one to another without murmuring, according as each hath received a gift, ministering it as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; if any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God; if any man minister (*διακονέω*) ministering as of the strength which God supplieth." Then follows the true Eucharist, or thanksgiving, of which this language may serve as a model: "that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion for ever and ever." The last words of the epistle transmit the salutation and kiss of love; *φίλημα ἀγάπης*; but neither in James nor Peter is there any reference to

¹ Heb. x. 25: perhaps *ἐπισυναγωγή* may mean attendance at the Christian synagogue as well as at the Jewish.

² I Pet. iv. 7: Rec. with K L inserts the art. bef. *προσευχάς*: A B **N**, W. K., Ti. om. As it is it reminds us of Acts ii. 42; cf. Apoc. v. 8.

the peculiar significance of the Lord's Supper as a commemoration of the death of Christ.

In 2 Peter ii. 13, the Revised Version has introduced the word "love-feasts" into the English Bible.¹ It is satisfactory that the direct references to this oldest symbol of Christian fellowship, found in Peter and Jude, are no longer to be concealed; but it is admonitory that in each case there is a disclosure of the perils attached to "the feast of love." The abuses which sacerdotal superstition were to attach to it were not, however, in sight in the apostolic age.

The Eucharist, or Thanksgiving, was an essential part of the proceedings in the sacred feast. Such a recognition of the Divine bounty when food was taken had been an ancient Jewish custom. This Eucharist is still preserved in the Communion Service, where it is said: "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father,

¹ The A.V. has "deceivings" in 2 Peter ii. 13, and "feasts of charity" in Jude 12: ἀγάπαις and ἀπάραις were easily interchanged. Dr. Lumby ("Speaker's Comm.," Jud. 12) says, "The Lovefeasts were in early time joined on to the Lord's Supper" (so Dr. Hinds, "Ch. Hist.," 1846); but this is the reverse of the true order. "The significance of the social element in the oldest Churches is in recent works (Renan, Heinrici, Hatch) with great propriety strongly brought out" (Harnack, "Dogmeng.," i. 104).

Almighty, Everlasting God." In the "Teaching" forms of thanksgiving are provided for use before the cup [taken first, as Luke xxii. 17], before the bread, and "after being filled." In the "Constitutions of the Apostles" these forms are greatly extended. Since the materials of the feast were contributed by the people, they began to be spoken of as their "offerings," or "oblations." "Give thanks, having before confessed your transgressions that your sacrifice may be pure."¹ "Those who present their offerings at the appointed time are accepted and blessed."² The Christian writers of the first two centuries, with one voice, describe the prayers, and praise and gifts of the people as their sacrifices. It was not until the third century had far advanced that the enemy sowed tares while men slept, and introduced the notion that the bread and wine of the Eucharist were to be offered as a repetition of the sacrificial death of Christ. The fraud was made plausible through the previous use of the term "offerings" in an innocent sense.³ The

¹ "Teaching," xiv.

² Ep. Clem. xi. Just. M., "Dial.," 107: "Prayers and giving of thanks, when offered by worthy men, are the only perfect and well-pleasing sacrifices to God."

³ In a fragment attributed to Hippolyt. (Ante-Nic. Lib., vi. 439) on Prov. ix. 1, it is said that "the undefiled body and blood are day by day administered, and offered sacrificially at the

Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 10-17) had said: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. . . . Through Him let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

The question when the Eucharist was separated from the Agape is both interesting and important. Historians have generally accepted the opinion which is thus stated by Dr. Schaff: "Early in the second century the social Agape was separated from the Communion and held in the evening, the more solemn Communion in the morning; and afterwards the Agape was changed into a charity for the poor."¹ Weizsäcker holds that "Justin Martyr shows that the congregational meeting and the Sacrament were still united, but the feast had fallen away."² Bishop Lightfoot, also, maintains that the separation had taken place before the date of Pliny's letter to Trajan, A.D. 112. He desires to establish an early date for the epistles of Ignatius, which speak of the Eucharist as

spiritual Divine table." The slightest knowledge of the history will suffice to show that such a statement could not have been made by Hippolytus, A.D. 212.

¹ "The Oldest Church Manual," p. 57.

² "Das Apost. Zeit.," s. 601.

being still in the form of an Agape. He, and most competent judges, however, admit that during the first century the Eucharist was invariably associated with the Agape, or Love-feast. The separation did not take place under the authority of the apostles. The advocates of "apostolical succession," who are usually the strict professors of "primitive practice," are here convicted of a glaring departure from apostolic order.

Dr. Lightfoot says, that it was found that "the Agape was not essential."¹ But can this be said of that "fellowship" which had held its ground unchallenged through the apostolic period? Too much is said in its praise throughout the New Testament for it to be regarded as "not essential." Granted that Pliny and other Roman officers forbade and discouraged the Christian assemblies, but did they cease to be held? Bishop Lightfoot says that "these festivals had begun to provoke unfavourable comments." Pliny does not say so, but the opposite, namely, that the feast was "promiscuous, but harmless." He forbade such fraternities chiefly because of what he called their "superstition." Moreover, Pliny's lan-

¹ Dr. Duff ("The Early Ch.," p. 120) assumes that the Agape was discontinued because not created by apostolic authority. He forgets Acts ii. 42, and xx. 11.

guage is too ambiguous and imperfect to be taken as an authoritative account of the habits of Christians. He says that they "met before day to sing a hymn, and to join in a Sacramentum [a confession?]-then they separated, but met again to take food together." If the assemblies were hindered for a time, they were wholly suspended, but there is no evidence that one part was given up while the other was continued.

The Epistles of Ignatius frequently refer to the Christian service, which they call both Eucharist and Lovefeast. "It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate a love-feast."¹ "In your harmonious Agape Jesus Christ is sung." "Some have no regard for an Agape, nor for the widow and orphan."² Notwithstanding the learned investigations of Bishop Lightfoot into the origin of these epistles, we cannot accept his date for documents which make so strong a distinction between the bishop and the presbyter. They need not be much earlier than the epistle to Diognetus, which reports that "the Christians have a common table."

Nor need they be earlier than Justin Martyr, who never uses the words bishop or presbyter, but speaks of the chief minister of the congregation as "Presi-

¹ Ignat. ad Smyrn., 8.

² *Ibid.*, ad Eph., 4.

dent." Justin is commonly quoted as a principal authority for the opinion that the Eucharist was fully separated from the Agape early in the second century. But he makes no statements which justify that conclusion; what he does say points in another direction. He relates that the candidate for membership is first baptized—probably in the open air (and therefore by day), and afterwards is brought to the meeting of brethren to join in the Eucharist ("Apol.," 65). He mentions the holy kiss, the distribution of bread and wine, the prayers and thanksgiving. The bread is not a crumb or wafer, but food (*ἡ τροφή αὐτή*), by which "blood and flesh" are nourished.

Nay, more; he refers to the community of goods as still flourishing: "We who valued above all things the acquisition of wealth and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock (*εἰς κοινὸν φέροντες*; cf. Acts iv. 34, 35: *πωλοῦντες ἔφερον τὰς τιμὰς . . . καὶ ἐτίθουν παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῶν ἀποστόλων*), and on account of their different modes of taking food would not associate with men of another tribe; now, since the appearing of Christ, we have become fellow-eaters (*ὁμοδίαιτοι*) and pray for our enemies."¹ Such language as this cannot well be

¹ Ep. Clem., cc. 38, 40, 49, 50; c. 33 (the last passage), Ἀργήσωμεν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγαθοποιίας καὶ ἐγκατείπωμεν τὴν ἀγάπην;

reconciled with the abolition of the Agape in the time of Justin.

The Epistle of Clement evidently has the Agape in view when it says: "Let the rich man provide for the wants of the poor, and let the poor man eucharize God because He hath given him one who can supply his wants. . . . We ought to eucharize Him. . . . He has enjoined offerings to be performed at the appointed time. . . . Shall we be slothful in well doing, or cease from the practice of the Agape?"¹ Clement never refers to the Eucharist as if it were a special celebration. The Pastor of Hermas notices the charity of Christians: "The rich man refreshes the poor, . . . and the poor man intercedes for him"; and also the visit of the prophet: "When a man, having the Divine Spirit, comes into an assembly of righteous men who have faith in the Divine Spirit . . . then the angel of the prophetic spirit who is destined for him fills the man, and the man . . . speaks to the multitude as the Lord wishes."

Irenæus uses language like that of Justin, indicating that in his day the Eucharist was still connected with a feast and not a separate ceremony. He says (v. 2), "When, therefore, the mingled cup and the manufactured bread receive the word of

¹ Ep. Clem. c. 38.

God, and the Eucharist of the blood and the body of Christ is made, from which the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they deny the flesh to have a capacity for eternal life?" Those words suggest "food" taken to sustain life. Again, he shows (iv. 5) that men were to "offer to God the firstfruits of His own created things," that to "give thanks" is the "oblation of the new covenant," and that "John in the Apocalypse declares that the incense is the prayers of the saints." "The oblation of the Church" consists of "the firstfruits of His creation." "The Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator, offering to Him with eucharistia the things of His creation" (iv. 4).

Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200), is very explicit in his testimony that the Agape has not lost its ancient character. He defends it against those who had degraded it. He says ("Pædag.," ii. 1), "Some speaking with unbridled tongue dare to apply the name Agape to pitiful suppers . . . dishonouring the good and saving work of the Word, the saving Agape, with pots and pouring of sauce. . . . Such entertainments the Lord has not called Agapes, . . . for He has said, 'When thou makest a dinner call the poor.' But Agape is in truth celestial food, the banquet of reason. . . . The right food is the Eucharist." Again ("Pæd.," ii. 2), "It is befitting

before partaking of food that we should bless the Creator of all." Some, he tells us ("Strom.," i. 19), used bread and water in the oblation, but this was against the rule of the Church, and belonged to the synagogue; and ("Strom.," vii. 6) we "offer to God sacrifices not costly, but such as He loves, . . . that compounded incense mentioned in the law which consists of many tongues and voices in prayer." The "holy kiss" was still given, but by some was abused ("Pæd.," iii. 11).

This language shows that the Agape was still the sacred feast, though some dared to "apply the name to pitiful suppers." Hence Dr. Bigg infers that in the Church of Alexandria, at least, the Agape and the Eucharist were not separated at the end of the second century.¹ He makes this remark "with some hesitation," because in Justin the two seem to be disconnected, and also in Tertullian (A.D. 210). We have already shown that the language of Justin does not justify this inference; and shortly we shall see that Tertullian is a direct witness to the contrary. But Dr. Bigg urges with great force: (1) That the Liturgy is not so advanced in Clement's time as in that of Origen; (2) that the Agape, both in its public

¹ "The Christian Platonists of Alexandria." By C. Bigg, D.D. ("Bampton Lectures," 1886).

and private forms, is mentioned, but not the Eucharist as a separate office ; (3) that Agape is the name for the Lord's Supper ; (4) that the Agape is mentioned in the Sybilline oracles (viii. 402, 497 ; A.D. 130) ; (5) that Dion. Alex. (Eus., "H.E.," vi. 42) still uses for the communion the same word (ἐστιάσις) which Clement uses for the Agape ; (6) that there is no Oriental writer before Clement's time who uses the term Eucharist as a distinct and substantive office.¹ We had come to this conclusion before Dr. Bigg's lecture appeared, but we are glad to have this testimony from a quarter which some will consider to have authority.

The references in the "Clementines" to the Agape-Eucharist are very numerous and striking.² They who hold that these documents issued from Syria in the second century must allow some value to their testimony respecting the custom in that region at the time ; the same remark, of course, applies to the

¹ Eus., "H.E.," vi. 42 : "The martyrs . . . received the brethren who fell away . . . and communicated with them in prayers and feasting—προσευχῶν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐστιάσεων ἐκωνώνησαν."

² "The Eucharist [in the 'Homilies'] is daily, is the ordinary evening meal, and consists of bread, salt, and certainly water." ("Studia Biblica," ii. 175 ; Dr. Bigg on the Clementine Homilies.)

theory of their origin in Rome. The "Recognitions" (vi. 15) state that those who had received the faith and were baptized were received by Peter, he "breaking the Eucharist with them." Clement relates (ix. 38) how each night, "having taken food in the usual manner and given praises to God," they went to sleep; or (iii. 50), "according to custom, having taken food." The "custom" in this case was, doubtless, that of "thanksgiving" (*εὐχαριστία*). Elsewhere (iii. 66) we may see that the church "fellowship" was still an Agape: "Have a religious care of widows; vigorously assist orphans; take pity on the poor; teach the young modesty; in a word, sustain one another as circumstances shall demand; worship God who created heaven and earth; believe in Christ; love one another; be compassionate to all; and fulfil charity (*τὴν ἀγάπην*) not only in word but in act and deed."

The "Homilies" (xii. 25) relate how Peter at Antioch "partook of food and gave thanks according to our custom." They intimate that Peter could not eat with Gentiles (xiii. 4): "We do not live with all indiscriminately, nor do we take our food from the same table as Gentiles, . . . but when we have . . . baptized them with a thrice blessed invocation, then we dwell with them." Before he was baptized (i. 22) Clement himself was not allowed to

eat with Peter, though Peter, on his behalf "blessed the food and gave thanks after being satisfied."

In the epistle of Clement to James (ix.) it is related how Peter gave directions to Clement on many subjects: "I know that ye will do these things if ye will fix love in your minds; and for its entrance there is only one fit means, viz., the common partaking of food. Wherefore see to it that ye be frequently one another's guests . . . for it is the cause of well-doing, and well-doing of salvation. Therefore all of you present your provisions in common to all your brethren in God."

The first writer in the third century who speaks of the Eucharist is Tertullian. He supplies us with the best description of the Agape which is left to us ("Apolog.," xxxix.): "About the modest supper-room of the Christians a great ado is made. Our feast explains itself by its name; the Greeks call it 'Love.' With the good things of the feast we benefit the needy. . . . Those who participate, before reclining, taste first of prayer to God. As much is eaten as satisfies the cravings of hunger; as much is drunk as befits the chaste. After manual ablution and the bringing in of lights, each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, hymns to God. . . . As the feast commenced with prayer, so with prayer it is closed."

