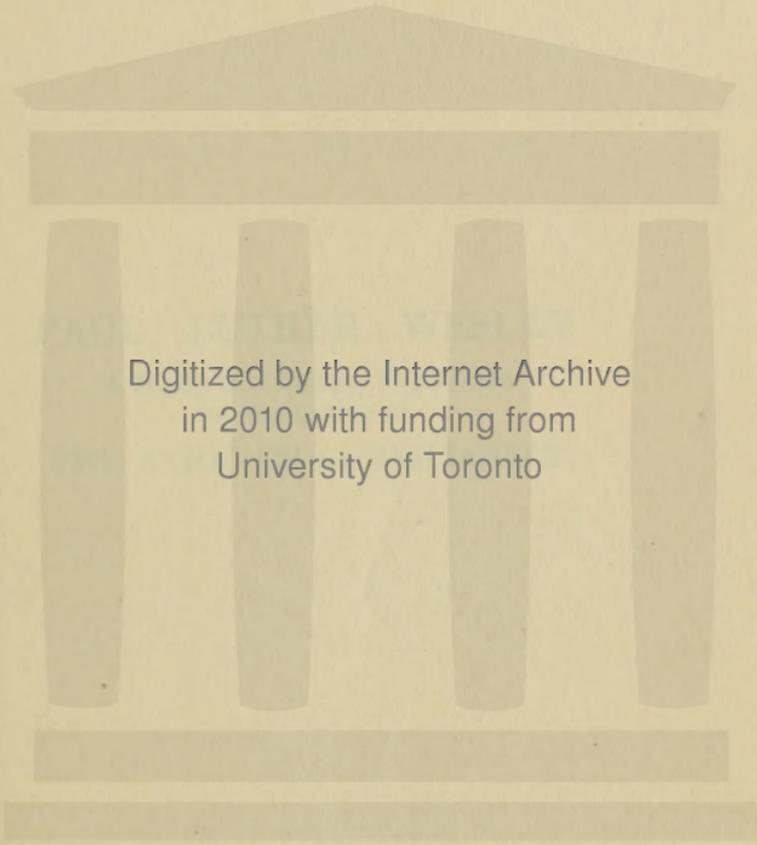


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PAUL : LUTHER : WESLEY

A Study in Religious Experience
as illustrative of

THE ETHIC OF CHRISTIANITY

LONDON
TRUFORD PRESS

PAUL: LUTHER: WESLEY

A Study in Religious Experience
as illustrative of
THE ETHIC OF CHRISTIANITY

BY
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'The Evangelical Succession; or, The Spiritual Lineage of the
Christian Church and Ministry,'

'Religious Experience: Its Reality and Value,'

'Seeking a Country,' 'The Quest of Faith.'

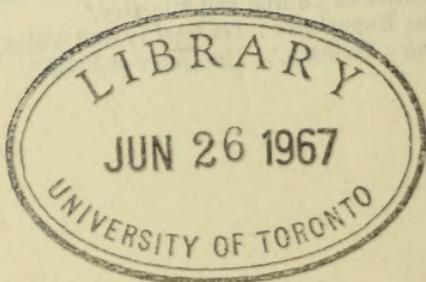
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PAUL LUTHER
WESLEY

A Study in Religious Experience
as Expressed in
THE ETHIC OF CHRISTIANITY

First Edition, 1922



LONDON
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To My Old-Friend
and Schoolfellow

RICHARD GREEN MOULTON

WITH
LASTING AFFECTION AND REGARD

PREFACE

APART from the generally acknowledged authorities on Ethical Philosophy, and more particularly on Christian Ethics ; apart also from the numberless works dealing, directly or indirectly, with Christian character, and with Christian experience as the living power at the background of character ; and apart from the many valuable books that treat of Paul, Luther, and Wesley, reference may be made to certain special sources of help and of information.

The Standard Edition of John Wesley's ' Journal,' edited by the late Nehemiah Curnock, greatly enlarged by the aid of original manuscripts, and by the addition of much material from unpublished diaries, with annotations, maps, and illustrations, is a truly magnificent work, and a mine of information. This has been at hand continually. When the first volume was published, with its suggestion (on p. 476) that perhaps the reference, in Wesley's account of his spiritual experience on May 24, 1738, to Luther's ' Preface to the Epistle to the Romans,' was a mistake, and that he meant the preface to the Commentary on Galatians, I wrote to intimate to the Editor that surely this was impossible, but that I was exploring the subject to the best of my ability, in pursuance of a clue given by Dr. Beet concerning some important pamphlets in the British Museum. Mr. Curnock, in reply, urged me to

make the investigation complete; and, when the results were published, first in an article contributed to the 'London Quarterly Review' (July 1911), and then, by request of the editors, to the Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society (September 1911), Mr. Curnock expressed himself as fully satisfied, and made the necessary correction of his former note to the 'Journal,' this being now indicated in the list of Corrigenda at the close of the eighth volume.

In regard to the portion of this work dealing with Wesley, and indeed the subject generally, I must ever make grateful acknowledgment of my indebtedness, not only for information, always so readily given, but also for the constant stimulus and encouragement of a friendship begun in a London colleagueship forty years ago, and lasting through life, to Richard Green, whose knowledge of the life and work of Wesley, and of the literature connected with his name, was perhaps unequalled in its way, though it was far more than equalled by his humility, his courtesy, his kindness, his sympathy. His noble monograph, 'John Wesley, Evangelist,' published as a centenary volume by the Religious Tract Society in 1905 (for 1903), was sent to me by instalments, in manuscript; and his very last work, 'The Conversion of John Wesley,' which also he had sent to me in manuscript, but was unable to deal with further on account of increasing weakness, he entrusted to my care, that I might do with it what seemed best. It was my privilege to find a publisher, and to prepare it for the press. I am glad to recall, that through all the years of our intercourse, so far as I can remember, there was no important conclusion to which I was led, no conjecture relative to such

matters as are dealt with in this work, which he did not endorse, either definitely, or by inclination of opinion. But he himself had done so much, by his fellowship, to set me on the lines of study in which I followed afar, that it was the easier to win approval.

Regarding the Luther section of the book, I may say that I found the two pamphlets in the British Museum, referred to above, of great interest and value : the Latin translation, by Justus Jonas, of the famous 'Preface to the Epistle to the Romans' ; and the old English translation, from the Latin, by a nameless 'W. W.' This, however, was a translation of a translation ; and, wishing to see the original, I availed myself of the kind permission of my friend Dr. Ritson, of the Bible Society, with the kindly concurrence and help of Dr. Kilgour and Dr. Moule, to examine their Luther New Testament of 1522, and the Luther Bible of 1534, copying such portions of the 'Preface,' from each edition, as seemed necessary. Finding that there was also a copy of Tyndale's (second edition) New Testament in the Library, and discovering that his Prologue to Romans was essentially the same as Luther's, though amplified, this I collated with the others, making extracts for future use. Desiring to see the yet more famous pamphlet, 'Of the Freedom of a Christian Man,' in its original form, I succeeded in procuring a copy from Germany, though such copies must now be extremely rare. It bears date 1520. This was the first great manifesto of the religious experience of Justification by Faith, in its various spiritual and ethical aspects, sent forth by Luther to his fellow-countrymen ; and it was the best. The pamphlet carried its burning words everywhere. A special, and

amplified, version, in Latin, was addressed to the Pope. Both of these pamphlets may now be had in modern German ; but as the English version of the ' Preface to Romans ' is to be seen only in the British Museum, and is not from the German original, and as that of the ' Freedom of a Christian Man,' to be found in Wace and Buchheim's translation of ' Luther's Primary Works,' is from the Latin, it has seemed to me that it might be of some service to students, if they were presented in full, translated direct from the original German. They are therefore given in the Appendix, with certain quotations from Luther's Latin ' Commentary on Galatians,' and a few other details.

The expository matter in the first part of the book may seem to bulk too largely, but it was necessary, by a wide induction of instances, to establish the main positions of the argument. For this immediate study the New Testament alone has been used, though of course the thought and reading of other years must have been continually yielding their contribution. As for those Scriptures of our faith, it must surely be the experience of every earnest inquirer, that, the more closely and lovingly they are pondered, the fresher and fuller seems their meaning ; and thus each student of their pages learns increasingly how true is the promise, concerning the Living Interpreter, ' He shall glorify Me ; for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you ' (John xvi. 14). To Whom be the glory !

T. F. L.

* From the articles mentioned above, contributed to the ' London Quarterly Review ' and the Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, and from a more

PREFACE

II

recent article in the Review, 'What are "Our Doctrines"?' I have quoted freely, in the Wesley portion of the book, what seemed pertinent to the present purpose.

My thanks are due to the publishers of books quoted in the following pages, for kind permission given.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

THE Quest of the Chief Good has occupied the thought and enlisted the pursuit of men in all ages. Not of all men. Multitudes have been content with the nearest and most immediate gain or gratification. Many have gone out of the way to indulge their lowest and most lawless desires. But there have been those, not a few, who have desired to find life's true fulfilment ; and, from the beginning until now, there has been a sustained inquiry, on the part of elect thinkers of the race, concerning the Chief Good.

It has been held by some that the supreme good of the universe could not be determined, unless we had a complete and exact knowledge of the universe, as a whole, and in its several parts and relations. This would make the quest impossible for finite creatures. There is no need, however, to regret an impossibility that is inherent in our finite nature. All that is necessary is to ascertain, within practical limits, the chief good, not of the illimitable universe, but of man. The determination of man's chief good must go far to determine man's duty. Thus the ethic of any system of thought is intimately bound up with its inquiry concerning the proper aim of life. The good and the right must be considered together.

Moreover, in such a quest the speculative and the practical will mutually act and react. In other words, the thinker must draw upon his own experience, and

less directly upon the experience of others, while the experience will inevitably benefit by clearer and fuller thought. We should expect, therefore, that the ethical progress of the race would be found to depend largely on the thought and experience of a comparatively small number of richly endowed natures, whose exceptional qualities of mind and heart have constituted them the leaders of their fellows in the onward course of life.

As regards the various systems of ethic that have prevailed in the world, there can be no doubt that the Christian Ethic holds the paramount place. Its intrinsic superiority to all others must surely be evident to the impartial observer, while its persistence and growing prevalence from age to age, in spite of all drawbacks of inconsistency and degeneracy, confirm its claims to pre-eminence.

The Ethic of Christianity, like Christianity generally, centres in Christ. Notwithstanding a temporary tendency of the present day to interpret Christianity by the 'experience of Jesus,' it must be affirmed, in the light of New Testament teaching, and of the testimony of the centuries, that the central dynamic of the experience of Christians is not any archetypal experience of God that was present in Jesus of Nazareth, but consists rather in the living presence and power of Christ in the heart. He is no mere informer of our faith and instructor in righteousness, however unequalled, but the source and fountain of life. Such is the position that this argument will seek to establish.

Among the first to come under the influence and inspiration of Christ, were His apostles, though the full effect was not accomplished till after His death and resurrection. From that time, the transforming

power of Christ over human character and conduct began its world-conquering course. Not, however, as pursuing only one method, or producing but one type of result, did this new-creating power go on its way. So far as we can distinguish even among the Twelve, they were originally of very various types, mentally and morally, and this variety was reproduced in the new experience. The same law of variety was evident in the case of other leaders, as time went on, and the Gospel was thus presented to the world with the initial advantage of manifold adaptation, though itself essentially one. In this way, Peter, James, and John, Andrew, Thomas, and Nathanael, and afterwards such men as Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, Paul, and Apollos, each made his own appeal to the hearers of the common gospel message, and thus a richly diversified fellowship of religious experience was the result. 'I am of Paul,' and 'I of Apollos,' and 'I of Peter,' said the Corinthians, captiously and factiously; but, with all the mischief and exaggeration of this party clamour, there was an element of truth in the individuality of response to an undoubted individuality of appeal. To-day also, as in those early times, there are those to whom John or James will make a stronger appeal than Paul or Peter, and the resultant spiritual and ethical experience will vary correspondingly. Generally speaking, however, the variety sets the essential unity in stronger relief.

The intention of the present work is to take one main type—perhaps the most characteristic type—of Christian experience, as exhibited in three of its most illustrious representatives, namely, Paul, Luther, and Wesley, whose earlier struggles, and way of release,

and wondering rebound of triumphant joy, were remarkably similar ; to examine each case in detail, by way of comparison, largely of contrast, with prevalent types of contemporary ethics, or of systems of ethic still widely influential at the time ; to make further, and supporting, comparison with the thought and teaching of certain associates and fellow-helpers of these spiritual chiefs ; and thus to determine the leading truths and principles of Christian experience and character, as illustrated by their names.

In addition, however, to the study of each individual case in the way described, and of the striking similarity of the three cases as regards their main factors, one aim that will be kept in view throughout will be to indicate the vital relationship between these instances of Christian faith, life, and teaching, a relationship of lineal succession so immediate, that the lapse of centuries is almost forgotten, and we see Luther catching the flame from Paul, and Wesley taking fire from the twofold source, as though the three were in actual personal touch.

It must be our first business to deal with the most vital, the most original, the most authoritative of these great names, that of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

PAUL

I

CERTAIN TYPES OF ETHICAL TEACHING IN THE GRÆCO-ROMAN WORLD OF PAUL'S TIME

AT about the middle of the first century of our era, Saul of Tarsus, now Paul the Apostle, first set foot on European soil, having come across from Troas. The first centre marked out for missionary work and testimony was Philippi, the capital city of that district of Macedonia, where an important church was founded. The next was Thessalonica (familiar in the Great War as Salonica), the capital of the second district, and of the entire province; most important also, by its situation on the great Via Egnatia, and at the head of the Thermaic Gulf, as a strategic centre of communication with all parts of the empire. In this city the Apostle's soul must have been strangely stirred by memories of two of the greatest chieftains of the human race, who belonged originally to that region, and were most intimately associated together: Alexander the Great, and his tutor Aristotle, the one supreme in the empire of might, the other in the realm of mind. Himself without any pretensions, consciously or unconsciously, on his own account—for he had yielded his heart and life, wholly and unreservedly, to Another, whose he was, and whom he served—he was yet, in respect of his human qualities

and gifts, not unworthy to rank with either of them, for instincts of generalship, on the one hand, and for philosophic thought and dialectic skill, on the other; while his achievements and permanent influence, as Christian Apostle, are of a value for the world that can never be measured.

Born and nurtured at Tarsus, one of the most important centres of Greek culture in that ancient world, it would seem almost certain that the apostle's mind, in the sensitive years of childhood, would be profoundly affected by the waves of thought that surged around his early home; and, when we remember that, shortly after his conversion, he spent several years at Tarsus, in comparative retirement, preparing for that apostleship to the Greek world to which he had been so expressly called, we may be sure that he would regard it as an important part of his preparation to make himself familiar with the marvellous inheritance of mighty thought to which that Greek world had succeeded, especially in everything that concerned belief, duty, character, and destiny. By reason partly of his commanding influence, partly of the considerable similarity of his cast of mind to that of the apostle, we may well think that Aristotle would be the one to whose teaching he would give special attention. It is necessary, therefore, to remind ourselves of the main principles of that teaching, that we may the better appreciate the distinctive character of the new ethic that accompanied the Gospel, especially as set forth in the teaching of the apostle. There may be interesting points of contact brought to light; there will be more of contrast.

For another reason it is well to bear in mind the

great presentment of ethic by Aristotle, as we study the Ethic of Christianity. Although, as we have seen, the apostle was probably predisposed to its study, and his interest in the philosopher might well be quickened by all the associations of his work in the city of Thessalonica, and afterwards at Berea, which was close to the royal university where Aristotle had taught the future world-conqueror and his comrades; yet, at the time when Christianity began its course, there were, as we shall see shortly, powerful competitors challenging the great master's supremacy, competitors whose sway was of long continuance—notably the Stoics—and, in some parts of the empire, their ethical teaching was, for the present, more in the minds of men. This competition, however, though long continued, was not permanent, and the supremacy of Aristotle, which easily reasserted itself after the strength of their teaching was spent, was acknowledged almost without question for many centuries, and even down to our own day has made itself powerfully felt.

Gomperz, in his singularly fresh and interesting account of ARISTOTLE and his philosophy ('Greek Thinkers,' Vol. IV., translated by G. G. Berry: Murray), gives a description of the Master's sway over the minds of men of diverse tradition, race, and temperament, which deserves to be quoted in full.

"Apart from founders of religions, no single man has ever exerted so permanent an influence on the mental life of mankind as Socrates. But this influence was very largely indirect. It is to be perceived in quarters where the name of Socrates has never been heard. A very different destiny awaited the most

illustrious of his intellectual grandchildren. The victorious march of Aristotle is without a parallel. Fifteen hundred years after his death he is spoken of by the great poet of the Middle Ages as the 'Master of those who know.' Ecclesiastical assemblies of Christian Europe penalise all deviation from the metaphysical doctrines of the heathen thinker: many a faggot blazes to consume his opponents. And the man whom Christendom delights to honour is no less the idol of Islam. In Bagdad and Cairo, in Cordova and Samarcand, the minds of men acknowledge his sway. The Crusader and the Moslem forget their strife while they vie in praises of the Grecian sage. Truly the threads of fate are strangely interwoven here. Mediæval Europe owed the revival of Aristotelian philosophy to the Arabs. They in their turn drew their knowledge from Syriac translations, the makers of which were well fitted to mediate between their Greek brethren in the faith and their Arabian brethren of the Semite stock. Thus the dead Aristotle set up reciprocal influences of far-reaching compass between East and West, and contributed his part towards the realisation of the ideal which his great pupil kept before his mind—that fusion of Orient and Occident after which Alexander strove in many a hotly contested fight."

It will be evident that any attempt to discriminate between the Ethic of Christianity and other ethical systems must pay special attention to Aristotle. Comparison and contrast are here most vividly illustrated and sharply accentuated.

The ethical teaching of Aristotle survives in sundry works that are based on his lectures, the most complete

and satisfactory being the one known as the ' Nicomachean Ethics.' This there is no need for us to traverse consecutively, or in detail; but our purpose will best be served by a survey of his outstanding principles, or main ethical theory, as distinguished from his practical morals.

We must begin, however, where he begins, with a consideration of the Chief Good. Of this he says, to quote his opening words, Πᾶσα τέχνη καὶ πᾶσα μέθοδος, ὁμοίως δὲ πράξις τε καὶ προαίρεσις, ἀγαθοῦ τινὸς ἐφίεσθαι δοκεῖ διὰ καλῶς ἀπεφήναντο τὰγαθόν, οὐδὲ πάντ' ἐφίεται. (" Every art and every method of inquiry, together with all action and purpose, seems to aim at some good; wherefore ' The Good ' has been well defined as, what all things aim at.") Proceeding from this universal statement, Aristotle goes on to consider the chief good of man. Εἰ δὴ τι τέλος ἐστὶ τῶν πρακτῶν ὃ δι' αὐτὸ βουλόμεθα, τᾶλλα δὲ διὰ τοῦτο, καὶ μὴ πάντα δι' ἕτερον αἰρουμεθα, δῆλον ὡς τοῦτ' ἂν εἴη τὰγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον. (" Now, if there is some end of the things that are to be done, which we wish for on its own account, and wish for the rest on account of this, not choosing all things for the sake of something different, it is manifest that this would be ' The Good ' and ' The Best.' ") The end thus defined, which is always to be chosen on its own account, and never for the sake of anything else, must, he says, be ἀπλῶς τέλειον (' absolutely perfect '). This he pronounces to be εὐδαιμονία, a word which he says is on the lips of all men, but with nobler or ignobler meaning, according to the scale of their desire and aim. He rules out entirely pleasure of the baser sort; includes in the general conception of ' welfare ' (a word which implies

the accompaniment of true happiness) some amount of good fortune, to allow of the proper activity of the soul; and decides finally that τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθὸν ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια γίνεται κατ' ἀρετὴν, εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην καὶ τελειοτάτην. ("Human good is an activity of the soul according to virtue, or, if there are several virtues, according to that which is the best and most perfect.") Thus 'welfare' may almost be said to be identical with living well and acting well. When he raises the question, how this pure joy of living according to virtue is to be won, he seems for a moment to be on the verge of a great discovery; for he says, "If then anything at all is a gift of gods to men, it is reasonable to think that welfare is God-given, and this beyond all else, as being the chief human good." Waiving this consideration, however, he looks to the state to teach and train its citizens in character and virtue, this being the object of political science, which is therefore the highest and best in the scale. For political science, with Aristotle, is the culmination and crown of ethics.

Even thus far only, we have an interesting field for comparison with the teaching of Christianity. The Christian message bears upon its very forefront the announcement of Good News (Luke ii. 10)—an announcement which is amply borne out by its subsequent history—the content and phraseology alike of the message indicating that something good beyond all else has been brought to man. It is indeed a gift, the gift of God, and it brings, as its true accompaniment, a pure and perfect joy. That which the philosopher glances at, dreams of, and yet dismisses as

beyond his purview, the 'Gospel' makes prominent, yea, all-important. Aristotle's remote Deity, the God of the speculative philosopher, was too vague and impersonal for the purpose of his ethic, and the popular mythology, which he treated indulgently for the sake of the multitude, was of no avail. But what is the gift of God, the Supreme Good, according to the Gospel? It is nothing other than God Himself, God's living love, offered to men, even urged upon the acceptance of their faith, as the free possession of the humble and contrite. Therefore 'the activity of the soul according to virtue,' in other words, the true and right functioning of the soul (for this seems to be Aristotle's meaning), with its accompaniment of joy, instead of centring in the soul itself, or working out towards others only, is concentrated, first and foremost, on God, being a grateful appreciation of God's love, followed by the outflow of a responsive love to God, and to all others for His sake. In other words, 'the activity of the soul according to virtue' is faith which works by love.

To return to Aristotle and his ethic. Virtue being according to his view the *ἐνέργεια*, or inward working, of the soul, as distinguished alike from its *δύναμις*, or potentiality, on the one hand, and from any outward *ἔργον*, or work, on the other—being, in other words, as we have said before, its true and proper functioning—it follows, as Aristotle goes on to show, that virtue is twofold, intellectual and moral. The former is dependent on teaching; the latter on habit. In this connection there is the interesting statement, ἡ δὲ ἠθικὴ ἐξ ἔθους περιγίνεται, ὅθεν καὶ τοῦνομα ἔσχηκε μικρὸν παρεκκλίνον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθους. ("Ethical virtue results

from habit"—*ēthos*, or character, from *ēthos*, or custom—"whence also it has had its name, deviating little from *ēthos*." In the further development of his subject, Aristotle magnifies the *νοῦς*, or pure reason, as the regal faculty of the soul, constituting its light, or vision, whereby the soul has intuition of truth. The highest virtue, then, is the activity of the *νοῦς* in the region of pure truth, or of principles; whereas *φρόνησις*, or moral wisdom, is the practical exercise of the *νοῦς* (acting as *διάνοια*, or discursive reasoning), in its discrimination between actual good and evil in human affairs. From this moral virtue, as an active, intelligent arbiter in the sphere of right and wrong, proceed the several virtues, as concrete preferences of the right or good.

With Aristotle's detailed scheme of the virtues we are not now concerned, as the object of this discussion is not a comparison of codes of conduct, or practical pursuits and behaviour, as between Christianity and the world's philosophy; but rather an exhibition of the similarity, where it exists, still more of the great dissimilarity, indeed the vital difference, of certain of their essential principles. If we may venture on the distinction, merely, of course, for the purpose of the present argument, it is Ethic, whether Christian or secular, as the theory of human good and right, rather than Ethics, as the tabulation and inculcation of specific duties, with which we have to do. The paramount principles of character, therefore, are what we must arrive at, if our study is to serve its purpose; and, in the case of Aristotle, we have been brought already within sight of the sovereign principle of his ethic—a principle which is to explain

everything and guarantee everything—namely, knowledge of the truth. He says, towards the end of his exposition, “ If welfare is activity according to virtue, it is presumably that which is according to the chief virtue ; and this would be the virtue of that which is best,” that is, the best faculty, or part, of the soul. “ Now, whether this is intellect or something else, the activity of this, according to its own virtue, would be perfect welfare. That this is contemplative (*θεωρητική*) has been said. For pre-eminent is this activity ; and pre-eminent is the intellect, of the things that are within ; and, of the things that are knowable, pre-eminent are those with which the intellect has to do. To man, then, the life which is according to intellect is the most pleasurable, if indeed this is what most of all constitutes man. This life, then, is the life of the truest welfare.”

Here again we are invited to a comparison, and a contrast, with the Ethic of Christianity. The teaching of the Gospel knows of a twofold life of the soul, or soul's activity, though far too much touched and transfigured by the divine to be called ‘ virtue,’ namely, a life in and towards God, as we have already seen, and towards one's self and others for His sake ; in other words, a life of grace, the grace which renews the heart, and fashions the new character, finding its outcome in the graces of the new life : all by the instrumentality, not of intellect, but of faith, a complex faculty or function of the soul, which includes spiritual vision or perception, but, much more, the acceptance and appropriation by the heart of the redeeming love of God in Christ. Where Aristotle is content with truth, as the objective of the intellect, we are taught to

concentrate, not the speculative vision, but rather the heart's adoring trust and love, on Him who says, 'I am the truth,' and in whose perfect love the heart finds its full satisfaction. Again, where Aristotle's practical wisdom has to discriminate between good and evil behaviour, we learn simply to follow Him in whom we believe, and to walk as He walked. But, in any case, whether as regards the life that is hid with Christ in God, or our outer life in the world, it is no functioning of the intellect that is of supreme value. We likewise are made perfect in love.

Aristotle need not detain us longer, though it may be necessary to revert to his principles, when we come to a more thorough exposition of the Ethic of Christianity. We must turn our attention for a short time to other types of teaching with which the Apostle was confronted in that Græco-Roman world, namely, those of the Stoics and the Epicureans. Philosophers of these schools encountered Paul at Athens. After the death of Aristotle, a reaction set in against the extreme intellectualism that characterised both his teaching and that of his revered master, Plato, divergent as were the forms that it took in either case; and, in view of the hard facts of life, which that boasted intellectualism proved inadequate to grapple with, attention was concentrated on practical conduct.

The EPICUREANS frankly made pleasure their 'summum bonum,' and, though Epicurus himself, with the better sort of his followers, such as the great Roman poet, Lucretius, ranked the pleasures of the mind as supreme, it is easy to understand how the unworthier sort would take advantage by this teaching to allow themselves in every gratification and

indulgence. Even according to Epicurus, virtue has no place, no importance in life, except as an aid to that undisturbed and pleasant condition of the soul which we must make it our main business to secure. Though Epicureanism, therefore, is in a certain sense non-ethical, it yet agrees with Stoicism in centring attention on the individual man and his welfare, apart from the 'cosmos,' and even from country and nationality, thus perhaps helping to prepare the way for Christianity, with its true individualism and universalism. But with its doctrine of pleasure as the chief good, Christianity could have no sympathy whatever. As regards religion, also, Epicureanism stood on the side of denial and disbelief. By adopting the atomic theory of Democritus, it freed itself from every thought of interfering divinities, and from all dread of death.

The STOICS were much more earnest, and their doctrine, being much nobler than that of the Epicureans, was a much more serious competitor with Christianity, especially where the power of Rome was strongest. For there Cicero's refined and generous eclecticism, still very influential, had inclined on the whole to Stoicism, as preferable to other philosophies. Stoicism attached the utmost importance to the individual, and to man as man, knowing no distinction of caste or class, of nation or race. It spurned pleasure, teaching that the true good consisted in virtue alone, and that virtue was the soul's calm self-poise and self-possession, its self-mastery and self-sufficiency. At the same time, as all souls are equal, we should be interested in the welfare of others, and seek their good. Latterly, the doctrine of the soul's self-sufficiency came to be

modified by a sense of human weakness in the stress of conflict with an adverse world, and by a consequent dependence on the divine power that was interfused with nature and with life.

This pious pantheism found an exponent in SENECA, who was contemporary with Paul, and may possibly, though perhaps only indirectly, have been more or less influenced by the teaching of Christianity. Bishop Lightfoot, who appends a valuable dissertation on 'St. Paul and Seneca' to his Commentary on Philipians, inclines, after a careful and detailed examination of the evidence, to the conclusion that, though we are not warranted in holding that the philosopher had any personal knowledge of the apostle, he may have learned something of the Christian religion indirectly, through its general diffusion among various classes of the Roman populace. This may account for coincidences of expression between his teaching and that of Christianity, though such coincidences, being for the most part verbal, are interesting, rather than important. His main teaching, as showing the best that philosophy could do for the world, makes the vast ethical superiority of the Gospel the more evident, considered in theory alone; while the utter powerlessness of Stoicism to cleanse the corruptions of the Roman empire, and to avert the threatening doom of its wickedness, prepares us the better to appreciate the Apostle's fearless challenge, writing to the Romans: 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is God's power for salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness from God, beginning with faith and leading on to faith; as it is written, But the

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righteous shall have life from faith.' (Rom. i. 16, 17 : Dr. E. T. Bartlett's New Testament.)

A great spiritual dynamic, securing a renovation in righteousness—this is what we fail to find in Stoicism, or in any other contemporary or antecedent philosophy ; but this is what is announced as amply available in the Gospel of Christ, and, wherever that Gospel is allowed real sway, its claims are abundantly justified by results.

The way is now prepared for a more direct examination of the main ethical principles of Christianity, as already familiar in the faith and experience of multitudes, when the Apostle Paul began his ministry, and especially as so richly exemplified in his own preaching and teaching, and so signally illustrated in his own experience. But we must first take account of his spiritual inheritance, as being a ' Hebrew of the Hebrews.'

II

THE ETHIC OF THE HEBREW RELIGION

THE Apostle Paul brought with him into that Greek and Roman world, which was assigned as the sphere of his apostleship, a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew religion in which he had been trained, and in which, as a preparation for the religion of Christ, he would find the vital beginnings of such faith and experience as came to fulfilment in what he afterwards spoke of as 'my Gospel.' By this he meant the Gospel as it had come to him, as it had taken hold of him and transformed him, and as therefore it was his special mission to make it known to the world. But, distinctive as was his type of teaching and of experience, the essential principles of the Gospel were the same, by whomsoever it was proclaimed. These principles we must now study in their general character, that we may be prepared to recognise them as individualised by the Apostle. Our inquiry must of course be limited by the scope of our subject: Christianity, as regards its ethical implicates and applications.

1. First of all, we are faced everywhere in the Bible, even in the Old Testament, with a great *Divine Initiative*, becoming effectual through the co-operating faith of man.

When Paul was at Athens, he found an altar with the inscription, 'To An Unknown God.' Its origin

and exact meaning he did not know. But it seemed to him a true summing up of the findings, or non-findings, of the acutest racial intellect the world has ever known, when it would master the problems of human being and of human life. There was no negation of God on the part of such a prophet soul as Socrates; of such a dreamer of dreams and seer of visions as Plato; of such an explorer of the wide universe as Aristotle. In each of these, and in many another of the great thinkers of antiquity, the spiritual instinct testified of the Divine. But, when they essayed to determine its meaning, how impotent they were! And, whether they fell back, for popular effect, on the mythology of which Paul saw such abundant evidence in Athens, or sought in their speculation to soar to the ever-receding altitudes of the Infinite Reason, their very helplessness was spelling out their halting tribute 'To An Unknown God.' Thus they were left to the athletics of their own wonderful thought, to the unaided struggles of their own life, and to the delivery of a message which came to men only with their own authority, an authority greatly impaired by the radical divergence of the great systems each from each, and paralysed in any case by the fatal lack of any proffered power that should make it possible for men to respond to the claims of the message.

There was no such lack in the great Hebrew Religion that had nurtured the apostle's earliest thought. The essential truths of that religion were indeed overlaid in his days by the meticulous puerilities of rabbinic teaching, even as they had had to contend from the beginning with what was often the coarse and crass

religious symbolism of the old Semitic world, a system which had to be partially adopted, and at the same time so modified and controlled, that it might be purged of its baser parts, and made into a pictorial prophecy of better things, until such time as it might be altogether done away. But the essential truths were there, in quenchless splendour, burning their way on to the sovereign fulfilment in Christ. Of these, the supreme truth was the truth of a Living God. Such a God had come to men, had communed with them, had made His mighty impact upon their life. The I AM was no abstraction of thought, but the God who was present everywhere, and most intimately present where He was needed most ; the ONE who, from age to age, is ever ready to be more to men than the most they can desire, supplying all their need. So said the Apostle : ' He made of one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He is not far from every one of us ; for in Him we live and move and have our being ' (Acts xvii. 26-28). That well describes the uncertain gropings of the Gentile world, which were now destined to meet their full response. But the Gentiles, in their turn, were to learn that God was in reality finding them, even as He had found Abraham long ago, and Moses ; and not only every prophet soul, but every devout, inquiring spirit.

(1) The Divine Initiative is evident among the Hebrews in the LAW ; not the law of ceremony, nor even chiefly the Moral Law, as the law of the great Commandments, though this, in its august splendour,

is of unique significance and value ; but the Law as God's communication to man of such truth as bears upon human character and life. It is this of which it is said in the 1st Psalm, concerning the godly man, ' His delight is in the law of Jehovah, and on His law doth he meditate day and night.' It is a law that, far from binding him harshly, ministers to his refreshment, like streams of water to the tree whose roots they lave, thus making his life fruitful in all good. Even in its more imperative form, as finding utterance in the ' Ten Words ' of Horeb, it begins, ' I am Jehovah thy God '—the God who had been to the people a God of deliverances, and whom they were thus emboldened to claim as their possession (Exod. xx. 2). What an impulse to the keeping of the ethical precepts that follow, each of which was an expression of loyalty to their own God ! Or again, when the spiritual essence of the Law of Command was gathered up into its positive and perfect form, it was this : ' Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might ' (Deut. vi. 4)—a love responsive to the love of a God who gave Himself to His people, and in its turn giving inspiration to all other love (see Matt. xxii. 37-39), and impelling to ready duty and service.

(2) This same Divine Initiative is very manifest in PROPHECY, which is the forthtelling of God's purposes of grace, actually by those who spoke in His name, but essentially by God Himself, who thus, so to speak, steps into the open, and becomes His own interpreter. There has never been any ethical teaching of nations—any ' Politics,' to use the Greek expression—that can compare for one moment with the

ethics of Hebrew Prophecy, and certainly never any dynamic of motive comparable to the tender persuasion and promise with which the moral exhortation is urged. Nor, in the midst of all that concerns the nation, is the individual overlooked; for it is not forgotten that the individual is the living unit of the nation, and ever and again the appeal seems to be intentionally focussed on the individual's need and welfare. The national and the individual messages are often fused into one, but it is never forgotten that the people of Israel was once the man Jacob. And as, by the intervention of God's exceeding mercy, Jacob became Israel, the conqueror of his baser self, so, by the same intervention of grace, may every one who belongs to the Israel-community share in the same individual victory with the ancestor of his people. 'But thou, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham My friend, thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art My servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away: Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.' 'But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the

Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.' (Isa. xli. 8-10 ; xliii. 1-3.)

(3) Again, amid all the subjective piety of the PSALMS, though here it is mainly man who is speaking to God, yet man is speaking out of his experience of God, and the Divine Initiative is still very prominent. If it were a question of applied ethics, the psalmists had much to learn, as regards, for example, their feelings towards their enemies ; but the essential ethic of character is most impressively set forth in their experience. God, even the Living God, had begun everything for them ; God was above, and around, and beneath them in everything ; God was their all in all. To verify this statement in detail would be to quote from every page. In the 8th Psalm, it is said of man, 'Thou art mindful of him ; Thou visitest him.' In the 16th, 'O my soul, thou hast said unto Jehovah, Thou art my Lord : I have no good beyond Thee.' In the 27th, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ? The Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ?' In the 34th, 'They looked unto Him, and were radiant ; and their faces shall never be confounded.' In the 36th, 'For with Thee is the fountain of life : in Thy light shall we see light.' In the 40th, 'I waited patiently for the Lord ; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay ; and He set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.' And in the 63rd we have the great central experience of the Bible, 'O God, Thou art my God.' To pass over instances innumerable, which show that the Divine intervention, the Divine Initiative, was ever present

to the mind of the psalmists, and was felt by them to be the spring of all their good, the guarantee of their strength, and the inspiration of their life, we may close this survey with a glance at the 139th Psalm, in which these things are set forth at length : ' O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou dost enfold me behind and before, and lay Thy hand upon me. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit ? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence ? Thy hand shall grasp me, and Thy right hand shall hold me fast. How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God ! When I awake, I am still with Thee.'

This preliminary survey of the ethical bearings of the Old Testament, in its great commanding principles, has not only shown the power of a great Divine Initiative, as present alike in the Law, in Prophecy, and in the Piety of the Hebrew Religion ; it has also brought before our notice other factors in the religious experience of the Hebrew people. But all through, it will have been observed, that there is no ambiguity nor uncertainty as to the Chief Good. This is nothing other than God Himself, the Living God, coming into man's very possession, living with man in the communion of love, through faith, and becoming continually a yet surer possession through the service of love. ' My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God. Hope thou in God ; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.' (Pss. xlii., xliii.) Such is the cry of the heart for God ; such is the answer to the cry.

2. Mingled with the gracious utterances that reveal a Divine Presence and Power at work in the world,

especially in the history of Israel, is the insistence upon a great *Divine Redemption*.

This is made very impressive in such words of Prophecy as those already quoted. They need not be repeated, nor need others be brought forward to supplement their assurance. But the whole history of the Hebrews was a history of redemption. Their forefather Abraham was redeemed from Babylonian idolatry, and all its attendant evil; their father Jacob was redeemed from the 'Jacob' nature to the 'Israel' character; the people of Israel were redeemed from Egyptian bondage and degradation; they were redeemed from the wilderness wanderings and apostasies; they were redeemed at last from Babylonian captivity.

Along with this strange history of redemption, there was the equally strange symbolism of redemption in their ceremonial and sacrificial law—strange to us, but to be explained as God's allowance and adoption, for the purpose of what we may call 'kindergarten' teaching, of a system so thoroughly saturating that old Semitic world with its ideas and principles, that, humanly speaking, the only way of disentangling the Hebrews from its perilous materialism was by regulating its operation, gradually disparaging its sensuous, almost sensual, 'rudiments' (Gal. iv. 8), by the searching message of the prophets and the piety of the psalmists, until at last, after 'being done away' for the enlightened, even while still running its course, it was altogether 'done away in Christ' (2 Cor. iii. 13, 14). But the great idea, that was wrought into all that complex of human custom by the controlling power of God, was the idea, and ideal, of Divine Redemptive Sacrifice.

3. We have again anticipated another factor in that old religious life of Israel, concurrent with the teaching of a Divine Redemption. There was a great *Divine Assurance*.

Most tenderly, and with infinite persuasion, does God assure His people, by the prophetic word, 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins.' 'O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me. I have blotted out, as a thick mist, thy transgressions, and, as a black cloud, thy sins. Return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee.' 'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall My covenant of peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.' (Isa. xliii. 25; xliv. 21, 22; liv. 10.)

4. This leads us to yet another factor, closely connected with the former. God was seeking to lead His people to the anointing of a great *Divine Consecration*.

Not only the specific covenant made with the people at Horeb, as represented in Deuteronomy, so searchingly rehearsed in Josiah's time that it led to an amazing reformation; but the whole character of Jehovah's agreement, or covenant, with His people in the old dispensation, was one prolonged re-utterance of the claim, 'Ye shall be holy, for I am holy.' God was pledged to them; they must pledge themselves to God. Hundreds of times we are confronted with the words 'holy' and 'holiness,' in the Hebrew Scriptures. The persuasion of the promises was at once the release from all bondage of fear, and a constraint to joyful service. The Law was a law of

holiness ; the words of the Prophets were a call to holiness ; the piety of the Psalms shines with the 'beauty of holiness' ; the Wisdom teaching sought to consecrate common life with holiness.

Such, then, is the Ethic of the Hebrew Religion—a revelation of grace, and of anticipated redemption, pressed home upon the hearts of the people, and finding its outcome in the praise of God and the service of man. The very commandments of Sinai, thus inspired, and transfigured by the prophetic teaching, become a law of liberty, anticipating the Sermon on the Mount, and preparing for One in whose life Holy Love was made perfect.

Now, therefore, we may go on to consider the fulfilment of Hebrew anticipation and of Gentile need in Jesus Christ. This fulfilment, as now represented by the Gospels and other writings of the New Testament, was the Christianity that Paul persecuted, and then espoused, known familiarly as 'The Gospel.'

III

THE ETHIC OF CONTEMPORANEOUS CHRISTIANITY

AT the time when Paul came into active contact with the Christian Faith, there were no Christian Scriptures, excepting perhaps certain memoranda and reminiscences of the Life, Teaching, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, such as are now more or less enshrined in the fuller representation of the New Testament. But there was the Oral Gospel, on the lips of apostles and evangelists, and reproduced in the testimony of converse by the early disciples.

I. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPTISTS

Amid all the changing sway of opinion regarding the precise relation of the Synoptic Gospels to one another, it is generally agreed that they represent the current, common testimony of the Apostles concerning the Life and Work of Jesus Christ. As written accounts, they became, and remain, the popular storehouse of such information. We are told that the common people heard Him gladly; and, in this presentation of His character, words, and doings, Jesus Christ still makes effective appeal to the acceptance and interest of men generally. What are the main factors of this new experience and ethic, as indicated by the Synoptic Gospel?

1. The great Divine Initiative takes the form of a *Divine Advent*.

Apart from any interpretation of the narratives of His Birth, and apart from any doctrine of the Incarnation, vastly important as is such a doctrine in its theological aspects, what is the great Fact of the Gospels, presented in Jesus Christ, of overwhelming importance practically, but that a new impact from God had come upon man, felt the more, and the more fully acknowledged, in proportion as people were more earnest in their desire for better things? In Old Testament times there was much expectation of a Coming One. Here was One who had come; who indeed often used this very language of Himself—simply and naturally enough, but therefore the more significantly—‘I Am Come.’ As to who and what He was, and whence He came, the people thought variously, sometimes confusedly, often vaguely. But He was there! not of themselves, though so intimately one with them, in His sympathy, fellowship, and friendly helpfulness. And, little as they may have understood it all, in their straits and sorrows, yea, even in the oppression of their sins, they felt beyond question that in Him a great power of God was near—near and available, available for the weakest, for the worst. Nor does He wait for them to find Him out, or to make their appeal. He was ever finding them out; His quick sympathy made its appeal to their faith. Is it a case of loathly disease? He lays His warm hand on the leprous flesh, and says, ‘Be clean.’ With equal authority He says to a helpless, hopeless paralytic, ‘Thy sins are forgiven,’ and a glad hope comes into his night of despair. In His memorable

saying to Zaccheus, 'The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,' He describes the characteristic of His whole ministry: it was a great visitation of power and blessing, which gave, not mere possibility, but sure promise, for what had been impossible—the beginning of a new life of righteousness and love. Such marvels were accomplished, wherever He went.