In the treatise from which we have quoted, the African presbyter wishes to "exhibit the occupations of the Christian sect (*negotia Christianæ factionis*)."¹ He shows how they assemble to pray, to read their sacred writings, to exhort one another, and, if needful, to rebuke. The "tried men of the presbyters" preside, and they have a collection every month, and they call each other brethren. This social meeting is held at night—the invariable practice of the Church for more than two centuries—for "lights" were necessary. Of the Eucharist as a separate institution he says nothing; it did not exist apart from the Agape which he describes. That this was his view of the Eucharist is shown also by his remark on Acts xxvii. 35. He says that "Paul, in the ship in the presence of all, made a eucharist to God (*eucharistiam fecit*.)"¹ As Olshausen says, "The apostle and the other believers acted as if it were a love-feast (*Liebesmahl*), though the unbelievers might not understand it." Tertullian further (*"De Orat.,"* c. xviii.) remarks that some when fasting did not give the "kiss of peace," which shows that this primitive custom still

¹ Acts xxvii. 35 : *εὐχαρίστησε τῷ Θεῷ* : which Jerome obscured under "*gratias egit Deo*"—also the Clem. Vulg. ; but Probst, "*Kirchl. Discip.*," refers to it as a eucharist ; so Wordsworth in loc.

survived. In another place ("Ad Uxor," ii. 4) he speaks of Christian women who offend their heathen husbands by tarrying all night long at the paschal solemnities, or in exchanging kisses with brethren.¹ These special observances only occurred annually, but were the cause of some suspicion. Origen also (A.D. 220) speaks of the "feast of love" and the "kiss of peace," and says nothing of any separate, formal celebration of the Eucharist.

To this evidence, that the Christian Eucharist was still observed as a feast, must be added that which comes from the frequent testimony that the Christians were charged with nefarious practices at their assemblies. In the remarkable letter of the Churches of Gaul to those in Asia, preserved in Eusebius, it is said that the persecutors "accused us falsely of Thyestæan banquets and Œdipean intercourse."² Eusebius attributes to some heretics practices which would have justified the reproach of the heathen: "In this

¹ Mr. S. Baring Gould ("Our Inheritance," p. 181) would like to found his pyramid—morning communion, on this reference to all-night vigils in Tertullian, but with no more success than he has with the case at Troas. Tertullian's language is ("De Coron. Mil.," 3), "We take the sacrament of the Eucharist, both at the time of food, as commanded by the Lord, and in meetings before daybreak." But the latter, as he explains, only came once a year at Paschal time.

² Euseb., "H.E.," v. 1.

way it came to pass that . . . the infamous and absurd suspicion that . . . we enjoyed impious feasts.”¹ But there must have been some Christian custom beyond the formal ceremony of the Eucharist to give any foundation to this widespread calumny. Tertullian says much about these charges, but he retaliates on the heathen: “Blush for your vile ways before the Christians, who have not even the blood of animals at their meals of simple and natural food.”²

We conclude then that there is no evidence that the Eucharist was separated from the Agape in the first two centuries. We do not now inquire where and under what circumstances the separation took place. The earliest Christian pictures represent chiefly the Agape, and its elements of bread and fish and wine. An Agape with bread and fish is painted in the ancient crypt of Domitilla, which De Rossi

¹ *Ibid.*, iv. 7. Just. Mart., “Apost.,” 26, mentions the “fabulous and shameful deeds” reported of the heretics, but he does not vouch for them.

² “Apolog.,” 9, and “Act Nat.,” 7. The Syriac “Aristides,” lately edited by Mr. R. Harris, M.A. (Camb., 1891) does not describe the Agape, but says that Christians “every morning and at all hours on account of the goodnesses of God, praise and laud Him; and over their food and drink they render Him thanks—(εὐχαριστοῦντες, Gr.)” This would suggest that there was no separate Eucharist.

traces to Flavia, the granddaughter of Vespasian, and it occurs repeatedly in the catacomb of Callistus.¹ But in time the brotherly feast of the primitive Christian was metamorphosed into the stately ceremonial of the Catholic Church. Yet the Agape lingered in occasional and local practice until the fifth century. Augustine (A.D. 380) relates that his mother always took to the Agape a basketful of provisions. Chrysostom calls the Agape "an excellent and useful custom, a system of love, and the consolation of poverty." The third council of Carthage (390 A.D.) forbade the Agape in churches, and also required the Eucharist to be received when fasting. Notwithstanding these censures the Agape continued to be held even in churches, but its observance seems to have died out after it was formally condemned by the Council of Trulla, A.D. 692. That its abolition was an error and a misfortune for the Church, they who believe in the validity of apostolical ordinances ought to be the first to proclaim.²

¹ Schaff, "Oldest Ch. Man.," p. 58. The "kiss" is still continued in the Russian and Coptic Churches : it is frequently referred to in the older writers ; cf. Just. Mart., "Apol.," 65.

² Pfeleiderer ("Das Christenthum," p. 25) has some good remarks on the Agape. Bickell ("The Lord's Supper and the Passover Ritual," Clark, 1891) traces the connection between the ancient liturgies and the passover forms, but does not dis-

On this point Rothe reminds us that "the form in which the visible Church meets us at the beginning of the second century, and indeed Christendom at large, is characteristically different from that which we so uniformly beheld down to A.D. 70. The difference is, that at the latter date we see the external society as a Church in the true sense of the word. The Ignatian letters throughout present to us the picture of a Church formally organized—not only of a Christian Church in a strong sense, but also definitely of the Catholic Church."¹ The "Catholic Church," therefore, was "a new departure." Its leading principle, that communion with a Church governed by

cuss the connection between the Agape and the Eucharist, or the time of their separation. He says "the oldest liturgy is that attributed to St. Clement," found in the "Apostolic Constitutions" (p. 87). His great authority is the Roman Catholic Probst. But the supposition that the apostles used the forms of the Passover ritual in their Eucharist does not make the Clementine liturgy "apostolic." The "Apost. Constitut." belong to the fifth century.

¹ Rothe ("Anfänge," s. 348). He remarks, that the clear revelation of this dissimilarity between the apostolic Church and that of the second century is greatly owing to Kestner's remarkable work on the Agape ("Die Agape oder der Geheime Weltbund der Christen," 1819), where, with "singular industry," he brings to light the real character of the primitive eucharistic service. Kestner, however, imagined that the Christians formed a sort of secret society.

“bishops, priests, and deacons” is necessary to a true Christian standing, was an addition to the “covenant” of grace. To bring believers back to the simplicity and freedom of the apostolic position has been the aim of Protestantism for three centuries, and must be its aim for centuries to come.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHRISTHOOD OF JESUS.

“The existence . . . of the Christian Church rests on an historical foundation—on the acknowledgment that Jesus was the Messiah.”¹

THE relation of the first heresies to Jewish opinions is, in our day, more generally recognised than it used to be. Since the days of Neander it has not been quite so common to lay the whole blame of erroneous developments on Greek and Oriental philosophy. Cardinal Newman says that in his early days at Oxford it was “considered a paradox to look to Antioch for the origin of a heresy which took its name from an Alexandrian ecclesiastic, and which Mosheim had ruled to be one out of many instances of the introduction of Neo-Platonic ideas into the Christian Church.”² But Newman maintained his “paradox,” and was thereby enabled to supply a

¹ Neander, “Planting,” etc., i. 21.

² “The Arians of the Fourth Cent.,” by J. H. Newman, p. 403 ; cf. Liddon (“Bampt. Lect.,” p. 350).

sketch of the genius of the christological variations in the early Church, which was, in some respects, more instructive than any which preceded it.

More recent theological literature also indicates that increasing attention is directed to the subject. The writings of the late Bishop Lightfoot show how fully Jewish opinions must be recognised as factors in the evolution of heretical theories.¹ Professor A. Harnack holds that the allegorizing of the facts and words of the Old Testament which grew into Gnosticism was "the result of a continuous inworking of the Greek philosophy and of the Greek spirit upon Judaism."² The influence of the Septuagint, of the schools of the Jewish Sophia, and of teachers like Philo, would all contribute to this result. But this view does not neutralize the fact that the essential points in the first heresies were of Jewish rather than of Gentile origin.

The early Church writers, on the contrary — as

¹ Lightfoot on the Pauline and Ignatian epistles. Mr. Stanton claims that his "Jewish and Christian Messiah" (Clark, 1886) is the first book in English on the mutual interaction of Judaic and Christian thought in the first centuries. We may refer to remarks in Slater's "Methodism in the Light of the Early Church" (1885), pp. 48, 64; and to "Cerinthus and the Gnostics" (*Lond. Qu. Rev.*, Oct., 1886).

² Harnack, "Dogmen," i., s. 159.

Irenæus, Hippolytus, Eusebius, and the long line of ecclesiastical authorities, attributed heresy to heathen sources. They could not allow that any differences of opinion or seeds of heresy could exist in apostolic circles. Mosheim, by his impartial learning, did much to establish the view that heresy arose only when Greek philosophy was mixed with Christian thought. Other Lutheran writers, as Buddeus, long since commented upon facts which pointed to another conclusion; and, more recently, Baur, Hilgenfeld, and Lipsius have given the subject fresh elucidation.¹ Dr. Hatch, also, in his Hibbert Lectures, observes that "the religion which our Lord preached was rooted in Judaism," but that "the Greek Christianity of the fourth century was rooted in Hellenism."² By this theory he endeavours to span the distance between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. We have no dispute with this latest application of

¹ Buddeus, "Eccles. Apost.," Præf., claims to have shown that the "false apostles" were not heretics, but Jewish Christians: Godet ("Comm. on Cor." i. 12) contends that they belonged to a Pharisaic party opposed to the twelve.

² Hatch, "The Influence of Greek Ideas upon the Ch. Ch.," 1890, p. 5. Pfeleiderer ("Das Christenthum," iv. v.), who has "left Baur more decidedly since 1885," objects to Harnack's opinion that "Hellenism fell suddenly on Christianity." He thinks Hellenism prepared the way for all subsequent developments.

the doctrine of evolution, provided that it soon becomes sensible of its proper limits, and can only regret that Dr. Hatch has not been spared to pursue yet further his learned and suggestive inquiries. Who can question that the contact of Judaism and Hellenism had, before the Advent of our Lord, powerfully affected both? Monotheistic tendencies had been infused into Paganism, and loftier ethics into heathen philosophy. On the other hand, Jewish thinkers had begun to ponder the relation of their religion to the world. It is probable that the Hebrew ideal of the Christ had been raised, and a way opened for a gospel to all men. A "Præparatio Evangelica" has been talked of ever since the days of Eusebius, and is recognised on all sides.

The credit of the idea that there should be an absolute uniformity of doctrine and practice in the Church is unquestionably due to those who said, "Except ye be circumcised . . . ye cannot be saved." The image thus roughly sketched in Jerusalem did not receive full veneration at the first council—its hour was not yet come. It was laid in shadows for a season, but it survived the destruction of the city, and, transferred to Rome, it entered upon a new history. Romish artists adapted the figure of the great idol to new conditions, and the cultus of a false unity has continued to this day. What the

handkerchief of Veronica has been for church decorators, the portrait of the virgin church by Hegesippus has been for ecclesiastics.¹ He said that there was no heresy until the apostles had all passed away. At Rome, at Ephesus, at Corinth, there was neither spot of heresy nor wrinkle of sedition. Unfortunately this "strong delusion" took possession of the "Fathers," and the Church has not been slow to accept the questionable legacy thus bequeathed to it.²

This uncritical view of the primitive unity has deprived the Church of the instruction which would have been furnished by a study of the New Testament itself. The principal controversies of the second and following centuries revolved about the doctrine of our Lord's person. It has been assumed that there could have been no differences of opinion on such a subject in the apostolic age. It was supposed that every Gentile believer who was taught from the first that Jesus was the "Son of God—born of a woman," would exactly coincide in judgment with the believing Jew who looked to Him as the expected Messiah. No alternative between the extremes of orthodoxy and heterodoxy was considered possible. The ex-

¹ Euseb., "Ch. Hist.," iv. 22 : yet Hegesippus traces heresy to Jewish sources.

² 2 Thess. ii. 11 ; *ἐνέργεια πλάνης*.

istence of many intermediate phases of doctrine respecting the Saviour's personality, which a more careful criticism of the New Testament has disclosed, was not suspected.

The inquiry into this subject ought not to be prejudiced because German rationalism has been the first to explore it. The Tübingen writers asserted that the first Christians were Ebionites; that they used a gospel which described a merely human Jesus; and that christological development passed through Paulinism and Gnosticism into orthodox Catholicism. But this violent theory brought its own refutation. Renan, Lipsius, Hilgenfeld, Harnack, Weizsäcker, and even Pfeleiderer admit that it was a great exaggeration. Harnack goes so far as to say that "the theory did not unlock any problem, though it professed to unlock all."¹ He, with most of the modern naturalistic interpreters, allows that Jesus after His resurrection, was regarded by His followers as exalted to the Divine glory. This is very different from that foremost assertion of the Tübingen critics, which alleged that the doctrine of the Divinity was wholly elaborated in the second century. Harnack now urges that "the division of original Christendom into Jewish-Christians and Gentile-Christians" is in-

¹ *Contemp. Rev.*, Aug., 1886.

adequate because "it ignores the Judaic forms and spirit in Paulinism." Yet these investigations and speculations were not wholly vain. Like miners, who have dug shafts and bored rocks in many directions, yet have missed the true vein, they have left their plant and workings to others who are enriched by their toil.¹

The Christology of the New Testament may be conveniently divided into four parts, which are defined for us by the course of the history.

- i. That which belonged to the period of our Lord's life on earth.
- ii. The second is found in the proclamations of the day of Pentecost and of the whole ante-Pauline period.

¹ The following extract from Schwegler's "Nachapostolische Zeitalter" (ii. 271) will show what the Tübingen view was: "Christology generally goes hand-in-hand with the theological standpoint. The lower the view of Christianity and of its character as a novelty in history, the lower, as a rule, will be its view of the person of Christ, and *vice versa*. It was natural, therefore, that Jewish-Christians should see in Christ only an ordinary man; while Marcionitism, exaggerating the historical newness of Christianity, saw something superhuman in Him. The Christology of the first period was therefore Ebionitish, but that of the second was Docetic." But Schwegler forgot that Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, preached from the first Jesus as Son of God, and that there were Jewish Docetics before Marcion. We are sorry that Harnack can still say that "Marcion only fully understood Paul" ("Dogmenges.," i. 63).

iii. The next includes the conversion and ministry of St. Paul.

iv. The last, arising in the same period, extends to the close of the apostolic age.

I. In examining the views held concerning our Lord during His earthly life, it is necessary to remember that the gospel narratives, having been written from thirty to fifty years after His death, were framed to meet the wants of the generation in which they arose. This is especially true of the fourth Gospel, which reveals a mind fully awake to the perilous growth of anti-Christian ideas. None of the Gospels contains a full and exact account of all that Jesus said and did. They must be compared and combined in order to obtain an adequate view of that which they report. The Gospel of Mark is the one which looks most like a compendium of the whole history, while that of Matthew is evidently adapted to Jewish readers. The narrative of Luke explains itself as a compilation, and its design to instruct and edify Gentile readers is evident. That they are all fragmentary, and bear the marks of adaptation to particular classes of readers, may assist rather than impair our regard for their historical solidity.

The testimony shows that, though the disciples held the faith that Jesus was the Messiah, they were

forbidden to make it public. When Peter made his great confession that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God," they were strictly charged to tell no man.¹ It cannot be correctly said, therefore, that there was no such faith held until after the resurrection. This faith might be dim and intermittent, but, because they believed Jesus to be the Christ, they followed Him. He had been recognised by the anointing at His baptism and by other signs, or the disciples of John would not have left with his consent to follow Jesus. Cleopas and his friend, on their way to Emmaus, before they had attained the faith of the resurrection, could say, "We hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel." It was intimated, however, that such a faith was a special privilege from God. When Peter suddenly, in the midst of his companions, declared the great conviction—tacitly held, but perhaps never so plainly uttered before—he was told that "flesh and blood had not revealed it": it was an apocalypse from the "Father in heaven." This was the faith, nevertheless, which held that little

¹ Matt. xvi. 20; cf. Mark viii. 30; Luke ix. 21. In each case the reason for silence is annexed: "Because the Son of Man must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things." Matthew alone adds to the declaration, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build My Church."

band of followers, not wholly unfaithful, around their Master to the end.

We should be mistaken, however, if we should attribute to these original disciples a clear, well-defined, theologically complete conception of all that is included in the Christhood of Jesus. Nicene orthodoxy was not then in debate. Faith was centred in the person of Jesus.¹ What He was in reality, or how His Messiahship should be manifested to all men, they did not know. They were looking for a Christ for Israel—a prophet like Moses who should lead the people out of the house of bondage—a son of David who should sit on his father's throne. The testimony of the Baptist, the miracles and teaching and personality of Jesus left them little doubt that He was the Christ. Yet this faith often wavered, and when He was fixed to the cross—which was Anathema—they all forsook Him and fled.

Outside this charmed circle there was no gospel yet announcing that Jesus was the Christ. The disciples went everywhere preaching "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But "the great mystery of

¹ We cannot agree with Dr. Schaff ("Hist. of Ch. Ch.," i. 524; with whom Weiss, "Bibl. Theol.," coincides), that to the last "Peter's Christology is free of all speculative elements, and simply derived from the impression of the historical and risen Jesus."

godliness," that the Son of God was "manifest in the flesh," was not ready to be "believed on in the world," for He had not been "received up into glory." During this period there must have been a boundless variety of speculations about His true character. As flash upon flash of His glory beamed out, the awed soul of the beholder would often murmur, "What manner of man is this?" "Who do men say that I am?" was His own question at Cæsarea Philippi.¹ There was a legion of conjectures. Some said that John the Baptist had risen from the dead; others alleged that Elijah had come "before the great and terrible day of the Lord"; or that Jeremiah or one of the prophets had returned to repeat his message. When some asserted that He was the Son of David, it was retorted that in that case He would not have come from Nazareth. These discussions were almost exactly repeated in apostolic times, and they are not unheard of in our own day.

But the full realization of the Christhood was not reached until the day of Pentecost. Many were engaged in earnest study of the prophetic word. Thousands were looking for Him of whom "Moses in the law and the prophets wrote." Even in

¹ Mark viii. 29; Luke ix. 18: The R.V., after the best readings, has in Matt. xvi. 13, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?"

Samaria there was a hope that the Prophet spoken of in their Pentateuch would come and teach them all things. The miracles convinced Nicodemus, and others in the upper classes of Jerùsalem, that Jesus was a teacher from God. Nicodemus was shown that this was the highest judgment on the subject which the worldly mind could reach, and that to reach the higher faith of the true Christhood a man "must be born from above." This teaching is repeated in the first epistle of John (v. 1), "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (iv. 2); "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." It agrees also with St. Paul's dictum (1 Cor. xii. 3): "No man can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." Before the pentecostal Spirit descended devout men could only receive the baptism of water and repentance, and attend to the words and deeds of the Son of Man. Meanwhile the multitude said, "This is of a truth the prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee?" (John vii. 40, 41). His enemies ventured to exclaim, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner."

We find, then, that the Christhood of Jesus was more or less concealed during His earthly life. The faith which united the disciples had not been

analysed, nor its true contents ascertained; it was conditioned by their Jewish training, and limited by individual docility and the gift of God. As the light of stars takes years in reaching our world, so the sayings of Jesus, heard on the lake or mountain side, only became luminous when He had gone to the right hand of God. The disciples "beheld His glory," but did not at once perceive that it was the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth.

To such a level of faith many Jewish inquirers were brought in after days. They saw that the life and work of Jesus could not be accounted for except by a reference to Divine power. He must have been a good man, and perhaps divinely commissioned. He was a prophet, or had an æon, an angel, or was even a Messiah, but not the very Son of God.¹ It was to convince such persons that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," that St. John wrote.² He

¹ "This opinion suited Ebion, who thought that Jesus was a mere man, descended from David, but not Son of God . . . and so declares that there was an angel in Him" (Tert., "De Carne Ch.," 14).

² Harnack ("Dogmeng.," s. 71) allows that the fourth Gospel "belongs to the first century barely." The Tübingens regarded it as "the culmination of the dogmatic development of the Church in Asia Minor in the post-apostolic age" (Schwegler, "Nach. Zeit.," ii. 346).

held that this faith—not the inferior stages of it—gave “the victory over the world.” “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John v. 5).

II. On the day of Pentecost all was changed. The gospel trumpet now utters no uncertain sound. Peter proclaims the crucified but risen Jesus to be both Lord and Christ. The seal having been taken from their lips, the apostles, in the temple and in the house, declare “all the words of this life.” But let us not exaggerate the step now taken in the enunciation of the personal dignity of the Saviour. The final form of the doctrine of the saving Person has not yet been reached. They know that Jesus has been “exalted by the right hand of God,” and that He has “received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost.”¹ Though their hearts had received so great an enlargement, there were higher degrees of the revelation, which at present they were not able to bear. First, they must be impressed with the fact that Jesus had been raised to divine glory. He had passed out of the category of “a mere man.” Hence, baptism is administered, and miracles are wrought “in His name.” He is still spoken of, historically, as

¹ Acts ii. 33.

“Jesus of Nazareth,” as God’s Servant whom He has glorified.”¹ He is called “the Prince of life,” but nothing is said publicly of the glory which the Son had with the Father “before the world was.” In some of these original declarations all the predicates of true Deity seem to be implicit. The first apostolic preaching, like that of the Master, was only gradually comprehended. All that was contained in such declarations as: “Him did God exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance and remission of sins,” and in “They ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ,” was not at once discerned.

So far the divine dignity of the Saviour was viewed

¹ Harnack and Weiss, etc., hesitate to believe that Peter ever rose above this first stage in the faith; but his connection with John decides the point otherwise. Weiss’s notes (“Bibl. Theol.,”) on “Jesus,” “Christ,” “Jesus Christ,” and “Son of God,” are instructive. Liddon, “Bamp. Lect.,” p. 291, “Peter teaches as men are able to bear his doctrine.” The disposition to favour the doctrine of development appears recently in High Church writers, such as the Rev. W. Lock (*Expositor*, Aug. and Sept., 1891), who writes on “The Christology of the Earlier Chapters of the Acts of the Apostles,” and on the “Interpretation of the Life of the Early Church.” He notices that *παῖς* (Acts iii. 13, etc.) contains a reference to the “Servant” (Isa. liii., etc.), and that it is used chiefly in the “Didache,” the “Ep. of Clement,” the “Martyrdom of Polycarp,” and the “Apostolic Constitutions.”

as having been attained by the glorification of the human Jesus.¹ This was looked upon as a real apotheosis. When Stephen, in his rapture, said that he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God, the Jews suppressed him with fatal violence, just as they had taken up stones against Jesus because He had "said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God." It is in this sense, probably, that St. James speaks of "our Lord Jesus Christ" as "the Lord of glory." St. Peter also (1 Eph. iii. 22) shows that the faith which operated in baptism derives its warrant from the "resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers (to which classes He could not therefore belong) being made subject unto Him." That this was a true deification, if we may use that term, is clear from the same apostle's direction that they "sanctify in their hearts the Christ as Lord."² In the second Petrine epistle the glory of "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" is yet more fully exhibited.

¹ On the *Adoption* theology, which considers the divinity of Jesus as dependent on His exaltation, and the *Pneumatical*, which attributes pre-existence to the Person of Christ, see Harnack, "Dogmeng.", s. 133.

² 1 Pet. iii. 15.

We see, therefore, that the primitive believers were content to recognise that Jesus was the Messiah, without formulating any exact definition of the doctrine of His divine nature. He was "the Christ," "from God." The power which He wielded was ascribed to the Holy Spirit (*ὁ ἅγιος πνεῦμα*). Ten years after the Pentecost we are told in the narrative respecting Cornelius: "The word which He sent to the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all [*i.e.* both Jews and Gentiles]), that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."¹ Nothing is yet said about the Logos, who became flesh, or about the Son of God, who became the Son of Man. It is the "Man Christ Jesus" who did "eat and drink" with His disciples even after He rose from the dead, but who is now

¹ Acts x. 36: *ὁ Θεὸς ἤνυ αὐτοῦ*, cf. John iii. 2; Just. Mart., "D. c. T.," 8. "Differences thus far had not been formulated among Christians . . . In the Epistle to the Hebrews . . . the doctrine is treated with an emphasis and system which suggest . . . dissidents" (Stanton, "Messiah," p. 159).

exalted and "ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."

But some refused to believe that the crucified Jesus had been raised to the right hand of God; and some believed in His exaltation, but did not advance to the conception of His pre-existence. In the days of Justin Martyr there were persons who admitted Jesus to be the Messiah, but that "He was a Man and of man."¹ Trypho said, "Those who affirm Him to have been but a man, and to have been anointed by election, and so to have become Christ, appear to speak more plausibly than the orthodox." The Jew also asked why it was needful for Jesus to be baptized by the Spirit if the eternal Spirit had already been incarnate in Him. To this, Justin who was not quite clear himself about the distinction between the second and third persons in the Trinity, could not make a very satisfactory reply. In the "Pastor" of Hermas it is expressly said that "the Spirit is the Son of God."² Cerinthus, Basilides, Valentinus, and all Gnostic teachers suppose the "Christ" to have descended on Jesus at His baptism. That invariable tenet of Gnosticism was not the invention of Cerinthus, or Basilides, or

¹ Just. Mart., "Dial. c. Tr.," 48, 49.

² Sim. ix. 1, 2.

Marcion, as Irenæus and Epiphanius seem to report, but was a survival of the early doctrine somewhat perverted.

It is needful, therefore, while we recognise with much interest these signs of simplicity in the incipient theology of the Church, not to implicate the primitive Christians in the erroneous developments of a later time. We must not conclude that the apostolic Church ever questioned the doctrine of the divinity of the Saviour,—that they could not, though the truth was not so fully manifested at once. The bright dawn of the Church advanced as the splendour of the Sun of righteousness arose upon it. It was not at once that they who had been the companions of Jesus in His tribulation and patience, and had known Him as a human Friend and Brother, ceased to think of Him as Christ in the flesh, and came to recognise in the glory which had “tabernacled” among them the Shechinah of God. Yet from the first they had rendered Him divine honours because God had exalted Him. Their experience of His grace justified them in these acts of devotion, and in due time they felt that to withhold from Him the attributes of a divine personality would be to do Him an infinite dishonour.¹

¹ Weizsäcker (“*Das Apost. Zeit.*,” 1886, p. 16) says that Paul

III. A new era in doctrine began with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. He knew that the voice which spoke to him on the way to Damascus was supernatural, for he replied, "Who art Thou, Lord?" The answer, "I am Jesus," filled him with trembling and astonishment. Jesus, whom he had persecuted, was not a crucified man, but the "Lord" of that higher world from which the voice had come! In a moment, the course of thought, which had been slowly maturing in the minds of the Galilean apostles was accomplished for him. It was this: Jesus could not have entered into glory unless it had been an essential property of the Christ: if He had been glorified as Christ, then He was "Lord," and had been from everlasting.

This apocalypse was not only for him, but for the Church. To him it was as when chaos, in its meaningless wanderings, first met the newly-born light, when the aboriginal darkness fled before the dawn of the first day. The voice which uttered the first *Fiat lux* had declared to him the secret of the ages: "Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of

has first clearly pursued the doctrine of the superhuman existence of Christ, "but he has not done it in opposition to the older apostles. There was no controversy over it." This is very different from the rationalistic dictum, that "Paul was the inventor of Christian theology."

darkness, who shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”¹

He began at once to preach in the synagogues that Jesus was the Christ and the Son of God.² It had pleased God to reveal His Son in him (Gal. i. 16). Jesus was to him now not merely a glorified Man, but in the same ineffable category with the Father from whom the revelation had come. Already Ananias had called Jesus “Lord.” When Peter reported the conversion of Cornelius, he reminded his brethren that their Master had said, “John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Of this gift from the exalted Jesus, however, he further says, “God gave them the like gift as He did also unto us.” So that all things were ready for the enlarged conception of the glory of the Redeemer which, through the converted Pharisee, was now given to the Church.

The Revised Version of the New Testament, following the best accredited readings, and by its own discriminating fidelity to the text, exhibits many

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 6.

² Meyer remarks that “Son” is found in Acts only in ix. 20 and xiii. 33; and (with Weiss) that it is equivalent with *Messiah*; but see Lechler, “Apost. Hist.,” i. 321.

features of this development of gospel truth which are obscured in the older version. Every one expected to find "Greeks" in Acts xi. 20, instead of "Grecians." The Philippian gaoler was exhorted to "believe in the Lord Jesus." He, as a heathen, would attach no idea to the title "Christ," which appears in the old reading. The omission also, in the account of the eunuch (Acts viii. 37), of the confession that "Jesus is the Son of God" has full authority. The genuineness of the original is greatly corroborated by a case like this where current usage is recognised. If the entire composition had been a post-apostolic "Tendenz-Schrift," the formulas of a later time would have been wrought into its very constitution.

On the other hand, we do not see why the R.V. should translate in Acts xiii. 38, "through this *man* is proclaimed unto you remission of sins." Only a pronoun is used (*διὰ τούτου*); and, as St. Paul always preached Jesus as something more than man, it might have been better to have left it in the indeterminate-ness of the original expression: "This person," or "He."¹

¹ Cf. Acts ix. 22: "Proving that this is the Christ"; Luke i. 32: "He shall be great"; Acts x. 36: "He is Lord of all." "This man" could scarcely be used for *οὗτος* in this case. Cf. also Acts x. 40, xv. 29; 1 John v. 20: "This is the true God"; 1 Cor. ii. 2.