MATTHEW, in the beginning of his Gospel, presents a beautiful picture from one of the prophets, which evidently struck him as peculiarly applicable to the whole impact of the ministry of Jesus Christ on the people: 'The people that sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up' (iv. 16). In his view, it was a veritable sunrise to the people, a glorious burst of daybreak splendour and beauty to those who had long cowered or groped their way in dim twilight, or even in midnight gloom. This, at the first, was in Galilee of the Gentiles, where races commingled, where Matthew himself had served the Roman power. Had he thus had opportunity to learn something of the pride of cultured Romans in their adopted Greek philosophy, and of its utter powerlessness to restrain them even from shameless sins? Had he heard them prate affectedly of 'virtue,' while indulging in undisguised vice? In this ministry of Jesus, which had made itself felt by Matthew sitting in his toll-booth by the Galilean sea (ix. 9), and had changed his whole outlook on life, he discerned, and felt, a very real 'virtue,' as of sweet sunshine, chasing the noisomeness of night away, making all things new. Where Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the rest, would

have reasoned with men, exhorted them, striven to amend them, or perhaps given them up at last as having no innate capacity for virtue (to quote one of their expressions), this heavenly light shone upon the darkness, and all was changed. Would not even those earnest-hearted, but practically so helpless sages, could they but have seen Christ's day, like Abraham, from afar (John viii. 56), have been glad? Matthew had seen that light of dawn ready to break on the Gentile world. After telling how the multitudes found healing and saving help in Jesus Christ, he quotes the prophecy concerning God's Chosen, who was to 'declare judgement to the Gentiles,' in whose name they should hope (xii. 18-21).

MARK, with his Roman name, and writing for Romans, seems to be always hearing the quick step of the legions, and makes his narrative vivid with the march of power. A new, a mighty power had come to men, and he hastes to recount its achievements, its victories. All things 'straightway' come to pass, as at the bidding of a commander. The thraldom of the power of darkness is broken by His greater might. Men are loosed from their afflictions—and from their sins. Those that Christ sends forth have the same authority, or power, in His name. His ministry is a ministry of liberation. Men are set free from tyrannies that had defied the remedies and programmes of men. How poor were the prescriptions of a Seneca, how pitiful his moral failures, in comparison with the all-accomplishing deliverance of this Strong One!

LUKE, the Greek, writes for Greek readers. While Matthew represents the Advent as the Advent of Light, and Mark as the Advent of Power, for Luke it

was the Advent of Love. He was 'the beloved physician.' Was there some reminiscence of the kindly visitation of those who needed a physician's help and encouragement, when he told how Zacharias sang, 'He hath visited and redeemed His people' (i. 68)? Describing Christ's first 'visitation' of the people, after the baptism and temptation, he records the text that was announced to His fellow-townsmen at Nazareth (iv. 18, 19): 'He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.' It is Luke who presents us with that exquisite picture of Mary, in the garden-booth of Bethany, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and drinking in His words (x. 38-41); of whom Jesus testified that she had chosen the 'one thing needful,' even the Love of God, interpreted by Love. Of this 'chief good' he speaks, like the other evangelists, under the figure of a kingdom—a realm of new life; but for him it is the kingdom of a Father's love (xii. 32), which He is pleased to 'give' to men. This kingdom, Christ said, is 'within you' (xvii. 20, 21). The three parables of chapter xv. represent the same love as on its quest for sinful men, each one the object of individual regard; likened to the shepherd seeking the one lost sheep, the woman seeking the one lost coin, the father seeking the one lost son. For Luke, it is unutterable Love, at the last (xxiii. 28, 34, 39-43), that suffers, and pleads, and dies for man.

It is evident that, to all these evangelists, the Chief Good was present among men in Jesus Christ. They had not to be seeking it; it had sought them. It

was 'the kingdom of God,' or 'of heaven'; the 'one thing' that the young ruler lacked, for all his anxious striving; the Living Love that throbbed so close to the hearts of the people, though it had seemed so far; the fellowship that changed earth into heaven.

2. This threefold Gospel portrays a *Divine-Human Person*.

Only a wonderful Person could have been the original of such a picture. Indeed, it can be accounted for in no other way. 'Then cometh Jesus' (Matt. iii. 13)—like a glorious New Star bursting on their view. 'It came to pass that Jesus came' (Mark i. 9)—stepping on the scene, and going forth on His march of power. 'Jesus began—(Luke iii. 33) His gracious work of healing ministry. Again, to those that had been looking dimly for Some One to come to Israel, 'He' appeared, at first by the Jordan (John i. 35, 36), but fully and finally by the Lake of Galilee (Matt. iv. 18; Mark i. 16; Luke v. 1). Yes, 'He'—how often was that word on their lips!—'He' had come into their lives, and everything was so different. He had said, and was ever saying, 'Follow Me.'

So, through all that Gospel Story, 'He' passes before our eyes, as He passed among the people, and through the land, during those wonderful years. The people were always saying, 'He is here,' or asking, 'Will He come?' But to the small band of disciples He became, before they at all understood the meaning of it, a life-centre in their religion. He, the Person, met their need and satisfied the soul. Nor did Jesus discourage such a trust; He rather invited and justified it. One of His sayings, repeated at junctures

of need or of danger, and setting forth the uniqueness of His personal relation to them, was the singular asseveration, I AM. On the troubled water, in the night, appearing suddenly to the disciples in their peril, He says, 'Be of good cheer! I AM.' So at other times did He assert Himself, make His personality prominent, impress it more and more on their faith. At last He asks them the question, which they had been asking in their heart, 'Who do men say that I am? Who do you say that I am?' And He accepts the answer, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.'

It is not necessary to multiply illustrations. The Synoptic Gospel, though it does not search the depths or scale the heights, like the Fourth Gospel, does show abundantly that this eminently Human Person was gradually revealed, not to the understanding, but to the faith of His followers, as so perfectly Human, because He was so uniquely Divine.

3. In the exercise of His Divine-Human ministry, Jesus Christ was ever ready to convey to the heart, wherever there was the readiness of faith, an *Authoritative Assurance*.

To the paralytic, whose bodily affliction had awakened the sense of spiritual need, and whose dumb entreaty bespoke the craving which his lips could not utter, He said, 'Son, be of good cheer! Thy sins are forgiven!' So to the woman in the house of the Pharisee, as she let her tears fall on His feet, 'Thy sins are forgiven! Thy faith hath saved thee.' He brought, by His assurance, a new warmth to the chilled heart; a new joy to the sunless life. The Pharisees pointed people to the ladder, up the steps of which they must

climb, if they would win God and heaven. He brought God near ; He made heaven a present reality.

4. But for himself, as the end drew near, the way became dark, even the way of death ; and at last we find ourselves facing the mystery of a great *Sacrifice of Love*.

We are forced to face the mystery. These cheery gospels ; these idylls of the lake and hills, of birds and flowers ; these pictures of sunshine winning its way into darkened homes and hearts—all lengthen into tragedy, and linger, as they tell, so simply, but with such solemnity, the Story of the Cross. We are made to feel, though no 'philosophy of atonement' is attempted or suggested, that we are in a Holy of Holies, that an Altar and a Mercy Seat are there, and that a Heart is breaking for very love—all because of our sin. The realism of it all is terribly sublime. We behold the torturing cruelty, the malignant hate, the ghastly mockery of the crucifying—the Deed of Man. Then a Hand blots out the ribaldry and blasphemy, sweeping it into oblivion. 'From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour'—a darkness that might be felt. Men held their breath. The Deed of God was being done. It was the Deed of Jesus also—the Deed of Sacrifice. Not a sacrifice offered by man to God ; not a sacrifice offered by God to God ; but Divine Love making its own Self-Sacrifice, through the willing instrumentality of the Divine-Human Will. The Divine heart breaks for man's wrong-doing and hate of good ; the Human heart becomes its shuddering, but submissive instrument, and is overwhelmed. That is the meaning—to the conscience and to faith—of Gethsemane and Calvary.

This Mystery of the Cross is not foreign to our subject. It is true that to use the word 'ethic' in such a connection would seem discordant. There is a too cold atmosphere about any word of philosophy. But it is the distinction of the Ethic of Christianity that, instead of cold speculative thought, it shows us a vital force, a burning Dynamic that transforms the souls and lives of men. The secret is the Cross of Christ.

Coincident with these things, associated for ever with that Act of Sacrifice, as prefiguring its full accomplishment, was the institution of the Sacrament of the Supper. That it stamped its impress deep on mind and heart is evident from its observance through the ages. The fact that its simplicity and homeliness have become overlaid with artificiality, and that its clear meaning has been obscured by unreal mystery, makes it the more necessary that it should be held fast, in its simplicity, as a testimony to the Love that spent itself, that poured itself out, for man. The Bread and the Cup, what we eat and what we drink, symbols of the body through whose activities we live, and of the blood which is the body's fount and spring of life—these He gives to us as symbols of the Body, 'which,' He said, 'is given for you': given in tireless devotion, its strength spent ungrudgingly in the service of man; and of the Blood, 'which,' He said, 'is poured out for you': His very soul, whence the blood draws its life, pouring itself out in yearning, redeeming love upon man, though the heart broke for it. So that, wherever that Bread and that Cup are found—in the round of laborious life, or in the fellowship of the faithful—they spell out, to the eye of faith, the story of the Love that, deathless, died, and

that, dying, lives for ever. To eat of that Bread, to drink of that Cup, is to appropriate, by faith, the love thus signified, and evermore to live by it.

5. Following closely upon the Sacrifice of the Cross, with the Resurrection Power and Life that were its sequel, these Gospels present us with the imperative of a *Divine Commission*. So does the Love that redeems lay its commands on men, consecrating them to a service of love.

Need we anything more than to be told, 'Jesus came to them, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me, in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, bring all men everywhere into this discipleship of love. I am with you for ever!' (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20) ?

Such being the factors of the Christian Ethic on the Divine side, the factor on the human side is faith. Virtually, when not expressly, Jesus Christ asked of all those whom He would heal, 'Believe ye that I am able?' And He gave the encouragement to hesitating hearts, 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' In close connection with the encouragement to faith, was His intimately individual approach to the souls of men. He often taught the multitude, and many were the gracious invitations addressed to the people that crowded upon Him, and hung on His words. But, for deeper impression and more definite result, He spoke with men and women face to face. Thus did He seek converse with Zaccheus; thus did He talk with Mary of Bethany. All these were made to feel, 'He is interested in me; He cares for me; He will save me.' So did the springs of a new life well up in their souls.

II. THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Perhaps the earliest of the New Testament writings, and written by one who had had earliest knowledge of Jesus, being a member of the Nazareth household, the Epistle of James deals so predominantly with what we may call applied ethics, that is, with the 'virtues' of the Christian life, that it might seem a not very favourable field for the illustration of the more general ethical principles. It deals with the ethics of trial, of prayer, of poverty and wealth, of temptation, of speech and silence, of hearing and doing, of the true ritual of a sympathetic and generous life, of class distinction, of comparative duty, of profession and practice, of teaching and learning, of blessing and cursing, of faction and fruitful peace, of selfish licence and of loyalty to God, of slander and censoriousness, of presumptuous vaunting and the reticence of submissive piety, of flaunting luxury and fraudulent stinginess, of uncomplaining patience and of steadfast hope, of loud assertiveness and of simple truthfulness, of affliction and exhilaration, of mutual confession and mutual prayer, of the reclamation of the erring and the charity that covers a multitude of sins.

This consecutive list of the topics treated in the Epistle is sufficient to show that, within its narrow compass of little over a hundred verses, it is a fairly complete, even as it is a most suggestive manual of Christian morals. It would bear comparison very favourably with the best code, or the best that was customary, in the morals of the Græco-Roman world. Aristotle's 'magnanimous' man, for example—the

man with large thoughts of his own value—would find no place for his highmindedness among the modest virtues of this Christian teacher. Nor would the Stoic's frigid self-control accord well with the self-forgetting ministrations of mercy to which James urges his hearers.

But whence came the inspiration of this practical goodness? It is not crowded out of the Epistle, even by the multitude of moral maxims. In what was surely a captious mood, Luther, thinking that he found nothing of his evangelical freedom there, says, "James is a right strawy epistle, for it has no evangelic manner about it." Though, however, the severe practicality of the Epistle precludes the ample presentation of the great ethical principles that we find elsewhere, they are nevertheless assumed. Especially is this true of the initial impulse to all well-doing in the presence and power of Christ, and instrumentally in the faith of Christ. The instances are somewhat striking.

To begin with, James wishes joy to his readers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, evidently a joy of the Lord that is to be their strength. That joy is to be furthered by painful testings, for their 'proved faith' shall work stedfastness (see Deissmann on *δοκίμιος*, in 'Bible Studies')—the very language (*κατεργάζεται*) implying that stedfast character is the working out of an inwrought principle, or rather of an inworking power (comp. Phil. ii. 12, 13). The *σοφία* of which Aristotle spoke will be needed for the right direction of this power, but it will be given liberally by God, who will not upbraid because of the unwisdom that makes it necessary to ask (i. 5). Thus prayer

becomes a guarantee of moral result. A further stimulus to steadfast endurance is afforded by the Divine promise that the life of spiritual love and loyalty shall find its coronation in due time (i. 12). Again, 'all good giving and every perfect gift is from above,' from the Father, who, 'having brought us forth by the word of truth' into the new life of His grace, will be sure to nurture us that we may be made strong (i. 17, 18).

Our faith is a faith in Jesus Christ the Lord of glory (ii. 1), and will therefore bear us on to glorious victory, if we let it have its perfect work. But, if we make it a mere profession, the dead faith of a mere name, 'can that faith' save us (ii. 14)? It is indeed faith that saves; yes, a vital faith, a faith that is operative. 'Show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith' (ii. 18). God's free grace, received by faith, is the initial force of right living; and 'He giveth more grace. God giveth grace to the humble' (iv. 6). Those that are humble in their estimate of themselves He will exalt (iv. 10). Best of all, for our comfort of hope, ἡ Παρουσία—the promised (Matt. xxviii. 20) Active and Living Presence—of the Lord is always nigh (v. 8).

Far, then, from being a 'strawy epistle,' lean and lifeless in Gospel truth, the Epistle of James is quite rich in its evangelical elements, furnishing ethical implications of the highest value.

III. THE EPISTLES OF PETER

The 1st Epistle of Peter, together with the first chapter and concluding words of the 2nd Epistle, is peculiarly interesting, as a testimony wrought out of a remarkable

experience, and as the utterance of a nature rich in emotion. It is therefore in striking contrast with the stern self-restraint of James, and also with the mystic idealism of John.

Of all the characters that come before us in the gospel history, there was none that felt the quickening, transforming impact of Jesus Christ upon his whole being more than this apostle. Of this there was a striking forecast in their first recorded interview. 'Jesus looked upon him, and said, Thou art . . . thou shalt be' (John i. 42)—indicating the need of a great change that should be wrought. Into the midst of his natural impetuosity, of his surging and swaying emotions, there came the Power that then first looked down into his heart, taking strong hold of his will, maintaining that hold, and establishing him, until 'Simon the son of John,' the man of generous but fitful temperament, became Peter, the man of rock-like strength and stability. It was a vast change, and only the working of that new power in his life could account for it. It is not our business to trace the successive stages of that new experience, but rather to study the apostle's more or less indirect testimony afforded by the epistles.

He begins his First Epistle by speaking of his readers as 'elect,' that is, sought out and laid hold of by the same grace of Jesus Christ that had taken hold of him on that memorable day—a grace not mechanically irresistible; indeed, if they rashly take this for granted, there is cause for fear (i. 17); but wonderfully persuasive, and bearing the soul through all opposition and peril. Loving Him whom they have not seen, on whom, nevertheless, they believe with full assurance

of faith, they receive even now the free gift which their eager faith grasps—' the salvation of your souls ' (i. 8, 9). This salvation, present, full, and free, is the pledge of triumph all along life's way, and of the final victory: ' kept by the power of God through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time ' (i. 5). Thus it is salvation that leads to salvation, ' from faith unto faith.' Whatever testing may come upon them, even a fiery trial like the tremendous heat by which gold is tested and refined, shall but purify the faith by which they appropriate the grace that has come into their life; and their ' proved faith ' shall win its way, along a path where all the graces shine, to its true consummation. Here we have once more the impelling power of the new life, and the instrumentality of faith.

This faith is still the faith that works by love, rejoicing the while with joy unspeakable. Was there anything approaching this exhilaration of righteousness in the ' pleasurable ' attendant on the ' activity according to virtue ' of which Aristotle spoke? It was a glorious earnest of victory. Thus, always girding themselves for life's work and warfare, and remaining watchful (*νήφοντες*), they are to set their hope perfectly on more and yet more grace, which will surely be brought to them, in degree proportioned to their need, by successive revealings of the face of Jesus Christ, always with them, always watching on their behalf (i. 13).

They have been called to holiness with an imperative that implies a promise: ' Ye shall be holy, for I am holy ' (i. 15, 16). Christ, with His resurrection power, has been manifested for their sake, and faith in such

a One may well merge into a sure and certain hope ('so that your faith may be also hope in God'—'en sorte que votre foi est aussi espérance en Dieu': Segond), the hope of glory (i. 21). The living word abides in them, with its regenerating, its all-performing power (i. 23-25). Being built into the living corner-stone of the new spiritual temple, they draw life from it without limit, as living stones (ii. 4-6).

Taken into God's own possession, they cannot but reflect His marvellous light (ii. 9). They are come into the inheritance of a blessing, which, abiding on their life, makes it a blessing to others (iii. 9). They have received a gift, which they are not to grasp greedily, but rather to minister generously to one another (iv. 10). For it is God who supplies their strength; yea, of all their new life of loving service, a service so much larger and freer than any 'virtue' which the moralist may advocate, than any righteousness which the 'just man' of the Greeks may exemplify, and far beyond the self-centred and self-regarding righteousness of the Pharisee—of this new life the living springs are in God, to whom alone therefore they must give the glory (iv. 11).

Are they altogether different in their manner of life from what they were? Has something come into their experience to account for it, quite different from what others know, who are not named by the same great Name? This is nothing to their credit, therefore they must not be high-minded, but rather fear (iv. 15-18). There rests upon them, as though hovering over their weakness, and thrilling them into strength, the Spirit of Glory, the Spirit of God (iv. 14). They must be watchful ever (v. 8); but He who has called

them, even as Peter heard the call, shall restore, establish, make them strong; for He is the God, not of partial, but of perfect help, 'the God of all grace' (v. 10). It is the grace of the humble.

This grace Peter evidently regards as what Aristotle would have called the *ἥθος*, the habitual ethical element, of the new life, for he speaks of it many times in this epistle, always in definite relation to Christian character and conduct. In this grace the Christian is to live and move and have his being. Without it, he is helpless; with it, he shall find all things possible.

All this is made very emphatic in the first chapter of the Second Epistle (see especially i. 1-11), which is perhaps all of the epistle (with possibly the concluding words) that we have from Peter's own pen. Here is a marvellous condensation of Christian Ethics. Faith, as the instrumentality of our possession of God, and consequent deliverance from the corruption of the world, is spoken of as 'precious.' It moves in the region of God's righteousness, and righteousness is its intended result. It lays hold of 'all things' necessary to a truly righteous life, and to the godliness which is its antecedent and sustainment; that is, it becomes possessed of the 'grace' which includes every element of spiritual and moral power, encouraged by the glorious manifestation of saving power in Jesus Christ (see Deissmann on ἀρετή, in 'Bible Studies'), and by promises correspondingly great and precious—all in proportion to the 'knowledge' (twice repeated) that results from this self-revealing.

Therefore, doing our part with the greater diligence, in the region of our faith we are to supply 'virtue':

that is, corresponding to the religious activity, there is to be a proper moral activity of the soul. In the region of our virtue we are to supply knowledge, for its right guidance—the *φρόνησις* of the Greeks; in knowledge, self-mastery; in self-mastery, steadfast endurance; in steadfast endurance, a godly piety that will not doubt or complain; in godliness, brotherly kindness, the kindlier and more sympathetic, because our brethren also have so much to bear; and in our brotherly kindness, the yet larger 'love,' that goes out in beneficence to all our fellow-men.

Let this be the ethical programme and practice of our piety, and the rare privilege of our 'knowledge' of Jesus Christ (again twice repeated) will not perish of unfruitfulness; but we shall be borne on with a momentum of abundant life, that will endorse the reality of the initial calling and choice which have made us what we are, to the rich results of our final triumph.

At the heart of this teaching in the Epistles of Peter, and at the heart of the experience that he describes, is the Gospel of Christ's Redemption. The badge of consecration for believers is 'sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. i. 2). All glories of the new life follow His 'sufferings' (i. 11). Christians are to be jealous of their holiness, because the redemption has been so costly, even 'precious blood' (i. 17-19). They should be content to suffer, because for them 'Christ suffered' (ii. 21). Yea, the Sinless One 'carried our sins up to the tree' (ii. 24: margin). He thus suffered for sins once, the Righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God (iii. 18).

It is the assurance of this redeeming love of Christ

which should fill believers ' full of glory ' (i. 8), inspiring a responsive love that will make all their life for others a sacrifice of love for Christ's sake (iii. 13-17).

IV. THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Fourth Gospel belongs to a time far beyond the conclusion of Paul's life-work. So that in one sense it is not contemporary. Yet, apart from the question of authorship, it represents contemporaneous Christianity. If the beloved disciple was the author, he was preaching his Gospel to men long before it was written. Even if it be maintained that the Gospel, as written, was put into its final form by a loyal disciple, the same is true—it was the Gospel, essentially, as John had been preaching it.

Our discussion, however, at this stage, does not turn on the reaction of influence between Paul's Gospel and that which bears the name of John. The intention is rather to ascertain the distinctive principles of Ethical Christianity, as contained in the canonical writings that we are examining, that we may then pass on to study the same principles as exemplified in the experience of Paul, and exhibited in his Epistles.

Thus far we find those principles to be consistently the same in the Synoptic Gospels, in James, and in Peter. They may now be defined, in their more developed form, as follows: 1. A GREAT DIVINE SALVATION; 2. A GREAT REDEEMING PERSONALITY; 3. A GREAT ASSURANCE OF FAITH; 4. A GREAT CONSECRATION OF LOVE. Or, as comprised in one formula, they may be thus expressed: Salvation by Grace, Assured to the Heart through Faith in Jesus

Christ, The Source and Inspiration of the Life of Perfect Love. The Supreme Good is the Love of God in Christ ; the Condition is the Acceptance of Contrite Faith ; the Resultant Life is Love. The spiritual essential is Life in God ; the ethical essential is Life for God ; the essential connection is our inward Assurance of God.

It will not be necessary to be continually re-stating these results of our analysis, but merely to refer to them, more or less explicitly, as our analysis proceeds. Let us bear them in mind as we examine the testimony of the Fourth Gospel.

The great Prologue to the Gospel of John, while introducing us to a different type of treatment of the life and work of Jesus Christ from that of the Synoptists, a treatment that keeps more expressly in view the spiritual and eternal, at the same time contains within itself a most impressive statement of the ethic of the new life. Our thoughts are carried back to eternal beginnings ; nothing less will suffice to explain the change that is coming to pass in the hearts and lives of men, wherever the Gospel is proclaimed. There, in the eternal beginning, was the Unbeginning Word, God's Other Self, the Utterance, the Personal Self-Expression of God, as Light and Love. In any case, it is a Divine Life which is operative, whether on the spiritual vision, or on the hearts of men. To come into being *through* Him is one thing ; to have our being *in* Him—this is life indeed. Wherever this true life even begins to be, light shines—the light of spiritual vision ; but the darkness of unbelief does not receive the light. To aid in overcoming this unbelief, that so the light

might shine unhindered, prophets have spoken, especially, at last, John the Baptist, bearing testimony of the Light. Even while he testified, the true Light, the Light that lighteth every man, was coming into the world. It was now to shine outwardly among men, as already it had been shining inwardly in human thought, conscience, and hope. But unbelief still withstood the shining of the Light. 'He was in the world, and the world through Him came into being, and the world knew Him not. He came to His own proper home among men, and His own people gave Him no welcome.' Shining through the vesture of our flesh, the glory manifested itself in vain.

The glory of the Word that became Flesh is the glory of grace as well as of truth ; it is a glory that, like the Shekinah, but more homely-wise, dwelt as in a tent among men ; the Light is the Light of Love. Glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father—how can it be withstood ? Not all withstand it, says John, speaking now with the deep feeling of personal experience : 'We beheld His glory !' He implies that the beholding was earnest, eager—as on the day when Jesus said to John and Andrew, 'Come and see.' Nor was it confined to himself and his friends. Others beheld the Light, welcomed the Love, and all things were made new. *They* were made new. 'As many as accepted Him, He gave to them the right'—a right carrying with it an inward power—'to become children of God, even to them that believe on His Name ; who were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' It would be quite impossible to present the ethic of the Gospel more concisely, more completely,

than here. The hope of man's renewal lies in man's faith, which is not mere vision, knowledge, belief, but acceptance, the opening of the heart. When the heart is opened, there is the immediate inflow of light and love. This is indeed belief, but a belief that is practical and vital, a belief implying utter reliance or trust, belief 'on His Name.' Now the Name asserts its authority; the Light and the Love do their work. The light is the light of a Sonship, in which we are bold to claim our part; the love is the love of Sonship, into which we are begotten. That is, to use the language of other writers, there is a great Adoption, with a great Regeneration as its accompaniment, the former being the causal condition of the latter. And our entrance is by a 'right' which is given us through Christ—our entrance into the twofold sonship. This implies our Justification, to use another word not in John's vocabulary. Thus there comes to pass inevitably, where this work of faith is wrought, a moral transformation which can be accomplished by no other means. Heredity cannot achieve it—'not of blood'—for some of the worst men have sprung from the best. The bent or bias of nature cannot produce it—'nor of the will of the flesh'—for man's nature is evil, with a bias, not towards the good but towards the bad. Determined resolve cannot bring it to pass, a resolve to conquer nature, and attain by sheer strength the perfection of a higher life—'nor of the will of man'—for resolve is baffled and beaten back by a power greater than its own, and already in possession. There is, however, a Power far greater than all, waiting for entrance; and from this fulness we receive, even grace more and more abounding.

It may be well to pause here, that we may notice more carefully the contrast between this latest apostolic statement of the new ethic of the religion of Christ, and the ethical theories that still lingered in that Græco-Roman world of which Ephesus was an important centre. There was much pride of race among the Greeks, affecting directly their theory of character. Not even Aristotle would expect much 'virtue' on the part of slaves, or of 'barbarians' generally, and certainly he would not go out of the way to teach them his doctrines. Greek blood was a guarantee of fitness, upon which ethical teaching might be grafted with some presumption of success. According to the teaching of the Epicureans, much confidence was to be placed in 'nature,' not only the nature of things generally, but especially the nature of man, including the impulse of his untaught desire and appetite. In any case, as the Stoics taught, man was master of his own will. Aristotle makes much of 'a deliberate choice by preference,' as being essential to the life of virtue. But this was emphasized more strongly by the Stoics, with whom the will was all-important, as keeping man in his proud self-poise and self-mastery. The facts of life, however, and certainly the facts of life in that old Roman world at the time when the apostle wrote, were a glaring refutation of these teachings. Greek and Roman alike were submerged in the overwhelming floods of vice, and not 'blood,' nor the volition of the 'flesh,' nor the reasoned and deliberate 'will of man,' availed to stay the tide, or to rescue the victims of insolent and triumphant evil. In the midst, however, of all this corruption and destruction, there were communities here and there, like the church at Ephesus,

not without grave faults, but constituting centres of new life, which were destined to vitalise and renew that decadent, dying civilisation. In these communities were people who had been reborn. This rebirth was not of man, but by a great visitation from God.

So much may be said, to point the contrast between the Ethic of Christianity, as set forth in this Prologue, and the ethic of the world's philosophy. At the same time it is recognised in the context that those who, in all times of the world's history, have opened their minds honestly to the light, have been illumined by a light which was not inborn, but was 'the true light which lighteth every man.' Such a one as Aristotle, for example, was opening his mind to the light, and his heart to its influence, when he gazed enamoured on that righteousness, in which, he said, all virtue might well seem to be included, testifying, as though from his own glowing experience, *καὶ οὐθ' ἑσπερος οὐθ' ἑφ' ἡ οὐτῶ θανμαστός* ('and neither the evening nor the morning star is so wonderful'). Not by any fault of his own did he lack the testimony of a Gospel, which was afterwards to testify of that light, or the knowledge of One who was to come, as Man among men, to make the Divine Light and Love humanly and warmly real. But, at Ephesus and elsewhere, the old Greek ethic had become an empty theory, powerless to renew the world.

To proceed with our examination of the Gospel of John, that we may continue our study of its teaching on the subject of the Divine Initiative of Grace, as starting and determining the new life, we pass to the call of the first disciples (i. 35-51). One important

consideration, for our purpose, is the fact, so clearly manifest in the narrative, that the great impact which came into the experience of those disciples, through their first contact with Jesus Christ, affecting equally the inmost springs of character and conduct in every case, made its entrance by different ways of approach, according to their diverse temperaments. Broadly speaking, we may say that here we have instances of the access of the new spiritual motive power, by way of attraction of the soul's yearnings, in the case of John (with Andrew) ; of deep searching of conscience, in the case of Simon Peter ; of sudden arrestment of will, in the case of Philip ; and of unexpected fulfilment of hope, in the case of Nathanael. This is not an occasion for detailed study of these cases ; but it is essential to our purpose to remind ourselves that, not only does the great initiating impulse and inspiration affect men variously at the outset, but it produces different types of character in its after effects. The impact may be more on spiritual discernment, on conscience, on emotion, or directly and immediately on the will ; but the essential result will be the same, namely, the quickening and transformation of human nature, and the impulse to a new life.

The same lesson is taught by the 3rd and 4th chapters, which show the effect of this new power on two so widely different characters as the devout Master of Israel, and the Woman of Samaria. The correctness of the one needs the stir of the new inspiration, as much as the errant naturalism of the other needs its purging power. To each it will be a new birth. But, however essential the change in the one case, however radical the transformation in the other,

the resultant Christian character cannot possibly be cast in the same mould. Here Light and Love are again exhibited in their wonderful working ; and the 5th chapter shows us the Life, as it moves in the midst of this world's spiritual death, quickening and judging belief or unbelief.

The 6th chapter represents the new visitation of life that had come to the people, under a figure that has been perpetuated in the Sacrament of the Supper, namely, that of Bread from Heaven. This is introduced by a description of the feeding of the multitude—a parable of what Jesus taught shortly afterwards to some of the same people at Capernaum. That conversation turned on one great saying, 'I am the Bread of Life.' This was an astounding claim. It has great theological implications. But it also sets forth very impressively the essential principle of spiritual strength, which is to be found only when the hungry heart of man is satisfied with God. He spoke to Jews ; but His outlook, as the vivid comparison indicates, was towards mankind. Our daily bread, the bread that has all the familiar associations of husbandry and home life, the staple food of all classes, from infancy to age, belongs to nearly all climes and countries—it is the food of the world. So does Jesus Christ represent Himself as the essential condition of life for all men everywhere. How different from the teaching of the proud Greeks ! He fulfils Himself, not in exclusiveness of race or of caste, nor in superiority of culture, but in common human life. Nor is it necessary for men to understand the working of this life-principle, but only to partake and be satisfied.

Need we wonder that, wishing at the last to leave some permanent symbol with His people, to express, in a way that would commend its meaning to every mind, the one secret of newness of life, He chose the same familiar comparison, which nature has provided? 'He took Bread.' And, to the end of time, He will still be saying, wherever His people partake, whether in stately cathedral or in plain-faced tabernacle, in common worship or in the privacy of home, and saying as though expressly to every humble participant, 'I am Bread.' Thus the simple meal becomes a sacrament of grace.

What was thus taught, under the figure of bread, is taught in the 7th chapter under the companion figure of water. 'Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink' (vii. 37). He thus reverts to the comparison with which He encouraged the faith of the woman at the well. He who satisfies the hunger, quenches the thirst of man. He meets every necessity, every craving and longing, of the heart. There is not only sustainment but refreshment in Jesus Christ.

Thus we find this Fourth Gospel presenting the Divine Initiative of Christ's Advent into the world, more and more, as a great salvation. The little interlude of viii. 1-11, not infelicitously placed where we find it, presents such a salvation very pathetically, and, as is the wont of the Gospel, not on some conspicuous height, or in stately setting, but on the very lowest level, and where it is needed the most. 'Jesus stooped'—so significant, in many ways. He will not stand, as a Censor, like the clamouring accusers. When they have slunk away, abashed, He sends forth

the crushed, contrite woman, uncondemned, saying, 'From henceforth sin no more.'

The conflict of argument which the same chapter goes on to describe concerns this great salvation. His carping, bitter opponents, already plotting His death, are *in their sins* (viii. 24), and there they stubbornly abide. That is their essential unbelief. Even for them, however, there is a way of salvation, if they will but know it; the salvation, indeed, is near—and yet so far! Over each one of them yearns the compassion of One whom they are forcing into the position of an unwilling alien, if not enemy. 'I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for, except ye believe that I AM, ye shall die in your sins.' There is freedom for them, if they will have it—the freedom of faith. 'If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' But, professing to be the guardians of 'the house' of the Father, they made themselves bondservants.

In the 9th chapter we have a rehearsal of the way in which a man, who, born blind, had been made to see, was led on gradually into a corresponding spiritual experience—a spiritual vision of Jesus Christ. To him the Healer was at first so much a Stranger, that he speaks of Him as 'the man that is called Jesus.' Then, to the Pharisees, he says of Jesus, 'He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and I see.' Again he declares, his faith growing under the cross-examination, 'He is a Prophet'; and yet again, 'If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.' Thus, when the Pharisees had cut him off from fellowship, and his deliverer asks him, 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' his eyes become fully opened; he says, 'Lord,

I believe.' And he worshipped Him. Salvation was taking hold of his soul.

The 10th chapter shows the Salvation that had come among men, seeking out the lost, as a good shepherd seeks the wandering sheep, and cares for them, and has them in his keeping. The 11th shows us the Life breaking the spell of death for those that were in thrall to its terror and bitter loss. The 12th, recording an interesting quest of 'certain Greeks,' who came, saying, 'We would see Jesus,' relates His prevision of the time, when a great attracting force, such as the outside ethnic world, which they represented, had never known, even a Person 'lifted up' for their sakes, would 'draw' people of all nations to His fellowship of love. The problem should be solved, which Greek, and all other ethnic philosophy, failed, and still fails, to solve: men should be won to goodness, by the sight of Infinite Goodness making Infinite Sacrifice for their salvation.

The 13th chapter begins to prepare us more distinctly for the climax towards which all has been tending—the 'uttermost' love of Him who went to His Sacrifice, even for them that hated Him the most. What, then, was His love to 'His own that were in the world'? But they still need their lesson, the lesson of the lowly service of love. 'He layeth aside His garments, and took a towel, and began to wash the disciples' feet': such wonders Love can do! It was scarcely needed that words should urge the lesson: 'that ye should do, as I have done to you'; 'that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.' All the sublime beauty of the New Ethic was in that Upper Room.

Chapters 14 to 17 may not be analysed. But their aroma fills the world for ever. The great Saving Presence that had come among men was breathing itself out in blessing ineffable, and carrying them finally into the Holy of Holies of God's heart, with its prayer of intercessory love. There they came indeed to a vision of the Chief Good: 'This is life eternal—to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' Life in Christ, with Christ, for Christ: there is the whole secret. Filling the compass of the farewell discourse, is one pervading promise—the promise of the Spirit who should 'bear witness.' By the inward testimony of His grace, He should give them peace and power. Then *they* should bear witness.

This leads us to refer back to a striking anticipation of what was to be taught more fully later, concerning that Assurance of the Spirit which means so much for the Christian Ethic. Speaking with Nicodemus on the mystery of the New Birth, Jesus said, with some indicated reference to the 'breath of even,' sighing around the house as they spoke together, 'The Spirit breatheth where He willeth'—a Person, with freedom of grace—'and thou hearest His Voice: so is every one born that is born of the Spirit.' That is the law of spiritual genesis. The joyful assurance of a Father's love makes all things new.

With the 18th chapter, we pass more directly into the lengthened detail of the final Sacrifice. Not much need be added to what was said in our study of the Synoptic Gospels. We are on holy ground.

The actors in that last transaction are many; the Actor is one. And it is one act—truly an Act of God—that is here described. All parties are represented.

Many wills are in touch with the one Will. Superficially, Jesus is being judged; actually, He is the touchstone that tries men and motives. The disciples of Jesus, and each disciple severally; Judas, disciple, and no longer a disciple; the Sadducean priests, and the Pharisees; a named, yet nameless, Malchus; Annas and Caiaphas; an officer of the court; a maid in the courtyard; a kinsman of Malchus; Imperial Rome, in the person of Pilate; Pilate's real, as well as official, self; Barabbas; soldiers of Rome; malefactors; women named Mary; one Woman named Mary; the beloved disciple; Joseph and Nicodemus—they all take part in this solemn pageant, in this Mystery of Redeeming Grace. Thoughts out of many hearts are being revealed.

'What is Truth?' asked Pilate, echoing the cry of many a baffled inquirer, who would explore the mysteries of the human soul, who would determine the processes of reason and of conscience, who would map out the syllabus of right and wrong. Truth? 'I am Truth,' He had said but lately. Now He says it, more augustly, by His whole deportment before Pilate. While so many are being convicted, like Pilate himself, of essential untruth, He makes it felt that He is bearing witness unto truth, that He is King of Truth. The secret of the world's refashioning in righteousness is here, because here is the secret of the soul's rebirth in love. Jews, Romans, Greeks—they all bore unintended witness, when they wrote on the Cross, 'Jesus of Nazareth, King.'

That prophecy is gloriously assured of its fulfilment by the resurrection splendour—shall we rather say, by the resurrection sweetness? For the scenes

are very human, and full of tenderness, presaging the intimacy of renewal that is to come into the common experience of men and women. In a garden, He reveals Himself to Mary Magdalene ; in the Upper Room, to His dear company. Once more there is full assurance : ' Peace unto you.' Once more there is the revealing of the Mysterious Personality : ' My Lord ! my God ! ' And, as the token and pledge, ' He showed them His hands and His side.' All, ' that ye may believe ; that ye may have life.'

V. THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JOHN

If ' undesigned coincidences ' are ever of evidential value, they are so in the case of the Gospel and the Epistle of John. No designer of similarity, however cleverly imitative, could produce the subtle nexus of allusions that binds these writings together.

After more than half a century from the events themselves, the wonder that was roused by the glory of the Only Begotten had not spent itself, nor the greater wonder, that what was so glorious should become so intimately familiar (John i. 14). Thus the Epistle begins with the exclamation, ' We heard, we saw, we handled ! ' It was the Unbeginning Word that uttered God to man ; it was the Love, the very Life, of God, that was manifest—yes, ' manifested unto us.' That Eternal Love made its homely dwelling among men, and ordinary men had ' fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ ' ; a fellowship that was perpetuated, long after mortal eyes had ceased to behold the glory. That fellowship is the secret of an eternal life.

The ethical requirements of such a privilege are correspondingly great in their stringency. 'God is light; in Him is no darkness at all.' To dwell with Him requires that our walk in the world shall be 'in light,' or our character belies our faith. But, if we are children of light, the fellowship is perfected—our fellowship with Him, shared with others, all alike being cleansed for this holy communion by the blood of Jesus. We take our stand on His faithfulness, that we may be strong to do His will.

So tremendous, indeed, is the ethical demand, that sinning should henceforth be unthinkable. This is the quiet, but astounding assumption with which the 2nd chapter begins its course. Yet, *if*—'if any man sin'—we are not cast off for ever; the Holy One does not all at once turn against us, and become our enemy: He becomes our Advocate! He who died as 'the propitiation for our sins' cannot lightly let us die. Jesus Christ the Righteous is on our side.

But again the ethic of redemption lifts its voice. To 'know Him,' with the knowledge of appropriating faith, is indeed eternal life, but that life must work itself out by right living: it implies 'that we keep His commandments.' Only by practice of love can love be perfected. That we may continue truly to abide in Him, we must 'walk even as He walked.'

Does this mean that such a religion resolves itself after all into mere morals, such as the philosophers taught? 'Even as He walked'—surely that was beyond all dreams of men. 'The sinless years that breathed beneath the Syrian blue' would mock our helplessness, but that they breathed out a power that drew men in the way of His steps. For this means that, by no

imitation, but by His own inspiration, we may love, even as He loved. This is the 'new commandment,' but a commandment with glorious promise. It receives its inspiration at the Cross, and therefore it may be fulfilled. The world's age-long darkness of incapacity is passing away; 'the true light shineth!'

From these austere heights of inexorable claim the teaching comes down to the level of our need, with the persuasive encouragement, twice told, that, as 'little children,' 'young men,' 'fathers,' all humble and earnest believing ones may expect strength according to their days. A Father's forgiving love, baptizing the young life with beauty; an inward voice, urging the Christian warrior to the strong conquest of wrong; God's sunrise sweetening into sunset light for the veterans—this is at once the spiritual and the ethical experience, which should be normal for all that bear His Name, and which is so great an inheritance, that when the world, with all its glamour, shall have passed away, they that are loyal to its claims shall abide for ever.

Thus the argument goes on its way. Its course varies, but its refrain recurs. 'If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is begotten of Him'—let no others make that claim. Lest, however, this should seem to imply that effort and merit are in the field, under another guise, at once the keynote is rung out clearly. It is Love that we serve; we serve with love inspired of love; the anointing of love makes us strong to serve; in Love's manifestation we know no shame.