The R.V. also gives "railed," as an alternative expression for "blasphemed," in the account of St. Paul's address at the Pisidian Antioch (Acts xiii. 45). It was the Apostle's assertion that Jesus was the very Christ, which excited, as in other cases, the deadly opposition of his Jewish hearers, who "contradicted the things spoken by Paul, and blasphemed." The word is evidently intended to represent "the blasphemy against the Son of man," of which the adversaries of the gospel were so often guilty. Saul himself had been, in this sense, a blasphemer (1 Tim. i. 13). At Corinth the Jews "blasphemed" (Acts xviii. 6). Paul confessed before Agrippa that he had compelled believers to blaspheme; *i.e.*, to deny that Jesus was Christ.¹ The error of Hymenæus and Alexander (1 Tim. i. 20) probably included the rejection of Jesus as truly Son of God. James (ii. 7) reminds the Jewish-Christians that their richer neighbours "blaspheme that holy name." Of this kind also was the "blasphemy" of those who said at Smyrna that they were Jews, and were not. To the Church at Pergamos it was said, "Thou holdest fast My name, and didst not deny My faith."

It is not difficult to gather from the accounts in the "Acts" and epistles of St. Paul's preaching that

¹ Cf. Plin., "Ep." xi. 97: *maledicerent Christo*. Just. Mart.

there were certain portions of his doctrine which were full of offence to the Jewish mind. He taught not merely that Christianity was the fulfilment of Judaism, but that it was its substitute. Faith had taken the place of works: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Jewish believers might still observe the law, but the actual obligation had ceased. Paul made the humiliating death of Christ essential to his system. They who had "died with Christ" had "died to the law." Besides, he left room for no possible division between the person of Jesus, who "suffered under Pontius Pilate," and the Christ, "who being in the form of God . . . emptied Himself."

But some who professed to preach the gospel did not advance the full doctrine of Paul. Some, like Apollos at the beginning of his career, had not received adequate instruction, and some were hindered by the fear of men. We have already shown that Paul found at Thessalonica and at Corinth the disposition to attend to an argument from Scripture that the "Christ" should suffer, but not to believe that Jesus, the crucified Nazarene, was "that Blessed One." Some faint-hearted evangelists might make a bad use of Paul's example in his temporary suppression—in order to conciliate prejudice—of the chief article in his gospel. He evidently had

some of these in his view when he says : " We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully ; but by the manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

After Paul had left Corinth Apollos came. His case is very instructive. He was an Alexandrian, learned in the Scriptures, and eloquent. He had been " catechised in the way of the Lord." Vibrations from the ministry of the Baptist and of Jesus had reached distant lands, and the oral gospel, which related the words and deeds of Jesus, had found echoes in many foreign cities. Some had received the baptism of repentance ; many had given themselves anew to the study of Scripture ; and some, like Apollos himself, were able to speak " carefully the things concerning Jesus," though, with Him, " knowing only the baptism of John."

So far, however, Apollos had not understood that Jesus was the Son of God.¹ Aquila and his wife taught him " the way of God more perfectly." Heretofore, he had spoken of Jesus as " a Man come from God," singularly endowed, who had been baptized by

¹ " He was prepared to accept the Messiah, but did not yet understand that Jesus was He" (Lumby, " Acts").

John, and anointed with the Holy Spirit. But now he proceeds to Corinth, where he "mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." The central truth was now added to his faith and his testimony. His doctrine, now, was that of Paul: "Paul planted, Apollos watered." A party arose which claimed Apollos as its head; but we have no reason to think that he encouraged the formation of that party any more than that Peter and Paul encouraged those who used their names. If, as some believe, Apollos became the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we may see what the higher faith in the personality of the "Son" was, into which he was brought by the saintly diligence of Aquila and Priscilla.

In Acts xix. we learn that there were certain disciples at Ephesus who had only received the baptism of John, and had not heard that the Holy Ghost was given. These represent an earlier stage in the movement, for they do not seem to have been taught, as Apollos had, "the things concerning Jesus." When they heard the truth, they were willing to be baptized into "the name of the Lord Jesus." Such a case shows how the various phases of the earlier opinions might continue long after their first promulgation. But, so far as Paul's mission was concerned, none was permitted to regard Jesus as a good

man only. The believer must "confess with his mouth Jesus as Lord," "every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord," and this because He had "been originally in the form of God."¹

IV. If we now turn to the later apostolic teaching, we shall find that this advance of doctrine was not received by all, and that it became an occasion of

¹ Phil. ii. 5: ὁς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. Zeller ("Acts of Apost.," xix. 1) strangely objects to the account of disciples of John at Ephesus as unhistorical. It may be noted that the baptisms recorded in the "Acts" were performed in "the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts ii. 38, viii. 12, x. 48, xix. 5). Neander ("Planting," i. 21) thinks that "in the original apostolic formula no reference was made except to this one article"—*i.e.* the Messiahship. Meyer thinks that Matt. xxviii. 19, "Baptize in the name of the Father," etc., was a statement of the meaning of baptism, but not at once used as a formula. This fuller formula is, however, found in the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," c. 7. Mr. Gore ("Incarnation," p. 84) places too much stress on the occurrence in the "Teaching," since we know so little of the real literary history of that document. Mr. Gore says, further (p. 96), "The apostles themselves had been led gradually on in correspondence with their consciences to explicit belief in Jesus Christ. They led their first disciples by a similar process. To have preached 'Jesus Christ is God, nakedly and simply, would have shocked every right-minded Jew, who would have seen in the assertion a proclamation of a second God, and would have been welcomed by every pagan only too easily, because he believed in 'gods many.'"

opposition to St. Paul, and of difficulty to the other apostles. So largely are the later writings of the New Testament occupied with replies to those who were disposed to take a low view of the Redeemer's person, that many recent critics have concluded that some of its principal portions originated in the second century. But if the doctrines referred to can be shown to have existed in the apostolic time, that hypothesis is unnecessary. The perpetuation of the lower Jewish conceptions concerning Jesus into a time when the enlightened Christian consciousness became unable to allow them, provided the controversial elements which are found in the writings of Paul and John. The clearer discernment of the Master's teaching concerning Himself, the fuller interpretation of the Old Testament—both due to the continued operation of the Holy Spirit as our Lord had promised—and revelations like that made to St. Paul, had made necessary the enlargement of the faith, though all could not at once enter into it.

St. John shows that some denied that Jesus was "Christ come in the flesh." They admitted that He was "Christ," but this was "in the water only." He, they said, had received an "anointing" or Christ-gift at His baptism, but He was not "the Word become flesh" (1 John ii. 20, v. 6); the Divine principle in Jesus was not the eternal Logos which assumed hu-

manity at His birth, but the Holy Spirit which came upon Him at the Jordan. They could not believe that the "Son of God" had been crucified: but held that the Divine afflatus was a supernatural endowment, altogether external to His true personality, and which left Him at His crucifixion. Against this teaching St. John in his gospel and epistles strenuously contends: "These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life through His name."¹ "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God."² "This is the victory that hath overcome the world—our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"³ "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist . . . now . . . in the world."⁴

¹ John xx. 31. ² 1 John v. 1. ³ 1 John v. 4, 5.

⁴ 1 John iv. 2, 3. Haupt and Westcott allow that in ver. 2 we might read, "Every spirit which confesses that Jesus is Christ come in the flesh." Huther favours this view, especially because it would agree with the supposition that John wrote against the Docetism of Cerinthus, and not that of Valentinus. Haupt also inclines to put more value than is usually given to the old reading, "he who dissolves Jesus"—*ὁ λύει τὸν Ἰησοῦν* (solventes Jesum, "Tert. c. Marc.," v. 16). Irenæus (iii. 16) knew

The term "Docetism" is used with some ambiguity among writers on ecclesiastical history. Dr. Salmon remarks that "Docetism proper" was that which denied a real body to Jesus.¹ This was the doctrine of Basilides, Valentinus, and Marcion. Cerinthus, on the other hand, asserted that Jesus was real, but "Christ" only apparitional. "Ebionitism views the divine in Christ docetically, as Docetism does the human," says Dr. Dorner; but this is not absolutely correct.² All the Ebionites, as well as all the Gnostic sects, spoke of the "Christ" docetically. This is the thread of unity which connects the faltering Jewish believer of the first age with the last Gnostic who vanished from the Church in the fifth century. Polycarp probably speaks against the later view when he says, "Every one who does not confess Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh is antichrist: and he who does not confess the testimony of the cross is of the devil"; as does Ignatius (in "Ep. ad Trall.," ix., etc.): "Jesus Christ . . . who was truly born . . . was truly crucified . . . if these things were done only in appearance, then am I also in appearance

this reading—"qui solvit Jesum"; but Origen (Matt. xxv. 14) seems to imply that it was directed against the later docetism: "Hæc autem dicentes non solvimus suscepti corporis hominem."

¹ "Dict. of C. B.," i. 868.

² "Person of Christ," i. p. 188.

bound." Both Polycarp and Ignatius connect Doctrines with the Judaizing heretics.¹

St. Paul speaks to the Colossians (ii. 19) of some who did not "hold fast the Head"—Jewish sectaries, who quenched the glory of Christ in angelological speculation.² In the Pastoral Epistles also are references to those who were zealous of the law but did not consent "to sound words even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ." But as the epistles to the Corinthians are universally accepted as genuine, we may refer to them for evidence that the opinions spoken of belonged to the apostolic age.

At Corinth Paul had laid the foundation that Jesus is Christ. On this foundation some had built "wood, hay, and stubble." When the Church met, and its members were allowed to exercise their gifts (charismata), some ventured to speak disrespectfully of "Jesus." Instead of confessing Him to be "both Lord and Christ," they pronounced Him to be "Anathema" (1 Cor. xii. 3). Those of whom the apostle speaks were professed believers, because he is in this passage treating of the employment of spiritual gifts.³ They who used these expressions

¹ Lightfoot, "Ignatius," i, 371.

² Lechler, "Apost. Times," i. 137; Lightfoot, "Coloss.," p. 181.

³ The apostle addresses his readers as "Gentiles." He desires to guard them against the Judaizing teachers who made

distinguished so positively between the human and the Divine in the Person of the Saviour that they had abandoned all veneration for the suffering Jesus. They believed in "Christ" but despised "Jesus" who had come under the curse of the cross. However, Paul shows that the faith had entirely vanished when "Jesus" was so dishonoured: "No man speaking by the Spirit of God saith—Jesus Anathema." At the same time he declares that no man, unless he is taught of God, can fully appreciate the Redeemer's glory: "No man can say Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit."

In 1 Corinthians i. 1-9, the apostle uses the title "Jesus Christ," "Christ Jesus," or "Lord Jesus Christ," in almost every verse, so needful did he find it to reprove those who were unwilling to render to "Jesus" His full glory as "Christ." Some of the adversaries boasted that they were "of Christ" (1 Cor. i. 12). This led him to say, "If any man trusteth in himself that he is of Christ (*Χριστοῦ*:—*ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ*), let him consider this again with himself, that, even as he is Christ's, so also are we" (2 Cor. x. 7). This special class of votaries "of Christ" did not boast in the name of Jesus any more

such statements as the above. They who said, "I am of Christ," seem to have received such doctrine.

than in that of Paul or Apollos. They did not trust in the baptism of John, though he had been "sent from God," nor in Jesus, though "God was with Him." Their confidence was in "Christ"—that Divine power which had rested on Jesus during His ministry but which forsook Him at the cross.

It is of some of the same school, who wished to separate the Divine nature of the Saviour from the human, that St. Paul speaks in 2 Corinthians xi. 4. He feared lest they should corrupt the Church and spoil its "simplicity and purity towards Christ." He says, "If he that cometh preacheth another Jesus," *i. e.* a Jesus who is not identical with Christ, "ye do well to bear with him": yet he adds, "such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ."

We do not know how wide a latitude of opinion was permitted in the apostolic Church.¹ By their original proclivities, and by their modes of life and thought and worship, Jews and Gentiles were so divided, that it was a problem indeed how to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." In the epistle to the Ephesians St. Paul maintains that both the great sections of the Church were included in its

¹ As Schwegeler says, it is a most critical question when the Ebionite views became heretical.

oneness, and that God from eternity had predestinated their amalgamation. The various members make but one body, for there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." They who separated the "one Lord" into "Jesus" and "Christ" did not retain the one faith.¹ All were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. There might be differences "in the measure of the gift of God" (Eph. iv. 7). Some might see in Jesus more than others. But the Church had been instituted, and its various offices ordained to bring all up to the unity of the faith, and the accurate knowledge (*ἐπιγνώσις*) of the Son of God.² In this way all should come "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." They should no more be children, cherishing the imperfect theories of the former time, nor be carried hither and thither by crafty teachers, but should "speak the truth in love." All were "built upon the foundation," and "each several building (Jewish and Gentile), fitly framed together, groweth into an holy

¹ Cf. 1 Tim. ii. 5: "one Mediator, Himself Man." In the spurious epp. of Ignat. (ad Tars., 4; ad Antioch., 4) this passage is used against those who divided the person of Christ.

² *ἐπιγνώσις* has, usually, a reference to the more accurate knowledge of the Mediator; see Eph. i. 17, iv. 13; Col. ii. 12; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 25; Heb. x. 26; 2 Pet. i. 8.

temple in the Lord ” ; for in the same Father “ every family ” is named.¹

If we turn to the Epistle to the Colossians, we have the authority of Bishop Lightfoot for saying that there were opponents of St. Paul amongst them, whose views of the person of Christ were “ inadequate and derogatory.”² They endeavoured to mislead the Colossians by “ philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ ; for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Bishop Lightfoot also says, that “ when Paul speaks of the true Gospel first taught to the Colossians as the doctrine of ‘ the Christ even Jesus the Lord,’ his language might be directed against the tendency to separate the heavenly Christ from the earthly Jews, as though the connection was only transient.”³ It was against the same errorists that in the same epistle the apostle so emphatically speaks of our

¹ The phraseology of Eph. iv. 21 has embarrassed commentators : “ But ye did not so learn Christ ; if so be ye heard Him, and were taught in Him, even as truth is in Jesus.” To be instructed in “ Christ ” was to be taught in “ Jesus ”—in His history, person, and work. We admit that there is some incongruity in making *καθώς ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια=ἀληθῶς*, yet the relation between *ἐν αὐτῷ* and *ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ* seems to justify this meaning.

² “ Col.,” p. 112.

³ Col. ii. 6.

Lord as "Christ," "the Christ," "the mystery of God" in Christ. Thus the Colossian heretics were, as Lightfoot intimates, "the link between the Judaizers of the apostolic age and the school of Cerinthus."¹

To illustrate this topic as it deserves would require an exposition of the whole of the New Testament. It is enough for us to have shown that tenets afterwards expanded in the Gnostic systems existed in the apostolic time, and they can be generally traced to Judaizing parties. These false teachers also followed the letter, but not the spirit, of the earliest Gospel, which had spoken of Jesus as one anointed with the Holy Spirit. They could not receive St. Paul's great doctrine that "Christ died" in the person of Jesus. They did not sympathize with him when he said, "Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world." In that Jewish "world" where Paul had now no chance of wealth or reputation, he might have spoken, without any detriment to himself, of "the cross of Jesus"; but his offence was, that he

¹ Cerinthus is supposed to have been opposed by St. John Lipsius, etc., place him in the latter half of the second century, because pseudo-Tertullian and Philaster say that he followed Carpocrates.

called it "the cross of Christ." St. James, St. Peter, and St. Jude do not employ the term "cross," and its use by St. John (never in the epistles) deserves a special study. In the writings of Clement, Hermas, in the "Didache," and the Clementines, there is little said of the death of Christ, though only the latter belongs to the Ebionite school. These facts suggest that the sign of the cross as a sacred emblem most likely arose in the "Catholic" age of the Church. To Jews the heathen abomination would always retain its repulsiveness. Judaistic associations were largely eliminated from Catholicism when, in the days of Tertullian, A.D. 210, the sign had come into general use.

The point at which the Jewish-Christian separated himself from progressive Christianity was "the cross—to the Jews a stumbling-block." From Calvary he retraced his steps to the shores and valleys of Galilee, where the parables and teachings of the "kingdom," and the report of the mighty works of Jesus, still lingered. A collection of the discourses of Jesus was probably the first Jewish gospel. They who had "seen Christ after the flesh" would, naturally, be the chosen counsellors of the believing Israelite.

St. Paul, on the other hand, taught his followers to "set their affection on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." The confession

which he required was, "Jesus is Lord." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was in unison with St. Paul in his exalted view of Jesus. The appellation "Jesus Christ" he does not often use, yet he magnifies the name "Jesus."¹ His saying in chapter xiii. 8, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," has been supposed to assert the abiding faithfulness of the Saviour. But it is connected with a caution against "divers and strange teachings": the phrase appears to have been a Christian formula, and is spoken of as "the faith" of their leaders and "the issue" of their life: may it not, therefore, contain a reference to the person of our Lord? The Jewish-Christian was tempted to divide between Jesus and Christ; here he is reminded that both are "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."²

¹ Heb. ii. 9, iii. 1, xi. 20, xii. 2.

² Bengel follows the usual interpretation: "Jes. Ch. qui era heri, idem est hodie: *heri*, ante passionem et mortem: *hodie* in gloria."

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHRIST-PARTY IN CORINTH.

“The unsolved riddle in the Corinthian controversies.”¹

THE eclipse, which soon passed over many interesting features of apostolic life, cast its densest obscuration over the divisions of the early Church. The tendencies of tradition, with the lack of independent testimony, have placed such subjects as that which we now propose to consider almost beyond the reach of investigation. If we except a brief essay by Dean Stanley, scarcely anything has been published in England on “the Christ-party.”² German theologians have given much attention to it, but, as the sequel will show, have come to different

¹ Schenkel.

² “Essays on the Apostolic Age.” A paper on this subject was sent by the present writer to a leading theological magazine, before the appearance of Godet’s “Corinthians”—which, as will be seen, takes a view of the tenets of this party which is almost identical with his. The paper was excluded “for want of space.” The question has not been considered to be one of practical importance to English theology.

conclusions, and, as we think, have failed to find the right interpretation. If illustration of the imperfection of our knowledge respecting primitive Christianity were needed, the variety and contradiction of opinions on this subject held by the first authorities would supply a striking instance. Few have admitted that the case presented any difficulty. Most writers have assumed that it is easy to decide what would be the opinions of three of the classes mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 12; there are scarcely two modern writers who exactly agree respecting the tenets of the fourth class. What Rückert said half a century ago is still true: "We have a party to seek."¹ More recently, Schenkel tells us that "the Christ-party is yet the unsolved riddle in the Corinthian controversies."²

The question revolves about three principal questions:—

I. Were they who claimed to be "of Christ" (*ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ*), a separate party in the Church, and are they to be distinguished from those who placed themselves under human teachers?

¹ "Die 1 Brief an die Korinther," von L. J. Rückert (1836), p. 43.

² "Das Christusbild," von Dr. D. Schenkel (1879), p. 72. Sabatier ("The Apostle Paul," p. 159), says, "It is a vain attempt to trace out these four parties, especially the Christ-party."

II. If forming a separate section of the Church, were they Jewish or Gentile Christians, or both?

III. What were their peculiar tenets?

I. The majority of replies to the first question is in favour of the separateness of the party and their opinions. They were within the church fellowship, but were differentiated from their fellow-Christians by certain doctrinal views—as de Wette, Neander, Meyer, Lightfoot, Godet, and most modern authorities hold. Some writers think that the fourth party was but a modification or development of the third or Petrine party; others resolve the four into two; but almost all agree that each party must have had some peculiar opinions. Rübiger asserts that the fourth party has been created by the exegetes, and that each section held allegiance to Christ, but claimed its own teacher as His best representative.

The more general view, is that which resolves the four into two principal parties. It is quite probable that there would be affinities between those who followed Paul and those who followed Apollos; and it is perhaps equally probable that there would be a close relationship between those “of Cephas” and those “of Christ.”¹ This is allowed, under various

¹ “The Aramaic name ‘Cephas’ is, perhaps, a proof of the Palestinian origin of the party” (Godet, Beet).

modifications, by Baur, Neander, Schmidt, Osiander, Lechler, Davidson, and others.¹

We conclude, therefore, that the probabilities are in favour of the view that the Christ-party constituted a distinct portion of the Church in Corinth. They remained in the church association, but held views somewhat apart from those of their fellow-believers. The unity of the Church was not strictly dogmatic or liturgical, but spiritual. It was, however, in danger of being broken through the elevation of party opinions into the position of tests of Christian faith and worthiness. Of the actual tenets of the Christ-party, and the relation of these to the general doctrine, we shall speak hereafter.

II. Proceeding to the next question, we ask whether those who said they were "of Christ" were Jewish or Gentile Christians.

The overwhelming weight of opinion is, that they belonged to the Jewish section of the Christian community. This was the theory advanced by Baur in his essay published in 1831.² That essay

¹ See also Lightfoot, "Hor. Heb." in loc.

² "Zeitschr. für Theol.," 1831. "Dass unter der Kephasspartei und der sogenannten Christuspartei wesentlich eine und dieselbe Partei zu verstehen ist, halte ich auch jetzt noch für die einzig richtige Ansicht, um sowohl die Briefe des Apostels,

signalized the commencement of his remarkable speculations on the history of the early Church. That his views on this point should prevail with the Tübingen school was to be expected, but they have also been accepted by writers of almost every school; as Credner, Reuss, Schmidt, Lechler, Osiander, Schenkel, Davidson, Lightfoot, and Weizsäcker. Meyer preferred to defend the patristic position that they were both Jewish and Gentile Christians who preferred a Divine teacher to human instructors. This view, while untenable on many grounds, is also exposed to the suspicion that later ideas have been read into an earlier situation.

Early church writers generally assumed that the Christ-party was orthodox, and opposed to sectarianism. Chrysostom says, "Although they who addicted themselves to men were in error, not surely they who addicted themselves to Christ." Augustine also says, "They who desired to be built upon men said, I am of Paul; but others, who would not be built upon Peter but upon the rock (*petram*) said, I am of Christ." Ambrose declares that the "apostle praises those most who said they were of Christ and not of a man." Theophylact thought Paul "does not accuse them

als auch die Korinthische Parteiwesen überhaupt richtig aufzufassen." Baur, "Kirchg. d. drei erst. Jahrh.," B. i., s. 58. Cf. also Schwegler, "Nachap. Zeit.," i. 162.

because they were followers of Christ, but rather because all did not follow Him." ¹

It must be observed, however, in opposition to these patristic interpreters, that St. Paul has no word of commendation for the Christ-party. He mentions it as being divisive like the others. Besides, does he not speak of those who professed to be "of Christ" as His opponents, particularly in the second epistle (x. 7, xi. 23)? Neither can we receive Dean Stanley's conjecture, that "the party of Paul was in the ascendant during the period of the first epistle . . . and the party of Cephas during the period of the second epistle, which expressly attacks a formidable company of Judaizers."² There were evidently Judaizers in the Church at Corinth from the beginning. Though there are no further direct references to the Christ-party in the first epistle, it will be shown later that there are indirect references. It is true that in 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23, Paul only mentions the three human leaders—Paul, Apollos, Cephas; but he did not mention again "Christ" as a party-leader, since all were "of Christ" (*ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ*). He opposed those who sought to monopolize the sacred name.

¹ "Others said more wisely, I am of Christ" (St. Bernard).

² "Corinthians" (1883).

It has been noticed that Clement of Rome (Ep. i. ad Cor., i. 47) mentions only the names of Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, without referring to those who said they were "of Christ." This fact might be important if we were quite sure that Clement had full knowledge of the real circumstances of the Corinthian Church in St. Paul's days. But he refers to St. Paul's epistles as his authority for the fact, that divisions had formerly occurred. He says that Paul wrote "at the beginning of the gospel," and consequently at a time remote from his own. He also compares the contentions of the apostolic age with those of his own day, and in favour of the former. The early believers had their partialities, but they were "towards apostles of high reputation." From his treatment of the case it has been customary to infer that the church party was not to be blamed; or that it was not a separate party; or not so definitely formed as the others. But Clement's reference to the subject is incidental; and, as it is fraught with difficulties, no material value can be put upon it.

Neander and Olshausen, on the other hand, have contended that the sect consisted wholly of Gentile Christians, who looked to Christ as to a higher Socrates. Their training, it has been thought, would incline them to seek for a teacher of heavenly wisdom. "In Corinth," says Olshausen, "if in any place, the

coalition of Christianity with heathen elements was probable." To philosophic Greeks, certainly, Christ might appear as a more authoritative and attractive oracle than any of their national sages, if the testimony of the cross, which was foolishness unto them, could be concealed. But Baur replied to Neander on this point. He reminded him that "not many wise" had been brought into the Church. It would be difficult to believe that a latitudinarian, Gentile-Christian party could have been formed so soon. Nevertheless, it has been urged, in favour of this theory, that a great part of the argumentation of the epistle is directed against "the wisdom of this world." Meyer and others, however, contend that this polemic against philosophy (*σοφία*) was aimed at the followers of Apollos, and not at the adherents of "Christ." A final decision in the case must evidently be postponed until we have decided what the views of the party really were. We hope to furnish reasons for believing that the "Christ-party" consisted of Jewish-Christians, and that their association with the Petrines was not accidental, but was founded on actual resemblances and sympathies.

III. The examination of the third question, which relates to the specific doctrines of the Christ-party, is embarrassed by a yet more distracting variety of

judgments. The lack of positive information has left each inquirer to follow the dictates of a favourite theory, or the dictum of a chosen authority. They especially who were disposed to seize every possible argument for unity necessarily regarded the party as the witnesses of primitive orthodoxy—the representatives of a unity which refused to be broken.

Nothing is more startling to the modern inquirer into the facts of the primitive Church than the discovery that the co-existence of Jewish and Gentile believers in the apostolic communities was so soon forgotten. The full recognition of that fact by Ignatius, Cyprian, or Eusebius would have been wholly incompatible with their view of the constitution of the Church. It has happened, however, that the section of the Church to which these writers belonged soon became predominant, and its history and traditions were chiefly cherished. The passion for uniformity excluded from the "Catholic" fold believers who practised Judaism, and Jewish Christians were reckoned to be among the heretics.

It is in recent times only that views opposed to the older conceptions of unity have led to a more careful examination of the indications of controversy in the primitive Christian communities. During the half-century which has elapsed since the publication of Baur's famous essay, a legion of suppositions have

been advanced, with the most of which we must deal as summarily as possible. It has been said,—

1. That the “Christ-party consisted of Jews who held that Christ had been promised to their nation only.” This conjecture of Schmidt has not gained a wide acceptance. The opinion was naturally held by most Jews and was not peculiar to this party.

2. That “the first three names were fictitious—hiding the real party-names.” This view was encouraged by Jerome, Ambrose, Theodoret, Cæcumenius, and even by Michaelis and others.¹ It was founded on 1 Corinthians iv. 6: “These things I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes.” But all that this passage suggests is, that the followers of Paul and Apollos were included for the sake of impartiality, but not implying that they really indulged the sectarian spirit. It is not likely that all the names were fictitious; and, as

¹ Also by Estius, “In omnes can. apost. epist.”: “At vero Græci expositores, cum quibus sentiunt Ambrosius at alii Latinarum non pauci, existimant apostolorum fingere personas . . . sive pseudo-apostolorum in quos latius invenitur in 2 Ep. x., xi., xii.” This writer also accepts an earlier opinion that in 1 Corinthians i. 12 the names have the order of dignity; Paul humbly places his own name first: “Christum supremum et huic proximum Petrum.” Meyer, etc., regard the succession of names as historical.

Holzmann says, this supposition " may be considered as done with."¹

3. That " they had a protevangelium, or ' sayings of Jesus,' which they exalted above apostolical preaching." This view was held by Eichhorn, and by Neander, who risks on it his theory that they were Gentile-Christians. It is not known that any besides Jewish-Christians boasted of having early gospels. As such, it is possible that the Christ-party might have a document or documents on which they placed great importance, though it is not certain that written gospels were existing at so early a date. This conjecture, therefore, fails from intrinsic improbability, and for lack of confirmation.

4. That " they were Jews but inclined to Sadducean opinions." Grotius and Storr advanced this theory, which was supposed to meet the case of those who denied the resurrection, 1 Corinthians xv. 12.² It is not shown, however, why such persons should declare that they were " of Christ." It may be noticed that St. Paul in the above passage does not speak of the raising of " Jesus" but of " Christ : " " If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain " ; but the

¹ Schenkel's " Bibel-Lexicon."

² This view is defended in Webster and Wilkinson's " New Testament," and in Rich. Watson's " Dictionary."

distinction has not been observed by those who speak of the party as Sadducees. They urge it on other, but, as we think, insufficient grounds.