As we pass to the 3rd chapter, it is still Love that confronts us, the love by which we live. For once the

writer breaks into rapture: 'Behold, what wonderful love! that we should be called God's children! And we are!' The joy of the adoption has become our regeneration. Is not this the pledge of everything good? When the splendours of the Great Appearing break upon the world, He shall find us changed into His likeness, and able to behold with open face. The hope of these glories is a cleansing hope, purifying us, even as He is pure. Only those that live in the fellowship of a Righteous Love can work righteousness. On the other hand, those who are truly begotten of God cannot think of sinning. To belong to God is to 'do' righteousness; it is to love.

Once more, this love is beyond anything that can be expressed by the world's vocabulary, or comprehended by the world's experience. '*Hereby know we love*'—it catches its flame from His love, and His love burns most brightly at the Cross. 'He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' Yet a love so transcendent is translated, not only into the supreme sacrifice of human love—'we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren'—but also into life's simplest charities: 'Whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?' The 'commandment' is love; the 'commandments' must be kept in love; the outcome of true faith is love.

In the 4th chapter, the argument still pursuing its way, with iteration, but not monotony, we are reminded that the Advent of Grace is the world's only hope—Jesus Christ, who came 'in the flesh,' identifying Himself with our frailty, Brother among brethren;

also, that the Fulfilment of Grace, in the great 'propitiation for our sins,' is God's guarantee of everlasting love. But we are again reminded swiftly that we must love—'love one another.' This is the conclusion of the whole matter, from which we are never allowed to escape.

After thus expatiating on the claims of that Unveiled Mystery, which he expresses in what is the most wonderful saying in the world, 'God is Love,' the writer, passing to the 5th chapter, insists on the consequence: such love, known, and believed, and obeyed, is life; and this life—the true, the eternal life, man's chief good—is in His Son.

The two brief private letters, bearing the name of John, exhibit the same principles of truth and love, mainly in application to the hospitality and courtesy of life.

VI. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Before passing on to the Conversion of Paul, and by way of introduction to that event, we must glance at the picture of Primitive Christianity presented to us in the earlier chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Much that we have considered could not have come into existence, but for the events there recorded.

After an interval of waiting, expectation, and prayer, the little company of disciples, men and women, was overwhelmed with a great surprise, and baptized into a new-creating joy, by the pouring out of the Spirit of the Risen Lord. He had foretold it as 'the promise of the Father' (i. 4), but the reality was beyond all

their thought. Very literally, it made all things new. For one thing, it convinced them with a conviction that nothing could ever shake, that He who had gone away from them into heaven was very really present, living, active in the world. All that had gone before was what Jesus 'began both to do and to teach' (i. 1); He was now going on, far more wonderfully, with both the teaching and the doing. The first recognition of the actuality of this Living Presence was when the Voice of a great Breath vibrated through 'the house where they were sitting,' and the dividing flames of one great Splendour touched every countenance (ii. 2, 3). Then, as each heart was strangely thrilled, every face flashed to the others the joy of the same discovery, 'It is the Lord!' He had said that He would come, and He was there! His last words had been, 'Lo, I am with you always!' They were fulfilled. From that time the disciples had a new watchword, often on their lips, always in their hearts—the secret of joy, of strength, of victory—Marana tha: 'Our Lord has come!'

'And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit' (ii. 4). That was the birth of a new, a living, a spiritual experience of Christ. It had come to pass, as the Baptist foretold, 'I indeed baptize you with water; but He that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.' Of this prophecy the Lord had given them at once a reminder and an endorsement (i. 5). It marked the difference between two ministries; also between two types of Christianity, the preparatory and the final. Water baptism was continued in the usage of the Church; it was a customary and convenient way of making a new religious

confession. With John the Baptist, it had been the baptism of repentance; it afterwards merged into the baptism of discipleship. One disastrous trend of practice, and then of belief, in the post-Apostolic church, was the increasing failure to distinguish clearly between the two baptisms.

That which was quite secondary in importance, the baptism of water, became ultimately spoken of as Christian Baptism; that which was supremely important, the Baptism of the Spirit, was almost forgotten. It accorded with the dominance of ecclesiasticism, as time went on, that the rule of the church, the act of man, should be made prominent. As experimental religion declined, the Act of Christ was out of thought, save in so far as it was assumed to accompany, in a semi-materialistic way, that baptism of water, which was the act and deed of the church. It was necessary, from the first, that provision should be made for a discipleship, which, though sincere in its acknowledgment of Christ as Lord, was immature in personal knowledge of salvation—as had been the case with the early disciples, in ‘the days of His flesh,’ and as would be the case with the children of believers, as soon as they were admitted to the recognised position of learners in the school of Christ. Similarly, in missionary countries to-day, it is found expedient to admit to the baptism of water, that is, of public confession, those who are willing thereby to renounce their heathenism, and to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, sometimes long before they are considered qualified, by personal experience of salvation, to be admitted into the full membership of the Christian Church.

The baptism which alone constitutes men and women members of the Spiritual Church is the Baptism of the Spirit—that is, the baptism of a new experience of holy joy in the Lord—such as ‘the disciples’ received at Pentecost. This baptism, as of ethereal fire pervading spirit and soul and body, is of such a sort as necessarily to imply ‘baptismal regeneration’; it is also, in the nature of the case, ‘believers’ baptism.’ So that, were the original distinction once more to prevail, the difficulties of those who find regeneration associated with baptism in the New Testament, and of others who find baptism connected with ‘believers’ only (presumably adults), would be done away, each type of baptism being accorded its own position and its own proper rights. The baptism of water, as the baptism of discipleship, would be recognised as suitable for all true learners of Christ, whether children or adults; the baptism of the Spirit, whereby alone we are born again, would be regarded as the crowning privilege of believers, the soul’s Pentecost.

The new experience sprang immediately into praise and testimony. ‘With other tongues’ the disciples glorified God, vocables that they had heard on the lips of worshippers from afar, and that had fastened, unknown to themselves, on their latent consciousness, coming unbidden to their own lips in the rapture of the moment; and, with fervent persuasion, using now the common speech, they bore witness to the people. The new power of spiritual ecstasy must perforce expand, upwards and around. They must tell out their new-found joy.

Receiving continually vast accessions to their

number, of those who were convinced by the testimony, the apostles led the people, as they were ready to receive the teaching, into the full truth of the Gospel, and, as their faith was quickened, into that holy fellowship, with God and with one another, which had now become their own very life. They made known to them also the blessed significance of the 'breaking of bread,' a testimony which, in the 'fellowship' or at home, was ever telling of the Love that gave itself for love of men. And they joined the new converts, with themselves and with one another, in that fervency of prayer which was their breath of life. This was their programme of church life (ii. 42).

These apostles, as we have seen, were men of diverse temperament, and their teaching would assume corresponding differences of type. James was there—of apostolic status and influence, though not officially an apostle—with his unflinching practicality; Peter was there—chief spokesman and leader—with his overflowing emotion and warm affection; John was there, with his mysticism, pondering deeply on the mysteries of love; James of the Boanerges flash, whose lightnings revealed the electric depths, was in the forefront of the testimony. They taught differently, but they taught the same message. Men came, by their instruction, through various avenues of approach; but they all came to Christ, the Living One, who died, but lives for ever. This Living Christ, received into the heart by faith, became to each the pledge and source and power of life.

Thus the work went on; the 'Word' was multiplied; the fellowship grew, until the embarrassment of the growing Church led to the appointment of the Seven

Stewards, of whom Philip and Stephen, breaking the bounds of the 'table-serving,' became preachers of commanding power. It was the preaching, and consequent death, of Stephen that led to the Conversion of Paul.

IV

THE CONVERSION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

APART from that Death which gives us life, and which must therefore for ever stand alone in its unique and sacred mystery, there is none in the history of Christendom more full of commanding, of startling pathos than the death of the proto-martyr Stephen. On the one side we see the mob of murderer-judges, with writhing hearts and gnashing teeth, their hostility aggravated to intensest hate by the cutting words which they hear, and yet refuse to hear (Acts vii. 51-54); on the other, a 'face as it had been the face of an angel,' smitten into dazzling beauty by the sight of 'the glory of God,' piercing with earnest gaze the opened heavens, and beholding as in an ecstasy the Strong Son of God, who waits to take His servant home. On the one side, again, we see the pseudo-judges, rampant in their hate, and with frenzied violence hurrying their victim to his death; on the other, the angel-face all broken with cruel stones, yet fashioning itself for prayer—prayer for his murderers. So, as the sharp stones crash in upon his brain, he falls asleep.

We read, 'The witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And Saul was consenting unto his death.' The contrast between the two men is remarkable, especially in view of a

striking affinity. Stephen was intensely spiritual: 'a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit' (vi. 5); 'full of grace and power' (vi. 8); notable for 'the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake' (vi. 10). In his teaching there was a new departure. It was of unanticipated spiritual breadth. The accusation preferred against him, perverted as it was, contained an element of truth. 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God' (vi. 11); 'This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law; for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us' (vi. 13, 14). The fact was, that, more spiritually discerning than most, if not all, of his predecessors, he distinguished between the spiritual, the eternal element in the old dispensation, and its temporary entanglement in Semitic sensuousness of ritual; also, between the preparatory character of the old dispensation, as such, and the fulfilment in Christ. As for the Rabbinic trivialities that were smothering religion, these he would sweep utterly away. Saul, on the other hand, was 'a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless' (Phil. iii. 5, 6). At twelve years of age a 'child of the law,' he was destined to be a rabbi. In Jerusalem, therefore, whither he was sent at an early age, he learned the law more fully and minutely 'at the feet of Gamaliel' (Acts xxii. 3)—an eminent teacher, personally moderate and unbigoted, but teaching strict Pharisaism. Educationally, Saul's mental and spiritual nature was sharpened to the acutest hostility

towards any departure from the ancestral belief; sub-consciously, if we may say so, there were potencies of great expansion and freedom, which were stirred into movement by the appeal of a kindred testimony, but against which, for a time, he fought with the fiercest fanaticism, thinking all the while that he fought only against external foes to the faith.

What, to such a one, already unconsciously stirred by the appeals and arguments of Stephen, was the effect of Stephen's death? How he must have been haunted by that angel-face, its brightness so cruelly broken, and by that prayer of forgiving love! His heart must have been torn asunder by maddening doubts. If the words of Stephen first began to liberate the sealed fountain of Saul's mind, preparing him, against his will, for the generous apostolate of after years; the death of Stephen gave the first mortal blow to Saul's pride of righteousness, and prepared the way for its conquest by the love of Christ.

For the present, however, his inward goading of conscience made him plunge into greater extremes of opposition. 'Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and, dragging forth men and women, committed them to prison' (viii. 3). But the inward conflict only grew the sharper. And when, at last, this fiery zealot sought to quench his distracting doubts in blood (ix. 1), he was nearing the crisis that was awaiting him on the Damascus road.

Certain elements in that crisis suggest another recollection, as perhaps mingling with these recollections of the death of Stephen, and making Saul's frenzy both more malignant and more maddening. *Had he, some few years before, been a witness of that*

other Death? Among 'the multitude that came together to that sight' (Luke xxiii. 48), was young Saul of Tarsus one? Belonging to the party which had helped to plot that Death, did he join in the shouting, 'Crucify! crucify!' and in the more shameful mockery of the Crucified? It is at least a possibility. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul almost implies that he had 'known Christ after the flesh' (2 Cor. v. 16)—and he hastens to add, in one of the boldest declarations of Christ's power to obliterate a shameful past, making it as though it had never been, 'If any man is in Christ, there is a NEW CREATION: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new!'

If Saul had thus seen 'that sight,' he had seen One whose face, even in death, had been of such surpassing sweetness, that it might well have made the faces of angel-onlookers brighten into yet greater glory of adoring love; and he had heard a prayer, of which Stephen's seemed the echo, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do' (Luke xxiii. 34). If Saul was actually present, he had seen 'two others, malefactors,' crucified with Jesus, 'one on the right hand, and the other on the left'; he had heard the converse of the three, dying in so singular a partnership; and he had seen one rough, dull face brighten with wondering joy, as the words were spoken, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise' (Luke xxiii. 39-43). These are Luke's own details. Who was his informant? Was it Paul?

Mingling, then, with the haunting vision of the dying Stephen, for many maddening days and sleepless nights, there was very likely the vision of the Crucified. In the doings of that day of death, Saul had been

perhaps an approving participant. Gazing, in vision, on the scene, he felt half constrained to confess to himself, that his place might well have been on one of those crosses of condemnation. If the Sinless One was crucified, should he be free? If rough evildoers, for common violence, deserved such a death, what did he deserve, who had fought with Stephen, even unto death; who had fought, in spirit at least, on the side of blasphemers and murderers, in the conflict of Calvary?

Not only during this crisis in the experience of Saul of Tarsus, but long afterwards, when the bitterness of self-accusation was swallowed up in the all-redeeming grace of Christ, there blended in his mind the twofold recollection of his part in those two dyings. It is well said by Lewin, in what perhaps still remains the greatest 'Life of St. Paul,' concerning his reminiscences of Stephen:—"Even the very words and phrases of Stephen, to which he had listened so earnestly, appear to have been written on his memory in letters of flame, so that he was haunted by them, involuntarily, to the last day of his life. Does Stephen say, 'The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands'? The Apostle also tells the Athenians, that 'The Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands.' Does Stephen speak of 'the circumcision of the heart'? The Apostle uses the same figurative language to the Romans. Are the dying words of the proto-martyr, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge'? Almost the last supplication of the Apostle was, 'I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.'" In like manner, regarding that other Death, he spoke with the intense personal feeling of one, who in any

case, by his active share in the enmity of human sin, but possibly by more direct participation, was guilty of the Deed of Death, when he said, speaking of sinners, 'of whom I am chief' (1 Tim. i. 15). But he hastens to add, that, as one who had been an uttermost sinner, he had the greater right, and felt the greater constraint, to preach an uttermost salvation. Perhaps he had scoffed at the half-ironical, half-sincere placarding on the Cross, 'Jesus of Nazareth, King.' How gladly and gratefully he now exclaimed, 'To the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever !'

The thrice-told story of Saul's Conversion (see Acts ix., xxii., xxvi.) need not be retold in detail here. But some particulars must be noticed, and the spiritual significance of the crisis must be studied.

Saul rides on his journey to Damascus, still bent on slaughter, and all the while trying to fight down the uprisings of conviction, to resist the sharp stabbings of conscience. In a moment, there is the flash of blazing splendour, that smites him blind ; there is the Voice asking, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' ; and when, lying half-stunned upon the ground, he asks confusedly, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' there comes the answer, as though from that very writing on the Cross, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.' He had kicked against the goads ; he strives no longer. They lead the erstwhile persecutor, the proud Rabbi who had been the hope of the Pharisees and their following, humbled, broken, weeping from his sightless eyes, into Damascus. 'And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.' Through all those long-drawn hours of fasting solitude, he was

shut up with his own soul—and with the Christ of Nazareth. It was the supreme transaction of his life. All must be settled now, at once and for ever. Spirit and soul and body are involved in the great surrender. He must know Him whom he has already confessed. His thoughts must be searched to their very depths. The depths of sin must also be sounded. He must feel all its fierce resistance to 'the glory of that light,' which had shone upon him from the Face of Jesus Christ, as He had been momentarily manifested ere the blindness came.

Was it at this time that a conflict, already waged again and again in the foregoing years, between the Law of God's Holiness, and 'the law of sin' in his soul, described afterwards in the 7th of Romans, was fought to a finish? The assaults had never been so fearful; the power of evil had never been felt to be so strong; his despair of victory had never been so black. God's Law now shines with the more searching light, from that Face. The very Claim of Christ, centring in that Lordship to which he has done homage, makes him feel the more hopeless. The standard, now, is not the complete performance of a Code of Commandments, but—to be like Christ! There can be no lesser interpretation of the Law. Well might he say, of this enlarged conception of its meaning, 'When the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' Yes, the Commandment which showed the way of life, he 'found to be unto death.' He is baffled at every turn. 'Sin, finding its opportunity, through the Commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me.' He learned afterwards that this was for a purpose. 'Sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by

working death to me through that which is good'—what was the real intention? 'that through the Commandment sin might become exceeding sinful.' But the sin so identified itself with his very being, that there seemed to be a double Ego in his soul. 'For that which works out from me'—the actual result of the inner self of evil—'I do not recognise as mine. For not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do.' He tries to disentangle his better from his worse self. 'So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me.' Yet the sin is done; the lower self, though disowned, asserts itself; it is too inseparably bound up with his fleshhood to be repudiated. 'For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to work out that which is good is not. For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practise.' He is under a terrible 'law.' 'I find the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present.' It seems wrought, like an evil destiny, into his inmost parts. It holds him in helpless captivity. It is like a great nightmare of oppression; like some evil vampire, that would suck the lifeblood of his soul. 'Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the hold of this Body of Death?'

There is a pause in the conflict. Indeed, it seems ended. No more can be done; the fighting cannot last longer; all strength is spent. May we read into this interval a vision suggested by that great Galatians saying at which we have already glanced? When the Apostle falls into the first person, as in the 7th of Romans and elsewhere, he is giving us glimpses of his own heart, telling us something of his own experience.

In his exhaustion of failure at Damascus, does he see again those three crosses? does he feel once more that such is indeed his fitting place—the cross of condemnation? As he thinks, however, of the confessing malefactor—of his contrition, of his late-found faith, of the message that sent him smiling into Paradise—a new meaning seems to come into that co-partnership of the Cross. It is not all condemnation; it could never be real condemnation for the Righteous One; it ceased to be condemnation for the robber, the murderer, when Jesus had spoken the absolving word. What a partnership! It was the robber's privilege. May it not be the privilege of every contrite sinner? He starts; he springs to his feet; he has made the great discovery! Χριστῷ Συνεσταύρωμαι. Just two words, that cannot be reproduced in their marvellous compression of meaning. 'I have been *co-crucified* with Christ!' For *me* was the condemnation; *mine* is the contrition of faith; for *me* is the Conquest of Love! My Liberator speaks. He looses me from my captivity. He finds me at my worst; He reveals His best; He comes like new life into my death! 'It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. The life that I now live—in the flesh (not of the flesh)—I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, who gave Himself for *me*.' Now he again exclaims, not despairingly, but triumphantly, the conflict all ended (Rom. vii. 25): 'Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!' Such was the Conversion of the Apostle Paul.

V

THE TESTIMONY OF THE EPISTLES OF PAUL

WE have ascertained, by a sufficiently wide induction, the distinguishing principles of the Ethic of Christianity, presented, with unbroken consistency, though with variations which only make their essential unity the more impressive, by the writings which represent contemporaneous Christianity, and confirmed in the experience, thus far, of the Apostle. Redeeming grace, universal in its range, but individual in its application, on God's part, with living faith, individually appropriating the grace, on man's part, effects that great renewal of man's nature, which results in the new life of love and service. So do the Gospels teach; such is the teaching of the early history of the church; and so do those other witnesses testify, whose general epistles we have studied. The redeeming grace of God had come to Paul very vividly, in Christ the Crucified, Christ the Glorified. By Christ he had been captured—arrested, as he tells his Philippians afterwards—laid hold of suddenly, when he was on his way to lay hold of others; he had been made a prisoner, when he was going to put others into prison. But, in that imprisonment at Damascus, he became a prisoner of hope. In the darkness there shone a great light. From his spiritual vision, as well as from his bodily eyes, the scales were at last fallen, and he saw

his Captor as his Saviour, whose death was his life. He laid hold of the Cross, and it lifted him into the heavenly places. He became free, and glad, and strong. The Love of Christ, a holy fire, set his own heart aflame, and thenceforth he lived for Christ—lived for Christ, by living for those whom Christ loved, for whom also Christ died.

The same vital factors of Ethical Christianity we shall find, not only everywhere present, but everywhere prominent, in the future testimony of the Epistles of Paul.

I. THE EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS

These were probably the first epistles that came from the Apostle's pen. They were written to the Christian converts of that city which was associated with the illustrious memories of Alexander and Aristotle. We may find echoes of those memories—of empire and of philosophy—in these messages from Paul to the new company of converts. Some of them were Jews; of 'devout Greeks' there was 'a great multitude,' including, 'of the chief women, not a few' (Acts xvii. 4)—all believers in the one reconciling name of Jesus, whom Paul had proclaimed as the Christ. His indirect allusions to the history and literature, which gave prestige to that region, would not be lost on such readers.

I. *The First Epistle.*

'Grace' meets us at the outset, a grace that brings 'peace.' God the Father's 'election' of them, His universal love laying hold of each separate soul with its holy persuasion, had been welcomed by their

faith, a faith which showed its fruitful vitality in love. The method had been the testimony of the Gospel, with the concurrent witness of the Spirit, resulting in 'much assurance,' and in a power that wrought impossibilities. Their 'joy of the Holy Spirit' constrained them to holy ambition for the spiritual empire of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that the same powerful 'Word' sounded forth from them to the people 'in every place,' whither, from that strategic centre, they could convey the quickening message of grace and faith.

Again and again the Apostle repeats the word 'Gospel,' as he goes on to remind them of the significance of their recent conversion to the faith (ii. 1-13). Like all Greeks, they were always ready for 'some new thing.' They had joyfully received the good news of Salvation. The 'Word' was a word surpassing far any word of man, any teaching of the most honoured of their philosophers. The 'kingdom and glory' into which they were called, and which they now sought to extend, was far more glorious than earth's proudest empire. Alexander, Aristotle—those names were great; but they now bore the impress, they showed the insignia, of a greater name. Yes, 'the word of the message' was not 'as the word of men'; it was, 'in truth, the word of God.'

'Faith and Love' (iii. 6)—that is the formula of Paul's philosophy for these Greek converts. That this may never be to them a barren formula, he will pray the Lord to make them 'increase and abound in love toward one another, and toward all men' (iii. 9-13). A love with so holy an inspiration will itself be holy, and their ambition must be for a holiness so

‘unblamable’ that it will bear the scrutiny of their Ever Present Lord.

This high ideal of holiness, however, must not soar aloft in superiority to lowly things. It is in lowly conditions that its sovereign authority should be manifest (iv. 3, 4), transforming and transfiguring, with a heavenly meaning, what would otherwise be of the earth, earthy. ‘The Will of God, your sanctification’—this means, he says, starting with the duty that lies nearest, complete mastery over one’s own body. What a magnificent ethical principle is here set forth: εἰδέναι ἕκαστον ἑμῶν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σκεῦος κτᾶσθαι ἐν ἁγιασμῷ καὶ τιμῇ. That a man should know how to get the mastery over his own body, so that it may be a vessel or instrument of the soul, obedient to every demand of holiness and honour—‘a vessel unto honour’ (2 Tim. ii. 21)—that is the primary problem of applied ethics, and the ethical principle that is involved lies in the word εἰδέναι, to ‘know how.’ Aristotle, in his discussion of ἐγκράτεια and ἀκρασία, or mastery and uncontrol, assumes that the practical reason should be sufficient to control the appetite, but allows that the will tends to go with appetite, resisting reason. If the reason triumphs, man secures self-mastery; if not, he is a weakling, exhibiting lamentable uncontrol. To ‘know how’ is the problem; merely knowing is not enough. The Apostle does not solve the problem; his spiritual autobiography, in the 7th of Romans, shows that for him it had been more insoluble than for Aristotle. He knew of heights and depths to which the Greek was a stranger. But for Paul the problem had been solved by Another, and it was the Gospel of the Solved

Problem that he preached to all men. He has tested it for himself ; he can therefore testify to others. Nor is it only the 'intellectuals' for whom there is hope : 'that *each one of you* know how.' Was it the will that was weak ? Did it give way to another will of the rebellious nature ? A Higher Will takes hold of man's weak will, and makes it victor—the Will of God's Redeeming Grace. 'The Gentiles who know not God' are groping in vain for the secret of self-mastery ; 'the passion of lust' is too strong for them (iv. 5). Even Aristotle must needs excuse the man who 'knows' and 'approves,' but is overcome by that which his reason condemns.

At the close of the Epistle (v. 23, 24), we have one of Paul's notable sayings, so close in its thought to some of Aristotle's most characteristic teaching, that we must examine it in detail. It is necessary to follow the language very carefully. After a succession of suggestive counsels concerning the way of the true life, the Apostle proceeds : *Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγιασάσαι ὑμᾶς ὀλοτελεῖς, καὶ ὀλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἀμέμπτως ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τηρηθείη. πιστὸς ὁ καλῶν ὑμᾶς, ὃς καὶ ποιήσει.* Aristotle, in his *Περὶ Ψυχῆς*, devotes much attention to the relation of soul and body. He insists that they are a unity, in the sense that neither can exist apart from the other. The soul cannot come into being apart from the body ; the body has no meaning apart from the soul. In the plan of life, the body is for the soul's use. Biologically, the body is first ; teleologically, the soul has primary value. The body is fashioned from the beginning with a view to the soul, just as the axe is fashioned with a view to the man that shall wield it. The soul is the

final cause of the body ; it is in the soul that the body finds its full realisation.

The Apostle adopts the Aristotelian view thus far, that he considers man's nature a unity. He would have spirit and soul and body kept 'in their whole estate' (ὁλόκληρον). The word, etymologically, denotes man's nature as his lot or inheritance in its entirety. The 'wholeness' must be unimpaired. Paul, however, has a much larger and richer idea of man's complex being than Aristotle. It consists, not of body and soul merely, but of spirit and soul and body. There is the central Ego, touched into relation with the world, through the body, and with God, through the spirit. The body is meant to be controlled by the soul ; the soul, in turn, is meant to be controlled by the spirit. Thus the order in which they are mentioned is significant. Only by the maintenance of this order of government can the integrity of the whole be sustained. Here, too, is the secret of perfect mastery : the spirit is in immediate touch with God, and draws from God its supplies of power. It is inspired by the Spirit of God.

The power, the inspiration, of God alone avails for the sanctification of human life. This inspiration of power, however, avails completely. Its possibilities are without limit. We may be sanctified ὁλοτελεῖς, that is, wholly through and through, to the very τέλος, the farthest verge, of our nature. Causally, the power is of God ; instrumentally, it is our constant sense of the nearness of a Living Saviour. The Apostle prays that we may be 'kept,' in the integrity of our complex being, 'unblamably, as in the Παρουσία [or, Living Presence] of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

What is our further encouragement? The Apostle would have us remember that the God in whom we are called to trust for the accomplishment of such a work is the 'God of Peace,' whose own Being is a perfect harmony, whose Name is therefore pledged to the effecting of harmony in those that believe; who has moreover given to each an individual pledge, by bringing His people into harmony with His holy love through the redemption of Christ (2 Cor. v. 18, 19). 'Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.'

Thus a kingship, a dominion, is prepared in Christ, for every one that believes, compared with which the conquests of Alexander were poor. The weakest believer, through the grace Divine, may have himself 'for a better possession, an abiding one' (Heb. x. 34), receiving the fulfilment of the Lord's promise (Luke xxi. 19), 'Ye shall win your souls.' Not by the knowledge, which Aristotle knew to be often impotent, but by faith, was the great victory to be won, the great empire to be gained.

2. The Second Epistle.

'Grace' and 'peace' are again the watchword. Again also 'faith and love' is the formula. The 'kingdom of God' is still in mind. Again they are reminded of their 'calling,' and of its endless possibilities: 'every desire of goodness,' and 'every work of faith,' shall be fulfilled with power. There is no place for helplessness in the Apostle's philosophy. The Name of the Lord Jesus, and His grace, require their victory.

So sure is Paul of this result, that he is ever giving thanks to God, because, as those whom the Lord

loves, they have been chosen of God 'from the beginning unto salvation, in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth'; and that choice of God has become their call, through the message of the Gospel (ii. 13, 14). The initial movement of each one's renewal has come from the heart of God. Unless thwarted by man's unwillingness, it cannot fail. 'Grace,' 'eternal comfort,' 'good hope'—these shall lead, as they are already leading, to the establishment of their hearts 'in every good work and word.'

Of this perfecting, God's faithfulness is the guarantee (iii. 3). Passing to the farewell, the Apostle gives a renewal of the pledge in the form of a wish. 'The Lord of peace Himself give you peace, at all times, in all ways'—a peace which should be the secret of power. Nor was this to be a gift from afar. Reminding them again of the abiding Presence (the *Παρουσία*), he prays for their constant sense of its reality: 'The Lord be with you all!' Thus the closing words are an echo of those with which the 1st Epistle concludes.

So does the Apostle justify the Ethic of the Gospel in that early home of Greek philosophy.

II. THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS

In one respect, Paul's first visit to Corinth was a turning-point in his ministry among the Greeks. To meet them on their own ground, he had perhaps been dealing with generalities rather too much at Athens, and the result was not encouraging. When he reached Corinth, he was under oppression of partial failure, but was 'constrained by the Word' (Acts xviii. 5). It must not be by any such reasonings as were congenial

to his keen intellect, but by 'the preaching,' that he should seek to fulfil his mission. As he says to the Corinthians afterwards, 'When I came unto you, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom'—not with the philosophizing or the rhetoric, the show of wisdom or display of speech, in which the Greeks delighted—'proclaiming to you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified' (1 Cor. ii. 1, 3). Thus, though he was with them 'in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling'—learning how futile were the best human resources of wisdom and skill—he delivered the one message of salvation by grace through faith, which alone could suffice to change men, whether Jews or Gentiles, Greeks or barbarians, free men or slaves.

1. *The First Epistle.*

Nothing could have seemed more startling in that old world, than that a former Jewish Rabbi, now a Christian Apostle, should address a fellowship of Corinthian people as 'saints' (i. 2). For, among all the abandoned wickedness of Græco-Roman life in those times, the surpassing wickedness of the Corinthians was a proverb. To 'Corinthianize' meant to go to such excess of riotous and shameless vice, as almost startled other Greeks. Nor had the community of Christian converts been formed from some minority that had escaped the general plague. After rehearsing the catalogue of unsavoury practices that were too familiar in their city, speaking of 'fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, the unnaturally wanton and wicked, stealers and greedy ones, drunkards, revilers,

extortioners,' he says, 'And such were some of you.' But a marvellous change had come upon them: 'Ye were washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God' (vi. 9-11). In this statement of the New Ethic, the Apostle is working backwards. God's power had come into their stained and stricken life; a great Name had been given them, as their guarantee; venturing themselves upon its surety, they had been justified from all offences; the power of righteousness that cancelled all their evil past went with them to a better future; and not only was life to be sanctified daily by this power, but the great forgiving love that was behind it all, like a fountain of living waters, cleansed their thought and desire.

Nowhere is the Ethic of the Gospel presented more fully and forcefully than in the opening words of this Epistle. God's 'grace' is the initial source of the new life, ministered freely through the redeeming Christ; all riches of renewal had attended its visitation; this was due, instrumentally, to a gracious assurance of salvation (Christ's 'testimony' being 'confirmed' in them); and they were thus set on the way of an 'unreprovable' well-doing, which should be unashamed in the light of the last great Manifestation.

The Apostle bears in mind continually the besetting perils of his Greeks. They were 'wise'; they were eager 'disputers' (i. 20)—for ever reasoning, contending, declaiming. This was their ancestral heritage. Was not 'wisdom' the cardinal quality, that made everything possible? Almost every philosopher had taught the efficacy of 'wisdom.' With what result? 'The world through its wisdom knew not God.' It missed

the secret. Now at last, through 'the preaching'—that is, the thing preached, the content of their Gospel message—the way of salvation was opened to men, through faith. Contradictory as it appeared to all bias and pre-formed opinion, of both Jew and Greek, 'Christ Crucified' was the world's hope. For herein was an inspiration of power such as the wisdom of the world woefully lacked—God's Power; to make such a power available for man's helplessness was therefore the true wisdom, proved by its results—God's Wisdom.

The results were evident to every one. God had taken of the unlikeliest material, judged by the standards of men: 'foolish things,' 'weak things,' 'base things,' 'despised things,' 'things that were no things' (such as slaves, who had no status at all)—these He had transformed by His saving grace. None, therefore, may glory in human nature, in man's 'best'; but all must acknowledge that God alone had done the work.

The *σοφία*, pure reason's knowledge of first principles, constituting the perfect man of the Greek philosophy, must give place to the *Σοφία* of God. He alone knows the essentials of man's being, the secrets of character; and it is man's true wisdom thankfully to receive the Divine revealing of these things. The secret is revealed 'in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us Wisdom from God—namely, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption' (i. 30): that is, man's standing was first of all made right with God; by the power of this new 'right' he went forward to a holy life; and from all entanglement of the world that would make him captive, from the world's

despair and death, he should be saved unto full redemption.

Holding in trust such a secret, how should the Apostle dare to play with the proved futility of human devices? 'I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified' (ii. 1, 2). He will not beguile them with a vain show of wisdom. The power of the Spirit shall be demonstrated, in the experience of their faith. But this faith to which they are called—it is the real fulfilment of what was dreamt of in the old philosophy, by those who taught the practical wisdom (*φρόνησις*) that was to apply the findings of pure wisdom (*σοφία*) to the problem of right living. Meanwhile, the Higher Wisdom, 'the Wisdom of God in a mystery,' should unveil to them more and more of its meaning, as they matured by experience (*τέλειοι*), and thus became ready to receive its lessons. Things beyond the reach of intellectual vision, beyond all that could be heard from the wisest of teachers, beyond the dreams and yearnings of the heart—such things, undiscoverable, untaught, unimaginable by man, but prepared for all lovers of God, His Spirit should make known. This was nothing less than the forming, in them, of Christ's mind.

We need not follow the course of this Epistle in all its windings of argument, for the keynote has been struck, to which all that follows is attuned. Certain main points alone need be noticed. Very concisely the Apostle sums up the secret of the new creation of character by the Gospel (iii. 9): 'Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building.' The ground can grow nothing of itself; there must be showers and

sunshine from above. The stones cannot shape themselves into a goodly edifice ; there must be a Master Architect, and a sure foundation. So does human nature need the interposition of Divine Grace. With equal condensation, he says (vi. 19, 20) : ' Ye are not your own ; for ye were bought with a price. Glorify God therefore in your body.' There must be the initial constraint of redeeming grace, through which we yield ourselves to be God's possession ; by the same constraint we render our outward life, of which the body is the instrument, to an obedience, a service, which shall glorify His name. Whatever the testings of this probationary life, whether the exhaustion of nature, as of travellers in a parched wilderness, or the solicitation of evil indulgence (x. 1-13) ; there is a Spiritual Rock, whose refreshing waters follow us all the way, whose pureness shall be our security against all peril of poisoned wells. Whatever the peril of this world's companionship, and of the tempting carousals of sin, we have a holy banqueting prepared (xi. 23-26) : a Table of the Lord, with its pledges of deathless love. The practical outcome of the Love that gives us life, is a ministry of loving service (chap. xii.), the service of man for Christ's sake.

Surely such a love, so inspired, so manifest, so sustained, even through all life's terrible testings, to the life beyond life that awaits it, must be a very lyric of sweetness in the midst of the world's clamour and discord. The Apostle feels the thrill of it, and rings out his song in strains of matchless beauty. Where is this Hymn of Love (13th Chapter) approached by the ethic of the world? Confidently the singer utters his challenge to all wisdom of man, however specious, that is loveless ;

and to all claims of creed, or even of character, that cannot attest themselves by the lowliness of love. The clanging rhetoric of fluent tongues, the acute penetration of keen intellects, the strong confidence that no obstacle dismays—what is all this, without love? The amplest almsgiving, yea, bold venturing even to the verge of martyrdom, are hollow pretences, without love. Love—who shall portray its charm? So patient and kindly; so sweetly content; so modest and lowly, so seemly, so innocent of irritable and brooding greed; grieving for all unrighteousness, and glad with the triumph of truth; bearing the disappointment of actual wrong, while yet persistently believing in some undiscovered good, or at least longing for such good, while brave to endure the long delay—these are the ways of love. Such love waxes stronger and stronger, and in its conquering strength must evermore abide. That which belongs to this temporary mode of things must share its transiency; love belongs to the eternal, and finds in eternity its home. Faith shall be at home there, and hope shall be faith's companion; for, in those 'ages of the ages,' there will be the call for growing trust, and increasing expectancy of better things. But love is first, and last, and all. The Ethic of Christ is the Ethic of Eternity. It was a natural transition, therefore, from this Lyric of Love to the glorious Pæan of Praise of the 15th Chapter, which foresees, and celebrates, the eternal coronation of true and trustful love: 'Death is swallowed up in victory!'

The Apostle may well urge, as his final watchword, 'Stand fast in the faith; let all that ye do be done in love' (xvi. 13, 14). For the glorious future is pledged by a glorious present: 'Marana

tha,' that is, 'Our Lord hath come!' That Living Presence is their pledge of victory.

2. *The Second Epistle.*

'Grace' and 'peace' is once more the greeting to the 'saints'—in the whole of Achaia; for so has the faith prevailed. The source of salvation is the Fatherhood of God (i. 3), in which 'mercies' abound. These mercies bring their assurance of 'comfort,' a comfort which abides, even abounds, in all life's exigencies. Such comfort has the power of a resurrection, even from life's worst despair. The Apostle therefore urges the superiority of the grace of God to 'fleshly wisdom.' What human ethic could show such a power?

The remarkable saying of i. 20 enforces the same truth. 'For, how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the Yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God.' In Christ the assurance is borne to our heart, confirming every promise; our heart makes glad response, through faith in the same Christ. Thus are we 'sealed' with a very sacred pledge, and carry within us the 'earnest' of all good, here and hereafter. If only we do not break the seal, and forfeit the earnest, by our unbelief, it is irrefragable.

We are brought into a Covenant (iii. 6), exceeding in glory. This is the glory of inward and spiritual life and power; the glory of a great spiritual freedom; the glory of a spiritual transformation.

We have been visited by a glorious Daybreak (iv. 3, 4), a Dawn that shineth more and more to perfect Day. We have received a Treasure, the richer by contrast with the 'earthen vessels' of human frailty

in which it is enclosed. We are conscious of the inworking of a life that triumphs over every power of death, even the resurrection life and power of Jesus. 'The exceeding greatness of the power' is 'of God.' We are borne up, in all our faith's endeavour, by 'things eternal,' above the dragging weight of 'things seen.'

Another classical passage illustrative of the new ethic is the pronouncement of v. 14-21. The all-performing power is the constraining Love of Christ. His sacrificial death is the motive to a sacrificial life. He is the very sphere of life in which we now live (v. 17). 'If any man'—whoever he be, whatever he may have been—'is in Christ, there is a New Creation.' The Hand of Atoning Love has blotted out all the guilty past. Its repudiated sin has gone into oblivion. The past is interpreted now in the light of our present faith and love. 'The old things—behold, they are become new!' God sees them, for Christ's sake, as we wish they had been, rather than as they actually were. For, in so far as our past always belongs to us according to our present attitude of endorsement or of disowning, the disowned evil past of the Christian takes on the complexion of the new consecration of holy love. Well may the Apostle say, tracing back this transformation to its origin, 'All things are of God.'

The more glorious all this grace, the more solemnly urgent is the exhortation (vi. 1), 'We entreat that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.' All depends, humanly, on our faith at the beginning, and on the humble, watchful continuance of faith, if we are to win through unscathed to the end. Some fragment from an earlier message (vi. 14-vii. 1) is placed here, as partly relevant, though interrupting the continuity of

exhortation. The promise of the Father's grace should surely not become a pride of careless privilege. Here is the 'noblesse oblige' of the Gospel. Children of such a Father must keep themselves unstained; they must have no fellowship with darkness; they must let the intimate companionship of God constrain them to a devotion that is perfected in love.

After many instructions concerning the service required of them at that time, the Apostle, in the midst of indignant protest, and defence of a challenged apostleship, as though remembering all at once the weakness of nature, and the increasing difficulty of the new way of life for these converts, and wishing to say something for their encouragement, tells (xii. 1-10) of an experience that befell him once, of which the benefit still remained. He was passing through some dimly suggested temptation of dreadful anguish. He entreated that the trial might be taken away—if only for his work's sake, which it seemed to make almost impossible. 'And He hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.' That was an assurance which he had so clasped to his heart, that, not once only, but whenever it was needed, it had been respoken, for the revival of his faith. 'He *hath said* unto me'—how often! Thus does he remind them of the Living Presence of the Redeeming Christ.

From this vantage of his own experience—or, if x. 1 to xiii. 10 be regarded as an Intermediate Epistle, then from the assurance of ix. 14, 15—the Apostle passes easily to the final words: 'Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace; and

the God of love and peace shall be with you' (xiii. 11). Then follows the enlarged benediction, now so familiar, hovering over that strange, wicked city, for all who are willing to receive its cleansing, its new-creating sweetness and life: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!' Here is the whole of our Ethic. By faith in Christ's redeeming grace, we learn the love of God, as our adopting Father; by the assurance of this adoption, conveyed to our hearts by the attesting Spirit, we are brought into a fellowship of perfect love that makes all things new.

III. THE DUAL DOCTRINAL EPISTLES

The two great doctrinal Epistles, Galatians and Romans, were probably written, near the time of the final visit to Jerusalem, within a few months of each other; and, though addressed to people very different in many respects, and differently related to his apostleship, they proceed, to a large extent, along very similar lines of argument. In each case, the aim is to set forth the distinguishing privilege of Christian experience, as contrasted with a humiliating pupilage in the one case, with a false legalism in the other. In the one epistle, remembering the coarse materialism of the old Gallic ritual, the Apostle sets forth the freedom of spiritual sonship; in the other, with Roman law in his thought, he sets forth the new 'rights,' which lead to free and willing righteousness.

I. THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

One great saying of this Epistle (ii. 20), with its touch of autobiography, has already claimed our

attention. It will have to be further considered at a later stage, as playing an important part, through Luther's interpretation, in the conversion of the Wesleys. Moreover, in considering Luther's testimony to the Ethic of Experience, we shall have to pass his Commentary on Galatians briefly under review. To avoid needless repetition, we may now leave these details aside, and glance at the salient aspects of the Epistle.

As in other instances, there is a short summary at the beginning. 'Grace' and 'peace' are again the salutation; the fount of blessing is the Fatherhood of God; its conveyance comes through the redemption of Jesus Christ; its filial assurance is assumed in the renewed reference to 'God the Father,' and to the individual realisation of faith expressed in the words, 'for our sins'; and the resulting life of purity is spoken of, with renewed reference to the Father, now 'our Father,' as a life of filial love.

The Galatian converts, with the emotional fickleness that was their racial weakness, had given heed to Judaizing teachers, who taught the works of the law, which they aimed at imposing on the freedom of the Gospel. They called their message, forsooth, 'the Gospel'; Paul lays it down with emphasis (i. 6-10) that there is no gospel other than that which they have received. Any new gospel is a 'different' gospel, not 'another.' In the nature of the case, a message of works cannot be a gospel at all. He himself has come to his freedom (i. 11-17) through too painful an experience, for him to be willing to tolerate any such reversal of the main principles of the religion of Christ as these proselytizers sought to accomplish.

He tells (i. 18-24) how, after the Damascus crisis, he began his apostleship, doing an unrecorded work for three years in that city, and for five years in his native Tarsus; not by any human commission, but with authority solely from Him who had said: 'To this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness, both of the things wherein thou hast seen Me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Me' (Acts xxvi. 16-18). Spiritual liberty must needs, therefore, be his watchword.

Fourteen years later than his first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion, Paul went again, to tell the other apostles of the gospel of liberty which he proclaimed, and to insist on the maintenance of freedom, against 'the false brethren, who came to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage' (ii. 1-10). His claims could not be withstood, and he went on his way, proclaiming the same charter of emancipation. The 'false brethren,' however, were still at work, and even Peter was in danger of giving way to them at Antioch, where, Paul says, 'I resisted him to the face.' 'Not for an hour' would he give place 'in the way of subjection.' Why? 'That the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.' Yet this truth of freedom the Galatians themselves were making forfeit!

Then he leads, by the familiar argument concerning

justification, to that unveiling of the heart (ii. 20), which refers us back to the time of his conversion. The expostulation, 'O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, before whose very eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?' (iii. 1), referring to his first proclamation of the Gospel among them, when he made them see vividly, as he himself always saw, that vision of the three crosses on Calvary, and the meaning of the One Cross—such an expostulation, so enforced, must surely break the evil spell of their bewitchment. *Why did He die*, if the righteousness of the law is to be still in the ascendant? It is the Ethic of Christianity that is in question. This, indeed, is the central theme of the Epistle.

Whether it was the law of Moses, as now pressed on the Galatian converts, or the law of gross naturalism, to which they had been born, it was in either case (iii. 23–iv. 11) a pupilage which was tantamount to slavery. They had all alike, Jews and Gentiles, been 'kept in ward'; they were 'under an usher'; they differed nothing from bondservants, 'in bondage under the world's materialistic A B C of instruction'; 'not knowing God,' they 'were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods.' Into the twilight of this servitude there had burst the splendour of God's New Day. For bondage, there was freedom; for pupilage and slavery, 'the adoption of sons.' '*And, because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!*' It was all God's great initiative—the initiative of the yearning of Fatherly love. How could they annul such a privilege? 'Now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to the weak and

beggarly sense-alphabet of religion, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?'

After further and prolonged pleading (iv. 12-31), in which he again urges the lesson of his own experience ('Become, I beseech you, free as I became'), the Apostle rings out the clarion call of the Epistle (v. 1): 'For freedom did Christ set us free! Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.'

Does this imply licence? But how can Christ's Freemen have any thought of disloyalty to their liberating Lord? The love which is their liberty (v. 13, 14) can have no parleyings with a lust which would involve worse bondage than before. 'Ye, brethren, were called for freedom. Only not the freedom that panders to the flesh. But through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

Christian love is a love inspired by the Spirit. 'Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. These are contrary the one to the other.' At the same time, though love fulfils the law, it is not 'under the law'; the fulfilment is not of compulsion, but of eager delight. Not regulation from without, but a glowing principle within, effects the fulfilment. It is inspired, not coerced. A life of unlawful indulgence, of fleshly licence, is a life of blind animal impulse, of mere 'workings' of wanton nature—hardly better than the foul ferment of putrescent flesh. These things need a stern law of fear and restraint. But those that come into Christ's newness of life, the life of the Spirit—like the fair fruits of the field (v. 22,

23), things of sweet air and sunshine—'grow,' naturally and spontaneously. There is no rule compelling them, and certainly there is none to condemn and punish. 'Against such there is no law.' 'Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-mastery'—who is he that shall condemn? The Ethic of the Gospel is justified by its applied ethics: 'by their fruits ye shall know them.' Do we 'live by the Spirit'? 'By the Spirit let us also walk.'

Thus the Apostle leaves his argument to do its work. Those who trouble them wish to 'glory' in their 'flesh'—dragging them down to their former animalism of pseudo-religion. 'Far be it from me to glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Nothing avails but 'a new creation.' Of this the Cross holds the secret.

2. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

The teaching of this Epistle has been partly anticipated, and will come before our notice in connection with Luther, and with Wesley. So that, in this case also, we need but glance at its main aspects.

As we have already premised, it is a manifesto of our 'rights' in Christ. This is the basal idea of its doctrine of Justification by Faith. It is equally present, however, in the doctrines of Adoption and Sanctification. Having regard to Rome, and its law, we may almost call it a manifesto of Christian Jurisprudence.

The argument is somewhat spiral. It returns upon itself, but always with progression towards the goal. We reach the great pronouncement of Justification by Faith in v. 1, and pass immediately to its corollaries, with the climax of verse 10. The course of thought is

repeated (v. 12-21), with a similar climax. Sanctification is shown, in either case, to be a proper consequence of Justification. In the 6th chapter this double conclusion is drawn out into its own elaboration of argument, with its own grand ethical conclusion (verse 22). In the 7th chapter, the Apostle goes back once more upon his argument. This time he leads up to the same conclusion—freedom of faith issuing in righteousness of life—by describing the course of a painful experience, his own experience, ‘under the law.’ He had been married to the law, to use his own figure (vii. 1-6). It was an unhappy marriage; and, when death had annulled it, the law having become dead in its significance, in presence of the message of faith, and he himself having similarly died to all its harsh demands and condemnation, through the same faith, he was free for another union, even the blessed union with Christ, in faith and love. We have previously traced the story of his helpless and hopeless struggle, as described in the rest of the chapter. At last, there came the great liberation. The 8th chapter is the Charter of Freedom. ‘No condemnation’ is its keynote. The life of the Spirit is now his law—a law of glorious liberty (viii. 2, 21). What is the secret of this new birth, with its resulting new life? It is the same Adoption of Sons, of which he has already been telling the Galatians. ‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God’ (viii. 14): they have been assured of their adoption, and this is the secret of the joyful freedom with which they follow the leadings of the Spirit, who has borne them such testimony. ‘For ye received not the spirit of bondage again, unto fear; but ye received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we

cry, Abba, Father ! The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God.' Here (viii. 15, 16), and in Galatians (iv. 6), we have the fullest declaration of the truth that God Himself, by assuring us of our personal interest in Christ, so fills our hearts with holy joy, that this becomes a new inspiration of righteousness, the righteousness of perfect love.

To go back, however, from this general survey, upon one great aspect of the Apostle's doctrine of salvation, as set forth in this Epistle, the idea of our Right in Christ, we find this to signify that God, by the pledge of His Son, becomes our Surety. In the introductory summary, which, like the corresponding introduction to Galatians, lays stress on the 'resurrection' of Jesus Christ 'from the dead,' he lays the foundation of what he intends to establish regarding God's Suretyship on our behalf, by reference to His age-long promise ; to the declaration, 'with power,' concerning His Son, in the fact of the resurrection ; and to the 'Name,' which is given 'to all the nations,' as the pledge of His faithfulness.

Throwing a flaming searchlight on the hideous wickedness of the old heathen world (i. 18-22), and turning the same light unsparingly on the hypocrisy of the typical Jew (ii. 1-iii. 20), he strips away every shred of excuse from the pretence that man can be justified by his works. The 'law' is a condemning law, even like the law of conscience, of which it is the formulation. Then the Apostle prepares (iii. 21-26) for his great pronouncement. 'But now, apart from the law, a righteousness from God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets ; even

a righteousness from God, through faith in Jesus Christ, for all them that believe. For there is no distinction. For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus : Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood, to show His righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God ; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season, that He might Himself be righteous, and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.' This careful definition is very condensed, but very clear. Man has no righteousness of his own, but God will make him a free gift of righteousness, provided and pledged in His Son Jesus Christ, whom He sets forth as a Saviour. The sole condition, on our part, is that we be willing to receive the gift. Such willing reception is faith.

This righteousness from God, of which God is the Guarantor, and Christ the Guarantee, is of a twofold character : it gives us a right to go forward, leaving our guilty past with One who obliterates it altogether ; and such a right becomes also a power to go forward, even to newness of life. It is not at all necessary that we should know how God makes this provision, though the more we appreciate its meaning, the more intelligent will be our faith. But it is all-important that we take our stand on the assured fact that God does make such provision. With the same assured confidence, we must grasp the fact that God undertakes to make us, and keep us, actually righteous ; for the righteousness which is from God is one and indivisible. Thus we are thrown back on the saying of i. 17—Luther's

great discovery : ' For therein is revealed a righteousness from God, from faith unto faith ; as it is written, The righteous shall live by faith.'

In the far past, there was the same way of righteousness. To Abraham, and to the Psalmist, God was Surety (iv. 1-8). To us, with a fuller, more impressive pledge, the Suretyship is the same (iv. 23-25). Now (Chapter 5), '*Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*' He has given us 'our access,' in spite of the past ; He gives us our rejoicing, in face of the future. Nor shall that rejoicing be set at nought by the tribulations that may come. They serve as the occasion, at once for the manifestation of His power, and for our discipline of faith. Withal, there is evermore the mighty inspiration of God's love, poured forth abundantly in our hearts, through the assuring witness of the Spirit. He who gave Himself for our sins, when we were enemies, will 'much more' save us from sinning, now that we have become His friends. No law of works could justify ; such law only showed sin's abounding evil. In Christ we see grace abounding more exceedingly. Working in co-partnership with grace, is eternal Righteousness.

In the 6th Chapter, which need not be followed in detail, we see the connection between the righteousness that deals with our past, and the same power of righteousness undertaking our future. The two cannot be separated. Indeed, as we have seen, they are one. 'We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?' Christ's death is the pledge of our death to sin ; His resurrection at once claims, and ensures, our newness of life. This we are to 'reckon,'

to take for granted, as a matter settled once for all, about which there should be no longer any doubt. What a freedom of faith! what a strength of righteousness!

The 7th and 8th Chapters rehearse the process at length, showing this principle of the Right, which is given us by God, at work everywhere. It frees us from our obnoxious wedlock with the law; it liberates us from sin's malignant hold, which shall have right of 'law' over us no longer; it brings us, uncondemned, into 'the liberty of the glory of the children of God.' The very adoption of love gives us a right. What right of inheritance, of privilege, is equal to the right of an acknowledged son? And the hope of the glorious hereafter is a right: it rests upon an earnest already in the heart; it is necessary for the continuity of God's purpose of a full redemption in our behalf.

Taking his stand on this rock of God's Suretyship, the Apostle utters forth his challenge (viii. 31-39): — 'What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died; yea, rather, that was raised from the dead; who is at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' None has the right; none has the power. 'For I am persuaded that neither death nor life; nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers; nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth; nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!'

The argument is complete. After an interlude concerning the destiny of the Jewish people, Chapter 12 begins the practical exhortation of the Epistle. The Ethic of Salvation must be justified by the applied ethics of duty and service. Yet, in the transition, there is a reminder of the complete reversal that is necessary, if the law of works is to give way to a law of grace. In the perverted legalism of the old economy, the people had come to regard their sacrifices as constituting a claim on God's regard. In like manner, they contented themselves with a worship of outward form, rather than of the heart. The true sacrifice, however, even aforesaid, was that which acknowledged, rather than sought to win, the mercy of God. Constrained by that mercy, now so wondrously manifest in Jesus Christ, we must present, not dead bodies of slain victims, but the bodily activities of living souls. Our worship, also, not contenting itself with outward ritual, must be in spirit and truth. Instead of taking pattern by the custom and usage of men, we must so put God's will to the proof, that our whole life shall be transfigured into blessing. For such is the life of ministering love that is delineated in the remainder of the Epistle.

The Gospel which the Apostle has thus made so fully known, alike in its essential ethical principle, and in its ethical application, finds fulfilment, beyond the plain duties that men owe to one another, and the love that should constrain them to mutual service, in those refinements of considerate and kindly feeling, and in that delicacy of demeanour, which are the blossoming and fragrance of piety, and which go far to commend the new life to men. The studious, and yet unstudied,

beauty of the Apostle's messages to friends (16th Chapter) is a fitting garniture of his high and sacred theme.

IV. THE EPISTLES OF THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT

In the Epistles of the First Imprisonment, we have the mature experience and testimony of the Apostle Paul, tested and perfected by his discipline of affliction. In these, however, there is rather the assured statement, or the quiet assumption of truth, than prolongation or repetition of argument.

I. THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

The ruling thought of this Epistle is God's eternal Purpose. There has been a great choosing (i. 4), proceeding from a foreordination, this in its turn having proceeded from the infinite grace of God. There is no implication of arbitrary election, over-ruling the individual will. Nor is there any suggestion of austere decree. All the process originates in Fatherhood. The grace is 'freely bestowed on us in the Beloved'—with freedom on both sides. The purpose is effectuated by a great redemption—'our redemption.'

The 'mystery of His will' (i. 9) is the 'good pleasure' of the same purpose. Again it is 'we' who inherit the blessing, the universal grace becoming individualised in our faith. Most wonderful of all, God sets the seal of this purpose of fore-ordaining love in our heart, 'an earnest of our inheritance.'

Is the old Greek thought of 'wisdom,' of 'intellectual virtue,' still in the Apostle's mind? He prays (i. 16-20), 'that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of

wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him ; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places.' The distinguishing principles of the life of faith and love, with implicit contrast to the cold, pale principles of ' wisdom ' and ' activity according to virtue,' could not be better presented.

In the 2nd Chapter we have a remarkable condensation of the same thoughts, from another point of view. A picture is presented of the ' nature ' to which some were disposed to attribute great possibilities. There were great possibilities, but for evil rather than good. ' Among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the volitions of our flesh and of our thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.' We were dead ! But there came a great ' making alive.' It was the power of God, of an Infinite Love, of a wealth of mercy, working through Christ's resurrection, and lifting us to the highest heights in Christ Jesus. To all the ages, this resurrection from the death of sin to the beauty and glory of the new Eastertide of Life shall be the memorial of ' the exceeding riches of His grace.'

Then the Apostle gathers up his meaning in two of his terse definitions (ii. 8, 10). ' For by grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that '—the being saved by grace through faith—' not of yourselves,' as though

it were man's discovery or achievement; 'it is the gift of God: not of works—that no one should glory.' What, then, is the place of 'works'? Are they of no account? By no means. But they are the end to which the purpose tends, not the means, or the meritorious cause. 'For we,' in our new character, 'are His workmanship,' not our own: 'created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared, that we should walk in them.' If we may take the suggestion which the word *ποίημα* irresistibly brings to our mind, the new life, with its beauty of holiness, is a very poem of God.

The Apostle goes on to expatiate on this inspiring theme, till he reaches the climax of prayer and praise with which the 3rd Chapter comes to its close. Every syllable of it thrills with the glorious fulness of the new life. Then follow the beautiful applied ethics of the Epistle, the glory spreading itself out over life's relationships and mutual service.

2. THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

The central theme of this Epistle is the pre-eminence of Christ (i. 18). He is all in all. There was a new 'knowledge,' or *gnosis*, making great pretensions with its airy speculations. The Colossians are exhorted (i. 9) to seek a knowledge that will satisfy the heart, and bear fruit 'in every good work'—the fruit of loyalty to such a Lord. This knowledge will bring power, and will overflow with a joy that evermore breaks into praise. In Christ there is a great redemption—'our redemption.' Can we trust such a One too much? His greatness dates from before all things,

and is the guarantee of full and final victory. Grounded in this faith, they will never be moved.

To proclaim Christ is the main business of the Gospel. It should be the aim and desire of Apostle and people. 'Whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ' (i. 28). 'As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and builded up in Him, and established in your faith' (ii. 6, 7). 'If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above' (iii. 1). It is the same Ethic, with the same sanction and inspiration.

From the vantage of these claims of Christ upon their faith, the Apostle passes to the usual consequence. They must let the tremendous dynamic of a faith that takes such hold of Christ, and of His illimitable power, do its work in their lowly life (iii. 12-17). The power is the power of redeeming love; therefore, 'above all things,' they must 'put on love.' 'And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' The applied ethics of relationship and service are again urged earnestly.

The pendant, 'To Philemon,' is a beautiful ethic of loyal love and ministration.

3. THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

Writing a little later to his beloved Philippians, the Apostle wishes them joy—for this is the purport of his letter of love. They are troubled because of his imprisonment; it reminds them of the imprisonment at Philippi, of which they were so ashamed. He bids them rather rejoice, even if things come to the worst

(ii. 17, 18). For, he says (i. 18), 'I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.' In and through all this joy, of various subsidiary considerations, there is the one supreme joy in Christ, that never fails. 'Rejoice in the Lord' (iii. 1); 'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice' (iv. 4).

What is the proper ethical outcome? 'To me to live is Christ' (i. 21). 'Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ' (i. 27). Or, as he expresses it more fully (i. 9-11), 'And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.'

The same law of ethical consequence is presented very cogently in the passage concerning the humiliation and sacrifice of Christ (ii. 1-11). The self-renouncing lowliness of the Lord of Glory is urged as the incentive to lowliness on their part, and to self-forgetting love. Moreover, they must bear in mind that, not as a mere example for imitation, but as an indwelling power and life, Christ claims and requires to be made known by His people (ii. 12, 13). They may well rejoice in their 'salvation.' There is no doubt of its reality. It is no dream, but an inward life-force that they feel pulsing and thrilling in their hearts. Yet let them remember that all life-force must have its outcome, or it soon decays, being thwarted of its function. They may well tremble at the thought of thus forfeiting, by a neglect which seems almost incident to the

joy of a great and treasured possession, what God has committed to them, partly in trust for others. 'Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to work, for His good pleasure.' Their salvation is an inworking, that it may become an outworking, energy. Is it *their* salvation? Salvation can never be a monopoly; it is expansive. It may not remain a mere subjective sentiment, however glowing; it must be as a vital sap, that can do no other than put forth flower and fruit. This is essential to the completion of God's work of grace. His salvation is inwrought, that it may be outwrought. In the one aspect, it is a spiritual privilege, of surpassing value; in the other, a spiritual ethic, of limitless possibility.

In the 3rd Chapter the Apostle draws on his own experience to encourage the Philippians in their quest of perfectness. There is, indeed, no perfection, in the sense that we attain a goal, beyond which there stretches no path of progress. In another sense, however, we all ought to be perfect. Not contenting ourselves with the partial experience of a possession of Christ for our own joy, we should complete the possession by ever seeking to communicate that joy to others. Christ has captured us (iii. 12)—as He captured Paul on the way to Damascus—that He may use us as His ministers of grace. He has laid hold of us, by a friendly 'arrest'—very different from the arrest of the Apostle at Philippi—that we may lay hold of His purpose of blessing for men, and be ambitious to fulfil His good pleasure in their behalf.

To 'know Him' (iii. 10) can mean nothing less than that we thus become perfect—not in any merit,

nor in any achieved 'virtue,' but in love. Virtue? merit? praise? Are these our ambition? 'If there be any virtue, if there be any praise,' they cannot, consistently with the faith of Christ, be centred in self. They pertain to Him who is the only source of all things good. On these things, then, as His bestowment—'things true, things honourable, things just, things pure, things lovely'—must our regard, our hope, our eager longing be centred (iv. 8); thus shall we be enamoured of the joy of His grace and conformed to His glory. For, weak as we are, and impotent, 'My God shall supply your every need' (iv. 19).

Thus we end, as we began, with abounding joy; a joy that has become our own inheritance, and that multiplies, along life's lowly ways, that it may find entrance into every heart and life. For so do 'His riches in glory in Christ Jesus' become the heritage of men.

V. THE EPISTLES OF THE LAST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Between the first and the final imprisonment at Rome, there was probably an unrecorded interval of missionary travel, during which the first and second Pastoral Epistles were written.

It is possible that they were but brief notes, afterwards enlarged, in their ecclesiastical parts, according to the more elaborate church organization of a later period.

I. THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

The prevalent thought in the more characteristically Pauline portion of this Epistle, is that of a trust which

has been reposed in us, a deposit that we have received.

Paul writes feelingly in this respect. Never did he cease to marvel that the 'gospel of the glory of the blessed God' had been 'entrusted' to him (i. 11), who once sought to destroy its testimony. 'Trustworthy is the Message, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners : of whom I am chief' (i. 15). 'This charge,' he continues, 'I entrust'—as a precious deposit—'to thee.' 'Holding faith and a good conscience'—the deposit clasped to his heart, giving him a confident outlook towards right and duty—Timothy will be able to 'war the goodly warfare.'

Having such a treasure, how can Christian believers let themselves be dazzled by the glitter of this world's gain? 'They that are bent upon being rich fall into a temptation and a snare' (vi. 9). 'For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil' (vi. 10). They that would follow the true quest must turn away from the false glamour of this world's wealth, pursuing the search for 'righteousness, godliness, faith, love, stedfastness, gentleness'—for to such an ethical quest does their experience of grace commit them. They will be bitterly opposed in the pursuit, but it is a goodly contention in which they are to contend (vi. 12), and the end, both for themselves and for others in whose behalf the contest is undertaken, will be 'eternal life.'

The 'commandment,' the 'charge,' the 'commitment'—these and such expressions occur and recur. The experimental is always passing into the ethical. Much has been given ; much is required. We have everything for ourselves ; we are to distribute everything to others. A prize is awarded ; it is to be shared.

All to whom the true riches are brought (vi. 17) must be 'rich in good works'; they must be 'ready to distribute, willing to share with others, laying up in store for themselves an exceedingly good deposit'—*θέμα λίαν* (Moffatt)—'against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is really life.'

2. THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

Only two sayings here need be noticed. But they are great. 'The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men; instructing us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world'—by faith in Him 'who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works' (ii. 11-14). And again (iii. 4-6), 'When the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man, appeared, not as the result of works which we ourselves had done in our own righteousness [Dr. E. T. Bartlett], but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

As a fitting sequel, the Apostle adds, 'Trustworthy is the Message, and concerning these things I desire that thou affirm confidently, that they who have believed may be careful to maintain good works.'

Through all this range of Pauline testimony, extending over many years, we find a very clear and consistent expression of the Ethic of Christianity, consistent also, though in a way characteristically

his own, with the setting forth of the same Ethic by other New Testament writers. True character, with its works of goodness, is not any price paid for God's approval, but the result of God's free grace. This grace is manifest in the redemption of Jesus Christ, which is assured to our hearts by the Spirit. In this joy of the Lord we are free, and true, and strong. Baptized with the gladness of God's Perfect Love, we fulfil all righteousness.

VI

THE FINAL MANIFESTO OF THE PAULINE TESTIMONY

THERE remain for consideration two documents, closely related to each other: the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Second Epistle to Timothy. It does not come within the scope of this argument to discuss questions of criticism. Yet they cannot be altogether excluded. In respect to the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it may be permissible to put forward a suggestion, not at all essential to our examination of the teaching of the Epistle, but having some bearing on its value, or interest, as in some respects a continuation, perhaps a completion, of the Apostle's testimony, and itself reconciling several competing claims.

In the first place, we may legitimately regard Apollos as a possible author of the Manifesto—so different, in certain respects, from any 'epistle.' The names associated with this theory are too great to allow of its being ruled out of court. There is no better summing up of the case, and certainly no more weighty judgment to be found, than in the words of that singularly gifted—almost supreme—scholar, William Fiddian Moulton. In the Introduction to his Commentary on Hebrews, he thus concludes his survey of the question: "On a review of the whole case, there is only one

conclusion that appears possible—that the Epistle was written by one who had stood in a close relation with St. Paul, but not by St. Paul himself.” After discussing ‘three names only’ that are ‘mentioned by early writers,’ Barnabas, Clement, and Luke, Dr. Moulton continues: “The subject is not one for confident assertion; but we strongly doubt whether the Epistle can be ascribed to any of those suggested by ancient writers. One other hypothesis must be mentioned, which has commanded the adhesion of many of the ablest writers of recent times. Luther was the first to express an opinion that the Epistle to the Hebrews was the work of Apollos. Some will maintain that conjecture is inadmissible, but certainly all the conditions of the problem appear to be satisfied by this conjecture. The record of St. Luke in Acts xviii. 24–28, xix. 1, supplemented by St. Paul’s reference in 1 Corinthians, might seem to have been expressly designed to show the special fitness of Apollos for writing such an Epistle as this. If it be not unbecoming to go beyond the words of Origen on such a subject as this, and to favour an hypothesis for which no express evidence can be adduced from ancient times, we can have no hesitation in joining those who hold that it is the Jew of Alexandria, ‘mighty in the Scriptures,’ fervent in spirit, the honoured associate of St. Paul, who here carries on the work which he began in Achaia, when ‘he mightily convinced the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.’”

Assuming, then, as a legitimate hypothesis, that Apollos was the author, how are we to account for the undoubted Pauline impress upon the Epistle? Dr.

Moulton speaks of the 'position allowed by all, that the Epistle, whether by St. Paul or not, is Paul-like in the general character of its teaching, and in many of its special features.' This may be sufficiently explained by the Apostle's early influence on Apollos, and by their continued friendship. But it would be more thoroughly accounted for by the supposition that Paul had lately requested Apollos to write such a treatise, that they had talked over the general lines on which it should proceed, and that Paul had received the draft of the Epistle, perhaps in a recent interview (see Titus iii. 13). This may have been left behind at Ephesus in the hurry of his second arrest, and it may have been one of the 'books' that he asks Timothy to bring to Rome (2 Tim. iv. 13), along with the 'cloak,' and the 'parchments' of his Roman citizenship, so important in connection with his trial.

It may have been understood that the Epistle was to be sent forth (perhaps primarily to Cæsarea, as Dr. Vernon Bartlet suggests) with Paul's endorsement, and with any alterations or additions that seemed desirable. The arrest and imprisonment might interfere partially with this plan for the time; but, whether it arrived, in Timothy's charge, before the Apostle's death, or after that event, how natural it would be for Luke, his trusted physician, friend, and secretary, to revise the Epistle carefully in the light of Paul's annotations, adding on his own account the postscript (xiii. 7-18). The original treatise may have ended with xii. 29; the section xiii. 1-6, 20, 21, may have been Paul's addendum (with perhaps a few touches here and there in the main part of the treatise);

and Luke, inserting the postscript of exhortation, as suggested above, before the Apostle's final words, may have made his graceful apology for such seeming interference, saying significantly, 'for I have written unto you in few words.'

The Epistle would thus be of a composite character : the original plan of treatment perhaps Pauline ; the working out of the plan, according to his own genius of thought, and in his own style of speech, by Apollos ; some touches, here and there, due to Paul's revision ; the conclusion by Paul ; and the more properly epistolary additions contributed by Luke, who put the whole Epistle into its final shape.

Those to whom it was primarily addressed—perhaps the Cæsarean Christians—would very likely know most of the facts, but, receiving it almost as a legacy from their beloved Apostle, would reverently cherish it as his last message. So Luke reminded them : 'Remember them that were your leaders' (xiii. 7). When it went forth to do its larger work, it would be easy for the name of Paul to go with it ; or Luke's name might sometimes cling to it ; sometimes it might go anonymously. At Rome (where Paul's name was never associated with the Epistle in those earlier times) the fact of its non-Pauline authorship might easily be known.

I. THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

Much of the Epistle lies outside our range. But there are important sections that bear very strikingly on our special subject.

It may be convenient, in this case, to take the four factors of the Ethic of Christianity, as determined by

our analysis, and notice how each of them is recognised and enforced in Hebrews.

(1) *A Great Divine Initiative of Salvation.*

This Epistle, like the Gospel of John, has a prologue of surpassing grandeur. 'God has spoken' (i. 1, 2). It is this Speech of God that first stirs the heart of man. The Speech finds utterance, not so much in words, as in 'The Word.' This personal Word is also a 'Son.' He is the outshining Splendour of God's Glory, the exact Representation of God's Being. Through Him the 'world-ages' have been made, and by Him all things in human history are borne onward (*φέρων τὰ πάντα*), through the ages, to their goal. A proximate goal was the 'purification of sins' that He effected for man; a farther goal, His glorification, as Intercessor for His redeemed. The ultimate goal is not yet in the purview. But, through all the process, He is bearing things onward; there is no spiritual momentum, save as He moves the heart of man; no spiritual progress possible in the world, but by the great impulsion of His grace.

Such is the invisible energy of the Strong Son of God. Outwardly, in that special working of grace which the Advent introduced, the Divine Power clothed itself with human tenderness. This the 2nd Chapter exhibits to our view. We see an 'Author of Salvation' (ii. 10), arrayed in the frailty of our flesh (ii. 14: see John i. 14), Brother among brethren, sensitive to all suffering, assaulted by sin—in all these things, 'like unto His brethren.' The great Initial Power of Salvation becomes winning and persuasive, thus suffused with human sympathy. All this is the

pledge of our victory: Man for men, He tastes and triumphs over sin and death; in His name, we may triumph.

(2) *A Great Redeeming Personality.*

Concerning His redemptive work—redemption by sacrifice—it is hardly possible to make extracts, for the Epistle is full of it. Sacrifice and Priesthood are its main theme. We find the centrality of the theme, however, in the 7th Chapter. ‘Such a High Priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this He did once for all, when He offered up Himself.’ ‘A Son, perfected for evermore,’ having ‘put away sin by the Sacrifice of Himself’ (ix. 26), and undertaken man’s whole case, is at once Priest and Saviour. He has accomplished salvation, once for all; now He administers salvation.

It is essential to regard this redemption, in its every part, as identified with Personality, and efficacious in proportion as Personality is kept in view. It must not be allowed to become general, or abstract. This is the whole meaning of the Melchizedek argument of the chapter. Into the details we need not enter; the main principle is clear. There has been an utter break with the priesthood of the law (vii. 12-14)—and with all priesthood and ministry of ‘succession’ or ‘genealogy.’ Human sacerdotalism is at an end. As regards both the great High Priest, and those who testify in His name, consecrated personality is the invaluable factor. Office, succession, human

appointment—this Epistle sweeps them away, as having no efficacy.

Melchizedek was a great, generous-souled priest, who had no genealogy to his reckoning, but only this, 'that he liveth' (vii. 8). It was his rare personality that made him even greater than Abraham, as able to help men to come near to God, to live for God. So our great High Priest 'ever liveth' (vii. 25) : whether, as once, in the days of His flesh, all human in His seeming ; or, as now, having passed into the heavens, all Divine in His resources of power, He lives—lives in fulness of grace and truth—and is therefore able to save. Personality undertakes for kindred personality, pledges itself and performs all, by personal attraction, inspiration, spiritual redemption. He saves, as only such a One can save, 'to the uttermost.' Death is unable to impair personality, Divine or human, and thus its privilege and power of ministry are not forfeit by death. Personality ever lives. The generous, priestly Melchizedek, having the one qualification of his great humanity, is Melchizedek everywhere, and for ever. How much more is our Christ the Same, 'yesterday, to-day, yea, and for ever' (xiii. 8) !

Just as we need no credentials for the friends whom we know, and trust, and love, beyond what they are in themselves ; so the one qualification, for those who minister in His name, is, that they have caught something of the quality of His heart, which witnesses that they 'live.'

(3) *A Great Divine Assurance.*

Such a redemption brings its own warm assurance to the heart. So likewise does the Covenant, of which

so much is said in the 8th and 9th Chapters. But the vital importance of an inward assurance of present salvation—itsself the pledge of final salvation, if only we remain faithful, not casting away our confidence, ‘which hath great recompence of reward’ (x. 35)—is dwelt upon at large in the 11th Chapter.

It is necessary, first, to ascertain the right interpretation of one of the most prominent expressions in the argument. This expression, consisting of a single word in Greek, occurs, in its various forms, four times : *ἐμαρτυρήθησαν* (verse 2), *ἐμαρτυρήθη* (verse 4), *μεμαρτύρηται* (verse 5), *μαρτυρηθέντες* (verse 39)—passive forms of *μαρτυρέω*, to bear witness. The verb is used in various constructions, the most common (with the dative of the indirect object) signifying, to bear witness *concerning* a person or thing (for which *περὶ* or *ὑπὲρ*, with the genitive, is sometimes employed). This is the common construction in the New Testament, and is found once, with the passive participle, in Hebrews (vii. 8). It may take an accusative of the thing that is testified, as is implied in the impersonal passive of vii. 17. But the dative of the indirect object may stand for the person, or persons, *to whom* the testimony is actually borne. Even with the other construction, this dative is implied ; for a testimony concerning any one, or anything, must be borne *to* some person, or persons, and for this the dative would be the rendering, if it were expressed, and not merely implied. There are a few instances of this construction in the New Testament, the dative of direct address being explicitly rendered. We have it twice in the last chapter of Revelation : ‘I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you (*μαρτυρήσαι ὑμῖν*) these things

in the churches' (xxii. 16); 'I testify unto every man that heareth (*παντὶ τῷ ἀκούοντι*) the words of the prophecy of this book' (xxii. 18). The construction is found also in classical authors, as in Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 494, 5:—

*μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι κᾶσις
πηλοῦ ξύνουρος, διψία κόνις, τῦδε*

—'Thirsty dust, twin sister of clay, bears witness to me.'

There is no question of the lawfulness of the construction, therefore, and the construction in the 11th of Hebrews must be determined by the contextual meaning. The construction just considered is made more likely, because it occurs in the previous chapter (x. 15): 'The Holy Spirit beareth witness to us'—*Μαρτυρεῖ δε ἡμῖν*. If the active may be used with this meaning, so of course may the passive.

We are thus prepared to give unbiassed consideration to the context. At the very close of the previous chapter (x. 39), the writer says, 'We are not of them that shrink back unto perdition; but of them that have faith unto the gaining of the soul.' Then immediately (xi. 1), 'Now faith is a guarantee'—as of a title-deed—'of things hoped for; an inward persuasion (*ἔλεγκος*) of things not seen.' Verse 2 proceeds, *ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ ἐμαρτυρήθησαν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι*—'For in this (faith) the elders were borne witness to'; that is, the testimony of God enshrined itself in their faith, with all its persuasive conviction of the reality of things not seen. Similarly, verse 3: 'By faith we understand'—or 'perceive,' with inward vision—'that the world-ages have been ordered by the Word

of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear';—invisible, spiritual potencies having been at work, bearing the stream of human history on its course, the seething movements on the surface of affairs being only symptoms of what is deeper and more real (see note on i. 3). Then again (verse 4), 'By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which ($\delta\iota'$ $\eta\varsigma$)'—as the channel, or instrumentality: not, 'on account of which' (accusative)—'he had witness borne to him,' that is, direct to his heart, 'that he was righteous.' In like manner (verse 5), in reference to Enoch's faith, it is said, 'He hath had witness borne to him that he had been well-pleasing unto God.' This is no other than the Pauline doctrine of the Witness of the Spirit, expressed in the way of the great Alexandrian. The conclusion (verse 39) is in agreement with the preamble of the chapter. The procession of the men of faith has passed before our eyes, marching through the ages, each with the quenchless light of immortal hope on his face, because of the secret persuasion of God's testimony in his heart. 'And these all, having had witness borne to them through their faith ($\delta\iota\alpha$ $\tau\eta\varsigma$ $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\omega\varsigma$), received not the promise'—the time of fulfilment was not yet; but the promise, and the sure hope, made them strong, and gave them victory. The inward assurance was the secret of achievement.

Thus we are led to the 12th Chapter. The witness that was first borne to the hearts of the men of faith, is now borne by them to others, that they also may achieve and conquer. We are encouraged to join the company of witnesses, receiving their testimony, and in our turn passing it to others; for, wherever

it is truly received, there shall be the same accompaniment of inward assurance, an assurance that will pass, with its living energy, into the fulfilment of all true duty and service.

(4) *A Great Divine Consecration.*

We thus arrive at the ethical outcome of the Assurance of Faith. The writer has twice used the strong expression, 'full assurance' (vi. 11, x. 22), in the latter instance as though expressly to lead up to the exposition of assurance in the 11th Chapter. In each case, it is followed by an immediate practical exhortation. The 'full assurance'—*πληροφορία*—'of hope' carries with it the corollary: 'that ye be not sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.' The 'full assurance of faith' should have this sequel: 'let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works.' In like manner the 12th Chapter exhibits, in its own way, the life of love as the consequence of that assurance of faith of which the previous chapter speaks. To run the race, we must cast aside all sinfulness (xii. 1), taking Jesus Himself, the Inspirer and Perfecter (*τελειωτήν*) of our faith—the One who prompts our trust, and completes it with the 'full assurance'—(xii. 2, 3), as our Pattern. The trials of life shall thus prove to be but the chastenings of love, and shall yield 'the fruit of righteousness' (xii. 11). We are to follow, with tireless quest, 'the Sanctification' (xii. 14)—so perfect, that, since its appearance in the world, nothing inferior will suffice for our aspiration—even the Holy Love of Him who received the consecration, as by His own act, that it might flash to

those who are named by His name (John xvii. 19). Should we, however, prove laggards, we are warned that we shall not 'see the Lord'—He will be far on out of our vision.

The same lesson is taught in verses 18-24. Law, with its rigour, has given place to love, with its holy inspiration; the Judge is the 'God of all' (Θεὸς πάντων), who loves His people with an everlasting love, and will save them to the end. Thus the exhortation is enforced, in what are perhaps the last words of this Manifesto, as it left the hands of its author: 'Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God, with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.' For those that hold the kingdom in their hearts, the fire of His Presence is the kindling, searching, cleansing fire of Holy Love, that shall burn all evil utterly away, and shall prove itself the all-impelling, all-constraining energy of our life's consecration.

2. THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

If our theory is correct, the Apostle had read, and supplemented, the Manifesto prepared, at his request, by his colleague. He had taken up the practical application, going on to urge, in his characteristic way, the service of love, cleansed from defilement, and disentangled from that 'love of money' (of which he had lately been writing to Timothy: 1 Tim. vi. 10), which fatally ensnares the soul, that might otherwise always be hearing the Unseen Friend say, 'I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee' (xiii. 1-6). In his own glowing style of farewell, he

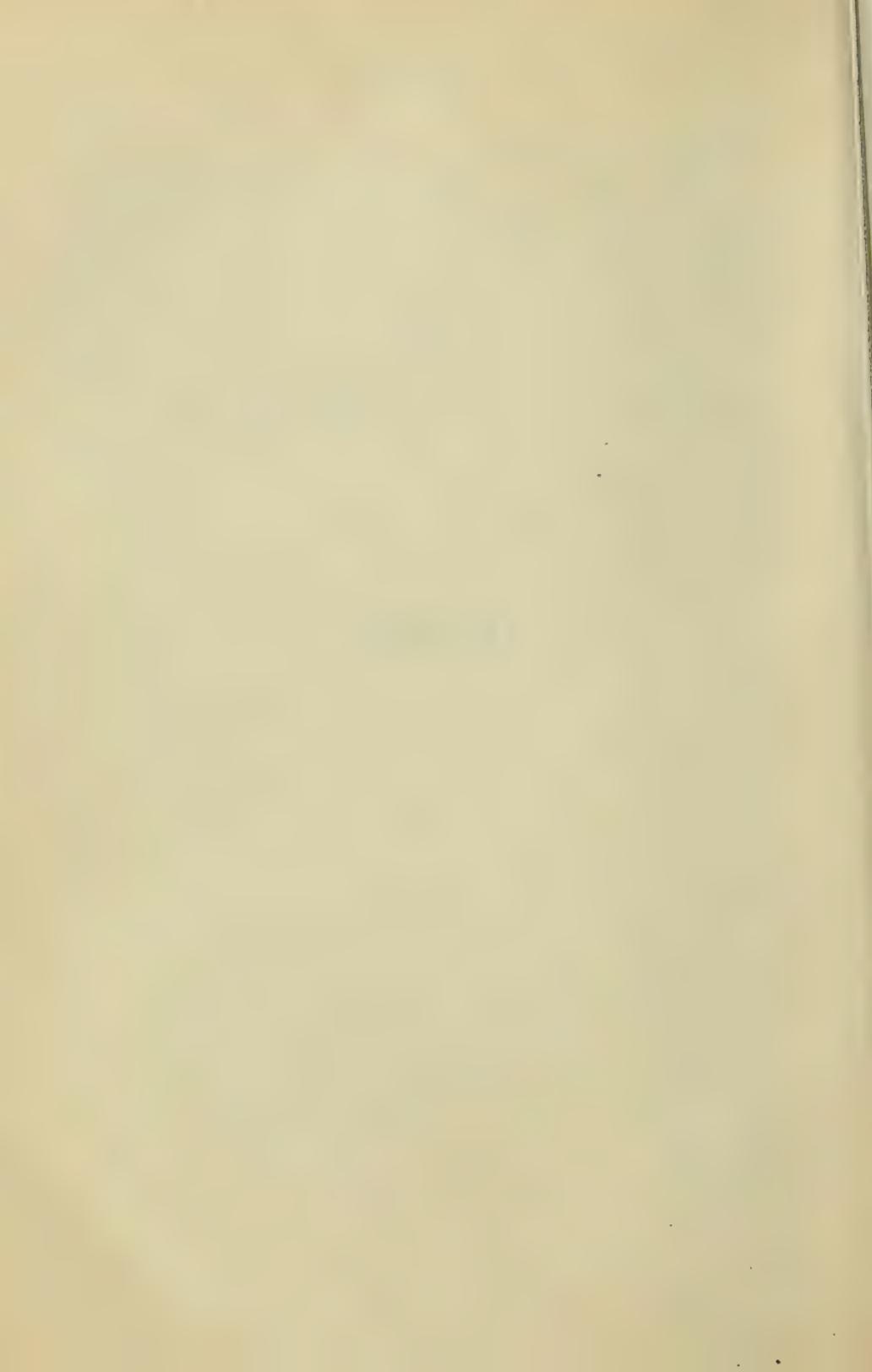
prays (verses 20, 21) :—‘ Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, with the blood of an Eternal Covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do His Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ : to whom be the glory for ever and ever ! Amen.’