5. That "they were followers of James, the brother of our Lord." It has been thought probable that as Paul, Apollos, and Cephas were taken as the heads of parties, James also, who held an elevated position in the Church at Jerusalem, would have his followers. His Judaism is supposed to have been more strict than that of Peter, who, when "certain came from James," retreated from his previous fraternization with the Gentile-Christians. Ewald holds that the arguments addressed by Paul to those who had scruples about eating flesh, and about matrimony, would suit a party claiming authority from James, the friend of Essenes and the boast of the Ebionites.¹

This view has obtained the support of Rosenmüller, Hug, Dean Stanley, and of Canon Farrar. The objections to it are, that no reason can be assigned for the absence of the name of the fourth apostolic teacher, and that it is not explained why the followers of James should have a special claim to be "of Christ."² Prof. Weizsäcker thinks that the

¹ Ewald, "History of Israel," viii. 183.

² Weizsäcker, "Zeit. d. Chr. Kirche," s. 310, 356; Farrar's "Life of St. Paul," p. 382.

party held the views of James but did not formally claim his authority. They were, he contends, of the same party as the opponents of St. Paul in Galatia, who were zealous of the law, and who, in Corinth traced their gospel to those who had seen Christ in the flesh. He also says (s. 360), "They would not only make the Gentiles into Jews, but also into Messias believers according to Judaism . . . They recommended the reception of the law as a commandment of Jesus. They said that the true gospel was not that which Paul preached, for he had not seen the Lord, but existed in a living tradition among the Jewish Churches." He consequently traces this party, as well as other antagonists of St. Paul, to Jerusalem; but naively adds: "Nicht ebenso klar liegt ihr verhältniss zu Jacobus." This is, indeed, the difficulty; nor is it certain that the anti-Paulinists could properly claim the authority of James. That the Christ-party consisted of those who were inclined to Judaism is more than probable, but, for the reasons given above, we cannot accept the theory that the name of James was veiled under that of Christ.

6. Another supposition has been, that Paul contrasts his own position with that of those who used narrow party-symbols: while some said, "I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas," he said, "I am of Christ." This

guess would not have been ventured unless the true explanation had been lost.

7. Others have thought that the characteristics of the party should be looked for in their spiritual pretensions. They might, it is alleged, have been those who affected to be above human teachers, since they had received direct revelations from the heavenly Christ. Such visionaries seem to be referred to in 1 Corinthians xii.-xiv., and in 2 Corinthians xii. It is supposed that these pretenders to illumination were the forerunners of Montanists, spiritual Gnostics, and other theosophists, of which, in after time, there was no lack in Greece and Asia Minor. These pretended, says Ewald, "to be the only true Christians." Schenkel has elaborated this view in the work already referred to, and it has received the approval of many.¹ But, unfortunately, while some characteristics of this class correspond to those of the "Christ-party," there are others which are not included.

8. We have already spoken of Neander's theory, namely, that the Christ-party were Gentiles who

¹ Schenkel, "Das Christusbild der Apostel," s. 73. He opposes the view that the Christ-party were zealous for the Jewish law. Some of his theories respecting the progress of the early Church we cannot accept, but his remarks on the emphasis placed by the Corinthian partisans on the "heavenly Christ" as opposed to the "crucified Jesus" are worthy of notice.

were intent upon transcending the actual facts of the Christian revelation, despising the earnest literalness of the apostles, and who sought to give to the teaching of Jesus a philosophic elevation and authority. This theory forms a convenient introduction to that which Professor Harnack delineates in his work on "Dogmengeschichte," in which he describes Gnosticism as "the acute secularization of Christianity."¹ He attributes the formation of Gnostic doctrines, and more gradually of ecclesiastical dogmas, to the "inward working of the Hellenic spirit," and that this entered the Church through the Pauline extension of the gospel. No one will question the entrance of the "Hellenistic spirit" into Christian circles even at this early period, or that its operation, at least in an inchoate degree, was felt at Corinth in St. Paul's time. Many things are said in the epistles against "the disputes of this world," and even against the promoters of a false gnosis (1 Cor. viii. 1). For anything we know, this

¹ "Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte" (1886), s. 162. Lechler, "Apost. Times," i. 183, thinks the claim of the Christ-party rested on their personal acquaintance with Jesus, but that they were not a distinct party. With this Rückert, Meyer, Renan ("St. Paul," p. 378), mainly agree. Holsten and Hilgenfeld hold that they were some who had seen Jesus in the flesh. Reuss, Osiander, etc., think they relied on the personal example of Jesus, who observed the law.

polemic might have been directed against some members of the Christ-party ; but it does not follow that they were disciples of Gentile philosophy. Hellenistic Jews, or proselytes, would answer all the conditions quite as well ; and the teachers they followed were evidently inclined to Jewish ideas.

9. Another principal division of opinion on the subject has also been already referred to, namely, that which has been widely encouraged by the ecclesiastical writers, who have maintained that the Christ-party held no schismatical doctrines, that they were essentially orthodox, and that they claimed to be above all parties, because they followed the Lord Himself.¹ Men of very different views as to details agree at this point—as Rückert, Meyer, Neander, Osiander, Holzmann, and Bleek. Bengel holds, with some qualification, the same view : “ They spoke more correctly than the others, provided that they did not despise ministers under that pretext.” De Wette also speaks with favour of this theory ; but Wetstein, Thiersch, Hilgenfeld, Alford, and Lightfoot believe that the party, while generally orthodox, included

¹ This seems to be the view of Pflleiderer (“ Das Christent.,” s. 88), who now agrees with Rübiger, who “ has broken through tradition, and shown that the party is a phantom.”

those who boasted of having seen and heard the Lord Himself.

From this rapid survey of opinions it becomes clear that the majority of modern writers consent to the verdict that the Christ-party consisted of Jewish-Christians, who held views more or less antagonistic to those of St. Paul.¹ When we attempt a closer examination, however, no common conclusion respecting their tenets is presented ; some other explanation is necessary, or the case must be thrown up in despair. That which we are about to propose assumes that the traditional opinion of the orthodoxy of the party is founded on ignorance of their true principles, and that if any party in the Corinthian Church deserved the stigma of heresy, it was the party which claimed to be "of Christ."

We may once more remark, that a great step in the inquiry is gained when it is granted that there were

¹ Osiander, "Comm. über den I^o Briefe Pauli in die Korinth," s. 28, says : "Without doubt the Christ-party were related to the Cephas-party, as were those of Apollos to that of Paul. They were the graduated fraction, having the highest authority. Already the Petrines claimed a high authority, Peter the rock ; but the Christ-party went to the original Rock—the immediate authority of the Lord. He was the Teacher of teachers." Nevertheless Meyer maintains that they were both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

wide distinctions of theory and of practice among the various nationalities and classes of persons which were gathered into the first Christian societies. The traditional picture of a community which shared an irrefragable uniformity of opinion and worship is fading away in the strong light of fuller knowledge. The Tübingen theory, which exaggerated these differences into profound and irreconcilable antagonism, is now discarded. It erred in the opposite extreme from the traditional theory, which excluded variety from the unity by denying unity to the variety. But history cannot be set aside by a philosophic speculation any more than by an ecclesiastical fiction. The only attractiveness remaining for the later theory is that it directed attention to facts which the older theory had of necessity overlooked.

It is becoming clearer that the groundwork of the primitive unity was not a scientific theology, in the modern sense. Jews and Gentiles, philosophers and artisans, met in the same fellowship. Their common interest was—salvation; their common centre—the Saviour. Every person, and every class of persons, brought with them into the new association some antecedent convictions and habits which would gradually assert themselves, or gradually yield to the new influences. Providentially the attempt to perpetuate the dependence of the Church upon the

Jewish unity was frustrated by the vocation of St. Paul. When the original unity was subverted, no other, national or external, could be set up during the apostolic age. The middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile having been thrown down, no other could be raised in that generation.

Yet the documents show how difficult it was to keep this "unity of the Spirit" between men of various schools of thought. The old sectarians clamoured for the re-erection of the prostrate barriers. Liberty was abused, and parties began to struggle for pre-eminence. In Corinth the whole Church was divided. Many in that Church stood at a great distance from St. Paul; some treated him with open disrespect. It is natural to suppose that his opponents belonged to the Jewish-Christian side of the Church, and that Judaistic subtlety would do its best to undermine his authority. Hellenistic conceptions had to be rendered into rabbinical and cabalistic forms before they could prevail in these pristine Christian circles.

If, then, we may take it as a starting-point in the investigation into the tenets of the Christ-party that they were Judaizing Christians, it is astonishing that no one has ventured, except Godet, to credit them with holding a doctrine which was, unquestionably, prevalent among believers of that class at a later

day.¹ That doctrine separated "Jesus" from "Christ." It represented "Christ" to have been a heavenly power which descended upon Jesus at His baptism, but left Him at His crucifixion.²

We have shown in the previous chapter that this distinction arose from the Jewish conceptions regarding the Messiah, and from the conditions which attended the early teaching of the gospel. The theory became yet more prevalent in the later apostolic age, and St. John represents it as the indubitable note of Antichrist. He says: "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of

¹ See p. 346.

² Irenæus ("Contr. Hær.," i. 26) says of Cerinthus: "He considered that Jesus was not born of a virgin, but was the son of Joseph and Mary, and, in this respect, like other men; . . . and that after His baptism Christ descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus from that principality which is supreme . . . but at last Christ flew away from Jesus, who suffered and rose again, but Christ continued to an impassible and spiritual existence." Here, no doubt, was the great difficulty to the Jew in the doctrine of redemption by a crucified man. The Christ was "impassible." Cerinthus and other Jewish Docetics held that the Christ left Jesus at the cross. Basilides (Iren., i. 23) and other Gnostics said that Simon, the cross-bearer, was crucified instead of Jesus. It was not the philosophic doctrine of the evil of matter which led to Gnosticism (as Ittigius, Mansel, and Salmon, "Docetism," "Dict. of Ch. Biog.," i. 867), but the Jewish objection to the notion that the Divine nature was capable of suffering.

God ; and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God." "Who is the liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" (1 John ii. 22, iv. 2, 3, 15, v. 1, 6).

This docetic view was the doctrine of Basilides, Valentinus and Marcion. Cerinthus, on the contrary, asserted that Jesus was a real man, but only a man.¹ In his system it was the Divine element in our Lord which was apparitional and temporary, and the human was the actual and real Jesus. The later Docetism, on the other hand, represented the "heavenly Christ" as the permanent æon, and the body of Jesus as an appearance. It is doubtful whether this later Docetism is referred to in the New Testament.² The absence of any allusion to it is a proof of the antiquity of the canonical books. St. John, in his Gospel and Epistles, only opposes such a doctrine as that of Cerinthus. The epistles of Ignatius betray an acquaintance with the later systems.³ Every school of Gnosticism had its theory on the relation of "Christ" to Jesus ; and Sabellianism, Arianism, and Nestorianism have their genealogy

¹ See p. 375.

² Huther : 1 John iv. 2.

³ "Ad Trall.," c. 10 : "He only seemed to suffer, they say" ; "Ad Smyrn.," c. 2, c. 5 : "They blaspheme my Lord, not confessing that He was truly possessed of a body."

rooted in these speculations. It has not been admitted, however, that the first form of Docetism may be traced to the earlier Churches of the New Testament.

Dr. Godet, in his Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (pp. 63-79), reviews the various opinions which have been propounded respecting the Christ-party, and expresses his dissatisfaction with them all. He assumes that the same party is referred to in both the epistles, and gives an instructive summary of its features as thus indicated. His view is:—

1. That it was a party opposed to the twelve—"false brethren brought in" (Gal. ii. 4, 6). These desired to impose the law on Gentiles, while the twelve maintained it only for Jews. This party had at its head priests and Pharisees (Acts vi. 7, xv. 5), who thought themselves superior to the apostles. They organized the mission against St. Paul, and had pushed their work as far as Corinth.

But, allowing that there was an extreme party at Jerusalem who went beyond the precise teaching of the "Twelve," we can scarcely admit that they were "opposed" to them. They certainly appealed to the authority of James; and this theory seems to suggest that the elevation of James in Jerusalem was due to a faction which succeeded in superseding the apostles!

2. Dr. Godet goes on to say that this party—

“designated themselves as those of *Christ*, not because their leaders had personally known Jesus . . . but as being the only ones who had well understood His mind . . . in regard to the questions raised by Paul. They were too prudent to speak at once of circumcision and Mosaic rites. . . . And moreover—and here is where I differ from Beyschlag—when they arrived on Greek soil, they certainly added theosophic elements to the gospel. . . . Paul rebukes the Corinthians for the facility with which they receive strange teachers, who bring to them *another Jesus*. . . . There is here something more than the simple legal teaching previously imported into Galatia. . . . We do not know what exactly was the nature of their particular doctrines. It did violence to the person and work of Jesus. This is explained perhaps by Paul’s strange saying (1 Cor. xii. 3), ‘No man speaking by the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is accursed.’ The apostle is speaking of spiritual manifestations which made themselves heard even in the Church. . . . Such a fact may, however, be explained when we call to mind a doctrine like that professed by the Judaizing Christian Cerinthus, according to which the true Christ was a celestial virtue which had united itself to a pious Jew called Jesus on the occasion of his baptism by John, which had communicated to Him the power of working miracles . . . but which had abandoned Him to return to heaven before the time of the passion. . . . It is known that Cerinthus was the adversary of the apostle John at Ephesus; Epiphanius—on what authority we know not—asserts that the first Epistle to the Corinthians was written to combat this heresy. It is remarkable that this false teacher was Judaizing in practice, like our false teachers at Corinth.”

So far we are in agreement with Dr. Godet. This explanation of the specific doctrine of the Christ-

party we believe to be the only one that meets all the conditions. It only remains to refer to a few additional points of confirmation.

As we have shown in the chapter on "The Christ-hood of Jesus," the central and vital point of interest in primitive Christendom was in the question, Who is Jesus? Was He the Christ, or was He invested with a Christ-power in order to accomplish His mission? We have seen how diversified the answers were. Peter's great confession (Matt. xvi. 13-16) was not an index of the ordinary conviction of the disciples during our Lord's life: it was a sudden and supernatural revelation. St. John wrote to demonstrate that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," which Jewish adversaries so constantly denied. There were many who had come to no definite conclusion, believing, like Nicodemus, that Jesus had a communication or anointing from God, but not allowing that the human Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, who died on the cross, could be identical with that "Blessed One"—the Son of God.