With these thoughts in his mind, Paul writes his last words to Timothy from Rome. He is almost a condemned prisoner, the trial under Nero having thus far gone against him ; he foresees the verdict and the sentence ; the headsman’s sword already gleams before his eyes. But his ‘ beloved child ’ need not be ashamed ; he himself is not ashamed (i. 8, 12). No Roman pleader undertakes his cause. He himself has been pleading in court—not, however, for his own cause, but for the Gospel (iv. 16, 17). There is nevertheless another Court ; there is another Advocate. ‘ I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that Day ’ (i. 12). So the veteran Apostle, clasping the testimony to his heart, calmly awaits the end.

Nero’s tutor and counsellor, the courtier-philosopher, Seneca, whose thoughts had been lofty, and his words high-reaching, but whose character had not sustained his philosophy, died about this time by command of his fickle master. It was an ignominious ending—as was shortly afterwards that of Nero himself, at last execrated by those to whom he had taught his own fickleness and blood-lust. Seneca could look back on nothing very worthy ; Nero, if his conscience woke at last, must have passed from the world in a

nightmare of fright. Paul says to Timothy, as we can imagine him saying to himself, while they led him to his death, 'I have fought the goodly fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith! Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give to me at that Day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved His Appearing.' Thus the consecrated life passes (iv. 6-8) to the consecration of death.

LUTHER



I

SOME ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF LUTHER

WHILE yet in his 28th year, Martin Luther, Augustinian monk of Erfurt, who had been sent some three years before to the newly founded University of Wittenberg to lecture on Aristotle's Ethics, and had then been sent back to Erfurt for further study, was again appointed to Wittenberg as Professor of Divinity. In the following year he took his doctor's degree, and soon began lecturing on the Bible. Among the books of the Bible which he thus took with his students were the Psalms (1513-15), Romans (1515-16), and Galatians (1516-17). Luther published the result of his lectures on Galatians in 1519 as a Commentary, afterwards distinguished, as the Minor, from the Major Commentary, which latter was published in 1535. Only lately have others seen the light, notably the lectures on Romans, of which the MS. was recovered quite unexpectedly, and published in 1908. This work is evidently of unique interest, partly because of the light which had flashed upon that epistle, as Luther pondered its words in the days of his spiritual bondage ; partly as having prepared the way for that celebrated 'Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans,' which was so influential in promoting the cause of the Reformation, not only in Germany, but, through Tyndale's

paraphrase, in England also, and which helped, indirectly, in the origination, two hundred years later, of the Methodist Revival. With the origination of that Revival, the Commentary on Galatians had much to do. All this we shall see later, in dealing with the Wesleys.

Any attempt to indicate the character and to estimate the value of Luther's religious experience must take account of the influences of his childhood, of the familiar teaching and practice of the church system of his day, of the instruction that prevailed in school and university, of the authors that he studied, especially those who profoundly impressed his thought, of the vital piety with which he came into contact, and chiefly of his earlier study of the Bible.

As regards his childhood, and the home piety in which he was nurtured, as well as the religious teaching of his first schooling, it is clear, from the accounts that we have of the Germany of those times, that there was a considerable leaven of practical godliness among the people, which was of quite a pronounced character in the case of Luther's parents. This, however, was almost exclusively what we may term with emphasis the *fear* of God. Such a representation of religion was strongly enforced by the practical instruction of the church, and terribly endorsed by the cruel discipline of school life. God was pictured as a Being too awful to be approached by wicked man, and Christ as a wrathful Judge, on the watch for delinquencies to condemn and punish. The only hope of less unfavourable regard lay in the intercession of Virgin and saints, secured and supplemented by the prescribed observances and penances of the church. For those that attended to these conditions, there yet remained

the pains of purgatory ; for the rest, there was hell. As an aggravation of the fearfulness with which these perverted beliefs invested the life of the people, there was a widespread and oppressive superstition regarding evil spirits, and the mischief which they wrought, as well as the haunting dread of the malicious machinations of the devil. Young Martin's sensitive nature was peculiarly susceptible to this veritable terrorism of life, as well as to the fearfulness of religion ; but his conscience was so tender, and his religious instincts were so strong, that, as he grew to years of responsibility, he became more and more assiduous in the endeavour to avert God's wrath, and to obtain peace of soul.

After his earlier schooling at Mansfeld, and for a year at Magdeburg, he was sent at the age of fifteen to Eisenach, where he remained till he entered the University of Erfurt. At Eisenach he was taken into the home of Frau Ursula Cotta, who was attracted by his singing, as he went from door to door, according to custom, seeking help towards the expenses of his school life. The schoolmaster was John Trebonius, who, as Köstlin tells us, " every morning, on entering the schoolroom, would take off his biretta, because God might have chosen many a one of the lads present to be a future mayor, or chancellor, or learned doctor." He thus did unwitting homage to the future Leader of the Reformation. The atmosphere of kindness in his adopted home, and the new treatment of respect in school, helped to relieve the gloom which had been gathering about his young life, and to prepare him for the struggles that were yet to come. Love was, partly at least, winning its way against fear.

At the age of eighteen he entered the University of Erfurt, which ranked as incomparably the highest in the land. Here he was thoroughly trained in philosophy, this term denoting a much wider and much more miscellaneous range of subjects than at present. Among these subjects, Latin was thoroughly studied, as the language of the learned world. Philosophy proper was represented by Scholasticism, of which the most powerful exponent in the Middle Ages was Thomas Aquinas, who, however, was not in the ascendant in Luther's time, Occam and his school being more in favour. Humanism was in the air, and the influence of Erasmus was very powerful. All these, and other factors, will have to be considered, as we pass to the study of Luther's religious experience. Let it suffice just now to say that Luther graduated with great distinction, and that, as Melancthon remarks, "his talent was the wonder of the whole university." But a great spiritual crisis was at hand.

All through his university career, Luther had remained faithful to conscience, and had continued to attend earnestly to the claims of religion. Instead, however, of gaining any comfort to his soul, he was more and more harassed with tormenting doubts and fears. To use his own vivid metaphor, the more he washed his hands, the fouler they became. The more he strove to atone for his offences, and to win merit with Heaven, the more pitiful seemed his endeavours, and the blacker seemed his sin. With startling suddenness he was thrust into a decision that altered entirely the programme of his life. In June, 1505, he visited his home at Mansfeld, and on the return journey to Erfurt he was overtaken by a terrific storm. Blinded

by an extraordinary flash of lightning, he fell dazed and trembling to the ground, and, praying for help to the Saints, vowed that he would be a monk. This was on the 2nd of July. Although he afterwards regretted his vow, he felt that he was irrevocably committed, and on the 16th he gathered his comrades and friends together to bid them farewell. They pleaded with him in vain, and the next day accompanied him tearfully to the Augustinian convent, where, as they thought, the hope and pride of the university was to be buried for ever.

There followed three years of convent life, with ever intenser and more painful spiritual struggle. The great aim of the convent discipline, at first, was to break the will, and not merely to humble, but to humiliate the novice, by the imposition of the most menial tasks, and by ruthlessly exposing this gratuitous servitude to the gaze of the world. Thus the brilliant graduate had to appear in the streets as a beggar, with the mendicant's wallet waiting to be filled. All this was borne, not only without complaint, then or afterwards, but with the unfeigned humility of one who thought no discipline too harsh, no penance too severe, if only it might help him to find peace with God. Thus the years passed. He prayed and fasted, he confessed, he did penance, he examined himself ever more anxiously, he magnified supposed offences, often non-existent, by morbid self-scrutiny, confessed again, received absolution again, but was ever referred back yet again to more penance, and further self-examination, until body and mind almost broke beneath the strain. Meanwhile the round of convent teaching and of church discipline afforded no comfort, spoke no word of a

present and real forgiveness by God, preached no salvation, beyond the pious hope of the laying up of such merit by multiplied obediences, as would win a way through purgatory at last, to some standing-place of acceptance in the presence of the awful Judge. Of such experience Luther wrote afterwards, "I was indeed a pious monk, and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk could obtain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it. Of this all the friars who have known me can testify. If it had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death, by means of my watchings, prayers, reading, and other labours. I tortured myself almost to death, in order to procure peace with God for my troubled heart and agitated conscience, but, surrounded with thick darkness, I found peace nowhere."

Meanwhile there were certain alleviations of this bondage, which were insensibly preparing the way for his emancipation. Although officially the church afforded no relief, there were sympathisers, who, unofficially, ministered to his help. One of his instructors used to remind him of the words in the Apostles' Creed, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins,' and of St. Bernard's insistence on the duty of faith in God's forgiving grace. Bernard dwells especially on the words of Paul, telling us that we are justified freely by God's grace, through faith. Then there was the gracious influence of the Vicar General, John Von Staupitz. This accomplished and godly man took the deepest interest in the despairing young ascetic, led him to distinguish between real and

imaginary sins, taught him that repentance was more than penance, that inward holiness was what God required rather than the scrupulous rectitude of artificial obediences, but that no good resolves or deeds could avail, either to secure such holiness or to gain God's favour; that, on the contrary, we must trust entirely to God's forgiving grace through Christ, who is no angry Judge, but a pitying Saviour. All his life long Luther was grateful to Staupitz, who almost joined him in the Reformation.

Soon after Luther's entrance on his convent life, a Latin Bible was put into his hands. This was in accordance with recent regulations, drawn up by Staupitz for the better direction of the monks; and though Luther received little encouragement in the matter, except from Staupitz, he persisted in his study of the Scriptures, sealed indeed largely as yet to his understanding, with such intense avidity, that even Staupitz himself was amazed. But they soon began to shed their light on his mind, until the memorable day, when, during his first term of service at Wittenberg (1508-9), as he sat alone in his cell at the convent of that place, there flashed upon his soul for the first time the true meaning of Paul's words to the Romans, 'The just shall live by faith.' Again, and yet again, on the Italian journey and at Rome, that truth was to be similarly revealed, until the shackles fell away, and he was free.

We thus come to an important landmark in our story, namely the appointment of Luther to the post of lecturer on philosophy at Wittenberg; where, though the present appointment proved of brief duration, he was to find the centre of his life-work afterwards, both as

Reformer, and as Professor and Preacher. At the beginning of his later work as Professor of Divinity we have already glanced by anticipation, more especially as regards his lectures on the Epistles of Paul.

Before passing on to the further study of Luther's religious experience, we must pause here to take account of the systems of thought with which he had already become conversant, or would become conversant shortly, as they are important factors in the case.

Next to the Bible, he gave chief attention to AUGUSTINE, the thinker and teacher whose name had been assumed by the order of monks to which Luther belonged, and whose commanding intellect was dominant throughout Western Christendom for so many centuries. The great merit of Augustine's teaching, as afterwards of Calvin's, was that he stamped deep into the mind of the church the truth that all salvation and renewal of man is determined by the sovereign grace of God. He knew too well, by the disastrous experience which he has laid bare in his 'Confessions,' that not the most masterful nature, nor the soul best equipped with the light of intellect and with the learning of the schools, can rescue itself from the bondage of degrading vice; that only the interposition of sovereign grace can lift a man out of himself, can transfuse him with new aims and aspirations, and can turn his life into the channel of righteousness. Augustine begins to celebrate his great deliverance in words of praise that we may well think had thrilled Luther while reading them in his cell at Erfurt: "O Lord, I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the

son of Thy handmaid. Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise. Let my heart and my tongue praise Thee ; yea, let all my bones say, O Lord, who is like unto Thee ? Let them say, and answer Thou me, and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Who am I, and what am I ? What of evil have my deeds been without ; or, if not my deeds, my words ; or, if not my words, my will ? But Thou, O Lord, art good and merciful, and Thy right hand had respect unto the depth of my death, and from the bottom of my heart Thou didst draw out that abyss of corruption. And this was the whole matter : that I should refuse what I did choose, and choose what Thou didst choose. But where, throughout that year-long time, and from what low and deep recess, was my free-will called forth in a moment, whereby to submit my neck to Thy easy yoke, and my shoulders unto Thy light burden, O Christ Jesus, my Helper and my Redeemer ? How sweet did it at once become to me, to be without sweetnesses of those toys ! and what I feared to lose, I now rejoiced to throw away. For Thou didst cast them forth from me, Thou true and supreme sweetness. Thou didst cast them forth from me, and Thyself instead didst enter in ; who art sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood ; brighter than all light, but more inward than any secret place ; higher than all honour, but not to them that be high in their own conceits. Now was my soul free from the biting cares of compassing and getting, of wallowing amid and ministering to my lustful foulness ; and to Thee did I as a child babble, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation ”

To Augustine, God is indeed the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. All this is true to the essential teaching of Christianity. But, in the working out of this main principle, he takes up certain positions, theological, ethical, and ecclesiastical, which go far to undo the spiritual and moral enfranchisement effected by the Gospel; and in these respects his dominance at last resulted in the further establishment of that elaborate mechanicalism and deadening semi-materialism of religion, which made the reforming work of Luther so necessary. He carries the doctrine of the sovereignty of grace so far as to make it irresistible. But grace and coercion are contrary terms. The correlative terms are grace and faith. Where faith yields willingly to grace, grace can do everything necessary for man's deliverance. Where faith is wanting, grace cannot do its saving work.

With Augustine, the doctrine of faith takes a subordinate place in effecting man's salvation, and this may account for his failure to recognise its freedom in response to grace. According to his teaching, love is the essential condition, faith being regarded merely as belief, a theoretical faith, intended to serve as the transition to love. What, in this system, is true of the initial experience of salvation, holds good throughout its course; at every stage, the continuance and increase of grace depends, not so much on faith, as on love. But, as Augustine thought, for the masses of the people there was wanting something more manifestly authoritative; and, because of this conviction, strengthened by the impulse of his passionately sensuous nature, he insisted on entire submission to church ordinances

and regulations, in which religion and morals alike should find their guarantee and their best expression. Meanwhile, the grace of love was to be secured to the submissive church devotee by sacramental efficacy.

There was thus a strange dualism in Augustine, which led him, now to a mystical contemplation and adoration that anticipates the beatific vision; and now to a fanatical exaggeration of the value of formal creed and compulsory ecclesiastical observance for the many, and of ascetic seclusion and abstinence for those who would be truly saints, which have been perpetuated, under his influence, even to the present day. The appalling debauchery of the State Christianity of those times is a tragical comment on the inefficacy of such an ethic.

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX was one whose influence would partly help and partly hinder Luther in his thinking out of the great problem of human life. He magnifies grace, as the essential prerequisite of the new life; nothing can be accomplished without it, but with it everything is possible. On the other hand, he safeguards man's freedom; grace is ever availing, never coercive. Man's free will must meet God's will, and together they will accomplish salvation. Forgiveness is free, and is to be received by simple faith. There is no merit but in God's mercy. Yet Bernard, thus rightly interpreting the significance of faith for the initiative of the Christian life, fails to carry out the same interpretation for its subsequent course, and, instead of applying the Apostle's motto, 'from faith unto faith' (Rom. i. 17), relies on that striving after love on which Augustine laid so much stress. There must also be the accompanying aid of the mediation

of the saints, together with the usual ecclesiastical and monastic performance and merit.

The master force in the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages was THOMAS AQUINAS, and though, as was before noticed, his philosophy was somewhat under eclipse when Luther was preparing for his life-work, yet it was impossible that a system of thought which had so long been predominant should not have considerable effect on his development. It is better recognised now than formerly that Scholasticism was not the wholly artificial and valueless thing which some used to think it. There were mighty, active, and fertile intellects at work in its service, and, though it is true that they worked within limitations, safeguarding their speculations by acknowledgment, sometimes perhaps more or less formal, of the sacredness of Church orthodoxy and the supremacy of Church authority, they nevertheless found ample scope for speculation that could be hazardously daring, and that was characterized by marvellous subtlety. Aristotle had hitherto been regarded, in the realms of logic and ethics, as almost one of the Fathers of the Church, and Aquinas set himself to elaborate and apply the Ethics of Aristotle in the service of the Church. To a large extent he endorsed the positions of the Aristotelian philosophy, as supplemented by the further conclusions of Augustine. Under the influence of Aristotle, and the other Greeks, he magnifies the ethical adequacy of knowledge, which, he thinks, should have power to tame the passions and bend the will. Then there will follow the habit of the virtuous life, with Augustine's sacramentally infused virtues of faith, hope, and love, as the necessary Christian supplement to

the wisdom, righteousness, self-mastery, and bravery of pre-Christian ethics. The system of Aquinas has been well represented as showing the edifice of ethics, with its basis laid by Aristotle, and the upper storey added by the Christian religion.

In the German thought of Luther's early years, the influence of another great Scholastic was very strong. This was the Englishman, WILLIAM OF OCKHAM (or Occam, as it is often given). A nominalist in philosophy, he stood for freedom of thought in that sphere, leaving its own supremacy to the Church in questions of faith. He was the pioneer, with Roger Bacon, of experimental science and scientific philosophy, and the precursor therefore, in these respects, of Francis Bacon. Luther speaks of him as 'my dear Master Ockham' (mein lieber Meister Ockham), though he belonged to the rival order of the Franciscans. It was probably, however, Ockham's criticism of the papal hierarchy that gave him favour with Luther, as his doctrine of the sheer arbitrariness of God's will, and of the self-sufficiency of the human will, while it must have added to Luther's difficulties in the years of bondage, would be quite out of harmony with the doctrines of grace and of faith that he afterwards learned and taught.

A later influence, which Luther acknowledged by publishing the 'German Theology' of the 'Friends of God,' was that of the GERMAN MYSTICS, especially Tauler, whose sermons he studied with minute care. This Mysticism, as represented by Eckhart, Tauler, and others, also by Staupitz in Luther's time, lays great stress on the inwardness of true religion, especially on the sole grace and merit of Jesus Christ.

In contrite faith we are to lay hold on the promise of pardon, and, being forgiven much, we love much. Our progress in grace, however, is proportionate to our clearing ourselves of all things that hinder its inflow, even of everything pertaining to selfhood, that we may be merged and lost in God. Thus, once more, after its first recognition, faith is lost sight of, and progress in the divine life is made dependent on self-abnegation. Here again we see points of attachment for Luther's new-found spiritual freedom, but also points of divergence. In the main, however, the influence of Tauler was a powerful factor in determining his religious experience, his warm nature responding eagerly to the experimental richness of mystical piety, as thus presented, and to the ardent aspiration of the pursuit after perfect union with God.

The persistent and pervading principle of all these systems of Christian thought, and the vitiating element in the ethic of each system, is the assumption of merit. Where it is discarded at one point, it appears at another, and the vital principle of salvation by grace, through faith, suffers disparagement accordingly, in practice, if not in theory. There is the doctrine of the merit of works, moral and ecclesiastical; of the merit of love; of the merit of the 'virtues'; of the merit of will; and of the merit of rapturous contemplation. Happily, while deriving benefit from what was good in these systems, Luther held to the cardinal principle of grace, as conditioned in its working by faith only; held to it with a tenacity that nothing could shake, and taught it with an iteration that might seem tiresome, were it not that we recognise the necessity for such repetition of insistence, in order that adequate

impression might be made on minds that were wholly unaccustomed to the truth.

When Luther was qualifying for theological teaching at Wittenberg, he had to give particular attention, at one stage of his studies, to the 'Sentences' of PETER LOMBARD, in which both Dogmatics and Ethics, on the basis of Aristotle, and under the special influence of Augustine and Abelard, are presented in very precise scholastic form. Peter Lombard agrees with Augustine that the Chief Good is union with God, and with Aristotle that virtue is the true activity of the soul, but holds that this is wrought in us by God. He deals with the questions of free-will (as regards man's ideal character, man in a state of sin, and man as redeemed); of love to God, and its relation to the virtues (the four cardinal virtues, the three special Christian virtues, and gifts of the Spirit); of the distinction between higher and lower virtues; and of the vices. Thus Peter Lombard laid the foundation on which Aquinas and other Scholastic teachers afterwards built.

Although his teaching regarding 'gratia operans' (effectual grace), and the reconciliation effected by the Atonement, itself a revelation of God's love to sinners, would afford scope for the teaching of the clearer and fuller views which had gradually taken possession of Luther's mind, as he pondered these subjects; yet there would be a call for special correction of the theory, which had hitherto vitiated even the best thought respecting these things, namely, that 'the death of Christ then justifies us, when thereby love is awakened in our hearts.' Luther was already prepared, by his own experience, to teach that it is faith, not love to God,

that justifies, and that the forgiveness which faith receives freely for Christ's sake itself becomes the occasion and inspiration of love.

One other influence remains to be noticed, and it is very important, namely, that of the Humanists, which was very powerful among the young in Luther's student days, and which, in the person and work of his great contemporary, ERASMUS, exerted considerable effect upon his later years. Erasmus was seventeen years older than Luther, and at the outbreak of the Reformation was exercising an almost unprecedented sway over the mind of the learned world. He was the chief, and very attractive, exponent of the revived classical scholarship of Europe. In England he was welcomed to a university professorship, and was intimate with some of the choicest spirits of English culture. He was an ordained priest and a pledged monk, who had severed himself practically from these vows almost from the time of their profession. He assumed a position of scholarly aloofness, which seems never to have been challenged by the Church that he had treated so lightly, whose authority, however, he was careful, even in his most trenchant criticisms, never openly to dispute. He was bent on a Reformation, but it must be brought about by the diffusion of learning, and could therefore be only gradual in its working. By force of scholarship, the foolish accretions of superstition were to be discredited, and piety was to be re-established on the basis of sound common sense. Invited to join Luther, for whose work he had all unwittingly prepared, he courteously declined, and continued to be the religious dilettante, when he might have contributed its most powerful

intellectual element to the real Reformation, and have sent his name down to after ages as that of Luther's equal coadjutor. But he lacked alike the deep spiritual sympathy and the thorough moral earnestness of Luther, and, partly perhaps with time-serving pusillanimity, partly under the bias of his elusive temperament, he continued to be merely the scholar, the critic, the literary leader of his day.

In one respect, however, his service to the Reformation, though not intended as such, was of inestimable value. He published, in 1516, a carefully revised text of the Greek Testament, with a Latin translation. This was the basis of Luther's translation of the New Testament into idiomatic German—the German, as he said, of the mother in her home, the children in the street, the common man in the market-place; a translation from which translations into other tongues were made, and which, by its influence on Tyndale, had something to do with the final fashioning of our English Version. Luther's former Biblical work having been based on the Vulgate, it is manifest that he was put into a position of incalculable advantage, in the very crisis of his need, by the Greek Testament of Erasmus.

Midway in Luther's university course at Erfurt, namely, in 1503, Erasmus had given to the world a little volume, which sets forth, in outline, the essential principles of his own proposed religious and moral reformation. It is this earlier volume, 'Enchiridion Militis Christiani,' or 'The Manual of the Christian Soldier,' which claims some attention for our present purpose. Just as our previous comparisons with Augustine, Bernard, Aquinas, Occam, Tauler, and Peter Lombard concerned the essential ethical

difference between Luther and the religious leaders of the foregoing era, so does a comparison with Erasmus concern the difference between the evangelical principles of the Reformation and those of the Humanists, whose movement became a sort of counter-Reformation on the part of the more serious of the men of the world. Moreover, as that same world-philosophy has by no means spent its force, the comparison is not superfluous to-day.

The Master of Learning, Erasmus yet disclaims any attempt to prescribe difficult and tedious study for those who would live the better life. "There is no man but he ought to use a good life, to the which Christ would that the way should be plain and open for every man, and that not by inexplicable crooks of disputations, not able to be resolved, but by a true and sincere faith and charity not feigned, whom hope doth follow which is never ashamed. Therefore in mine opinion the best were that some both well learned men and good of living should have this office assigned and put unto them, to make a collection and to gather the sum of Christ's philosophy out of the pure fountain of the gospel and the epistles and most approved interpreters, and so plainly that yet it might be clerkly and erudite, and so briefly that it might also be plain. And such a thing my mind was about to bring to pass as well as I could, when I made this book of 'Enchiridion.'" His avowed primary purpose is to help a certain courtier to escape the corruptions of the Egypt in which he lived, to which end he has been asked to furnish his friend with a certain craft of virtuous living, by whose help he may attain a virtuous mind.

The first essential is watchfulness. There must be diligent self-scrutiny. Prayer is enjoined, and the reading of Scripture. The Christian warrior is to know himself. We are to gain Christ's peace by fighting our vices. In our composite nature, reason should be king, and the appetites all in subjection. Our affections also must be subordinate to reason. Spirit, soul, and flesh must be kept in their proper order. The Holy Spirit will favour those that exercise themselves in the craft of virtuous living. We must believe firmly that the things are true which are declared in Scripture. The way of health we may enter with a jocund courage. All fearsome things that oppose us are to be counted nought. We are to have Christ always in sight, and "think Him to be nothing else save charity, simplicity, or innocency, patience, cleanness, and shortly whatsoever Christ taught."

Perfect piety is that we ascend from things visible to things invisible. Christ is to be the only and chief example or form of living. We must still be climbing, yea, though we despair to attain to the top. Temptation we must take for a sign that God scourgeth us as sons. We must have our mind always circumspect, and pray fervently, or get to some holy occupation, to turn ourselves from temptation. We must trust only to the strength of Christ. Temptation should be so overcome as to be made an occasion of virtue. We must think no vice too light for our attention. We are to encourage ourselves by comparing the bitterness of the struggle with the bitter shame that would follow defeat. Failure must not be allowed to bring despair. The example of the Cross of Christ is to be the only and chief remedy against temptation.

We should think of the true dignity of man as against the shameful indignity of sin. Again, we ought to compare the two captains, God and the devil; also, eternal death and immortal life. We should consider how transitory is this life at the longest. And we should bethink ourselves of the peril of that impenitence or obduration of mind, which is of all mischiefs the extreme and worst.

After these rules come certain suggested remedies against various specific vices or sins. In conclusion it is said, "We have taken upon us this labour for thy sake, that unto thee (as it were with a finger) we might show the way which leadeth straight unto Christ."

Here is much sagacious advice, much moral wisdom and religious discernment, much that might be of service to every Christian soldier in the war with sin. We can understand that the shrewd sense of these instructions would commend them to Luther, and make him the more wishful to have such a fellow-combatant in the war that he had to wage. Yet we may well imagine that he would wonder how a thinker so acute, whose eyes were so open to those abuses of the Name of Christ which were prevalent everywhere, should have missed the main secret. Salvation is taken for granted. It is regarded as having been effected once for all, and secured personally by the loyal observance of Church rule. Faith is a sure belief in what is declared, rather than individual trust in an individual Saviour. Jesus Christ is our Pattern; His Cross has exemplary virtue. The great joy of an assured forgiveness; the glory of the adoption of sons; the conquest of sin by immediate faith

in an ever present Saviour ; the self-forgetting consecration of holy love—all this is wanting. Once more, as with the other teachers, it is effort of which we are told, not newness of life by faith.

We must now pass, however, to the great crisis in Luther's spiritual history, which taught him—that he also might teach others—the vital principle of Freedom by Faith. His earlier life has been passed in review, with its various influences for good or for evil ; we have followed him, as he took the plunge into monastic life, and have watched his futile struggling with sin, and his despairing attempt to make himself perfect before God ; we have seen the slow dawning of the light, and the gathering together of various forces and factors that were making for his emancipation. Now we are on the verge of the crisis that was to determine immense issues for himself and his fellow-men.

II

THE GREAT RELIGIOUS EMANCIPATION, AND ITS WITNESS

I. THE RELIGIOUS EMANCIPATION OF LUTHER, AND THE CHALLENGE

ONE of the events that helped to quicken Luther's nascent faith, in this case almost forcing it to a more decisive self-assertion, was an official visit that he paid to Rome in 1511. There were certain matters in dispute concerning the Augustinian convents and their administration, which were referred to Rome for settlement, and Luther was appointed, with another monk, to carry out the negotiations. He does not seem to have taken any active part in the affair, leaving this to his colleague ; but the visit to the Holy City filled him, in anticipation, with wondering joy. When they arrived, after a slow pilgrimage, within sight of Rome, he threw himself on the ground, and burst into a cry of almost adoring salutation. But there came a speedy disenchantment, as he went from one holy place to another, drinking in at first, greedily enough, what was told him regarding various relics and other delusions. Luther soon found that he was only laughed at and despised for his innocent credulity ; nor for this alone, but on account of his real and earnest piety, a thing which was quite out of date among the

notables of the Neo-Paganism of a revived classical culture, and their retainers. The very mysteries of his religion, he found, were ridiculed, even while they were being performed, and this by their appointed guardians and administrators, who sometimes flouted them with shocking blasphemy. As for morals, they were scarcely in being; nor can this be wondered at, when it is remembered that the infamies of the Borgia family had but lately been in the ascendant.

Notwithstanding the shock of these revelations, Luther still tried to hold fast to his belief in the pretensions of the priesthood, and continued to pay homage to the claims that Rome made upon the faith of its devotees. This, however, could not last long. According to the story which his son Paul remembered being told, by Luther himself, in his childhood, when the weary and disheartened monk was one day ascending, on bare knees, the stone steps of the Scala Santa, or Holy Staircase, up which so many generations of pilgrims had toiled, that they might win merit; in the midst of his painful climbing, so symbolical of the protracted struggles of the foregoing years, he seemed to hear a Voice, re-echoing the words that had thrilled his soul some two or three years before at Wittenberg, and again at Bologna on his way to Rome, 'The just shall live by faith,' and at once, rising to his feet, he walked down quietly, a free man. All his life he had been toiling upward to win merit, never attaining, never seeing the sky. Even after he had begun to learn that man's merit was nothing, that the merit of Christ was everything; that only as man disowns his poor, false merit, and is willing to trust in the merit of Christ, as alone sufficing for his salvation,

is there any hope—while the light was thus slowly dawning, he had yet endeavoured to find a place for this new conviction among the confessions and absolutions, the penances and indulgences, to which he had been accustomed from his youth. Nor was he yet wholly free from these entanglements. The encasement of superstition broke slowly away. But he returned from Rome with the central conviction at last fully formed, and prepared to teach it to others as the chief doctrine of grace.

The following year, 1512, Luther took up the duties of his full professorship at Wittenberg. He is now Doctor of Theology, qualified and authorised to teach, not only the 'Sentences,' but all other theological lore, holding at the same time the post of sub-prior at the Augustinian Convent. Whatever might become of the 'Sentences,' he set himself at once to make the Bible the groundwork of his teaching. To this he was bound by the vow that he had taken on qualification for the post; and, though this vow was usually more honoured in the breach than in the observance, the Bible being almost utterly neglected, in the classes as well as in the religious life of the people generally, Luther rejoiced to be bound by such a vow, and from that time, like Wesley afterwards, was 'a man of one book.'

As we have already seen, Luther lectured first on the Psalms, then on Romans, and the year following on Galatians. He was thus already anticipating his life-work, while following the bent of his new experience. Where are to be found such manuals of spiritual freedom as those three, which now became his intimates? His spiritual instinct was guiding him

aright, and was itself becoming stronger and truer by the exercise. The Psalms, with their spacious horizon, and the way open upwards to God, must have been to him a large and wealthy place, where he heard the Voice that holds converse with man in the cool evening of life's feverish day. In Romans, as we know, he expatiated among the rich experiences of Paul; and in Galatians those same experiences were vividly presented in their intensest individual expression.

D'Aubigné, in his 'History of the Reformation,' thus describes the revolution in Luther's spiritual experience, which had come to its climax at Rome, and which was being continually intensified by his study of the Pauline testimony. "Luther had profoundly studied the Epistle to the Romans, and yet the doctrine of Justification by Faith there taught had never appeared so clear to him. Now he comprehends that righteousness which alone can stand before God; now he receives for himself from the hand of Christ that obedience which God of His free gift imputes to the sinner, as soon as he raises his eyes with humility to the crucified Son of Man. This was the decisive epoch of Luther's inner life. That faith which had saved him from the terrors of death became the very soul of his theology, his stronghold in every danger; the principle which gave energy to his preaching and strength to his charity; the foundation of his peace, the encouragement to his labours, his comfort in life and in death." But, as D'Aubigné goes on to say, "From the period of his oath, Luther no longer sought the truth for himself alone; he sought it also for the Church. Still full of the recollections of Rome, he saw confusedly before him a path in which he had promised

to walk with all the energy of his soul. The spiritual life that had hitherto been manifested only within him now extended itself without. This was the third epoch of his development. His entrance into the cloister had turned his thoughts towards God; the knowledge of the remission of sins and of the righteousness of faith had emancipated his soul; his doctor's oath gave him that baptism of fire by which he became a Reformer of the Church."

In the 'Argument' prefixed to the Commentary on Galatians, Luther unveils what must have been his own personal experience at that time. To quote from the old English translation elsewhere referred to:—
"Wherefore the afflicted and troubled conscience hath no remedy against desperation and eternal death, unless it take hold of the forgiveness of sins by grace, freely offered in Christ Jesus, that is to say, this passive righteousness of faith, or Christian righteousness. Which if it can apprehend, then may it be at quiet, and boldly say: I seek not this active or working righteousness, although I know that I ought to have it, and also to fulfil it. But be it so that I had it, and did fulfil it indeed; yet notwithstanding I cannot trust unto it, neither dare I set it against the judgment of God. Thus I abandon myself from all active righteousness, both of mine own and of God's law, and embrace only that passive righteousness, which is the righteousness of grace, mercy, and forgiveness of sins. Briefly, I rest only upon that righteousness which is the righteousness of Christ and of the Holy Ghost."

It may often jar upon the reader to find Luther uttering such seemingly disparaging things about works, and the law, as though actual righteousness

were of no account, and only the righteousness of imputation, through faith in Christ, were worth considering. Nor can it be denied that, in his zeal for the truth to which he had been brought by his own painful experience, namely, that not all the works which man may force himself to do, not the most specious righteousness which he may thus seem to attain, can avail to justify him in God's sight, much less to win merit from God, Luther does sometimes speak unguardedly and with exaggerated emphasis. Yet in his main contention he is perfectly right. The works of which Luther speaks are worthless for the purpose of making man right with God. For not only is the guilty past quite unatoned for, when all these things are done, but, as regards their present value, they are vitiated by their forced character, and constitute, at the best, but a superficial and affected righteousness. On the other hand, when man frankly acknowledges his helplessness and unworth, casts himself on God's mercy, takes his stand on the guarantee of Christ's Sacrifice, and dares to call God his Father—then, his heart overflowing with grateful love, he goes forward, having no thought of merit, but simply constrained by the wonder of redeeming grace, to fulfil all righteousness.

This was the teaching of Paul long before, as of Wesley afterwards; a teaching, in each case, as in Luther's, wrought out by the struggles which showed all the earlier quest to have been futile and vain. But, neither in these instances, nor in the case of Luther, was there the least tendency to encourage laxity of character or slackening of devotion. That this was far away from Luther's thought might be proved by

numberless quotations. It will suffice just now, however, to turn to the concluding words of the 'Argument' to Galatians from which we have already quoted. "When I have this righteousness reigning in my heart, I come forth into another kingdom, and I do good works, how and whensoever occasion is offered. If I be a Minister of the Word, I preach, I comfort the broken-hearted, I administer the Sacraments. If I be a householder, I govern my house and my family, I bring up my children in the knowledge and fear of God. If I be a magistrate, the charge that is given me from above I diligently execute. If I be a servant, I do my master's business faithfully. To conclude, whosoever he be that is assuredly persuaded that Christ is his righteousness, doth not only cheerfully and gladly work well in his vocation, but also submitteth himself through love to the magistrates and to their laws, yea, though they be severe, sharp, and cruel ; and (if necessity do so require) to all manner of burdens, and to all dangers of this present life, because he knoweth that this is the will of God, and that obedience pleaseth Him." Surely this is a sufficient answer to any misgiving as regards Luther's moral earnestness, and at the same time a vindication of the Ethic of the Gospel.

Besides the swift reaction upon Luther's personal faith occasioned by his visit to Rome, there came, about six years later, when, by quietly pursuing his work, he had established his position at Wittenberg, the great provocation and challenge of the shameless Sale of Indulgences, brought at last, by Tetzels vulgar auctioneering, almost to Luther's very door. It is not necessary to enter at any length into the details

of this oft-told story. Theoretically, one who had confessed to the priest and received absolution was thereby forgiven his sins in the sight of God. But there might yet be need for the imposition of penance, to make him right in the sight of the church, and also to secure him against the pains of purgatory. All this need, however, might be met in other ways; as, by payment for special masses to be said, by some great act of devotion, or by a generous response to some appeal of the Church for funds. Leo X had lately made such an appeal, for the building of St. Peter's at Rome. This appeal, so far as Germany was concerned, was farmed out to the notorious Albert, Archbishop of Mayence and Magdeburg. By him it had been mortgaged to the money-lenders of the house of Fugger, at Augsburg. The profligate monk Tetzl acted as a sort of agent for that house; nominally, as sub-commissioner for the Archbishop.

“Contemporaries have described the lofty and well-ordered pomp with which such a commissioner entered on the performance of his exalted duties. Priests, monks, and magistrates, schoolmasters and scholars, men, women, and children, went forth in procession to meet him, with songs and ringing of bells, with flags and torches. They entered the church together amidst the pealing of the organ. In the middle of the church, before the altar, was erected a large red cross, hung with a silken banner which bore the Papal arms. Before the cross was placed a large iron chest to receive the money; specimens of these chests are still shown in many places. Daily, by sermons, hymns, processions round the cross, and other means of attraction, the people were invited and

urged to embrace this incomparable offer of salvation. It was arranged that auricular confession should be taken wholesale. The main object was the payment, in return for which the 'contrite' sinners received a letter of indulgence from the commissioner, who, with a significant reference to the absolute power granted to himself, promised them complete absolution and the good opinion of their fellow-men." (Köstlin, *Life of Luther*, Translated from the German: Longmans, Green, and Co.)

We need follow the discreditable story no further. Even any fine-spun theory that might be put forward to excuse or extenuate falls shattered before the indisputable facts that Pope and Archbishop, to say nothing of the despicable Tetzl, cared nothing for righteousness, everything for money; that, practically, encouragement was proffered to profligates to condone alike past and future crimes, if only they would pay; and that the stump-orators of the cause played brutally on the tender feelings of the devout, as they urged them to buy the souls of their departed from the flames.

At last Luther could bear the provocation no longer. His own people were being beguiled—for he was now practically chief pastor and preacher of Wittenberg, as well as Professor and Sub-Prior. The arousal of his soul by the unholy traffic in sacred things, while it almost completed his own disentanglement from the last shreds of superstition, made him resolute to save from the snare those who were under his influence, as well as to deliver his testimony to the world. On October 31, 1517, he nailed to the Wittenberg church door the famous Ninety-Five Theses, in which he

challenged the whole evil system which had thus wantonly assumed the aggressive.

The occasion served as a great opportunity for the proclamation to the world of the newly discovered gospel doctrine of Justification by Faith. Luther cancels the word 'penance' from the vocabulary of the Christian faith, showing that its seeming synonym, 'repentance,' has a very different meaning. In Thesis 27 he turns fiercely on the indulgence mongers. "They preach mere human follies, who maintain, that as soon as the money rattles in the strong box, the soul flies out of purgatory." In Thesis 36 he declares, "Every Christian who truly repents of his sins enjoys an entire remission both of the penalty and of the guilt." In 62, "The true and precious treasure of the Church is the Holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God." In 94, "We should exhort Christians to diligence in following Christ, their Head, through crosses, death, and hell." And in 95, "For it is far better to enter into the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation, than to acquire a carnal security by the consolations of a false peace." (See 'Luther's Primary Works,' by Wace and Buchheim: Hodder and Stoughton.)

"In less than fourteen days," says a contemporary writer, "these Theses were read through every part of Germany; and ere four weeks had elapsed, they had overspread the whole of Christendom, as if the angels of heaven had been the messengers to exhibit them to universal gaze."

As D'Aubigné says, "It was evident that whoever had this faith in the remission of sins; whoever had this repentance, this conversion, and this sanctification,

would escape from the toils and swaddling bands of Rome, and would acquire the liberty of the children of God."

Luther himself had found liberty. It must henceforth be his mission to proclaim the same enfranchisement to others. Thus we are brought to the consideration of his further testimony to the freedom with which Christ makes free.

II. THE WITNESS RESULTING FROM THE GREAT RELIGIOUS EMANCIPATION

Luther's career henceforth was to be one perpetual witness-bearing to the truth which had become his very life. But, as the emancipation in his case, notwithstanding the occurrence of crises at intervals, had been gradual, so the testimony of the after years had been in part anticipated.

I. THE WITNESS OF THE WITTENBERG PULPIT.

Almost from the beginning of his connection with Wittenberg, Luther had been preaching ; at first in the convent, then in the little chapel belonging to it, and then in the old parish church. Just as his classes were crowded, sometimes with as many as four hundred students, so the church was thronged with eager hearers. Together with numbers of University doctors and others, there were more than two thousand young people, children, and servants present, to whom he devoted his attention. He preached incessantly, Sundays and weekdays.

We should expect that in his sermons especially he would be always explaining and urging the one way

of salvation through faith in Christ, and the works of love that properly follow. One of his sermons is entitled, 'The Methods and Fruits of Justification' (Gal. iv. 1-7). He speaks of the text as touching 'the very pith of Paul's chief doctrine.' Very pertinently he distinguishes between works and the worker, saying that it is man who is either justified or condemned, not works. Therefore no work can be acceptable to God, if the worker himself is not first accepted. "Men judge the worker by the works; God judges the works by the worker."

Luther clearly reverses the order that he had been following in the years of his bondage. "Nothing is necessary in order to accomplish good works, but justification; he that hath attained justification performs good works, and not any other."

Referring to the derision with which many greeted his message concerning the necessity of faith, as though he implied that they were 'Turks' or 'heathen,' he convicts them of ignorance regarding the true nature of faith, which is not belief, or orthodoxy, but personal trust in a personal, living, present Saviour. This, however, was the prevalent mistake of the Church generally in those times; it is the common tendency of ecclesiasticism at all times. At a much later date, when Lutheranism had fallen largely into the same mistake, Schleiermacher, in his 'Reden,' said that the commonest error is the confusion of religion with intellectual knowledge, or with morality. "Religion is, for you, at one time a way of thinking, a faith, a peculiar way of contemplating the world; at another it is a way of acting, a special kind of conduct and character." The characteristic Ethic of Christianity,

therefore, of which the mainspring, the vital force, is the living faith that Luther at last found, needs to be restated and re-enforced from time to time, as the very consolidation of religion tends to imperil it.

The text serves well to illustrate the radical difference between works done for the sake of merit, and works done for love's sake. The one are the works of the bondservant, the other those of the child.

On the doctrine of Christian assurance, or the witness of the Spirit, Luther speaks out strongly. "Now, if the Father give us His Spirit, He will make us His true sons and heirs, that we may with confidence cry, Abba, Father! How can it therefore be that our hearts should not hear this cry and testimony of the Spirit?" (See, for full report of this sermon, 'The World's Great Sermons,' Vol. I: Funk and Wagnalls.)

Such was the preaching of the Wittenberg pulpit through all the years.

2. 'CONCERNING THE FREEDOM OF A CHRISTIAN MAN.'

Small as they were, the three Tractates published in 1520—'The Address to the German Nobility,' 'The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,' and 'The Freedom of a Christian Man'—were of incalculable value and influence, running their course swiftly among the people, and firing the imagination with those great principles of the Reformation which Luther made it the business of his life to proclaim.

Leaving aside the first and second, which concern, respectively, the Papal system as related to the nation, and the sacramental doctrine of the Roman Church,

we must give careful attention to the third, which is regarded as one of the most important expositions of the Christian Ethic in existence. If it should sometimes strike the reader as obvious, or perhaps even commonplace, it must be remembered that this is the fate of works of a pioneer character: the truths that seem familiar, or obvious, have become familiar through the instrumentality of what now wears a commonplace aspect.

Luther's '*Von der freyheyt eynes Christen menschen*'—to give the orthography of the original 1520 edition—is prefaced by a dedicatory letter to Jerome Mulphordt, Provost of Zwickaw, 'my particular friend and patron.' This 'discreet and wise' friend he commends for his love of Holy Scripture, saying that it is to himself 'a special pleasure to learn where the divine truth is beloved,' the more so, as there are many who 'repudiate its claim, withstanding it with all strength and craft.' "Therefore," he concludes, "have I desired to initiate our acquaintance and friendship by dedicating to you this treatise and sermon, which in its Latin form I have dedicated to the pope; thereby, as I hope, showing, for every one's benefit, not inadequate cause for my teaching and writing concerning the papacy."

The German version has a more directly spiritual bearing and intention, and the 'freedom' which it expounds is primarily the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, namely, liberty from the guilt, the bondage, and the power of sin. The internal evidence would seem to show that the German tractate was the original, though perhaps it was held back till the amplified and adapted Latin version had been sent to the Pope.

Was this latter by Justus Jonas, like the Latin version of the Prologue to Romans?

The tractate is divided, somewhat informally, into thirty sections.

(1) Luther begins by laying down two propositions:—
“A Christian man is a free lord over all things, and in subjection to no one; A Christian man is a bond-servant of all things, and in subjection to every one.”
He supports these statements by 1 Cor. ix. 19; Rom. xiii. 8.

(2) We are reminded that man is of a twofold nature, bodily and spiritual, so that what is said of him (as in Scripture) may be true in one sense, not in another.

(3) No outward circumstances can make man spiritually either free or unfree.

(4) Ecclesiastical conditions, therefore, may indeed make ‘spirituals,’ not spiritual men.

(5) The only real spiritual provision for man is the Gospel.

(6) The Gospel brings us to nought, as regards deservings, that it may present Christ to our faith.

(7) It should, therefore, be our constant care to cherish the Gospel, as revealing Christ, and to cherish a true faith in Christ, the only Saviour. For this faith brings all wealth of blessing, and a fulfilling of the law of righteousness.

(8) Why then are the commandments given, if faith alone suffices to make righteous? That we may learn our inward sinfulness, and our natural impotence for good.

(9) When this lesson has been learnt, then are we ready to receive the offer of Christ, and His proffered

salvation ; then are we prepared to learn the true righteousness by faith.

(10) By faith we become united to Christ, so that the life, and strength, and virtue of Christ pass into our heart and life, possessing us wholly. This is Christian freedom, when the painful effort for righteousness is done away, and true righteousness springs from a living faith in Christ.

(11) By faith we do God the greatest honour possible, trusting wholly to His faithfulness. In return, God honours our faith, and accounts it to us for righteousness. This is our justification.

(12) Faith unites us with Christ, as a bride with her bridegroom, 'for better, for worse.' We participate in His sufferings, and in the power of His resurrection ; He participates in our sorrows and joys.

(13) We see, then, why so much is ascribed to faith, for it fulfils the first commandment, 'Thou shalt honour thy God.' This carries with it the fulfilment of all other commandments, whereas the works of effort are dead things, neither honouring God, nor profiting man.

(14) Christ, the true Firstborn, is our King and Priest. He is King of truth, wisdom, peace, joy, salvation, having under His control all other good. As Priest, He ever lives to make intercession.

(15) Christ shares His 'firstborn' rights with His people ; they are kings and priests unto God. Theirs is a true lordship, or mastery, all things working for their good, and ministering to their freedom.

(16) Theirs is also a true priesthood, for they are entitled to appear before God, and to intercede for others. Through his kingship man prevails over all things ; through his priesthood he prevails with God.

(17) But, if all Christians are priests, what is a Christian Ministry? "The Scripture allows no other distinction, than that it calls the instructed or consecrated ones, *ministros, servos, oconomos*; that is, servants, thralls, stewards, who should, to the rest, preach Christ, faith, and Christian freedom."

(18) Hence we learn that merely to preach about Christ is not enough; Christ should be so preached, that a living faith springs up in the heart. This faith holds Christ dear, and dares all for His sake.

(19) Thus much having been said positively of the spiritual life, it is necessary to answer objections, as, for example, to say why, if faith is all-sufficient, good works may not be discarded altogether. If man were only spiritual, living merely his own inward life, there might be some force in the question. But, as was said in the beginning, "A Christian man is a serving thrall, and subject to every one. Alike, where he is free, he need do nothing; where he is a thrall, he must do all sorts of things."

(20) To explain more fully, man is living a bodily life, and is in constant relation with other men. Therefore the Christian, besides the hidden life in Christ, has an outward life to live; he must control his body, and live rightly towards other people.

(21) Not thus, however, does man become religious, or accepted with God. It is faith alone that justifies us before God; it is faith alone that purifies the soul, filling it with God's perfect love, and making it wishful also 'that every man, with itself, loved and praised God.'

(22) To illustrate, the Christian man may be compared to what unfallen man might have become in Paradise. Man was already, by his innocency, living

in God's favour, and needed only to serve God in love. Similarly, when he is newly created in Christ Jesus, and living in the Paradise of God's perfect love, he needs only to follow the promptings of that love, and all his works are good.

(23) Therefore it may be said twofoldly, with equal truth: "Good religious works never make a good religious man; but a good religious man makes good religious works." And conversely. Thus everything, for good or for evil, depends on the person. The good tree will bring forth good fruit. Let the person, then, or character, be made right through faith, and the life will be right.

(24) But without faith, the person cannot be made good. Works, of themselves, are only artificially connected with the person, whereas they should spring from the person's renewed life.

(25) All this explains sufficiently, why in one sense we must repudiate works, while in another sense they may not be repudiated. They are, not a cause, but a consequence of true goodness.

(26) The above is true, not only of man's duty towards himself, in the mastery and proper use of his own bodily nature; but also of his relations to others, of his duty to his fellow-men. In short, we ought to serve one another in love, even as Christ, for love of all, became servant of all.

(27) The Christian man, then, may well be content with his faith, which gives him all that is in Christ, and constrains him, loving as Christ loved, to live for others as Christ lived.

(28) All such service is obviously the service of perfect freedom; even as Christ was free, and yet, in

free love, gave Himself for all mankind. We submit, like Christ, to restrictions for the sake of others ; like Him, and for His sake, we render ourselves in sacrifice, and yet are free.

(29) Hence we may readily distinguish between true works and false works. Those are false, which have, as their motive, any thought of self-aggrandisement, any thought of attaining merit before God ; those are true, which are wrought in love, the love that seeketh not its own.

(30) In conclusion, the Christian man lives, not in himself, but in Christ, and for others. " Behold, this is the genuine, spiritual, Christian freedom, which makes the heart free from all sins, laws, and commandments ; which excels all other freedom, as the heaven the earth. Which may God grant us truly to understand and maintain ! Amen."

It is unnecessary to trace the essential elements of the Christian Ethic through the details of this great argument. They shine conspicuous in all its course, almost in every sentence. Grace, faith, the abounding joy of faith, and an abounding love, working itself out in loving service, all for Christ's dear sake—this was surely a message worth recovering from the accretions of age-long superstition, worth proclaiming to a world that else must die in its wickedness.

3. LUTHER'S NEW TESTAMENT.

Perhaps Luther's supreme testimony to his fellow-countrymen was his gift of the Scriptures, in their own German tongue, and especially of that New Testament, in whose teachings he himself had found his spiritual freedom.

There were many pre-Lutheran German Bibles. The German, however, in which they were rendered was not such as the people, at least in Luther's time, either spoke or properly understood, and the translation was not from the original, but from the Vulgate. It is one distinguishing merit of Luther's Bible, that not only was the translation based on the original, but its language was the language, used in common daily life, of those that needed it the most, 'the common people.' Or, to speak more precisely, whereas the local German dialects differed greatly, and not one of them was of any commanding importance, Luther, partly by adopting a common German, as distinct from the dialects, and partly by giving it a vigorously idiomatic style of his own, made it, by his Bible, the inheritance of his fellow-countrymen.

It was in the latter part of 1521, while Luther was under friendly detention at the Wartburg, that he set to work on the New Testament, and, though working carefully, yet pursued the work so earnestly, that the translation was completed in three months, and by September 1522 it was published.

Accompanying the text was a series of Prefaces, or Prologues, to the several books. Most of these were very slight, but there was one of such exceptional importance, wrought hot from Luther's recent struggles, that it claims special attention. It was translated into Latin by Luther's friend and henchman, Justus Jonas, who frequently rendered such service to Luther and Melancthon. Further particulars concerning it will be found in the third part of the present work, in connection with the great crisis in Wesley's experience. As is there stated, it is given

complete in the Appendix, together with the tractate on 'Freedom' lately considered.

This PROLOGUE TO ROMANS consists of two parts the one an introductory account of the leading ideas of the Epistle, and the other a series of brief summaries of the contents of the chapters.

The first part is an interpretation of the words Law, Sin, Grace, Faith, Righteousness, Flesh, and Spirit, as used by the Apostle.

Luther well says that *Law* is not to be taken merely as meaning definite and rigid commands, but is to be interpreted as God's claim on the conscience generally. The illumination of the soul, as regards right and duty, is intended, by whatever means it may be conveyed. But the all-important consideration is that the Law, as thus understood, is not literalistic; it is wholly spiritual, concerning mainly the motives of the heart. A good motive, constituting a good work, involves the heart's love for the right, which makes the fulfilment of duty joyous and free. "So now accustom thyself to the statement, that doing the work of the law is a very different thing from fulfilling the law."

If the Law is so spiritual, so searching, it inevitably reveals man's *Sin*. By Sin is meant, "not only the outward work in the body, but all the activity that is astir with it, namely, the motive of the heart. Note also that the little word 'do' should mean, when man altogether plunges and is carried away into sin. For no mere outward work is in question, if man is quite carried away, with body and soul. And Scripture especially looks into the heart, and on the root and main source of all sin, which is unbelief in the innermost heart."

By *Grace*, and the gifts of grace, are meant the favour of God, or His merciful goodness, and the bestowal of Christ as a Saviour, with all the attendant gifts of the Spirit. The Grace that prompts the bestowal of the gifts is one and indivisible, unlike the gifts themselves, which are not altogether fulfilled in us, so long as the conflict with our evil nature lasts. But the grace, or favour, of God, into which we come by faith, remains inviolable, so long as we truly believe.

Faith is to be carefully distinguished from mere belief, or opinion, which may be ever so orthodox, and yet have no power over sin. Faith is operative, it is practical, it is an energy, by which our whole being becomes transformed. Faith, therefore, though entirely different from 'works' of effort or merit, is nevertheless a living principle that must always 'work.' Works that are truly 'good' belong to a true faith, as inevitably as brightness and glow belong to fire. Such faith is inwrought by the Spirit.

Righteousness, then, is the result (not the reward) of faith. But, though it is man's privilege, and wrought in man, it is God's righteousness, and this in a twofold sense. God counts man's faith for righteousness, as being a steadfast belief in the grace of God that brings salvation; and He works, through man's faith, the effectual operation of the same grace, constraining man to give God glory, and to every man his due.

By the *Flesh* is meant, not merely the bodily nature of man, with its appetites and desires, but "the whole man, his body and soul, his understanding and all his mind; for the reason that it all lives and moves in him according to the flesh." Thus (Gal. v. 20) even heresy and hate are called fleshly works.

In like manner, *Spirit*, as used in this connection, does not denote merely immaterial states or activities, for he may be acting spiritually "who is occupied with the most outward kind of works, as Christ, when He washed the disciples' feet." The word 'spiritual' properly "signifies one who lives and works, inwardly and outwardly, in a way that serves the interests of the spirit and of the future life."

The main principles of practical Christianity, that is, of Christianity as an ethical force, being here set forth fully, there is no need to follow Luther in his further synopsis of the Epistle. It is enough to point out, once more, that the distinctive Ethic of the Gospel is manifest throughout this treatment of the leading ideas of the Epistle, and to refer to the full text of the Prologue (see Appendix) for further illustration of the same in the subsequent brief exegesis.

4. THE COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS.

As we have already noticed, Luther published the results of his lectures on Galatians in 1519; but in 1535 he published the maturer work, known as the Major Commentary, the other being the Minor.

When dealing hereafter with the coincident crisis in the spiritual experience of the Wesleys, we shall have to consider at large the great saying which helped them so much, through Luther's interpretation. Referring to that part of our study for such further detail, some of it peculiarly impressive, and abundantly illustrative of our general argument, in connection with the saying (Gal. ii. 20) that meant so much to Paul, Luther, and the Wesleys alike, we may here deal briefly with other parts of Luther's noble exposition.

Lightfoot, in his Commentary on Galatians, pays a generous tribute to Luther. "No man had a higher claim to a hearing on such a subject; for no man was ever better fitted by the sympathy of like experiences to appreciate the character and teaching of St. Paul." And Dr. Beet says, "In spite of the immense progress since his day in exact New Testament scholarship, and in spite of some blemishes, it is yet my deliberate judgment, that, for the purpose for which the Epistle was written, and for its chief practical worth now, Luther has caught and reproduced the inmost thought of St. Paul more richly than has any other writer, ancient or modern. The Reformer's disposition and history and surroundings placed him in sympathy with the Apostle to a degree which no mere scholarship can reach. His Commentary on Galatians has therefore an interest which can never pass away."

The quotations that follow are from Irmischer's edition of the dual Commentary, Major and Minor, though the interest of the Minor is now mainly historical and personal.

Of *Grace*, Luther says (i. 3): "These two terms, grace and peace, comprise the whole of Christianity. Grace remits sin, peace gives a quiet conscience. Nevertheless peace of conscience can never be had, unless sin is remitted. Sin, however, is not remitted on account of the fulfilment of the law, because no one satisfies the law; but the law rather makes sin manifest, accuses and terrifies conscience, declares the wrath of God, and drives men to despair." Again (i. 4), "The question is, how we may obtain remission of sins? Paul answers, that the Man who is called

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gave Himself up for our sins. These are magnificent and consolatory words, and are according to the promise of the ancient law, that our sins are taken away by no other means, than through the Son of God given up to death." Of the same *Salvation by Grace* he goes on to say : " This then is the chief knowledge and true wisdom of the Christian, that Christ was given up to death, not on account of our righteousness or holiness, but on account of our sins, which are real, great, many, indeed, infinite and invincible. Therefore do not feign that they are small, such as may be done away by thy 'works.' Neither despair on account of their greatness, when sometimes thou feelest them seriously. But learn here from Paul to believe, that, not for feigned or imagined sins, but for real ; not for small, but for the greatest ; not for one and another, but for all ; not for the vanquished (for no man, no angel even, can conquer the very least sin), but for sins invincible, Christ was given up. And, unless thou art found in the number of those who say, ' for our sins ' ; that is, who hold this doctrine of faith, who teach it, hearken to it, learn it, love it, and believe it ; then plainly there is no salvation for thee (*de salute tua actum est*)."

Concerning *Assurance*, or the Witness of the Spirit, Luther says (iv. 6) : " The Holy Spirit is sent, through the Word, into the hearts of believers. That is done, when, through the audible word, we receive glow and light, whereby we are made different and new men, whereby new judgment, new feelings and impulses, arise in us. That change and newness of judgment is not the work of human reason or virtue, but the gift and effect of the Holy Spirit, who comes with the

preaching of the Word, who purifies our hearts by faith, and brings forth in us spiritual impulses." And again, "Paul might have said, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, 'calling,' Abba, Father! But he says advisedly 'crying,' referring to the temptation of the Christian, who as yet is weak, and believes weakly. In Romans viii. 26 he calls this cry, 'inexpressible groaning.' It is, however, the veriest consolation, that Paul here says that the Spirit of Christ is sent by God into our hearts to 'cry,' Abba, Father! Whoever should assuredly believe this, would not fail in any affliction, however great." (Luther's suggestive distinction is between 'invocantem' and 'clamantem.')

Of the spiritual *Freedom* which is born of this Divine Assurance, Luther says (v. 1):—"That freedom wherewith Christ has made us free, is not from any human servitude, but from eternal wrath. Where? In the region of conscience. It is that most true and inestimable freedom, compared with whose magnitude and majesty all other freedom is but a drop or a speck. For who can tell forth how great a thing it is, when any one can assuredly settle it in his heart, that God neither is nor ever will be wrathful, but that to all eternity He will be a favourable and gracious Father for Christ's sake?" And again, "Paul uses significant and emphatic words, which are to be carefully pondered. 'Stand fast,' he says, 'in that freedom wherewith Christ has made us free.' Therefore that freedom comes not on account of the law, or of our own righteousness, but is given us freely for Christ's sake. He alone interposes between us and the evils which press upon us, He conquers them and carries them away,

so that they cannot any more oppress us and condemn. Instead of sin and death, He gives us righteousness and eternal life, and thus changes the servitude and terrors of the law into freedom of conscience and Gospel consolation, saying, 'Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee' (Matt. ix. 2)."

Once more, speaking of the life of *Perfect Love* which follows from such joyous inspiration, Luther remarks (v. 22, 23) :—" He does not say the 'works' (*opera*) of the Spirit, as of the flesh, but adorns these Christian virtues with a worthier appellation; calling them 'fruits' (*fructus*) of the Spirit. For they are of greatest use and fruitfulness, since those who are dowered with them give glory to God, and by means of the same allure others to the teaching and faith of Christ." Again, after expatiating on these fruits of the Spirit, he says, " There is, indeed, a law, but not against such. So he says elsewhere (1 Tim. i. 9), ' Law is not laid down for a righteous man.' For so does a righteous man live, as not to need any law to warn, to urge, to compel ; but, without any compulsion of law, he does spontaneously what the law requires. So a Christian fulfils the law inwardly by faith ; for Christ is the perfecting of the law unto righteousness to every one that believes, apart from works, and by remission of sins." And again, as the conclusion of the whole matter (v. 25) : " For where the Spirit is, it renews men, it brings forth in them new impulses ; that is, from being boastful, wrathful, envious, etc., it makes them humble, mild, patient, etc. Such seek not their own glory, but God's ; they do not provoke and envy one another, but each gives place to each, and in honour they prefer one another."

MELANCHTHON.

It may be convenient, in thus parting with Luther's more express doctrinal and ethical testimony, to compare that of his friend and lieutenant, Melanchthon, whose second edition of the *Loci* was published in 1535, the year of Luther's Major Commentary on Galatians. (The first edition had been published in 1521, two years after the Minor Galatians.)

In the Section, *De Justificatione et Fide*, Melanchthon says :—" We are justified, therefore, when, being put to death by the law, we are raised by the word of grace, which is promised in Christ, if only, when the Gospel forgives our sins, we also cleave to it by faith, nothing doubting that Christ's righteousness is our righteousness, that Christ's satisfaction is our expiation, that Christ's resurrection is ours. In short, nothing doubting, that our sins are forgiven, and that God is now favourable and well pleased. Not any, therefore, of our works, however good they may either seem or actually be, are righteousness ; but only FAITH, with respect to the mercy and grace of God in Jesus Christ, is RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Proceeding to the Section, *De Fidei Efficacia*, he says :—" Now this also is to be observed, that works, as being fruits, are thus indications, evidences, signs of the Spirit, as Christ says (Matt. vii. 16), ' By their fruits ye shall know them.' For it cannot be, that hypocrisy be for ever dissembled, and faith cannot but pour itself out, by eagerly serving God in all His creatures, as a loyal son is wont to serve a loyal father (*ut pio patri pius filius solet*). For, where by faith we have tasted the mercy of God, and have known the Divine goodness through the word of the Gospel,

which forgives sins, and promises grace to the sinner, the soul cannot but love God again exultingly, and, so to speak, testify its gratitude for so great mercy by some kindness in return. For Paul has said most significantly, 'By faith we cry, Abba, Father!' Now, because such a disposition surrenders itself truly to God, ambition, jealousy, spite, envy, avarice, indulgences, and the fruits of these things, are killed. It occupies itself with things that are lowly; it hates itself; it abominates all its lusts; and, as Paul says most fittingly to the Romans (vi. 21): 'We are now ashamed of the things which formerly we enjoyed.' Therefore faith pours itself out on its neighbours (*Effundit ergo se in proximos quosque*), whoever they be, does them service, yields itself for their use, regards their necessity as its own, behaves in all things towards all candidly, sincerely, in nothing ambitiously, in nothing malignantly. This is the efficacy of faith, so that from these fruits it may easily appear in whose hearts there is true faith."

And he passes thus to the Section, *De Caritate et Spe*:—"From these things it is seen, in what way the love of God and the love of one's neighbour are born of faith. For the knowledge of the Divine mercy brings it to pass, that God is loved in return; brings it to pass also, that we freely surrender ourselves to all creatures—which is, the love of our neighbour."

Melanchthon, the scholar and philosopher of the Reformation, whose work above quoted is of classical importance, presents in these extracts a very noble Ethic, not slavishly imitative of Luther, but independently loyal to the same Gospel of Freedom, and guarded carefully against all peril of degeneracy into licence.

(The quotations are from the edition of the 'Loci Communes' by Plitt and Kolde.)

5. THE LUTHERAN HYMNODY.

Just as the Advent itself was attended by an outburst of song, the new rapture of the soul finding expression in lyric praise, so was the Lutheran emancipation, and so too was the Methodist revival of religion, accompanied by the reawakening of holy song. The ritual and rule of ecclesiasticism may utter themselves in the monotony of chanting, but the freedom of the Gospel must express itself freely, must soar higher, and take a wider and more various flight. Luther himself was a hymnist; like Wesley, he was a skilful reviser of hymns; and again, like Wesley, he was skilful in adapting popular melodies to the new songs of joy.

Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott is one of the hymns that can never die. Like, however, the Psalm of which it is a paraphrase, and like Watts's paraphrase of the ninetieth Psalm, it is of general, even national, character. The characteristic hymns of experimental religion are individual rather than general, uttering forth individual experience. No hymns are comparable in this respect with Charles Wesley's, as regards both quality and number. But the few original hymns that Luther wrote were from the soul, throbbing with its new life; and such songs of the soul, springing to the lips of those that had experienced the same rapture, became the glorious heritage of German Christianity. The name of Gerhardt, to give but one instance of those who caught the Luther inspiration, is an imperishable glory.

After a partial reformation of public worship in 1524, when congregations became more actively participant in the service, and when their mother tongue became a vehicle for the expression of prayer and praise, there followed, in 1526, a reform that was carried out more fully, especially at Wittenberg—for no interference was attempted, Luther trusting to suggestion and advice, rather than to command. From that time, gradually, the old Latin chanting, by priests and choirs, gave way to hearty congregational singing in the vernacular; while of course the Bible was read in the same language, and in that language the living Gospel was preached.

The first evangelical hymn-book appeared in 1524, with only 8 hymns, 4 by Luther. Another, the same year, contained 25, 18 by Luther. Thus the succession continued, the last *Geystliche Lieder* in Luther's lifetime containing 101 hymns, 35 being by Luther. This was almost the total number of hymns that were composed by Luther, and of these 11 are translations from Latin sources, in whole or in part, 4 are revised and enlarged from Pre-Reformation popular hymns, 13 are Biblical paraphrases, only 8 are (mainly) original.

Luther's service to the new hymnody must be judged, not by the bulk of his own personal contribution, but by the stimulus and inspiration which he gave.

His first real hymn for congregational use, *Nun freut euch, Christen insgemein*, was written in 1523, the year after his New Testament appeared, and three years after his pamphlet on 'Freedom' was sent to run its burning course among the people. The hymn

was published in 1524, in the *Etlich Christlich Lieder*, Wittenberg: It was in ten verses, and was entitled, 'A Christian Hymn of Dr. Martin Luther, setting forth the unspeakable grace of God, and the true faith.' It was soon in full popular use.

Interesting particulars, respecting German hymnody in general, and Luther's special relation to the same, will be found in Julian's 'Dictionary of Hymnology.' A good edition of Luther's Hymns is published by David Nutt, of London. From this is reproduced, in the Appendix, the hymn above referred to, in modern form.

Seven of the ten verses of this hymn, forming a complete hymn in themselves, are here presented, in what has been attempted as a free but faithful paraphrase. They are given in the metre of the original.

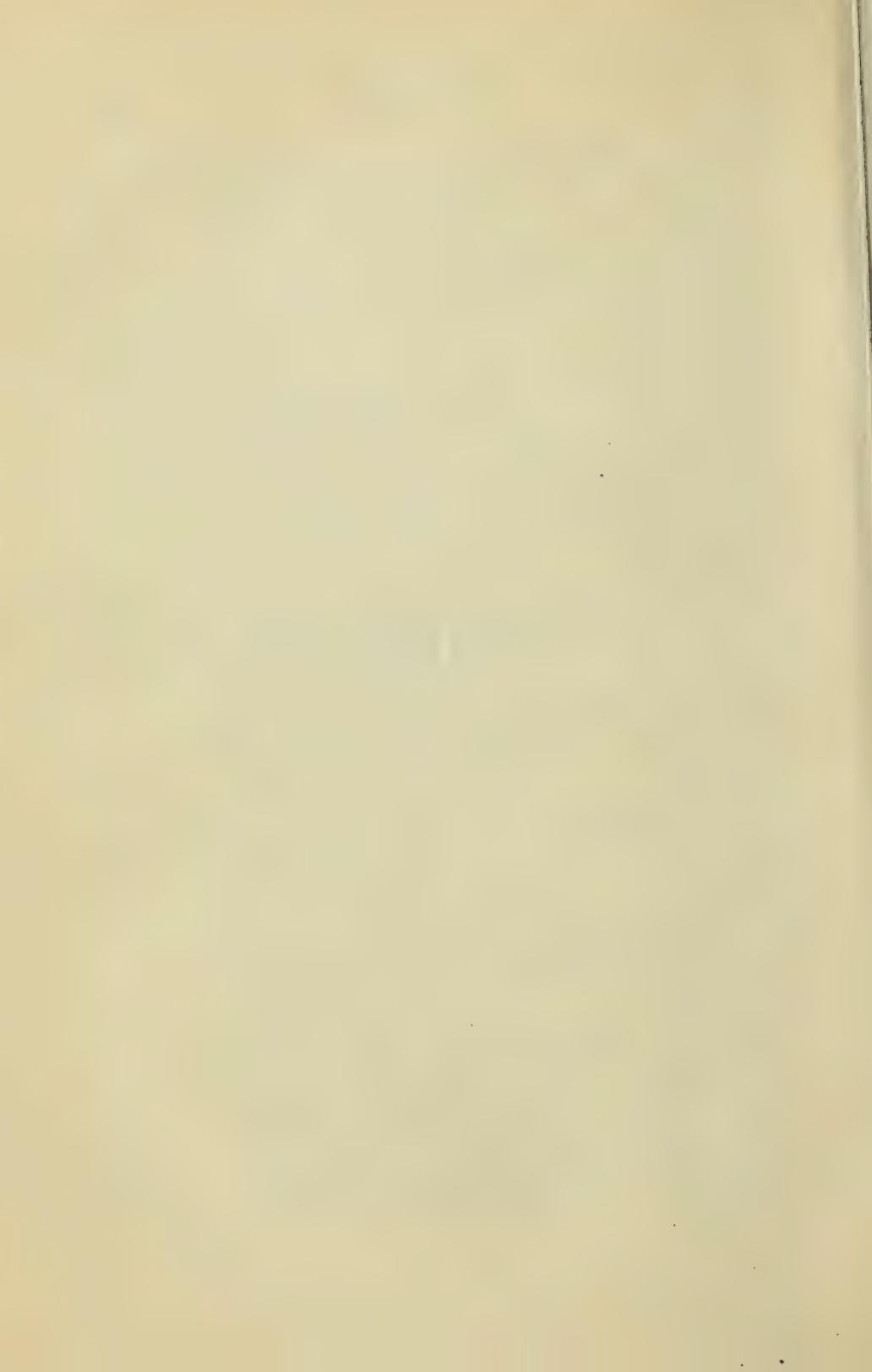
GRACE

- 1 Now joy ye, Christians, won from thrall,
 And let us leap for gladness,
 That we with courage, one and all,
 May sing, love chasing sadness,
 What God for us hath strangely wrought,
 And lavished all His sweetest thought;
 For dearly hath it cost Him.

- 2 The devil's captive long I lay,
 Only death's darkness seeing;
 My sin did plague me night and day,
 Therein I had my being.
 I ever sank the deeper down,
 Evil's black flood my life did drown:
 My soul was sin's possession.

- 3 All my good works were nothing worth,
They were but my undoing ;
My soul, as hating God from birth,
Was evil still pursuing.
My torment drove me to despair,
Death closed me round to slay me there ;
Hell only did await me.
- 4 The Eternal God, He looked on me,
And pitied all my anguish ;
He could not brook my misery,
Nor leave me thus to languish.
He turned to me His Father Heart ;
And, that He might assuage my smart,
Sent me His Sole-Begotten.
- 6 Hastened the Son with willing feet.
He came to earth to save me ;
Born of a Virgin, pure and sweet,
A Brother's love He gave me.
Veiling His strength in humble guise,
He sojourned here all lowly-wise,
Our captor to lead captive.
- 7 He spake me thus : ' Hold fast to Me,
Thy wrongs shall soon be righted ;
I give My very Self for thee,
For thee My Life is plighted.
For I am thine, and thou art Mine,
Close round My Love thy faith shall twine ;
Our troth no Foe shall sever.
- 10 Whatever I have done and taught,
Be thou still doing, teaching ;
Therewith God's kingdom shall be brought
In praise to hearts beseeching.
But guard thee well from man's device,
Lest the rich treasure lose its price,
Which I trust to thy keeping.'

WESLEY



I

SOME PREPARATORY CONDITIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF WESLEY

JOHN WESLEY'S wonderful 'Journal,' besides being a record of almost unparalleled religious activity, and a transcript of the life of the English people, for the greater part of a century, such as is nowhere else to be found, may also be called the autobiography of an intimate spiritual experience, presented so fully and frankly, as to constitute it a rich mine for study on the part of those who would learn the secret of joyous spiritual freedom, resulting in self-forgetting devotion to the service of man and the glory of God. It begins on Oct. 14, 1735. Oxford Methodism was on the move. John and Charles Wesley, with two comrades, sailed down the Thames to Gravesend, with some others, who there took leave of the little party. Wesley says, "Our end in leaving our native country was not to avoid want, God having given us plenty of temporal blessings, nor to gain riches or honour, which we trust He will ever enable us to look on as no other than dung and dross, but singly this—to save our souls, to live wholly to the glory of God." At present his horizon was circumscribed. A few years later, and for the rest of his long life, he was actuated by an insatiable yearning for the salvation of his fellow-men. But a true instinct taught him that, until he himself

was right, he was not likely to do much towards helping others to become right. His sojourn in America was a part of the discipline that was to teach him his own helplessness, and thus prepare him for God's better way. He had been trying for years to save his soul; he was still trying; he might try for ever, and be no nearer than at the beginning. It was the old history repeating itself—salvation by effort. His utter failure left him ready to learn, like Paul, like Luther, that salvation is of grace, through faith.

To understand the nature of the crisis at which Wesley had arrived when the 'Journal' begins, we must go back some years. He came of a strangely blended lineage. His grandfather, the first John Wesley (or Westley), and his great-grandfather, Bartholomew, were Puritans holding appointment in the Anglican Church, who were among the ejected 2,000 of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662. The wife of the first John Wesley was daughter of a celebrated Puritan, John White, the Patriarch of Dorchester. Wesley's grandfather on his mother's side was another distinguished Puritan, Samuel Annesley, whose wife was daughter of another John White, an eminent Puritan lawyer. Though the father and mother of the Wesleys, deriving from such an ancestry, became convinced and ardent Anglicans, yet there probably remained a subconscious instinct and sympathy on the side of Puritanism, more especially in the case of John Wesley, which goes far to explain the strange dualism of his character. To the very end he tried to believe that he was a loyal Churchman, though he certainly was not regarded as such by the bishops and clergy. Loyal he was, in theory; practically

he was a great Nonconformist. His guiding principle was that, whatever church prejudice had to give way, if souls were to be saved, give way it must and should ; and thus he went on his course, casting aside one regulation or custom after another, until at last he had become, unwittingly, the founder under God of an evangelical church, which, in all its branches and offshoots, taken throughout the world, is larger than the Anglicanism from which, in some sort, it has sprung ; though indeed the vast majority of converts, in the early days, had never had any actual connection at all with the Church of England. All this, however, though necessary to be borne in mind for a due appreciation of Wesley's spiritual history, lies aside, in itself, from our main purpose.

John Wesley was born into the world at Epworth, of which place his father was rector, in 1703 ; his brother Charles between four and five years later. The father, Samuel Wesley, was eccentric, but clever, and entirely devoted to his duty ; the mother, Susanna, was one of the noblest, as she was one of the most remarkable, women the world has ever known. The home training, though of Spartan strictness, was essentially kind, and, for intellectual stimulus, as well as for moral and religious care and culture, has seldom been equalled, and never surpassed. The numerous children were nearly all highly gifted and accomplished, and two of them perhaps made a deeper mark on the world's history than any other two Englishmen of that century. John's school life at the Charterhouse, and his university career at Oxford, were one continued triumph. At the age of 24 he took his Master's degree, having been elected Fellow of Lincoln the previous year.

He was a brilliant scholar, a popular wit and conversationalist, a genial comrade, and withal had kept his life unstained in an age when this was a great rarity. But, from about the time of his election to the Fellowship, he came much more decidedly under the influence of religion.

Richard Green, in his invaluable booklet, 'The Conversion of John Wesley,' speaks thus of those early days :—" We read that he entered the University 'a gay, sprightly, and virtuous youth.' That he applied himself with scrupulous diligence to his studies cannot be doubted, for it was evidenced in the rapid progress he made in learning ; but there are no traces of spiritual growth. It would not have been surprising had his frail bark been touched by the outer circles of that maelstrom of frivolity then to be found in Oxford University society. Thrown for the first time into such surroundings, it would have been quite a natural consequence had the inexperienced youth been drawn within its influence. But there were other influences at work ; Epworth was a counter-attractive force to Oxford. The careful training of past years, supplemented by wise counsels from the pen of his honoured father, and equally wise, if more gentle, words from that mother who had never loosed her hold upon his heart, would have held him back, if he had been disposed to yield to the many siren voices around him. There is no record of anything beyond an occasional game of cards, a little private acting, an occasional hunt, a participation in a friendly festivity, and a light-hearted versifying and correspondence with 'Varanese' (Betty Kirkham) and 'Aspasia' (Mrs. Pendarves). But there is not the

slightest hint of any departure from the path of the strictest morality. He was too poor to join in roustering feasts, had his habitual temperance failed to defend him against all such indulgence. In his private diary of this period, he writes with his usual severity of self-condemnation."

But we may continue in Wesley's own words, written after he had passed through the great experience of May 24, 1738, and taking retrospect of his life up to that time. The account is of classic importance for our subject. He says of those eighteen long preparatory years, more than comparable with the corresponding period of Luther's life, and perhaps equally critical in importance for the future of religion in the world:—"Being removed to the University for five years, I still said my prayers both in public and in private, and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and for the most part very contentedly, in some or other known sin: indeed, with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had; unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call repentance. When I was about twenty-two, my father pressed me to enter into holy orders. At the same time, the providence of God directing me to KEMPIS's 'Christian Pattern,' I began to see, that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our

thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis for being too strict. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before; and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at, and pray for, inward holiness. So that now, 'doing so much, and living so good a life,' I doubted not but I was a good Christian. Removing soon after to another College [Lincoln, on his election as Fellow], I executed a resolution which I was before convinced was of the utmost importance—shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins. I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with MR. LAW'S 'Christian Perfection' and 'Serious Call,' although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that everything appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying Him, as I had never done before. And by my continued endeavour to keep His whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded that I should be accepted of Him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

In 1730 I began visiting the prisons ; assisting the poor and sick in town ; and doing what other good I could, by my presence or my little fortune, to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessaries of life. I soon became a by-word for so doing, and I rejoiced that my name was cast out as evil. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday Fasts, commonly observed in the ancient Church ; tasting no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any further. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful ; I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good ; I for that reason suffered evil. And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing His will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprised, not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that ‘ other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid ’ by God, ‘ even Christ Jesus.’ ”

Wesley continues this retrospect of his life of effort, through the remaining time of his fifteen years at Oxford, and his two years in Georgia, until his return to England. It was all of the same character : the utmost devotion of effort, but no joy, no freedom, no success in his work. Yet the preparation for deliverance

was going on apace. During the outward voyage he was brought for the first time into contact with the Moravians, twenty-six of whom were on board, and was much struck with their simple and cheerful piety. They were happy in the storms that threatened to wreck the ship, and sang praise to God, while he was greatly afraid to die. In Georgia, although his high-church principles compelled him to treat the Moravians as heretics, and repel them from the Lord's Table, he was nevertheless glad to avail himself of their fellowship and to seek their advice. Having become conversant with German in their company, he translated into English some of the best of the German hymns, rich in evangelical piety. There is nothing superior, for sustained grandeur of thought and diction, in our language. Both by this close familiarity with the best German hymnody, and under the influence of the Moravian Christians (inheritors, it is interesting to remember, through Hus, of the Wycliffe tradition), Wesley was being gradually taught the true evangelical doctrine, though it had not yet taken hold of his heart.

In the remarkable summing up of the results of his brief Georgian ministry, he says, "This, then, have I learned in the ends of the earth—that I am 'fallen short of the glory of God': that . . . 'having the sentence of death in my heart,' and having nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope, but that of being justified freely, 'through the redemption that is in Jesus'; I have no hope, but that, if I seek, I shall find Christ, and 'be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' The faith I want is 'a sure trust and confidence

in God, that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God.' I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans: that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, 'I live not; but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it; for whosoever hath it is 'freed from sin': he is freed from doubt, having the 'love of God shed abroad' in his heart, 'through the Holy Ghost which is given' unto him; which 'Spirit itself beareth witness' with his spirit that he is a child of God."

All this is essentially true, though, along with the above, Wesley uses some expressions about himself which are exaggerated in their condemnation, and which he afterwards disowns. At this we need not wonder, considering the tremendous strain of all the years, the seemingly utter failure of his mission to America, and the ignominy of his flight, brought about through the conscientiously stubborn literalism of his religion of the rubrics. But in one main respect his diagnosis is true. The spiritual ethic of his experience hitherto had been altogether inverted. He had been trying to force himself to a righteousness that had for its aim the favour of God, instead of finding that favour freely by faith in Christ, a faith that would work a joyful righteousness.

Before we proceed further in this inquiry into the course of Wesley's religious experience—so singularly parallel thus far, in all essentials, with the experience

of Luther, and, so far as we can trace it, with that of the Apostle Paul—it will be well to examine, as in those other cases, the extent to which Wesley may have been influenced by traditional, and also by more or less contemporary, spiritual and ethical teaching, beyond what has already come before our notice. It is interesting to find that, of the recognised ethical teachers of ancient philosophy, and also of Christian times, including a long list of English names, more than a score are mentioned in Wesley's 'Journal' and other works. This indicates that, though his was a keenly logical rather than a profoundly philosophical mind, he was quite alert in his outlook on the world of philosophic thought, especially in regard to everything that bore on conscience and duty.

In Sermon 70 (1 Cor. xiv. 20), on 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered,' he says, "If reason could have produced a hope full of immortality in any child of man, it might have produced it in that great man whom Justin Martyr scruples not to call 'a Christian before Christ.' For who that was not favoured with the written Word of God ever excelled, yea, or equalled, SOCRATES? In what other heathen can we find so strong an understanding, joined with so consummate virtue?"

On Dec. 17, 1736 ('Fifth Savannah Journal'), he records in his cipher Diary, that he read PLATO before expounding to the Germans. The Editor of the 'Journal' surmises that this may have been suggested by the second morning lesson for the day, recording the visit of Paul to Athens. Again, in the Preface to his treatise on 'Original Sin,' he remarks, "Nor can Christian philosophy, whatever be thought of the

Pagan, be more properly defined than in Plato's word: It is *θεραπεία ψυχῆς*, 'the only true method of healing a distempered soul.' "

Strangely enough, considering his greater affinity of mind with that philosopher, ARISTOTLE is mentioned but twice, namely, in the 'Journal,' Nov. 5, 1787, where he speaks of him as a universal genius; and in a small tract on 'Natural Philosophy.' But with Aristotle's philosophy the accomplished Oxford Fellow, Greek Lecturer, and Moderator of the Classes, would be sure to be conversant.

The STOICS are referred to several times in 'Thoughts upon Necessity,' as 'men of great renown, and some of the ablest disputants in the world'; by whom that doctrine was 'earnestly espoused and vehemently maintained'; also, as having imputed 'the evil that is in the world, either to the original stubbornness of matter, to the concatenation of causes and effects, or to unconquerable fate.'