We have also observed that St. Paul is very careful, in the beginning of the first epistle to the Corinthians, to repeat frequently the full title of our Lord. In chapter i. he mentions "Jesus Christ" (twice), "Christ Jesus" (twice), and "the Lord Jesus Christ" (six times). In chapter v. 5 he speaks of

the Lord Jesus," in viii. 6 of "one Lord Jesus Christ," and in ix. 1 of "Jesus, our Lord." We think there must have been a special tendency at Corinth to depreciate Jesus, to correct which the apostle makes this decided attempt. The variety of readings and the contradictions of commentators in several passages show that some further element needs to be recognised in order to a full conception of the theories prevalent in the Church. Such an one is that in 1 Cor. xii. 3, where the false teachers declared "Jesus" to be "anathema."¹ Another case is that of 2 Cor. xi. 4, where St. Paul complains of those who sought to turn believers "from the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ": they preached another Jesus (*ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν*).²

We need not be surprised that the progress of the faith should be marked by such varieties. The laws of evolution have their illustration in the history of the Church. "Reversion to the original type" is as

¹ Meyer, in this passage, asks, "Why did not Paul say *Χριστός*?" but he gives no satisfactory answer. Cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 22: "If any man love not the Lord, let him be anathema." Canon Farrar ("Early Days," p. 556) has some good remarks. The same writer, in the *Pulpit Comm.*, "Corinthians xii. 3," allows that these objectors would doubt "the identity of Jesus."

² Weizsäcker ("Apost. Zeit.," s. 284-323) attributes to these Jewish teachers only zeal for legalism.

distinct in some cases as is the "survival of the fittest" in others. But the imperfect creed which, in the days of Nicodemus, was a pardonable blindness, became when the fourth Gospel was issued an insufferable error.

Happily, we are not left without instances of the actual progress of believers from the lower to the higher levels of faith. All did not, as St. Paul, emerge in one hour from the shadows of unbelief into the "marvellous light" of faith. Thomas followed Jesus as a teacher long before he addressed Him as "My Lord, and my God!" James and other kinsmen of our Lord did not believe on Him at first; and the former, it is thought, was converted by an appearance of Jesus after His resurrection. In the history of Apollos we have another interesting and instructive specimen of the gradual enlightenment through which many gospel hearers passed. He had known "only the baptism of John," and Jesus as one who had been singularly endowed in that baptism; but he did not know Jesus as the true Christ, the Son of God. After this he "powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." Among those whom he convinced would, doubtless, be some who did not regard Jesus as a false Messiah, but had not yet known Him as the Saviour from heaven: to such

Apollos would appear to have had a special mission. We may infer also that, whatever other opinions the Corinthian followers of Apollos might entertain, they were quite sound in the Pauline doctrine of the Person of Christ. When Paul first came to Corinth, he found his hearers unprepared for the full announcement of Jesus as the Christ. He must first reason from the Scriptures, and show that Christ was to come, and that He should suffer. He had to feed them with milk, for they were not ready for strong meat. But when the first difficulty was past, there was no more reserve. Referring to these very circumstances (2 Cor. i. 19), he says: "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy [whose arrival at Corinth brought about the crisis]—was not yea and nay, but in Him is yea." If for the time he had become as a Jew to the Jews, it was no hypocritical or cowardly dissembling; he had done it that he might "gain some." From this time his gospel may be described in his own words: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord" (2 Cor. iv. 5). To the Ephesians he says (iv. 21), "Ye did not so learn Christ; if so be ye heard Him, and were taught in Him, even as truth is in Jesus." In 2 Cor. x. 7, Paul urges, that "if any man trusteth that he is of Christ, let him consider, that even as he is of

Christ, so also are we." His pleadings in the former epistle had not dispersed the band of his opponents, but the opposition with which he contended had become chronic. It is clear also that the opposition was upon doctrine: it was no mere question of apostolic authority. If this Christ-party consisted of Jewish-Christians, who were seeking to make the gospel more acceptable to their compatriots by recasting the apostolical conception of the Person of the Saviour, we can understand the prominence given to them by St. Paul, and the real meaning of many of his expressions regarding them. Whether his rivals at Rome were of the same class we do not know: all he says is, "Some preach Christ [it is not said Jesus] even of envy and strife—of faction—Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice. . . . For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. i. 15-17, 21).

Most interpreters take it for granted that, whether the first clause of 1 Cor. i. 13. is interrogative or affirmative, it refers to the attempted distribution of Christ among the several parties. That the expression "Christ is divided" could be epexegetical of "I am of Christ," and that it contained a rebuke to those who had "divided Christ" from Jesus, has not been admitted. Yet the occurrence of this peculiar expression, immediately after the mention of those who claimed to be "of Christ," suggests that in the

mind of St. Paul this was the fault of that section specially.¹

We conclude, then, that as there were those in the apostolic age who were disposed to exalt "Christ" and to disparage "Jesus," there is no reason to doubt that the Christ-party were inclined in that direction. They appear to have belonged to that Jewish section of the Christian community which cherished the remembrance of the strict humanity of Jesus. Between the extremes of faith and unbelief, in a time of transition, there would exist every gradation and phase of speculation. Possibly these members of the Church in Corinth, who boasted that they were "of Christ," were among the first to give a shape to that which became a characteristic doctrine of the Ebionites.

It may be objected to our thesis, that, if members of the Church had maintained views so inimical to the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, the apostle would have condemned them utterly: he would not have been content with an exhortation to unity, as though they who believed that Jesus was the Son of God

¹ *Μεμέρισται*, 1 Cor. vii. 34, is rendered by A.V. and R.V. "there is a difference," which Westcott and Hort call "an ill-attested and improbable sense." They prefer "is distracted." The Vulg. here, and in 1 Cor. i. 13, has *divisus est*. Matt. xii. 25, speaks of Satan as being "divided against himself," *ἐμερίσθη*.

could agree together in the same Church with those who held that He was "a mere man."

To this it may be replied that we must not introduce into this early stage of the history of the Church ideas of unity which belong to a later time. Besides, a gradual advance of the doctrine of our Lord's personality during the apostolic age may be clearly discerned.

Though the Apostles, after the day of Pentecost, preached Jesus as "both Lord and Christ," they did not elaborate the doctrine into the form which the Church only fully accepted at the Council of Nice, A.D. 325. St. Paul, having seen at his conversion the glorified Jesus, felt it to be his special mission to proclaim Him as the "Son of God."¹ Some continued, far into the apostolic age, to speak of Jesus as a "Christed" man only, "knowing only the baptism of John." Moreover, the sectaries in Corinth had not advanced to anything like the developments of ripened Gnosticism. The tendency existed, but had not yet effloresced. Such persons were content with their first impressions respecting Jesus, and had not sought to enter into the higher conceptions which

¹ "The revelation of Jesus had been the turning-point of the apostle's life" (Liddon, "Bampt. Lect.," p. 326); cf. Gal. i. 12, 16; 1 Cor. ii. 2; Eph. iii. 2, 4.

Paul brought before them. They lingered, as other Hebrews did (Heb. vi. 1) in the "first principles of Christ" when they should have gone "on to perfection." The Christ-party was right in that which it affirmed, namely, that there was a Divine principle in "the Christ" which could neither suffer nor die: they were wrong in that which they denied, namely, that this Divine principle had been incorporated in Jesus from the beginning. Their affirmation was of service to the Church in after days, though their denial has also prolonged its echoes down to our own times.

We may remark further, that, if it is clearly shown that elementary Ebionitism and Gnosticism were already diffused through the Churches of the apostolic period, the critical objections to some of the Pauline epistles and the parts of the New Testament are obsolete. It may be allowed that some personal and circumstantial differences varied their presentation of the truth, but their Christology, and theology in general, was substantially the same. All proclaimed Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God. This was the creed of John (xx. 31; 1 John ii. 22); of Peter (Matt. xvi. 16; 1 Pet. i. 3); of James (i. 1; ii. 1); and of Jude (4), as well as of Paul. This doctrine had to contend in the second century with the Gnostic imaginations of Valentinus and Marcion;

as it had in the third century with the rationalism of Sabellius and of Paul of Samosata. Its principal obstacle in the first century was the invincible prejudice of the Jewish mind against a Messiah who had been crucified. The "Christ-party" adopted a theory which became a characteristic tenet of Jewish-Christendom, and which led to its final estrangement from the fellowship of believers.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CHURCH.

“Where the Church is, there is the Spirit ; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and all grace.”—*Irenæus*.

“The Apostle’s writings are not altogether agreeable to the order of things as now practised in the Church.”—*Hilary*.

“Custom without truth is but error growing old.”—*Cyprian*.

THE word “Church” does not occur in three of the Gospels. Our Lord instructed his disciples to say: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand”; but it was not till a century after that the *Church* became synonymous with the *Kingdom*. Christians who happened to have only the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John would not know that “salvation comes by the Church,” for the word is not found in any of them. St. Matthew, however, contains it three times.

I. In the New Testament generally the term “Church” refers—

1. To an assembly called together for some purpose. It was used in this sense in the Old Testament for the “congregation of Israel.”¹ This is its mean-

¹ Deut. iv. 10: קהל ישראל; Acts vii. 38; Heb. iv. 12.

ing in Matt. xviii. 7 : " If he will not hear thee, tell it to the Church." ¹ The crowd at Ephesus was called a " Church," (Acts xix. 32) ; the legal assembly to which the town clerk appealed is described as " the lawful Church " : and Stephen (Acts vii. 38) speaks of " the Church in the wilderness."

2. In this primal and literal meaning the term " Church " began to be used for a company of believers who belonged to the same locality. By a false reading Acts ii. 47 was made to say that " the Lord added to the Church day by day those that were saved " ; but if this had been correct, the term would only have meant " congregation." ² At the death of Ananias and his wife " great fear came upon the whole Church." Against " the Church which was at Jerusalem," *i.e.* against the whole company of believers, a great persecution arose after the death of Stephen (Acts viii. 1) ; and " the Church throughout all Judea, Samaria and Galilee had peace " when that persecution subsided (Acts ix. 31).³ " At Antioch in

¹ In Mark viii. 29, Peter's confession is given, but not the reply found in Matt. This is remarkable, since, according to Papias and others, the second Gospel was written under the direction of Peter.

² R.V. " The Lord added to them day by day."

³ Documentary evidence goes against the old reading, " the Churches," but this is the first time that the " Church " stands

the Church there were certain teachers" (Acts xiii. 1); and, yet later, Paul and Barnabas "appointed for them elders in every Church" which they had founded. Later still, Paul convened the "elders of the Church" at Ephesus, and exhorted them "to feed the Church of God." Here we observe the term passing into a higher signification. Paul says to these ministers of Ephesus, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock in which the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops" (Acts xx. 28). The congregation of believers is not a fortuitous concourse, but a "flock," under the great Shepherd, with subordinate pastors who are responsible for its welfare.

St. Paul continually uses "Church" in its simple meaning when he would distinguish the congregation of believers in any city or place; but this does not hinder his use of the term in a higher signification occasionally. He sent epistles to "the Church of the Thessalonians," and to "the Churches of Galatia," and to "the Church of God which was in Corinth." St. John, also, addresses in the Apocalypse "the seven Churches in Asia." St. Paul says (1 Cor. xiv. 4) that "he that prophesieth edifieth the Church," *i.e.* congregation; and also that females shall "keep silence in the

for the whole company of believers. Cf. 1 Thess. ii. 14: "the Churches of God in Judea"; and Gal. i. 22.

churches." In like manner he speaks of "the Church in the house." The Church in the house of Aquila at Rome is mentioned twice (Rom. xvi. 5 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 19).¹ Philemon had a Church in his house (ver. 2) ; and Nymphas of Colosse (iv. 15) had one also. Such a Church Paul himself had in "his own hired dwelling" at Rome (Acts xxviii. 30) : and there was one in the house of Titus Justus at Ephesus (Acts xviii. 7).

The term "Church" does not occur in the epistles of Peter and Jude. St. James (v. 14) speaks of "the elders of the Church ;" but the congregation or place of meeting is called a "synagogue" (Jas. ii. 2). He addresses his letter to "the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion," and not to a Church or Churches. St. Peter, also, addresses his first epistle to the elect who "are of the Dispersion" in Asia. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews only uses the word twice : once he quotes a passage from the Old Testament (Ps. xxii. 23), and again he speaks of the "general gathering and assembly of the firstborn in heaven" (Heb. xii. 23). This comparative neglect of the

¹ The relation of such Churches as those in the houses of Aquila and Paul at Rome cannot be explained by a theory of rigid local unity. The epistles of Ignatius opposed such "conventicles."

term by the Jewish-Christians cannot be overlooked. If "salvation is by the Church,"—if by membership in the one apostolic Church the first Christians "believed themselves to inherit the grace of Christ," how strange that the majority of the New Testament writers should never insist upon it.

3. It is in St. Paul's writings that the word "church" attains its higher import. He uses it to represent not only the local or visible fact of an assembly of persons who professed faith in Jesus Christ—not only in this extensive signification, but also intensively, to denote an institution endowed with special privileges. In this sense he speaks at Miletus, of "the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx. 28). In his epistle to the same believers (Eph. i. 22, iii. 10, v. 23) he says that Christ is "head over all things to the Church"; that the Church is "the body of Christ"; that "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it." Can such expressions be applied to any "local" or "visible" Church? Do they not apply to "all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours"? (1 Cor. i. 2).

It is only by the perversion of Scripture, then, that the grace of Christ can be made to depend upon ecclesiastical institutions. Our Lord bade His disciples to submit controversies to the assembly of the

brethren (Matt. xviii. 17).¹ But the Romish Church uses this passage to enforce its extraordinary demands: "Christ said, 'Hear the Church'; therefore you must believe in transubstantiation, in the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, in the infallibility of the Pope; for the Church teaches these things."

Dr. Hook, in his famous sermon in the Chapel Royal (A.D. 1838) took this famous passage as his text. He argued strongly against the Romish application of our Lord's words, yet set himself to make one equally unlawful and yet more absurd. "Hear the Church," he said, for "to separate from such a Church must be a schismatical act"; and "the consistent English Churchman cannot conform to the Presbyterian establishment in Scotland, but in that part of the island attends the services of the Scottish Episcopal Church." Happily the reigning Sovereign has not regarded this arrogant appeal, and has rendered a loyal and even hearty adherence to Presbyterian forms in that part of her kingdom. Nonconformists may claim the Royal example and the political constitution of Great Britain as approving of

¹ "—That congregation of which thou and He are members" (Alford).

their contention, that the "ministry of three orders" is not essential to British Christianity.

II. But we must next inquire into the conditions of admission into the Church. These are only "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," with the reception of baptism as the "outward and visible sign" of the great change.