In the work on 'Original Sin,' SENECA is brought forward as a witness: *Omnia in omnibus vitia sunt* ('All vices are in all men').

To AUGUSTINE there are many references. In Sermon 63, and again in 85 (Phil. ii. 12, 13), he refers to "that well known saying of St. Austin (one of the noblest he ever uttered), *Qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salvabit nos sine nobis* ('He that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves')." Again, in Sermon 68 there is an interesting reference: "Yea, I would not affirm, that the arch-heretic of the fifth century (as plentifully as he has been bespattered for many ages) was not one of the holiest men of that age, not excepting St. Augustine himself. I verily

believe the real heresy of Pelagius was neither more nor less than this—the holding that Christians may, by the grace of God (not without it; that I take to be a mere slander), ‘go on to perfection’; or, in other words, ‘fulfil the law of Christ.’” He quotes Augustine many times in the tract on ‘A Roman Catechism’; also in ‘Popery Calmly Considered,’ ‘A Predestinarian and his Friend,’ and ‘Thoughts upon Necessity.’ There is also a long quotation from the ‘Confessions,’ in Letter 39, very striking, and most pertinent to our purpose, in which Augustine magnifies the grace of God, beginning, *Intravi in intima mea, duce te*; and continuing, *O aeterna Veritas! Tu es Deus meus!* (See Lib. 7, cap. 10.) In connection with the same name, he refers also to Aquinas, ‘a more vehement defender of the decrees than Augustine.’

These and other references show that Wesley was familiar with the most notable works bearing, even remotely, on the great questions that had so exercised his mind. Knowledge of truth, virtue, duty, freedom of the will, the chief good, grace, faith—these and other problems of experience he fought his way through, in full acquaintance, sooner or later, with what others had thought and said. On all this material, as well as upon his own painful experience, all in the light of New Testament teaching, and of what he heard from living witnesses, he was continually turning the trained scrutiny of one of the acutest intellects of that day. His mind was eminently critical; at Oxford he was a renowned logician and disputant; therefore it was no ill-balanced and over-susceptible soul that experienced the momentous change shortly to be described, but one whose mental instincts and habits

of thought would have been regarded as certain to protect him from a mere emotional self-delusion.

Let us, however, consider still further, in this connection, Wesley's references to some of the principal English writers on ethical subjects. In so doing, we shall anticipate, quoting from the range of after years as well as from the earlier. This, indeed, we have done already. But the judgments of his older years are only a confirmation of the knowledge and habit of the earlier time. At the age of 83 ('Journal,' May 11, 1786), we find him reading BACON'S 'Ten Centuries of Experiments' (*Sylva Sylvarum*) on a journey; again (Nov. 5, 1787), likening Bacon to Aristotle as a universal genius. The same opinion he expresses some three days later, in 'Thoughts on Genius'; and in the Introduction to his 'Compendium of Natural Philosophy' (in 5 vols.) he says, "After the revival of learning, as all other branches of philosophy, so this in particular, received new light. And none was more serviceable herein than Lord Bacon; who, well understanding the defects of the school philosophy, incited all lovers of natural philosophy to a diligent search into natural history. And he himself led them the way, by many experiments and observations." This indicates sufficiently that Wesley's logic was not merely that of the schools, though he wielded a brilliant dialectic, but a logic of careful observation and induction. It was this that he applied so constantly in the earnest inquiry of his own spiritual quest, and afterwards in his intimate dealings with multitudes of people, in the matter of spiritual experience, during the course of his long life. So that his conclusions come to us, not only as those of a singularly well-equipped mind,

arguing deductively from accepted premisses, but tested by the experiments, in a wide field of investigation, of more than half a century.

In the pages from which the last quotation is taken, it may be remarked that we find a similarly significant, though brief, allusion to Bacon's equally great predecessor, ROGER BACON.

To GROTIUS there is a reference in the 'Letter to Dr. Middleton,' confuting that writer's 'Free Inquiry'; and again in Letter 461, to Joseph Benson. But he does not mention the moral theory of Grotius, in connection with the *Jus Naturale* on which it turns.

HOBBS is mentioned once (Sermon 70, 'The Case of Reason Considered'), and it is evident that his materialistic philosophy was familiar to Wesley. He had asked in the course of his sermon, "What if that saying of a great man be really true—*Post mortem nihil est; ipsaque mors nihil* ('After death there is nothing; and death itself is nothing')?" And he says later, "How was the case with that great admirer of reason, the author of the maxim above cited? I mean the famous Mr. Hobbes. None will deny that he had a strong understanding. But did it produce in him a full and satisfactory conviction of an invisible world? Did it open the eyes of his understanding, to see 'Beyond the bounds of this diurnal sphere'? O no! far from it. His dying words ought never to be forgotten. 'Where are you going, Sir?' said one of his friends. He answered, 'I am taking a leap in the dark,' and died."

Cudworth, More, and Cumberland are passed over; but there are several references to LOCKE. In his

'Journal,' May 29, 1745, Wesley quotes a letter that he had received from the notable James Erskine, referring to Locke's doctrine of 'the association of ideas.' On Dec. 6, 1756, he says, "I began reading to our preachers the late Bishop of Cork's [Dr. Peter Browne] excellent 'Treatise on Human Understanding,' in most points far clearer and more judicious than Mr. Locke's, as well as designed to advance a better cause." On April 28, 1781, he prepared an elaborate investigation of Locke's great work 'On the Human Understanding,' which appeared in his 'Magazine'; an instance of the care with which he sought to inform and educate his people, and a striking testimony to their willingness to attempt the study of subjects that must have taxed pretty severely the untrained mind. This account of Locke's philosophy we find was completed a month later, while he was still on his travels. In the earlier part of his article he had said, "For some days I have employed myself on the road in reading Mr. Locke's 'Essay on Human Understanding,' and I do not wonder at its having gone through so many editions in so short a time. For what comparison is there between this deep, solid, weighty treatise, and the lively, glittering trifle of Baron Montesquieu? As much as between tinsel and gold; between glass beads and diamonds. A deep fear of God, and reverence for His Word, are discernible throughout the whole; and, though there are some mistakes, yet these are abundantly compensated by many curious and useful reflections." He goes on to deal with the question of innate principles, and of the origin of ideas, but remarks, "The operations of the mind are more accurately divided by Aristotle

than by Mr. Locke." Wesley's criticism is carried on in detail, and is very searching, but he concludes: "From a careful consideration of this whole work, I conclude that, together with several mistakes (but none of them of any great importance), it contains many excellent truths, proposed in a clear and strong manner, by a great master both of reasoning and language."

On May 22, 1775, Wesley writes, "Between Limerick and Castlebar I read over the famous controversy between Drs. CLARKE and LEIBNITZ. In sentiment he [Leibnitz] is a thorough fatalist, maintaining roundly, and without reserve, that God has absolutely decreed from all eternity whatever is done in time; and that no creature can do more good or less evil than God has peremptorily decreed." We might think Leibnitz treated very unsympathetically in this drastic condemnation, especially considering the grandeur of his whole scheme of philosophy, and notably the dignity which he assigns to man. But Wesley's acute insight into a defect of which Leibnitz himself was not conscious is justified by the criticism, sympathetic indeed, but frankly impartial, of one of the ablest thinkers of our time. Eucken says, in his 'Problem of Human Life' (by Hough and Gibson: Fisher Unwin), "The treatment of the problem of will is a striking illustration of the extent to which a philosopher can deceive himself as to the nature of his own teaching. Leibnitz is keenly opposed to determinism. He wants to demonstrate—and thinks he has demonstrated—the truth of freedom: he transforms the whole psychical life into a mechanism of the intellect." The controversy between Samuel

Clarke and Leibnitz concerned the reality of space and time, affirmed by Clarke, disputed by Leibnitz.

To Clarke, who for a quarter of a century was regarded as the foremost English metaphysician, Wesley refers again, but only in passing (Letter 167). He refers also to Clarke's contemporary, SHAFTESBURY (who grounded his moral philosophy, not on reason, like Clarke, but on man's social affections), as 'another lively, half-thinking writer' (March 5, 1769). This is practically the verdict of a modern critic (Sidgwick, 'History of Ethics': Macmillan):—"The ethical optimism of Shaftesbury, being rather broadly impressive than exactly reasoned, and being connected with a natural theology that implied the Christian scheme to be superfluous—and hinted it to be worse—challenged attack equally from orthodox divines and from infidel pessimists."

Even MANDEVILLE'S 'Fable of the Bees' receives attention from this indefatigable student of everything bearing, however remotely, on his business as a shepherd of souls. "Till now I imagined there had never appeared in the world such a book as the works of Machiavel. But De Mandeville goes far beyond it. The Italian only recommends a few vices, as useful to some particular men, and on some particular occasions. But the Englishman loves and cordially recommends vice of every kind; not only as useful now and then, but as absolutely necessary at all times for all communities! Surely Voltaire could hardly have said so much; and even Mr. Sandeman could not have said more." ('Journal,' April 14, 1756.)

The great BISHOP BUTLER, whose 'Analogy of Religion' and 'Sermons on Human Nature' were of

such immense consequence to Christian belief and ethical thought in this country, is mentioned twice only, by name, with brief but appreciative reference to the 'Analogy.' Strangely enough, the 'Sermons' are not referred to, though their thorough vindication of the supremacy of conscience, their distinction between true self-love and other impulses and affections, especially benevolence, and their careful induction from observed facts, give Butler a great place in our list of ethical writers. Is there any connection between this comparative silence on Wesley's part and a momentous interview which took place between him and Butler, then Bishop of Bristol, begun Aug. 16 and ended Aug. 18, in the year 1739? This, however, will fall to be considered later.

We have not quite completed our survey of the ethical, or quasi-ethical, thought with which Wesley was familiar, there remaining a few moral philosophers, more or less contemporary, who were of somewhat later date than Butler. As in the other instances, his opinions, gathered from the long course of his literary activity, take us forward a considerable distance beyond the point at which we have arrived in tracing his religious experience, and to which we must shortly return. This does not materially affect our main object in the present part of the inquiry, namely, to show that Wesley was always fully aware of all that had been said, either for or against his chief positions, and that, having once arrived at his convictions, not only in theory, but by an experience won through much struggle and pain, an experience which had so utterly changed his life, he did not swerve from them through all the years that followed.

To HUTCHESON, and his identification of virtue with benevolence, more especially to that aspect of his theory which led him to regard religious motive or sanction as altogether annulling virtue, Wesley makes extended reference. Already in the Georgian period (May 7, 1737) his Diary informs us that, on a walk to and from a village, he read an 'Account of Hutcheson's Works.' On Nov. 22, 1756, he says, "I read with the preachers this week the 'Abridgment of Mr. Hutcheson's Works,' wherein the abridgers have expressed, with surprising exactness, not only his sense, but his very spirit. But, in truth, I cannot admire either; nay, I admire his hypothesis less and less." He refers to the completion of this study on July 31, 1758. Long afterwards (Dec. 17, 1772) he writes: "In my way to Luton I read Mr. Hutcheson's 'Essay on the Passions.' He is a beautiful writer, but his scheme cannot stand, unless the Bible falls. I know, both from Scripture, reason, and experience, that this picture of man is not drawn from the life. It is not true that no man is capable of malice, or delight in giving pain; much less that every man is virtuous, and remains so as long as he lives; nor does the Scripture allow that any action is good which is done without any design to please God." In Sermon 90 he devotes considerable attention to a treatise by Hutcheson on the 'Original of our Idea of Virtue'; also in Sermon 105, 'On Conscience,' to his 'Essay on the Passions.' He returns to him in Sermons 106, 114, and 123, always in condemnation of his special theory of virtue, as necessarily leaving God out of account.

It was not to be expected that HUME, with his scheme of artificial virtues, due to a supposed compact of

society, and justified merely by their tendency to promote happiness, would find much favour. He is referred to, rather contemptuously, on May 5, 1772, being set on a far lower level than BEATTIE (with a reference to BERKELEY); even as previously (March 5, 1769) he had been contrasted with CAMPBELL. He is referred to several times in the Sermons, as for example in Sermon 123, 'On the Deceitfulness of the Human Heart,' where Wesley asks, "Did Mr. David Hume know the heart of man? No more than a worm or a beetle does." Certainly Wesley's field of observation was much wider than Hume's.

Adam Smith, with his theory of moral sympathy, is not mentioned, but HARTLEY has extended notice. His associational theory was not likely to be approved. In 'Thoughts upon Necessity' Wesley deals at large with the philosophy, frankly materialistic, which reduces all mental and moral processes alike to medullary vibrations. In 'A Thought on Necessity' Wesley returns to the attack.

PRICE, the intuitionist, is honoured with a whole treatise, 'Some Observations on Liberty,' but with regard to his political rather than his moral philosophy.

Finally, REID is barely mentioned, not very appreciatively. As Wesley read the 'Inquiry into the Human Mind' on a journey from Arbroath to East Haven (May 31, 1774), he might not be able to do it justice. Reid's other works were published later, the one that deals with morals, 'Essays on the Active Powers of Man,' only three years before Wesley's death.

Other factors, entering much more immediately into the complex of Wesley's experience, as leading

up to the decisive crisis of 1738, are associated with the names of Hooker, Pearson, and Jeremy Taylor, three glories of the Church of England; with the Homilies of that Church; and with the name of Henry Scougal, a young philosophical mystic of the Church of Scotland.

It is remarkable that there is no reference anywhere to that master thinker, majestic beyond any, unless it were Milton, in the 'roll and rhythm' of his English prose, RICHARD HOOKER. For it is almost a certainty that Wesley must have been well acquainted, not only with Hooker's masterpiece, 'Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,' but with his great Sermon on 'Justification.' There were parts of both that might well have appealed to Wesley's heart, only that they are so wrapped up, as to be almost lost, in the learned controversy that absorbed Hooker's mind. Here is a saying, however, with the life-blood beating warm, from the very heart of the ponderous sermon (the quotation is taken from Andrew Crook's folio edition of the complete works, 1666):—"The cause of life spiritual in us is Christ dwelling in the soul of man. Wherefore, if we have read that the Spirit is our life, or the Word our life, or Christ our life, we are in every of these to understand that our life is Christ, by the hearing of the Gospel, apprehended as a Saviour, and assented unto through the power of the Holy Ghost. 'He that hath the Son hath life,' saith St. John, 'and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' Because, as Christ being raised from the dead died no more, death hath no more power over Him; so justified man, being allied to God in Jesus Christ our Lord, doth as necessarily from that time forward

always live, as Christ, by whom he hath life, liveth always."

To PEARSON'S historic work, 'On the Creed,' Wesley makes several references. As showing again how carefully he trained his preachers, he says on Feb. 23, 1749, being at Kingswood, "My design was to have as many of our preachers here during the Lent as could possibly be spared; and to read lectures to them every day, as I did to my pupils in Oxford. I had seventeen of them in all. These I divided into two classes, and read to one Bishop Pearson 'On the Creed,' to the other Aldrich's 'Logic,' and to both, 'Rules for Action and Utterance.' In 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,' he gives lengthy quotations from Pearson ('a man no ways inferior to Chrysostom'), in vindication of his own teaching on the subject of the soul's renewal. These quotations he repeats in his 'Letter to the Bishop of Gloucester,' as 'the words of as learned and orthodox a divine as ever England bred.' When we remember, however, that Pearson elaborates his explanation of the 'Credo' ('I believe'), to prove that faith is an 'Assent to what is Credible,' we can understand Wesley writing some years later (Letter 535), when pressed on the matter, "Bishop Pearson's definition is abundantly too wide for the faith of which we are speaking." Pearson as a theological teacher he admired; as a spiritual guide, he can hardly have been of much help in Wesley's earlier years.

The case was different with regard to Pearson's contemporary, JEREMY TAYLOR. Wesley's very habit of diary-keeping he owed to a practical suggestion in the 'Rules of Holy Living.' This manual of piety,

followed by Thomas à Kempis, Law, and afterwards Scougal, started him on the more serious pursuit of religion. Being very much struck with Taylor's views on purity of intention, he says, "Instantly I resolved to dedicate to God all my thoughts and words and actions." But he was not yet on the right track for the discovery of a free and joyous salvation. Writing to his mother in 1730, he says of Taylor, "What I so much like is his account of the pardon of sins, which is the clearest I ever met with." As an illustration of this clearness, he goes on to say, thus revealing unwittingly the cardinal error which cost him so much, but quoting Taylor, "'Pardon of sins, in the Gospel, is sanctification.'" Five years earlier he had written to the same counsellor, who herself, however, was not yet qualified to advise on this subject: "In treating of repentance he [Taylor] says, 'Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not; therefore be sorrowful for ever having sinned.'" However, there was this result of Jeremy Taylor's influence, that, as Wesley tells us in his 'Plain Account of Christian Perfection,' when he first read Taylor on 'Holy Living and Dying,' then Kempis's 'Christian Pattern,' and then Law's 'Christian Perfection' and 'Serious Call,' he determined to be no half-Christian, but 'to be all devoted to God, to give Him all my soul, my body, and my substance.'

Not as yet, with all this help, had Wesley a glimpse of the way of salvation by grace through faith, nor had he learned the secret of a new heart and a renewed life. It was still salvation by effort, an effort after righteousness, instead of righteousness as the result of salvation. Forgiveness by sanctification was what

he was seeking, rather than sanctification as the outcome of a joyful assurance of free forgiveness. Nor as yet was faith the living faith of personal trust; it was only Pearson's 'Credo,' the mind's assent to truth.

To quote again from Richard Green ('The Conversion of John Wesley') :—“ On the first day of January, 1733, Wesley preached a sermon in St. Mary's, Oxford, before the University. Thirty years later he said that it contained all he taught at the latter period concerning salvation from all sin, and loving God with an undivided heart. In the sermon he defines faith as an unshaken assent to all that God hath revealed in Scripture, and in particular to those important truths, ' Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners ' ; ' He bare our sins in His own body on the tree ' ; ' He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' ' An unshaken assent ! ' Beyond this he had not penetrated. But, when he came to publish this sermon some years later, he added the following remarkable passage : Not only an unshaken assent, but likewise the revelation of Christ in our hearts ; a divine evidence or conviction of His love, His free, unmerited love to me, a sinner ; a sure confidence in His pardoning mercy, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost ; a confidence whereby every true believer is enabled to bear witness, ' I know that my Redeemer liveth ; that I have an Advocate with the Father, and that Jesus Christ the Righteous is my Lord, and the propitiation for *my* sins. I know He hath loved *me*. He hath reconciled me, even me, to God ; and I have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness

of sins.'” This Sermon was published in 1748, as the first in the second volume of the Standard Sermons to be noticed later. The alterations then made, quoted above, are strikingly significant of the essential difference between the two periods of Wesley's experience. In the former period, he had groped his way to the ethics of religion; the great, the all-transfiguring Ethic of Christianity had not dawned on his vision.

With WILLIAM LAW, Wesley became personally acquainted, and with his works he was, as we have seen, intimately familiar. KEMPIS's 'Christian Pattern,' which had long been his close companion, he retranslated, and published in 1735; also an 'Extract' in 1741. All these works he continued to approve, and praise, as multitudinous references testify; but though, like the others mentioned above, they served to deepen, more and more, in his Oxford days, the sense of a necessity for inward religion, yet they did not help to its attainment, but rather assumed it as already begun, and needing only to be carried forward to perfection. The germinal principle was probably regarded as already secured by the sacramental system of the Church; of any vital change, to be wrought in the heart through contrite faith, Wesley did not learn from these teachers.

On Feb. 23, 1736, Wesley tells us, in his private Diary, that he began to read SCUGAL's 'Life of God in the Soul of Man' to one who had caused him much anxiety on the voyage to Georgia. Several years afterwards he published the treatise in pamphlet form, and later still he included six 'Discourses on Important Subjects' in Vol. 45 of his 'Christian

Library.' Scougal's mystical piety had greatly attracted the Wesleys at Oxford, and continued to influence the Methodist movement. Scougal, however, who seems to have been born into the new life, in a godly home, and amid gracious influences, almost from infancy, and knew nothing of such struggles as Paul, Luther, and Wesley passed through, was not, with all his beauty of life and of teaching, any more likely to help the stricken soul out of darkness into light, nor to teach the secret of that joyful assurance of God's pardoning love, which became the living power in the experience and ministry of those apostolic men, than were the German mystics able to afford such help in Luther's day, or the English mystical and other divines in Wesley's quest for spiritual freedom and power.

But there was one work, which, through its clear teaching on this question, should have been of immense service in the time of anxious inquiry, only that, for some reason, he did not recognise its significance, in that respect, till the truth was already dawning on his mind. This was the HOMILIES, prepared by the English Reformers under the guidance of Cranmer, but not published till 1547. Mary, on her accession, ordered the destruction of the book, but it was revived under Elizabeth, and four or five years later the second book was published. In 1632 they were united in one volume. The 11th Article declares, "That we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification." There is none with that title, but the reference is undoubtedly to the 'Homily of Salvation,' which is full of the doctrine

of Justification by Faith. May we venture to think that in this Homily we have echoes of Luther's Prologue to Romans, transmitted by Tyndale's Prologue? Very soon after Wesley's deliverance, he published 'The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works, Extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England.' Those Homilies had been a silent witness through all the years. Why was there no one to urge their testimony on the earnest young souls at Oxford? We need not make quotations from the Homilies, nor trace the numerous references in Wesley's 'Works.' It must suffice to quote his testimony to their value, though so late, in his own experience. "The book which, next to the Holy Scripture, was of the greatest use to them," he says, referring to himself and his fellow-inquirers, "in settling their judgment as to the grand point of justification by faith, was the Book of Homilies. They were never clearly convinced that we are justified by faith alone, till they carefully considered these, and compared them with the sacred writings, particularly St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans." This is the witness of Sermon 107. Not only are the Homilies most clear on this cardinal doctrine, as such; they are equally cogent in their demonstration of the supreme ethical value of the doctrine. "These be the fruits of true faith, to do good as much as lieth in us to every man, and, above all things, and in all things, to advance the glory of God, of whom only we have our sanctification, justification, salvation, and redemption: to whom be ever glory, praise, and honour, world without end!" These and other such glowing words, we may well think, would at least help to prepare for that warming of the heart which

Wesley experienced afterwards in the Aldersgate Street meeting.

One great name among Wesley's contemporaries has been left unmentioned. From the standpoint of sturdy common sense, and somewhat conventional Christianity, SAMUEL JOHNSON was the moralist of his day. His 'Life'—a picture of eighteenth century England, though so different, to be set side by side with Wesley's 'Journal'—enshrines casual observations, by this shrewd Mentor, on piety and practice. As he and Wesley were personally acquainted, and to some extent enjoyed each other's company, a comparison has peculiar interest.

Boswell relates this account which Johnson once gave of his 'religious progress.' He speaks of having fallen into religious indifference in his ninth year. In his fourteenth, he became 'a sort of lax *talker* against religion,' not thinking much against it, as he remarks. At Oxford (like Wesley) he took up Law's 'Serious Call,' 'expecting to find it a dull book, and perhaps to laugh at it.' "But," he says, "I found Law quite an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion, after I became capable of rational inquiry." From that time, says Boswell, 'religion was the predominant object of his thoughts.'

On September 7, 1736, Johnson remarks in his Diary, "I have this day entered upon my 28th year. Mayest Thou, O God, enable me, for Jesus Christ's sake, to spend this in such a manner, that I may receive comfort from it at the hour of death, and in the day of Judgment! Amen."

In 1781, when Johnson was 72, Boswell exclaimed

fervently to Johnson: "My dear Sir, I would fain be a good man; and I am very good now. I fear God, and honour the king; I wish to do no ill, and to be benevolent to all mankind." Johnson replied, "Do not, Sir, accustom yourself to trust to *impressions*. There is a middle state of mind between conviction and hypocrisy, of which many are unconscious. Favourable impressions, at particular moments, as to the state of our souls, may be deceitful and dangerous. In general, no man can be sure of his acceptance with God."

Two years later—the year before his death—Johnson reverted to his earlier career. "I myself was for some years totally regardless of religion. It had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickness brought it back, and I hope I have never lost it since."

It is interesting to remember that Johnson was at Oxford during the time of the Wesleys, and just when the Fellow of Lincoln and his brother were beginning the 'Holy Club.' Wesley and Johnson were evidently studying Law at about the same time. Did they know each other at Oxford? There are references of each to the other, in both works, Boswell's 'Life,' and Wesley's 'Journal.'

On Thursday, Dec. 18, 1783, exactly a year before Johnson's death, Wesley, himself in his 81st year, says of Johnson, then 74, "I spent two hours with that great man, Dr. Johnson, who is sinking into the grave by a gentle decay." The private Diary shows that this was at 2 o'clock, and that they had dinner together. What passed at that interview? It was a rare opportunity. A few years before, Johnson had

remarked, " John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk, as I do." Now at last the two old men, who perhaps had influenced the minds and hearts of their fellow-countrymen more than any others, must surely have exchanged notes. What was the result ?

They were both greatly in earnest, but they did not now represent, as perhaps they did at Oxford, the same type of religious experience. Johnson's religion may be stated, not unfairly, to have been mainly the fear of God ; Wesley's, the love of God. (It is an interesting coincidence, that the ancient coat of arms of the Wesleys, whose family can be traced back to Anglo-Saxon times, was, ' God is Love. ') Johnson's morality was the morality of a conscience touched always by God's fear, and passing, from the fear of sin, into benevolent regard towards man. Wesley's ethic was the ethic of faith and love ; faith kindled into full assurance, by the individual vision of Christ, and merging into a joyful and grateful love to God, as a Father, which constrained him to the love and service of his fellow-men, and even to uttermost, but willing, sacrifice.

Johnson greatly feared death ; the thought of it was a constant horror. Wesley, who had had the same fear in his earlier time, lost it entirely, when his experience of personal salvation came, and it never so much as touched him any more. But, when Johnson was on his death-bed, the thick clouds that had hung so heavily over his life must have broken. Was this, in part, a result of the memorable interview

with Wesley the year before? Johnson's friend and physician, Dr. Brocklesby, says :—" For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and *propitiation* of Jesus Christ. He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the *sacrifice* of Jesus, as necessary, beyond all good works whatever, for the salvation of mankind."

Before receiving the tokens of Christ's redeeming grace, in his room, at last, Johnson composed and uttered a most pathetic prayer, in which he said, " Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in His merits, and Thy mercy ; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance ; make this commemoration available to the confirmation of my faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity ; and make the death of Thy Son Jesus Christ effectual to my redemption."

It would seem almost certain that Wesley had comforted his friend with reminiscences of his own great liberation from fear and sin. To that crisis in his experience, thus anticipated, we must return.

II

THE GREAT SPIRITUAL CRISIS, AND ITS TESTIMONY

I. THE SPIRITUAL CRISIS IN WESLEY'S EXPERIENCE, AND THE WARMED HEART

MUCH of the help that had come to Wesley thus far had been on the wrong lines. The traditional piety of those among whom he had been nurtured and trained, sincere and earnest in the home, largely conventional in school and university, had practically inverted, to a considerable extent, the relation between the faith and the ethic of religion. Effort, duty, virtue, devotion—these came first; acceptance, and the favour of God—these were to come some time, perhaps never in this world, as the result and reward. As we have seen, the true teaching in regard to these things was enshrined in some of the standard declarations and statements of the Anglican Church; but these were partly forgotten, and almost wholly inoperative. Earnest piety was flouted by the worldlings of the day, and, even among those whose Christianity was more than a mere name, Wesley found none to lead him in the way of peace. He was living in the Seventh of Romans, with its counsels of despair. The glorious Eighth was to follow, but not

by the guidance of those to whom he rightly looked for help.

The light was coming to its dawn, but it shone from the land of Luther. Luther's own words, and Luther's countrymen, were to be the means of his deliverance. It is true that there had been, and were, great leaders of religion, from whom help and comfort might have been received—Baxter, Doddridge, Watts, and others; but the confines of Wesley's hereditary Anglicanism, though this was of so recent date, had not allowed them to come within helping distance. Not even his own great ancestors seem to have been thought of; they were, as yet, too thoroughly 'ejected' from the sphere of his thought and life, though probably the incipient stirrings of spiritual freedom which he felt were the 'urge' of that unacknowledged ancestry. What he needed so sorely was, not only true teaching in the things of the spirit, but individual sympathy on the part of those who had proved the reality of an experience like that of Paul, and of Luther; who, in words transfused with the joy of a great deliverance, and vibrant with the yearning to bring others to the same gladness and liberty, would convey to Wesley's heart the message of the great salvation.

Such help was at hand. Wesley had reached London, after an absence in Georgia of nearly two years, besides the long time of slow voyaging to and fro, on the 3rd of February, 1738. On the 7th ('a day much to be remembered'), he met one of the Moravians, whom he had not known before, but to whom he was to owe his soul—Peter Böhler, now on his way from Germany to Georgia. On the 17th, Wesley and Böhler went to Oxford. They 'conversed much'

during the short stay in Oxford. Wesley was bent on reasoning everything out, before he could proceed further in the way to freedom. This led Böhler to say, *Mi frater, mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua philosophia* ('My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away'). They met again at Oxford on the 4th of March, and on the 5th Wesley says, "I was clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." On the 6th, he 'began preaching this new doctrine,' though, as he says, 'my soul started back from the work.' As yet, he was preaching as a convinced believer in the doctrine, but not as one who had found the living experience. On the 23rd, Wesley and Böhler met again at Oxford, and Wesley says that he was amazed by the account which Böhler gave 'of the fruits of living faith—the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it.' "The next morning," he says, "I began on the Greek Testament again, resolving to abide by 'the law and the testimony'; and being confident that God would hereby show me whether this doctrine was of God." He continued to preach, according to Böhler's previous advice: "Preach faith *till* you have it; and then, *because* you have it, you will preach faith."

Wesley is still Fellow of Lincoln, and preaches the hope of this new salvation at the College Chapel on Sunday, April 2nd, being Easter Sunday, from the words, 'The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.' Twice again that day, to other congregations, he preached from the same words. He says, "I see the promise, but it is afar off." On the

22nd, he meets Böhler once more. He says, " But I could not comprehend what he spoke, of an *instantaneous work*. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment ; how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles ; but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions. I had but one retreat left, namely, ' Thus, I grant, God wrought in the *first* ages of Christianity ; but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe He works in the same manner now ? ' But on Sunday the 23rd, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses ; who testified God had thus wrought in themselves, giving them in a moment such a faith in the blood of His Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, ' Lord, help Thou my unbelief ! ' "

That we may better understand some aspects of what is to follow, we must turn for a while to Charles Wesley, who had participated thus far in his brother's bitter bondage, and more recently in the hope and promise of deliverance. He was to find his liberation sooner than John, and in the solitude of the sick-chamber. William Holland, a remarkable man, belonging to the Church of England, but in communion with the Moravians, gives the following account of what Charles Wesley has chronicled more briefly, in his ' Journal,' for May 17, 1738. " Shortly before Peter

Böhler's departure for Georgia, he and Mr. Wesley began a band. I was gone at that time for a few days into the country. After my return, in speaking with one of our society on the doctrine of Christ, as preached by him, and reading the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, I was conscious that I was not in the state there described. I became very uneasy, made a diligent search for books treating of faith in Christ, and was providentially directed to Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. I carried it round to Mr. Charles Wesley, who was sick at Mr. Bray's, as a very precious treasure that I had found, and we sat down together, Mr. Charles Wesley reading the Preface aloud. At the words, 'What, have we then nothing to do? No, nothing! but only accept of Him who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,' there came such a power over me as I cannot well describe; my great burden fell off in an instant; my heart was so filled with peace and love that I burst into tears. I almost thought I saw our Saviour! My companions, perceiving me so affected, fell on their knees and prayed. When I afterwards went into the street, I could scarcely feel the ground I trod upon." Thus far from Holland's account.

Charles Wesley thus relates the Holland incident: "To-day I first saw Luther on the Galatians, which Mr. Holland had accidentally lit upon. We began, and found him nobly full of faith. My friend, in hearing him, was so affected as to breathe out sighs and groans unutterable. I marvelled that we were so soon and so entirely removed from Him that called us into the

grace of Christ, unto another gospel. Who would believe our Church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone? From this time, I endeavoured to ground as many of our friends as came, in this fundamental truth, salvation by faith alone—not an idle, dead faith, but a faith which works by love, and is necessarily productive of all good works and all holiness.”

He goes on to say, under the same date, “ I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me, especially his conclusion of the 2nd chapter. I laboured, waited, and prayed to feel, ‘ who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.’ When nature, near exhausted, forced me to bed, I opened the book upon, ‘ For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon earth.’ After this comfortable assurance that He would come, and would not tarry, I slept in peace.” This was exactly a week before John Wesley’s great experience, and Charles Wesley’s own deliverance came on the intervening Sunday. There can be no doubt that Luther’s Galatians helped greatly towards the release that so soon came to pass. Especially, we may well think, were the words, ‘ who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*,’ continually ringing in his ears.

Holland tells us, in the passage above quoted, that, when he had taken his new-found treasure to Charles Wesley, the latter read aloud from the Preface. In the very beginning of the Preface occurs a comparison of the doctrine of justification to a rock, as being the one sure foundation of the Church of God. Luther is speaking of the enemies of the faith, that

rage horribly *adversus unicam hanc et solidam petram, quam nos justificationis locum dicimus* ('against this only and solid rock, which we declare to be the article of justification'); and this seems to have been in Charles Wesley's mind, when he spoke, as above, of the Church as having been 'founded on this important article of justification by faith alone.' But it is in the 'Argument' (not the Preface), that the words occur which were made the means of Holland's liberation:—*Nihil ergo facimus nos, nihil operamur ad hanc justitiam consequendam? Respondeo: Nihil, quia haec justitia est prorsus nihil facere, nihil audire, nihil scire de lege aut de operibus, sed hoc solum scire et credere, quod Christus transierit ad patrem, et jam non videtur; quod sedeat in coelis ad dexteram patris, non judex, sed factus nobis a Deo sapientia, justitia, sanctificatio, et redemptio; in summa, quod sit noster pontifex, intercedens pro nobis, et regnans super nos et in nobis per gratiam.* ('Are we then to do nothing, to work nothing, for this righteousness that is to ensue? I answer, Nothing! Because this righteousness means straightway to do nothing, to hearken to nothing, to know nothing of the law or of works, but this only to know and believe, that Christ is gone to the Father, and now is seen no more; that He sits in the heavens at the right hand of the Father, not as Judge, but as made unto us wisdom from God—righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; in short, that He is our High Priest, interceding for us, and reigning over us and in us through grace.')

It may be of interest to ask whether the old copy of the commentary that Holland found was in Luther's original Latin, or an English translation. As was

remarked in connection with Luther's own emancipation, there was a translation made into English, of the year 1575, with a commendatory letter signed 'Edwinus London,' which must mean Edwin Sandys, Bishop of London, who became Archbishop of York in 1576. To quote from an old copy of this translation, dated 1644, the title-page bears the inscription:— 'A Commentarie of Master Doctor Martin Luther upon the Epistle of S. Paul to the Galatians. First collected and gathered word by word out of his preaching, and now out of Latine faithfully translated into English for the unlearned. Wherein is set forth most excellently the glorious riches of God's grace, and the power of the Gospell, with the difference betweene the Law and the Gospell, and the strength of Faith declared: to the joyfull comfort and confirmation of all true Christian beleevers, especially such as inwardly being afflicted and grieved in conscience, do hunger and thirst for justification in Christ Jesu. For whose cause most chiefly this Booke is translated and printed, and dedicated to the same. *My power is made perfect through weaknesse.* 2 Cor. xii. 9. London. Printed by George Miller, dwelling in the Black-Fryers.' To the Wesleys, in their present longing for liberty, this title would be as an angel of hope. That, and the circumstances of the finding of the book, point to the English translation as having been taken to Charles Wesley on that memorable day. On the other hand, the fact that Holland passed it to the invalid for reading aloud, would almost imply that it was the original Latin, which Charles Wesley might presumably be able to read with greater facility than Holland. The words quoted by Holland from the

'Argument' do not agree exactly with either supposition; but, if Wesley translated from the Latin, as he read, they are such as Holland might remember, in a general way, as giving the sense.

It will be remembered that Bunyan (as he tells the story in 'Grace Abounding'), when he was feeling his way to the joy of salvation, found 'a book of Martin Luther's; it was his Comment on the Galatians; it also was so old, that it was ready to fall piece from piece, if I did but turn it over.' He goes on to say:—"Now I was much pleased that such an old book had fallen into my hand, the which when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart. But of particulars here I intend nothing; only this methinks I must let fall before all men—I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians (excepting the Holy Bible) before all the books that ever I had seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience."

At this stage in our study, it may be noted, that, far from the experience that came to the Wesleys being a freak of spiritual history, constituting it but a curiosity in the records of religious life, it was a case—very eminent, indeed, and most noteworthy in its results—of history repeating itself once more. Tyndale, Parker, Sandys, Bunyan, the Wesleys—they are all in the succession. Or, to go farther back, the Wesleys derived from Luther, even as Luther derived from Paul. At this crisis, indeed, we see the three, with whom we are dealing, in close juxtaposition. Time and space seem done away. At intervals of centuries, these men are filled with the same glow

of new-found joy, they look into one another's eyes, one is encouraging another.

Once more, however, we must remind ourselves, that this is not a case of doctrine merely, especially not of mere general truth. It is truth in its individual and living application, and truth applied, primarily indeed by the healthful Spirit of God's grace, but instrumentally through the warm, quick sympathy of those, who, having themselves experienced that grace, are eager each to pass on the precious treasure to the next. Wesley and Luther are speaking heart to heart; heart to heart Luther is speaking with Paul. This is the true genealogy of a living faith, on its human side; this is the holy 'succession' of spiritual liberty.

In the very rare little volume, 'Hymns and Sacred Poems,' published by the Wesleys in 1739, Charles Wesley's original hymns appear for the first time. Had the fountain only lately been unsealed? Among them are three 'Hymns of Thanksgiving,' full to overflowing of his new-found joy. The history of one of these, 'O Filial Deity,' may be traced in Charles Wesley's 'Journal,' or by reference to that valuable repertory of facts, 'The Methodist Hymn Book Illustrated' (by John Telford). 'Who for me, for me, hast died' was a refrain that haunted his mind for months. Thus the music that came into Charles Wesley's experience, to which he gave almost a myriad-fold expression in his hymns, was all attuned to the keynote struck by Luther, just as John Wesley, at Aldersgate Street, caught the glow of the fire that burned on the altar of Luther's heart.

Luther's comments on the words, 'who loved me, and gave Himself for me,' apart from those on the

rest of the verse (Gal. ii. 20), occupy more than ten pages of the Latin Commentary. *Hic descriptam habes veram rationem justificationis et exemplum certitudinis fidei. Qui haec verba, 'Vivo in fide filii Dei, qui dilexit me, et tradidit semet ipsum pro me,' certa et constanti fide cum Paulo dicere posset, is vere beatus esset; et illis ipsis verbis Paulus in totum abrogat et tollit justitiam legis et operum, ut postea dicemus. Sunt autem diligenter expendenda haec verba: 'Filius Dei dilexit me, et tradidit semet ipsum pro me.'* Or, as it is rendered in the old English translation, "Here have ye the true manner of justification set before your eyes and a perfect example of the assurance of faith. He that can with a firm and constant faith say these words with Paul: 'I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me,' is happy indeed. And with these words Paul taketh away the whole righteousness of the law and works, as afterwards we will declare. We must therefore diligently weigh and consider these words: 'The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me.'"

Through all those days there would be ringing in the ears of both John and Charles Wesley the words of Luther's concluding exhortation: *Lege igitur cum magna emphasi has voces, 'me,' 'pro me,' et assuefacias te ut illud 'me' possis certa fide concipere, et applicare tibi, neque dubites, quin etiam sis ex numero eorum, qui dicuntur 'me'; item, quod Christus non tantum dilexerit Petrum et Paulum, et se ipsum pro eis tradiderit, sed quod illa gratia in isto 'me' comprehensa aequae ad nos pertineat et veniat, ac ad illos.* ("Read therefore with great vehemency these words, 'Me,' and 'for

Me,' and so inwardly practise with thyself, that thou, with a sure faith, mayest conceive and print this 'Me' in thy heart, and apply it unto thyself, not doubting but thou art in the number of those to whom this 'Me' belongeth: also that Christ hath not only loved Peter and Paul, and given Himself for them, but that the same grace also which is comprehended in this 'Me,' as well pertaineth and cometh unto us, as unto them."

The full account of Charles Wesley's final emancipation, which came a few days after the events just noticed, namely, on Whit Sunday, May 21, 1738, is given in his own 'Journal' under that date. It need not be reproduced here, as the essential facts have been given by anticipation. But it is interesting to note that the decisive words of encouragement were spoken by 'a voice' that Charles Wesley heard, as he lay on his sick-bed: 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise, and believe, and thou shalt be healed of thy infirmities.' It was found, after some search, that the words were spoken by a woman, who had stolen into the room, delivered her message, and disappeared. When she was found, she confessed, "It was I, a weak, sinful creature, spoke; but the words are Christ's: He commanded me to say them, and so constrained me that I could not forbear." What a shattering blow to all theories of priestly absolution! The Oxford High Churchman received his real absolution at last, from his Lord, truly, but by the lips of a poor, trembling woman, who was afraid to make herself known.

We must now turn, however, to what was, for John Wesley, for the Great Revival, and for the Evangelical

Faith of the world, the 'Day of Days,' namely, Wednesday, May 24, 1738. The occasion was so momentous, and it so repays us to be accurate in every detail, that the account must be given in full, and, as much as possible, in Wesley's own words. He says, after rehearsing the story of his spiritual quest from the beginning, up to the point at which we have arrived in the foregoing pages, where we left him waiting for the living faith:—

“ I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indifference, dullness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, *Τὰ μέγιστα ἡμῖν καὶ τίμια ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως.* 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that ye should be partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet. i. 4). Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The anthem was, 'Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? For there is mercy with Thee; therefore shalt Thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.'

“ In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change

which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, *I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away MY sins, even MINE, and saved ME from the law of sin and death.*"

That was the true birthday of Methodism. It was the beginning of the Evangelical Revival, which changed the face of England, because it so largely renewed the heart of England, and has affected profoundly the whole world.