This was the doctrine of the twelve apostles. They were instructed by the Master: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." At the beginning Peter said to the awakened, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus, unto the remission of your sins." Here we may notice that the thing sought by inquirers was not "admission into the Church," but "salvation." Formal association with the Church was not so much desired as the pardon and sanctification realized in faith. Hence, St. John (i. 12) says; "As many as received Him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name"; and (iii. 16): "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Respecting St. Paul's doctrine there can be no

doubt. He says (Rom. iii. 28), "We reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law" (Rom. iv. 16); "For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace" (Rom. i. 16); "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth." There was no detailed statement of doctrine placed before the candidate for baptism. In Cyprian's time (A.D. 360) it was usual to ask, "Dost thou believe in the remission of sins and eternal life through the holy Church?" (Ep. ad Magn., 76); but no such article was put forward in the apostolic age.

Here we must notice, again, the limitation in church membership which existed in the primitive period. Until the first Council (Acts xv.) no Gentile was admitted into the Christian society unless he had conformed to the Jewish ritual. After that Council the pristine formal unity, by which the Christian Church was only a sect within the Jewish Church, ceased to exist. There were now two kinds of Christians. One followed Jewish modes of worship, the other were not required to observe these customs. Yet "the body" was one (Eph. iv. 4). God had made "of the twain one new man, so making peace . . . both having access in one Spirit unto the Father." The Gentiles now became "fellow-citizens with the

saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone ; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord.”¹

Henceforth the unity of the Church is “of the Spirit.” Absolute doctrinal unity is not to be expected in the Church, which consists of men of every nation, of diverse education, of a boundless variety of circumstances and prepossessions. Since the Gentile was freed from the yoke of the Jewish ritual, only intolerant violence can enforce uniformity of opinion and worship. The growth of the Church is to be associated with the natural developments of thought and with the progress of the race. St. Paul was not without the idea that the Church may advance to approximate and substantial, if not to exact uniformity. He predicts a day when we shall “attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. iv. 13) ; but that day is yet afar off.²

¹ Eph. ii. 19-22. Bishop Ellicott says, “‘Each several building’ is wholly irreconcilable with the context.” Meyer, on the other hand, allows that the reading is “linguistically and logically correct.”

² A. V. : “Till we all come in the unity,” disguised the true meaning ; *οἱ πάντες* includes Jews and Gentiles.

III. We may next consider what is known as the "Catholic" theory of the "one, visible" Church.

No one except members of mystical sects has denied that the Church is a visible institution. But though the Church is visible so far as it relates to the actual appearance amongst men of a society of persons who hold the faith of Christ, yet it is not wholly visible. "Only (so to speak) the lower limbs of the body of Christ are on earth. The Church is a society in the world, but not *wholly* in the world, nor existing for the world's ends."¹ Man is visible, but not wholly so: the most real life of the man is not seen; so is it with the Church.

Mr. Gore asks, "Did Christ found a Church in the sense of a visible society?" (p. 9). To this there can only be one answer: The disciples of our Lord constituted a visible society.

A further question is, "Whether believers in Christ were left to organize themselves in societies . . . or, whether the Divine Founder Himself . . . instituted a society?" (p. 10). This question is not so readily answered as Mr. Gore seems to imagine. No theory of the Church—not even that which Mr. Gore supports, supposes that our Lord left to His disciples a detailed organization for the Church.

¹ "The Ministry of the Church," by C. Gore, M.A. (1889), p. 58.

There was, indeed, the minimum of organization. The apostles and disciples were left to "organize for themselves" as their circumstances might demand. The apostolic history is an account of what they did.

But Mr. Gore wishes to establish the position that the essential "organization" of the "visible society" which Christ founded consisted in its dependence upon the apostles, and that this was perpetuated in the "apostolic succession." He says (p. 11) that among "a great number of religious bodies owing their existence to Christian belief, we discern also something incomparably more permanent and universal—one great continuous body, the Catholic Church . . . which all down this period of its continuous life makes a constant and unmistakable claim. Is the claim which this visible Catholic Church has made a just one?"

The only strict result of Mr. Gore's argument on the subject seems to be this: That as our Lord founded a "visible" society, and the Catholic Church is "visible," therefore it must be the society founded by Him. But then the Nazarenes, the Ebionites, the Marcionites were "visible" also, as were the Arians, the Nestorians, in after time; and, more recently, even the "Catholic" Church is found as Greek-Roman and Anglican. Are all authentic because they are "visible"?

But has the "Catholic" Church the very "organization which was founded by Christ"? Did He found the Papacy? Was the ministry established in three orders by Him? Can Mr. Gore show that the "Catholic Church"; which excluded any one who practised the Jewish ritual; which denounced every one a schismatic unless he belonged to a Church which had bishops, presbyters, and deacons; which refused to recognise any believer in Christ unless he had received the sacraments from its own ministry, was the veritable "organization" made by Jesus Christ Himself? It would be necessary to prove all this in order that Mr. Gore's contention should be made secure. Assumptions on these questions are out of date.

If it is allowed that the "Catholic Church" is the veritable "visible society" founded by Christ, it would be easy to grant also that the Church is the only dispenser of salvation. Mr. Gore maintains that the Church is not the mere fellowship of believers—that is the low, evangelical notion which he and his friends abjure. He holds that the Church is the great institution for the dispensation of grace to men. Its members and ministers are within the covenant: *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*. The great question for every man is: "Dost thou believe in eternal life, and the remission of sins by the holy Church?"

We need not say that this doctrine is not taught in the New Testament. Mr. Gore does not present us with a single utterance of our Lord or His apostles in which it is clearly implied. Were Peter, James, and John saved "through membership in the one Apostolic Church, Catholic and local," as Mr. Gore tells us was the case with African Christians (p. 16)? Our Lord said to the apostles, "Ye are clean through the word which I spake unto you," but never taught that their association with Him secured their salvation. On the contrary, He said, "I have chosen you twelve, but one of you hath a devil." The case of Judas ought to settle for ever the pretensions of a "visible" society to save men.

It is not until Mr. Gore comes down to the times of Irenæus and Tertullian that he can find Christian language which appears to favour his theory. "The Church is, to Tertullian's mind, God's institution for man's education and salvation. . . . It was through membership in this one apostolic Church, catholic and local, that African Christians believed themselves to inherit the grace of Christ. 'He cannot have God for his Father,' Cyprian was fond of emphasizing, 'who has not the Church for his mother'" (p. 16).

We are sorry that we cannot render so much credit to Irenæus, Tertullian, and Cyprian, as accurate exponents of the Christian system, as do Mr. Gore

and his friends. However, these writers did refer, in opposition to Gnostic teachers, to the Churches descended from the apostles because they were supposed to have the true doctrine. Their theory of the "Apostolic Succession" was not that of later times, which centred all upon the office rather than upon the teaching. It is not, therefore, fair to quote them in defence of the later theory of that subject.

We are not surprised to find that Mr. Gore should have difficulty in reducing St. Paul's teaching to harmony with his theory. Failure was inevitable; but here are his words (p. 29):

"It is sometimes argued that St. Paul could not have believed in salvation through the Church, because this contradicts his doctrine of the justifying effect of faith. But, in fact, there is no such contradiction. The Christian life is a correspondence between the grace communicated from without and the inward faith which, justifying us before God, opens out the avenues of communication between man and God, and enables man to appropriate and to use the grace which he receives in Christ. There is thus no *antagonism*, though there is a *distinction*, between grace and faith. Now grace comes to Christians through social sacraments, as members of one 'spirit-bearing' body. 'By one spirit are we all baptized into one body'; we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread. Thus the doctrine of the Church as the household of grace is the complement, not the contradiction, of the doctrine of faith."

Does St. Paul say, in the passage quoted above, that "grace comes to Christians through social sacra-

ments"? Yes, the grace of unity and mutual love; but not the grace of justification, or of regeneration, which are the things in question. He says that the Church is one in spite of its formal divisions: both Jews and Greeks, bond and free, were "all made to drink of one spirit." But in respect to "salvation," about which the dispute is, St. Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. ii. 8). They received grace when "having heard the word of the truth," and having believed in Christ, they "were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13). What a splendid antithesis Paul would have made if he had first declared that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified"; and then that "grace comes by social sacraments"!

Mr. Gore and his school have evidently gone back to Judaism.¹ It was the Jewish adversaries of St. Paul who insisted that salvation came by "social sacraments": "Except ye be circumcised ye cannot be saved." Unless they were received into the "visible unity" of the Jewish Church, they had no part in Christ. If St. Paul did not spend his life in opposition to this doctrine, we have never understood him.

Of course Mr. Gore and his party can furnish no

¹ Farrar, "Lives of the Fathers," i. 331 [on Cyprian]: "Judaism is restored in a slightly different form."

effectual reply to the Roman Catholic claims, so "constant and unmistakable." If we are to follow the development which can be traced in Irenæus, Cyprian, and Augustine, why should we hesitate to accept that accomplished by Gregory, Leo, and Pius the Fifth and Pius the Ninth? Mr. Gore says that "an essentially different idea of the Church's function finds expression in the general councils and in the Papacy" (p. 61), but the "continuous claim" has chiefly come from those who belong to the Roman unity. Shall we yield to it? They use Mr. Gore's arguments; they appeal to the same sayings of the fathers; they interpret Scripture after his method. Newman, and Manning, and thousands more have submitted. Once yield Mr. Gore's major proposition that "salvation is by the visible Church," and thousands more would perceive that the Anglican system was a doubtful dependence. It has only been "visible," strictly speaking, since the sixteenth century. That it happened to be "visible" in the first centuries, in independence of Rome, would present little obstacle. It was for a thousand years in "visible" fellowship with Rome, and made that fellowship its glory.¹

¹ "Is there any ground whatever for ascribing this sanction to the Nicene period, and denying it to the modern Papacy?" (Jacob, "Eccles. Pol.," 28).

It is only by appealing to St. Paul and the apostolic Church that the freedom of Christianity can be maintained. St. Paul also shall furnish us with our reply to Mr. Gore on the subject of apostolical succession. The latter says (p. 71), "It was intended that there should be in every Church, in each generation, an authoritative stewardship of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, and a recognised power to transmit it, derived from above by apostolic descent." But St. Paul did not receive his ministry by "apostolic descent." He was "an apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ." Here, at the very beginning of the gospel, is a break in the chain which no ecclesiastical skill can repair. The "persons of the apostles" were passed by, and another ministry not of their "transmission" given to the Church. In modern days we have seen operations of "grace" which, according to Mr. Gore, were not according to the "covenant," but to the glory of Christ have resembled what happened in the case of St. Paul. The "apostolical succession," so called, did not send out Carey to India, or Morrison to China, or Ellis to Madagascar, or Hunt to Fiji, or Paton to the New Hebrides; yet these have added more converts to the Christian faith than, probably, did St. Paul himself.

The great apostle never says that "the grace and

truth which came by Jesus Christ" were conveyed by apostolic authority, or that he had "a recognised power to transmit it derived from apostolic descent." He says the very contrary. Some of the Corinthians were disposed to boast of this apostle or that. Paul says, "What then is Apollos, and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed." "So then neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." This doctrine of the "succession" was already in the Church. Some denied that Paul was an apostle. He was not one of the twelve; he had not been regularly ordained; he was not sent by Peter and James. Against these false doctrines concerning the means of grace, which assailed then, as now, the spiritual foundation of the kingdom of God, St. Paul solemnly warns the Christians of Corinth, and reminds them that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

If we turn to the post-apostolic literature, we find no trace of this doctrine, that salvation is by the Church. The "Teaching" directs that no one should be admitted to the Eucharist but those who have been baptized.¹ Believers are to pray that the Church may be "gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom." Again: "Re-

¹ ix. 4.

member, O Lord, Thy Church to deliver her from all evil and to perfect her in Thy love, and gather her together from the four winds.”¹ But it also expressly enjoins, “Let every one that comes in the name of the Lord be received.”²

The Epistle of Clement was addressed by “the Church of God which sojourns at Rome to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth.” It rebukes sedition and exhorts to unity, but does not define precisely what unity is. The conditions of salvation he represents to be repentance, faith, and well-doing: “We being called by His will, in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom . . . or works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which from the beginning Almighty God has justified all men.”³ Divine service is to be rendered at the appointed places and times. Jesus Christ was sent from God; the apostles were sent by Christ; the apostles “appointed the firstfruits, having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons.”⁴ But there were not three orders of ministers; only two—bishops or presbyters, and deacons. These were appointed “by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church.”⁵

¹ “Teaching,” x. 5. ² *Ibid.*, xii. 1. ³ c. 32. ⁴ c. 42.

⁵ There is great doubt respecting one expression in Ep.

The Epistle of Barnabas earnestly contends against the doctrine of salvation by connection with a visible Church. "The wretched ones [the Jews] wandering in error, trust not in God, but in the temples as being the house of God. . . . Let us inquire, then, if there is still a temple of God. . . . Before we believed in God the habitation of our heart was corrupt and weak . . . but having received the forgiveness of sins . . . we have become new creatures. . . . He, then, who wishes to be saved looks not to the man (*τὸν ἄνθρωπον*, *i.e.* to the preacher) but to Him who dwells in him."

With Ignatius, Irenæus, and Tertullian another view of the Church was propounded.¹ By Cyprian,

Clem., c. 44: "Our apostles . . . appointed those mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions (*ἐπινομή*) that when these should fall asleep other approved men should succeed them in the ministry (*λειτουργία*)." Nirschl ("Patrologie," s. 78), and Hefele ("Patrum Ap. Op.," p. 90) connect it with *νόμος*, and translate it as *ordinance*. By Hesychius it was rendered *inheritance*; whence Rothe ("Anfänge," s. 374) has *testamentum*, and Lightfoot ("Phil.," p. 201) *codicil*. The R. C. Probst ("Kirchliche Disciplin," s. 20) takes it as "die Regel der Nachfolge." It was a new word, and no one knows its exact meaning.

¹ "Who first distinguished Christianity as the Church of God from Judaism, and how first the idea of the 'Church' became valid," says Harnack ("Dogmenges.," i. 92) "there is no information."

Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine it was developed and perfected. Henceforth the Church became the sole dispenser of grace, and out of it there was no salvation. On their utterances the persecutors and inquisitors of after days rested for their justification in the treatment of heretics. The Church of Rome still advances this theory as the infallible truth of God. The High-Church party clings to it with enthusiastic devotion. They refuse to recognise the other Christian Churches of Britain as being in anything but a state of heresy and schism. No Congregationalist, no Baptist, no Methodist dreams of excluding any true believer in Christ from the Church, although such a one may hold opinions and use forms of worship differing from his own. But the "English Catholics" take on themselves the responsibility of refusing fellowship to all who do not submit to their ritual. They refuse to recognise the unity of the Church except in the case of full conformity to ordinances which they regard as authoritative. There would be little difficulty in the realization and manifestation of Christian unity in England, except for the stubborn but unscriptural claim advanced on behalf of "the historic episcopate."

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