It is a singular thing, considering not only the crucial importance of Wesley's testimony just recorded, but also the deep interest which it has stirred in the hearts of multitudes, that seemingly (with one forgotten exception, to be noticed later) no attempt has been made, save recently, to identify the words that were so wonderfully blessed to John Wesley on that memorable night, or even to trace them to their proper source. In the Standard Edition of the 'Journal,' however, the Editor started a new theory concerning the Luther original, a theory that is urged with striking arguments, and that so commends itself at first sight as almost to win assent. Mr. Curnock says (see Note to account under date May 24, 1738):—"It has been suggested that William Holland was the 'one' who 'was reading Luther's Preface' on May 24." Then follows some account of Holland, with the extract from his manuscript relating his visit to Charles Wesley on May 17, followed by the suggestion:—"It is extremely probable that this was the reader under whom John Wesley's heart was strangely warmed. If so, we have the singular coincidence that Charles read to him and he read to John. But what was read? The text

of the 'Journal,' as it has reached us, says distinctly : *Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*. One can scarcely be surprised that a doubt has arisen with reference to this statement. Is 'Romans' a misprint, or error of association, for 'Galatians'? The discovery of a missing Diary would set the question at rest."

Notwithstanding the force of these considerations, and the attractiveness of the theory suggested, it is found, on closer examination, to be untenable. Not that we need discard the whole of the suggestion, for some of its accompaniments, if not its main contention, may be accepted as at least possible. It may have been Holland who was reading to the company ; and, mingling with the immediate effect of the words then read, there was probably the concurrent effect of the great Galatians saying, that had gained such living power of personal application through Luther's words, as first discovered by Charles, and afterwards made known to his brother.

But there are fatal objections to the hypothesis of a mistake on John Wesley's part, regarding the book that spoke the final word of freedom which so totally transformed his whole career. Whatever may be said of his liability to error, the presumption is altogether against the supposition of mistake in a matter of such importance ; at least, when he came to write the careful record of that event, and of all that led up to it, a record occupying so large a space, and noting so minutely every detail. Had he been under any misapprehension in the excitement of the actual occasion, he would have ascertained his mistake in the inquiry that he would be sure to make afterwards. Certainly,

even had a mistake crept into the 'Journal,' it would have been noticed, say by Holland, or by Charles Wesley, and could not, in any case, have been reproduced through the reprints of half a century.

Apart, however, from such considerations, the very wording of the record is conclusive. The argument in support of the Galatians theory seems to assume that we have to choose between two corresponding Luther works, a commentary on Romans and a commentary on Galatians, each with its own preface. That is not the case, though it has generally been taken for granted that the statement in the 'Journal' referred to the preface of a commentary by Luther on the great epistle. As a matter of fact, Luther never published any commentary on Romans, though he delivered exegetical lectures on the epistle at Wittenberg, the manuscript of which was discovered only a few years ago. But, though there was no commentary on Romans known of in Wesley's day, there was, as Wesley so exactly expressed it, a 'Preface to the Epistle to the Romans': *to the epistle*, not to any work on the epistle.

Luther's Preface, or Prologue, to Romans has a value and a reputation all its own. It occurs, in its original form, immediately before his translation of the Epistle in the memorable German New Testament of 1522. (An original copy of this edition may be seen in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society, London, being perhaps the greatest treasure among their invaluable collection of Lutheran and pre-Lutheran Bibles.) There is first a general Preface of three or four pages; then the order of the books; then come the various books themselves, not quite in

our order, each preceded by its own *Vorrhede*, or Prologue. Whereas, however, most of the epistles have Prefaces of only half a page or less, that to the Romans has a Prologue of eleven pages. It is entitled, *Vorrhede auff die Epistel Sanct Paulus zu den Romern*. In the 1534 edition (comprising the whole Bible), 1 Corinthians has two pages of preface instead of one, and Revelation six pages instead of two thirds of a page. But the Prologue to Romans consists, practically, of the same as before, ten large pages. It is in fact a great doctrinal manifesto, almost, if not quite, ranking with the Commentary on Galatians for intrinsic importance, though so small.

It may be said here, in passing, as is stated in the Preface to this discussion, that, when these considerations were put before the Editor of the 'Journal,' he regarded them as quite conclusive, and cancelled his conjecture, as put forward in the 'Note' above quoted. This correction, however, does not appear till the 8th Volume of the 'Journal' is reached, and then only in a list of Corrigenda at the end. Thus it is very likely to be overlooked, and it seemed necessary to put the whole case once more before the readers of that truly superb edition of Wesley's matchless autobiography.

In the British Museum may be seen two little books, both bearing on the subject of our present inquiry. One is entitled: *Praefatio Methodica Totius Scripturae in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos, e vernacula Martini Lutheri in latinum versa per Justum Jonam. MDXXVIII*. The other has on its title-page: 'A Methodicall preface prefixed before the Epistle of S. Paul to the Romans, very necessarie and profitable

for the better understanding of it. Made by the right reverend Father and faithfull servant of Christ Jesus, Martin Luther, now newly translated out of Latin into English, by W. W., Student. Printed Anno Dom. 1632.' As some writers give the date 1575 for an English translation of the Preface, this may be a later edition of the same work.

It will be observed that the Latin translation is dated only two years later than Luther's first New Testament, and, as Justus Jonas was an intimate friend of Luther, and published this Latin version presumably with Luther's full approval, it has almost all the authority of the original. Yet it will be found, on comparison, to deal freely with the German original; and the English version, being avowedly a translation of a translation, is no doubt a free rendering of the version of Justus Jonas.

The Rev. T. E. Brigden, who in various ways has rendered signal service to the student of early Methodism, in the 'Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society' for March 1911, directs attention to the fact that 'a full account of this Preface and its relation to Wesley's experience may be found in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, May 1838'; and, on reference to this forgotten article, it will be found that the writer, 'Didymus,' had succeeded in unearthing from a collected edition of Luther's works (dated 1554) the version 'by the famous Justus Jonas,' and, yet more important, in identifying those parts of it which concern Wesley's account of the experience that came to him exactly a hundred years before. These passages he translated faithfully into English, and from this English rendering Mr. Brigden has made his quotations,

alike in Hurst's History of Methodism, and in that portion of 'A New History of Methodism' for which he is responsible. It would seem, however, that 'Didymus' had no suspicion of the place the 'Preface' originally occupied in Luther's New Testament, though he does say that it was 'originally written and published in the German language.' Mr. Brigden also, in Hurst's History, speaks of the 'Preface to Luther's *Commentary* on Romans.'

Yet another interesting circumstance remains to be taken into account. It is not perhaps generally known that Tyndale, in his famous second edition of the New Testament, published in 1534, pretty closely follows Luther in his way of writing Prologues to the various books, and that these Prologues are, to a large extent, reproductions of those of Luther. As in the case of Luther's New Testament, by far the most important of Tyndale's Prologues is that to Romans, consisting of thirty-six pages. (One of the extremely rare copies of this edition of Tyndale may be seen in the Bible Society Library.) Lovett ('The Printed English Bible': Religious Tract Society) says of Tyndale, "During 1526 he lived at Worms, and either there or at Strasburg printed the famous Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans." Tyndale's Prologue probably helped considerably in promoting the English Reformation. It may have been owing to the violent prejudice existing at that time in England against everything Lutheran, that Tyndale reproduced the Prologues, with free variations, in his own name.

It cannot be positively determined whether it was the old English translation from the Latin, or Justus

Jonas's Latin translation itself, or Luther's original of the Prologue, which was being read at Aldersgate Street. On the whole, perhaps it is the most probable supposition, considering the intermingling of Moravians with such assemblies in those days, that some one was reading (and possibly translating, for the benefit of those who did not speak German) from Luther's original Prologue, either in pamphlet form, or in the old Luther New Testament. Wesley, of course, would understand equally well, in any case, though it is more interesting to think that he was listening to Luther's exact words. (In the Appendix will be found, not only the 'Preface' in full, translated direct from the German, but also the crucial passages, in German, in Latin, and in the old English translation; also the corresponding portions of Tyndale's paraphrase of Luther's Prologue.)

As regards the words themselves, which came as a message of fire to warm Wesley's heart, there need be little doubt. The 'Preface' deals first with the great leading thoughts of the Epistle, devoting a separate section to each, and then the successive chapters are summarised one by one, all in the light of the foregoing survey of general principles. Those leading ideas or general principles, as we have seen in dealing with Luther's works, are enumerated as—Law, Sin, Grace, Faith, Righteousness, Flesh, and Spirit. The words that Wesley speaks of as 'describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Jesus Christ' must come at least as early as the section on Faith; but the way was prepared by the earlier section on Law. In that section, after showing that God's law requires the heart's motive'; that, 'where there is

not free delight in the good, there the heart's motive is not in the law of God'; that 'such a heart no one can give, save the Spirit of God'; which 'Spirit, however, is not given except in, with, and through faith in Jesus Christ,' Luther goes on to say, "*Thus it comes to pass, that only faith makes righteous, and fulfils the law, for it brings the Spirit, through the merit of Christ. The Spirit, however, creates a cheerful and free heart, as the law requires; so then good works proceed from faith itself.*" After speaking more specifically of Sin and Grace, Luther comes to the great central section of this part of the 'Preface,' namely, that on Faith. "*Faith is not human opinion and dream, which some mistake for faith. . . . Faith is a godly work in us, that changes us, and causes us to be born again of God, and slays the old Adam, makes us quite different men in heart, mind, motive, and all our faculties, and brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, there is something so lively, creative, operative, mighty about faith, that it is impossible that it should not without ceasing work that which is good. It does not ask indeed whether good works are to be done, but, before one can ask, it has done them, and is always doing them. But he who does not such works is a faithless man, fumbles and looks about him for faith and good works, and knows not what either faith or good works are, yet babbles and prattles much of faith and good works. Faith is a living, deliberate reliance on God's grace, so sure, that it would die for it a thousand times. And such reliance, and knowledge of God's grace, makes us gladsome, courageous, and cheerful towards God and all creatures; which thing the Holy Spirit accomplishes in our faith. Therefore man becomes joyfully willing, without constraint, to do*

good to every one, to serve every one, to bear all kinds of suffering for God's love and praise, who has shown him such favour ; so that it is impossible to separate works from faith, just as impossible as that heat and light should be separated from fire."

All Wesley's past must be borne in mind, as well the long years of misdirected effort, as the more recent gradual dawning of the light, that we may appreciate the significance to his soul of Luther's glowing words, through which the sunrise flamed suddenly into the sky.

So far, then, as is possible, we have identified the very words that brought warmth to Wesley's heart. We can almost hear, as Wesley heard, the thrill in Luther's voice, as he himself caught the inspiration from the Apostle. Our immediate purpose, however, under the guidance of these words, is to determine the essential spiritual and ethical principles that took possession of Wesley, making possible the mighty work which he had so longed to accomplish—the regeneration of England.

In the first part of this inquiry, after tracing the great ethical principles of Christianity, as set forth, amid much variety of presentation, in the writings of the New Testament, we found that they might all be gathered into one comprehensive statement or formula: 'Salvation by Grace, Assured to the Heart through Faith in Jesus Christ, the Source and Inspiration of the Life of Perfect Love.' It is clear that all this meaning is to be found in Luther's words, even as already it had been gradually taking possession of Wesley's mind and heart, through other instrumentality, in preparation for that final crisis. Through all the years that followed, from this experience he never

turned aside, from this teaching he never swerved. It was always a matter of life or death with him, to believe, and to lead others to believe, in *Saving Grace, Living Faith, Joyful Assurance, Perfect Love*. That which he had made the *terminus ad quem* now became the *terminus a quo*; his former goal became his new starting-point. These were Wesley's main principles; everything else was altogether secondary; if only these were secured, with whatever minor differences, he was satisfied. This, as we shall see later, was his creed—the creed of the heart. To such a creed he expected his preachers to be loyal; to such a creed he sought to lead the people. He had no other. He had opinions, beliefs; he said of these, 'We think, and let think.' But the great vital principles must not be tampered with, for without these we perish. They had cost him too dear; they had cost the Saints of all the ages too dear; *they had cost God too dear*, to make it possible for him to regard them lightly, or to let others treat them lightly.

This it was which determined Wesley's action from time to time, as he pursued his work; which explained and justified his deviations from church order, and from church authority, whenever loyalty to the great essential principles seemed to make such deviations necessary; and which gives him his distinguishing place in the religious and moral history of the world. For, with him, the spiritual was always passing into the ethical; life in God meant life for God; and life for God meant life for the sake of others. His 'Chief Good' was Life in God—the reciprocal life of faith and love—as contrasted with Aristotle's 'Activity of the Soul according to Virtue'; with him, instead

of the rather indeterminate 'virtue' of Aristotle, there was the Life of Love, for Christ's sake; and, instead of the too purely intellectual 'knowledge' of Aristotle and the Greeks generally, that determined, or even constituted, virtue, there was Faith, the Faith of the Heart, a faith that worked by love, this love living, moving, and having its being in the Perfect Love of God.

Bearing all this in mind, we shall be able, without difficulty, to appraise the force of criticism, on the part of those who are more or less aloof from Wesley's position, as well as to appreciate the sympathetic approval of others who are identified, wholly or mainly, with that position. We may pause to consider some of these judgments.

An exceedingly able French critic, DR. AUGUSTIN LEGER, in his monograph, *La Jeunesse de Wesley* (Hachette and Co., Paris), thus pronounces his mind on the subject of the Aldersgate Street experience:—"Such was, according to their own accounts, at that Pentecost of 1738, the conversion of John and of Charles Wesley; instantaneous, as they believed, and spontaneous in precisely the same degree. . . . The reversal of perspective which was then produced in the soul of John Wesley is indisputable. He had imagined, till then, that, to attain and possess the Eternal, man had to scale the heavens, to pile Ossas of virtues on Pelions of practices, in order to gain Olympus, to raise himself to the Infinite on the Babel of his own perfection. Long ago, he suspects that that work is impossible and vain; thereafter, at intervals, in the harsh tension of his will, his discouragements, and his sorrows. Henceforth, the reality

appears to him much more simple : man has not to struggle towards God ; God is near him, with him, in him, from the beginning ; and every one of our efforts towards God is only possible already by the help of God. God does not wait, in order to love us, till we have merited His love by the irreproachable integrity of ours. The feeblest stirrings of our attraction towards Him are already only a response to the overtures of His boundless love. (*Dieu n'attend pas, pour nous aimer, que nous ayons mérité son amour par l'irréprochable intégrité du nôtre. Les plus faibles émois de notre attrait vers lui ne sont déjà qu'une réponse aux prévenances de son amour sans bornes.*) Having brought us into being freely, He has freely forgiven us, by a new proof of love more amazing, namely, the gift, for us, of Christ, His Son, as a Redeeming Sacrifice. He who has properly seen that, once, would never more be able to doubt God ; he who has properly felt that, has no longer any need to toil laboriously to love Him ; love, like trust, springs spontaneously from the fulness of our gratitude towards that sovereign grace, which has done everything for us, without asking of us anything in exchange."

Another distinguished French writer, wholly in accord with Wesley's view of that great experience, yet treating it from a properly independent standpoint, DR. MATTHIEU LELIÈVRE, in *John Wesley, Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre* (Librairie Evangélique, Paris), says :— "A notable thing ! It was while he listened to the reading of a page of Luther, commenting on a text of St. Paul, that the light came to its fulness in the soul of Wesley, as if to indicate clearly that the awakening of the 18th century was about to attach itself to

the apostolic age and to the Reformation. Those two great epochs had to be revived, not only by the affirmation of the doctrine of justification by faith, but by the personal experience of that divine grace on the part of the men who were commissioned to teach it to others. Wesley like Luther, and Luther like Paul, could say, 'I have believed; therefore have I spoken.'

" 'We find,' says SCHOELL, 'with Wesley, the same inward struggle, the same transition from the works of the law to grace, as with Luther. And that emancipation as regards the law, that deliverance of the soul struggling for the assurance of salvation and the joy of faith—all that, is not the product of illusion or of a fanatical enthusiasm, as has often been said of Wesley by reproach. It is the opening of the long-closed bud, breaking its sheath. The soul, freed from the yoke of the law and of sin, is henceforth in possession of the assurance of salvation and of the joy of faith; for, as Luther says, there, where is the pardon of sins—there are found life and happiness.'

" 'If ever a crisis of the soul,' continues Dr. Lelièvre, 'determined a change of aspect in a man's life, it was surely that which came to its climax in the experience of Wesley, on May 24, 1738. Without that crisis, he would have been all his life, like Paul before his conversion, an accomplished Pharisee; or, like Luther before his, a bigoted ritualist. Thanks to that crisis, he became an apostle, like the first; and a reformer, like the second. (*Sans cette crise, il eût été toute sa vie, comme Paul avant sa conversion, un pharisien accompli, ou, comme Luther avant la sienne, un ritualiste bigot; grâce à cette crise, il devint un apôtre comme le premier, et un réformateur comme le second.*)'

In a foreword to Dr. Lelièvre's biography, the illustrious DR. DE PRESSENSÉ writes:—"Wesley gave the most magnificent start (*le plus magnifique élan*) to the missionary movement—for it was a true mission which he undertook with Whitefield in so-called Christian lands. I know nothing more admirable than that ardent, tireless propaganda, in both worlds, holding multitudes on the lips of those true apostles, who, to use the expression of William Arthur, bore with them truly a 'Tongue of Fire,' and, in the century of Voltaire and of Bolingbroke, brought back true Pentecosts. They were the initiators of a general awakening, which has been produced in all Protestantism. The dry bones were reanimated by their voice, which has been heard in all the earth."

This pronouncement, by a great church historian, is of special value, as acknowledging, with emphasis, the presence and power of the new dynamic which came into the experience of the Wesleys and their coadjutors at their Pentecost. This was its distinguishing characteristic; this was the secret of the spiritual and moral quickening, cleansing, and renewal of myriads—ultimately of many millions—of men and women, in many lands; this, therefore, is surely a vindication of the transcendent importance of what came to pass on May 24, 1738. It meant a new, a fuller spiritual life, in more than two continents; it meant a new ethic, constraining to a new devotion to the service of man; it meant the initiation, and the permanent inspiration, of the great philanthropies that are so familiar in our day, but were, till then, so largely unknown. Greek wisdom, Roman law, with their intellectual insight, their practical sagacity, were

powerless to prevent the old, rotting world from going to its doom ; a petrified Christianity, in the Middle Ages, and again in later times, served too often as the shelter, if not the sanction, of the grossest vice. It was the Ethic of Salvation, in the days of Paul, of Luther, of Wesley, that held new hope for mankind.

II. THE TESTIMONY CONSEQUENT ON THE GREAT SPIRITUAL CRISIS

Among the consequences of that great experience in Wesley's spiritual history which we have been studying, must be noted first of all his speedy reappearance at Oxford.

I. A NEW MANIFESTO OF THE OXFORD PULPIT.

Wesley was shut out from one London pulpit after another, but he was still Fellow of Lincoln, and was not as yet debarred from delivering his testimony in St. Mary's, the University Church. He preaches there within three weeks of the Pentecostal crisis (June 11), from the text, ' By grace are ye saved through faith ' (Eph. ii. 8). In his ' Journal,' he barely mentions the visit, saying nothing about the sermon. But, as the Editor of the ' Journal ' says, " It was his first publication after his conversion "—referring to the sermon as subsequently printed—" and a great manifesto." It stands first among his published Sermons.

In his sermon, Wesley asks, What faith it is through which we are saved ; what is the salvation which is through faith. After tracing the meaning of the word ' faith ' through its various stages, he defines the faith of Christian experience, as, " not only an assent

to the whole Gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of His life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon Him as our atonement and our life, *as given for us*, and *living in us*; and, in consequence hereof, a closing with Him, and cleaving to Him, as our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' or, in one word, our salvation." Similarly he traces the meaning of the word 'saved,' defining it first as including salvation from the guilt of the past, with its attendant fear; in the one case, through our justification, by reason of the atonement of Christ, and in the other, through our adoption, of which an assurance is borne to our heart by the Spirit. But he is careful to show that this salvation means, equally, our being saved from the power of sin, initially in that new birth which accompanies our adoption, and subsequently in the daily sanctification of all our doings, of all our desires. In this insistence upon the equality of sanctification by faith with justification by faith, Wesley is to some extent in advance of Luther, who does indeed teach the complete, or 'full' salvation, as Wesley was afterwards accustomed to express it, but not with the same clearness of definition.

Wesley was soon in the full stream of his evangelistic work, which went on with accelerating energy for more than fifty years. This work was the practical test of his principles, and, it may be said, their complete vindication.

He preached again at St. Mary's on July 25, 1741; and yet once more on Aug. 24, 1744. Under the latter date he writes: "*Fri.* 24 (St. Bartholomew's Day).—I preached, I suppose the last time, at St.

Mary's. Be it so. I am now clear of the blood of these men. I have fully delivered my own soul."

One of the most recent tributes to the value of Wesley's ministry comes from Oxford. In Oman's History of England (Methuen and Co.), the writer of Vol. VI., 'England under the Hanoverians' (PRINCIPAL C. GRANT ROBERTSON), says: "John Wesley's movement merits the abused epithet of epoch-making. Methodism and the French Revolution are the two most tremendous phenomena of the century. Wesley swept the dead air with an irresistible, cleansing ozone. To thousands of men and women his preaching and gospel revealed a new heaven and a new earth; it brought religion into soulless lives, and reconstituted it as a comforter, an inspiration, and a judge. No one was too poor, too humble, too degraded, to be born again, and share in the privilege of divine grace, to serve the one Master Christ, and to attain the blessed fruition of God's peace." The author goes on to say: "Aloof alike from politics and the speculations of the schools, Wesley wrestled with the evils of his day, and proclaimed the infinite power of a Christian faith, based on personal conviction eternally renewed from within, to battle with sin, misery, and vice in all its forms. The social service that he accomplished was not the least of his triumphs. At a time when Bishop Butler asserted that Christianity was wearing out of the minds of men, Wesley kept the English people Christian, and shamed the Church that closed her pulpits to him into imitating his spirit, if not his methods. It is certain that into the moral fibre of the English people, even into the classes most anxious to repudiate the debt, were woven new strands

by the abiding influence of Methodism." Thus does the Oxford Fellow of to-day bear testimony to the spiritual value and ethical result of the teaching and preaching of the one-time Oxford Fellow of two centuries ago.

After the cleansing fires of the Revival had been burning for a year, they broke into a larger blaze with the open-air preaching, into which Wesley was drawn, with many misgivings, but in which he achieved his greatest triumphs. He began at Bristol, in April 1739, and the congregations numbered many thousands. This was too much for Butler (whose 'Sermons on Human Nature' had been published in 1726, and his 'Analogy of Religion' in 1736); and, being at that time Bishop of Bristol, he summoned Wesley to answer for his doings. There was a strange irony in the situation. The greatest English exponent, perhaps, of moral science is face to face with the greatest English shepherd of souls, and endeavours to hush his voice, to stop his regenerating work! They argue with each other, the discussion turning on the reality, the legitimacy, of those great principles which had lately been vindicated in Wesley's experience, and were now being vindicated in the experience of multitudes. Butler asks, "Sir, what do you mean by faith?" Wesley replies, "My lord, by justifying faith I mean a conviction, wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that Christ hath loved him and given Himself for him, and that through Christ his sins are forgiven." Butler: "I believe some good men have this, but not all. But how do you prove this to be the justifying faith taught by our Church?" Wesley: "My lord, from her Homily on Salvation." Wesley quotes from that

authoritative, but half-forgotten book. At last Butler says: "You have no business here; you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore I advise you to go hence." But Wesley is no longer 'in orders,' and subject to diocesan bishops. He is 'under orders' from a far higher source, having been signally called and commissioned as an Apostle of the faith that has made him free. He calmly replies: "My lord, my business on earth is to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here; therefore, here I stay. As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me; and woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel, wherever I am in the habitable world!" This was on Saturday, the 18th of August, from 5 to 6 in the evening. At 6.15 he promptly preached at the Bowling Green, according to his custom, and on Sunday morning again at 6.45, to five thousand people. And thus the fire burnt its way among the people for fifty years.

In the 'Advertisement' to the First Edition of the 'Analogy,' dated some three years before this interview, Butler had said: "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world." The moral and religious

condition of England, at that time, was indeed too bad to be adequately described. Among all classes, unbelief and wickedness were rampant. Religion, too commonly, if professed at all, was but a thin veneer, hardly even pretending to disguise the essential unbelief and shameless sin that seemed to be almost taken for granted everywhere. Against this overwhelming tide of impiety and iniquity, such calmly philosophic disquisition as that of Butler's 'Analogy,' 'Dissertation on Virtue,' and 'Sermons on Human Nature,' was utterly ineffectual.

That acute and discerning critic, SIR JAMES STEPHEN, in his essay on 'The Evangelical Succession,' after describing, in his own inimitable way, the condition of England at the time when Butler was preparing his ethical studies, goes on to say, "It was at this period, that the Alma Mater of Laud and Sacheverell was nourishing in her bosom a little band of pupils destined to accomplish a momentous revolution in the national character." Stephen then tells of the Great Revival, and its progress, paying tribute to Wesley and Whitefield; and concludes with an interesting comparison between Tradition and Scripture, as two main determining factors in two different types of religion. "From ecclesiastical lore we learn how to be subtle in distinctions, exact in the analysis of particular doctrines, and clear-sighted in the synthesis of them all. But from the Bible, and from the Bible alone, we may derive, though with no scientific accuracy, and by no logical process, the one great, prolific, and all-embracing idea—even the idea of Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being. There also, and there only, we learn all that is to be

known, or rather all that is to be felt and experienced, of our relations to Him—how they have been impaired by sin, and how they have been restored by an adorable, though utterly inscrutable, atonement. There also we discover what are the spiritual agencies employed for the restoration of our nature to its primeval image. There, in no recondite learning, no abstruse speculations, nor in any abstract creed, but in the very person of Christ Himself, is exhibited to us the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It is because the fathers of the 'Evangelical Succession' thus continually resorted to Holy Scripture, as at once the ultimate source and the one criterion of all religious truth, that we reverently hail them as the restorers and witnesses of the faith in their own and in succeeding generations."

Wesley's testimony, for which he was 'cast out' by Butler, the greatest figure in the Church of England in his day (he declined the Primacy a few years later) was amply vindicated in another way. Dr. Angus, in the short *Life of Butler* prefixed to his edition of Butler's Works, gives the following affecting account of Butler's last days. "A story is told (on the authority of Mr. Venn), of his last moments, quite in harmony with his general character, and beautifully illustrative of the grace of Christ. When Butler lay on his death-bed, he called for his chaplain, and said, 'Though I have endeavoured to avoid sin, and to please God to the utmost of my power, yet, from the consciousness of perpetual infirmities, I am still afraid to die.' 'My lord,' said the chaplain, 'you have forgotten that Jesus Christ is a Saviour.' 'True,' was the answer, 'but how shall I know that He is a Saviour for me?' 'My lord, it is written, "Him that cometh to Me I

will in no wise cast out.” ‘ True,’ said the Bishop, ‘ and I am surprised that, though I have read that Scripture a thousand times over, I never felt its virtue till this moment. And now I die happy.’ ” That was Wesley’s secret, the secret that gave offence to Butler thirteen years before. It was the secret which he had found for himself, and which he felt constrained to be ever making known to others: a secret by which through his preaching, multitudes were learning, not only to die well, but to live well.

2. APPEALS TO MEN OF REASON AND RELIGION.

In the midst of his perpetual preaching, Wesley was for ever writing, and the testimony of his busy pen is admirably illustrated by the treatises with the above title. They followed at about the time of his last St. Mary’s sermon.

The first of these (1743), ‘ An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,’ contains this testimony to the reason and conscience of his fellow-countrymen: “ Although it is with us a ‘ very small thing to be judged of you or of man’s judgment,’ seeing we know God will ‘ make our innocency as clear as the light, and our just dealing as the noon-day ’; yet are we ready to give any that are willing to hear, a plain account, both of our principles and actions; as having ‘ renounced the hidden things of shame,’ and desiring nothing more, ‘ than by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.’ ” He wishes his ethic to be the vindication of his faith.

He defines ‘ a religion worthy of God that gave it ’ as “ no other than love: the love of God and of all mankind ;

the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, as having first loved *us*; as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul." He says, "Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, longsuffering, the whole image of God; and at the same time, a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory." Again, "This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of love, and joy, and peace; having its seat in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence (for love worketh no ill to its neighbour), but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it." Surely, compared with this teaching, even Butler's best philosophy of virtue was but as moonlight to sunshine, if clear, yet cold; whereas this faith that warmed the heart brought forth fruit unto holiness.

Wesley thus speaks of that *Loving Grace*, which was, with him, the fountain of all good, in connection with the *Living Faith*, which was its correlative. "It [that is, faith] is the free gift of God, which He bestows, not on those who are worthy of His favour, not on such as are previously holy, and so fit to be crowned with all the blessings of His goodness; but on the ungodly and unholy; on those . . . in whom was no good thing, and whose only plea was, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!' No merit, no goodness in man precedes the forgiving love of God. His pardoning mercy supposes nothing in us, but a sense of mere sin

and misery ; and to all who see, and feel, and own their wants, and their utter inability to remove them, God freely gives faith, for the sake of Him in whom He is always 'well pleased.'” Of this faith he had just been saying, “Faith is the eye of the new-born soul. Hereby every true believer in God ‘seeth Him who is invisible.’ Hereby he ‘seeth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ’; and ‘beholdeth what manner of love it is which the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we,’ who are born of the Spirit, ‘should be called the sons of God.’ It is the ear of the soul, whereby a sinner ‘hears the voice of the Son of God, and lives’; even that voice which alone wakes the dead, ‘Son, thy sins are forgiven thee.’ It is the palate of the soul; for hereby a believer ‘tastes the good word, and the powers of the world to come’; and ‘hereby he both tastes and sees that God is gracious,’ yea, ‘and merciful to him a sinner.’ It is the feeling of the soul, whereby . . . in particular he feels ‘the love of God shed abroad in his heart.’”

Wesley goes on to speak further of this *Joyful Assurance*, which was the accompaniment of a Living Faith, and which led on to the obedience and service of *Perfect Love*. “By these words, ‘We are saved by faith,’ we mean, that the moment a man receives that faith which is above described, he is saved from doubt and fear, and sorrow of heart, by a peace that passes all understanding; and from his sins, of whatsoever kind they were, from his vicious desires, as well as words and actions, by the love of God, and of all mankind, then shed abroad in his heart.” And again, “Have you not another objection, that we preach

perfection? True; but what perfection? The term you cannot object to; because it is Scriptural. All the difficulty is, to fix the meaning of it according to the Word of God. And this we have done again and again, declaring to all the world, that Christian perfection does not imply an exemption from ignorance, or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations; but that it does imply the being so crucified with Christ, as to be able to testify, 'I live not, but Christ liveth in me,' and hath 'purified my heart by faith.' It does imply 'the casting down every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' It does imply 'the being holy, as He that hath called us is holy, in all manner of conversation'; and, in a word, 'the loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and serving Him with all our strength.'"

Here it may be observed, that, taking into account the tendency—together with a teaching that sanctioned the tendency—to be content with God's forgiveness, and to anticipate frequent lapses into sin, which would, on renewed repentance, be in like manner forgiven, Wesley meant, by 'Christian Perfection,' a Christianity, not thus broken, maimed, partial, but complete, the Christianity of sanctification as well as of justification; and all by a faith which trusts, for pardon, in the Christ that died, and for holiness, in the Christ that ever lives. He meant also a Christianity so complete, that it includes the sanctifying of our desires as well as of our deeds; and not only a negative sanctification, the avoidance of evil, but the positive love and pursuit of the good, for ourselves and for others. The secret of such a fulfilment of faith is love—God's perfect

love, possessing our hearts and lives, and making our love perfect through faith. Thus Wesley did not teach that we can be perfect with any perfection of our own, much less that any one may perfectly realise the perfect ideal; but that we may believe joyfully that, moment by moment, the Perfect Love of God is present, to save us from sinning, and to inspire a loving devotion to God and man.

We need follow no further the interpretative testimony of these 'Appeals.' The three Parts of the 'Farther Appeal' were published successively in 1745. They continue their course of unsurpassed reasonableness, as, for nearly two hundred and fifty pages of patient explanation and exposition, they set forth the experience and ethic of that salvation into which Wesley himself had come by so tortuous and troublesome a course, and into which he yearned to lead others by a simpler and directer way.

3. WESLEY'S NEW TESTAMENT.

Wesley says in the Preface to his Sermons, "To candid, reasonable men, I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God: just hovering over the great gulf, till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing—the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way: for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price,

give me the book of God ! I have it : here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri* (' a man of one book ').” That was his life-long attitude towards the Bible. He learned it for himself—hardly ever any one so thoroughly ; he taught it to others—hardly ever any one so forcefully.

It was not possible for Wesley to give to his fellow-countrymen, like Luther, the Scriptures in their own language ; this had already been done. But, during an enforced interval of leisure, on account of illness, he did give his people a Revised Version of the New Testament, which, allowing for the advantage possessed by our Revisers of 1881 in regard to their more accurate Greek text, compares favourably with their work. In his Preface to the original edition of 1755, he says, excusing himself, to such as might think that he had not made sufficient change, for not deviating from the familiar version more than fidelity required :—“ This I could not prevail upon myself to do : so much the less, because there is, to my apprehension, I know not what peculiarly solemn and venerable in the old language of our translation. And suppose this to be a mistaken apprehension, and an instance of human infirmity ; yet is it not an excusable infirmity, to be unwilling to part with what we have been long accustomed to, and to love the very words, by which God has often conveyed strength or comfort to our souls ? ”

In the ‘ Notes,’ following largely the exegesis of Bengel, Wesley enshrines the teaching of those doctrines of spiritual experience and practical holiness, which to him, as one commissioned to bear testimony, were all in all. These ‘ Notes on the New Testament,’ along with certain Sermons to be presently noticed, he

indicated, in a famous legal document, as the Standard of Doctrine for his preachers, and other accredited teachers of religion. It is very important always to remind ourselves that *only the great cardinal principles of experimental and practical piety, upon which he was always insisting, are thus intended*; namely, those that we are at present studying.

What then is the testimony of the 'Notes' in this respect? To answer the question, we cannot do better than take Wesley's comments on crucial passages in those Epistles of Paul which have already been so much in evidence, Romans and Galatians.

Commenting on Rom. i. 16, 17 ('For I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, both to the Jew and to the Gentile. For the righteousness of God is revealed therein, from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith'), he thus describes the Gospel:—"The great and gloriously powerful means of saving all who accept salvation in God's own way. There is a noble frankness, as well as a comprehensive sense, in these words, by which he on the one hand shows the Jews their absolute need of the Gospel, and on the other, tells the politest and greatest nation in the world, both that their salvation depended on receiving it, and that the first offers of it were in every case to be made to the despised Jews." Speaking of 'the righteousness of God,' he says:—"This expression sometimes means God's eternal, essential righteousness, which includes both justice and mercy, and is eminently shown in condemning sin, and yet justifying the sinner. Sometimes it means that righteousness by which a man, through the gift of God, is made and

is righteous. And that, both by apprehending the righteousness of Christ through faith, and by a conformity to the essential righteousness of God. St. Paul, when treating of Justification, means hereby the Righteousness of Faith: therefore called 'The Righteousness of God,' because God found out and prepared, reveals and gives, approves and crowns it."

In his note on Rom. v. 1 (' Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ '), he says: " This is the sum of the preceding chapters. Being enemies to God no longer, neither fearing His wrath, we have peace, hope, love, and power over sin. These are the fruits of justifying faith: where these are not, that faith is not."

On Rom. viii. 16 (' The same Spirit beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God '), he comments briefly:—" With the spirit of every true believer, by a testimony distinct from that of his own spirit, or the testimony of a good conscience. Happy they who enjoy this, clear and constant." And on viii. 38, 39: "' I am persuaded '—having overcome the wicked one, and being now superior to all doubt and fear. ' Neither death nor life,' &c. How many great and various things are contained in these words, we do not, need not, cannot know yet. ' Nor any creature ': nothing beneath the Almighty; visible enemies he does not even deign to name. ' Shall be able '—either by force or by any legal claim—' to separate us from the Love of God in Christ,' which will surely save, protect, deliver us, the faithful, in, and through, and from them all."

Grace—faith—assurance—perfect love: here once more we have his main principles, tersely but clearly set forth.

Writing on the great Galatians saying (ii. 20), which had meant so much to him and to his brother Charles, he says briefly, as though it were too well known to need enlargement here:—" ' I am crucified with Christ '—made conformable to His death; ' and I live no longer '—being dead to sin: ' but Christ liveth in me '—is a Fountain of Life in my inmost soul, from which all my tempers, words, and actions flow. ' And the life that I now live in the flesh '—even in this mortal body—' I live by faith in the Son of God ' : I derive every moment from that supernatural principle; from a divine evidence and conviction, that He ' loved me, and gave Himself for me. ' "

Once more, on his own great text, Eph. ii. 8-10 (' By grace are ye saved through faith, ' &c.), he gathers up the whole of his special teaching in one summary statement:—" Grace, without any respect to human worthiness, confers the glorious gift. Faith, with an empty hand, and without any pretence to personal desert, receives the heavenly blessing. ' And this not of yourselves ' : ' this ' refers to the whole preceding clause; that ' ye are saved through faith ' is ' the gift of God. ' ' Not of works ' : Neither this faith nor this salvation is owing to any works you ever did, will, or can do. ' For we are His workmanship '—which proves, both that salvation is by faith, and that faith is the gift of God; ' created unto good works '—that afterwards we might give ourselves to them; ' which God had before prepared '—the occasions of

them : so we must still ascribe the whole to God ; ' that we might walk in them '—though not be justified by them."

4. WESLEY'S STANDARD SERMONS.

Of the 141 Sermons included in Wesley's ' Works,' 44, as it is now ascertained (they were till lately erroneously thought to be 53), were specified, along with the ' Notes on the New Testament,' as the Standard of the spiritual and ethical teaching of Methodism, in the Deed Poll enrolled by John Wesley in Chancery, March 9, 1784, and embodied in the Wesleyan Model Deed. No ' doctrine or practice contrary to what is contained ' in these Notes and Sermons is to be regarded as consistent with loyalty to the Methodist mission.

We have already anticipated, in dealing with Wesley's ' Notes,' what must now be more fully considered, namely, the true interpretation of his meaning in thus assuring the fidelity of Methodist teaching to the great purpose for which he considered that Methodism had come into being—' to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land,' according to his oft-quoted watchword. As for his people generally, he imposed no doctrinal condition of membership whatever, requiring of them ' barely this one thing, to fear God, and work righteousness ' (' Journal,' Aug. 26, 1789 ; see also under May 18, 1788). He glories in the fact that not ' any other Church builds on so broad a foundation as the Methodists.'

In his Preface to the Sermons—now used as a preface to all the Sermons, but intended at first for the early selection—Wesley says :—" The following Sermons

contain the substance of what I have been preaching for between eight and nine years last past." He writes in 1746, when the first instalment of the selected sermons was published; but his words continued to be used, to the last, as prefatory to the special doctrinal selection of which we are speaking. "During that time," he goes on to say, "I have frequently spoken in public, on every subject in the ensuing collection; and I am not conscious that there is any one point of doctrine, on which I am accustomed to speak in public, which is not here, incidentally, if not professedly, laid before every Christian reader. Every serious man who peruses these will therefore see, in the clearest manner, *what these doctrines are which I embrace and teach as the essentials of true religion.*" He says further, "I have endeavoured to describe *the true, the scriptural, experimental religion*, so as to omit nothing which is a real part thereof, and to add nothing thereto which is not." When the words which, for convenience, are italicised above are duly weighed, and when they are compared with his thousand times reiterated statements on the subject of essential, experimental religion—and *practice* (for he never lets this pass out of sight)—it will be clear, first, that *nothing which is not fully dealt with in these sermons was regarded by Wesley as essential*, and that, of what is here dealt with, *only that which concerns 'experimental religion'* is regarded as vitally important.

The way is thus cleared for an examination of the contents of the Sermons. One immediate result is very striking. Of the Forty-Four Sermons, *no fewer than thirty-two belong to the department of Christian Ethics*, that is, of the religion of practice, thirteen of

these consisting of a consecutive exposition of the Sermon on the Mount. Of the remaining twelve, several are predominantly ethical, and in every case the doctrinal passes into the ethical at almost every opportunity.

It may help to illustrate, and confirm, the above statement, if we glance at the list of subjects. 1. Salvation by Faith. 2. The Almost Christian. 3. Awake, thou that Sleepest! 4. Scriptural Christianity. 5. Justification by Faith. 6. The Righteousness of Faith. 7. The Way to the Kingdom. 8. The First-Fruits of the Spirit. 9. The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption. 10. The Witness of the Spirit. 11. The Witness of our own Spirit. 12. The Means of Grace. 13. The Circumcision of the Heart. 14. The Marks of the New Birth. 15. The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God. 16-28. The Sermon on the Mount. 29. The Original, Nature, Property, and Use of the Law. 30, 31. The Law Established through Faith. 32. The Nature of Enthusiasm. 33. A Caution against Bigotry. 34. Catholic Spirit. 35. Christian Perfection. 36. Wandering Thoughts. 37. Satan's Devices. 38. Original Sin. 39. The New Birth. 40. The Wilderness State. 41. Heaviness through Manifold Temptations. 42. Self-Denial. 43. The Cure of Evil-Speaking. 44. The Use of Money.

From such a survey we find ourselves confirmed in this conclusion: Wesley's Standard Sermons are expressly meant to teach, and to teach with frequent reiteration, the few cardinal doctrines of what he considered *the religion of the heart*; and also to insist upon the imperative necessity of *the religion of the life*. With him, 'experimental religion' means nothing

dreamy, imaginative, sentimental, but the experience of vital godliness, godliness of character and of conduct.

What, then, let us ask once more, in the light of this authoritative manifesto, are the great practical doctrines of Christianity? The answer may be summed up in the title of the first sermon: 'Salvation by Faith.' For in this comprehensive doctrine all the others are included; and what may not be so included, however otherwise important, has no part in what Wesley regards as essential Christianity. This great Salvation he describes more particularly, in other sermons, as consisting of Justification; Adoption, and the Witness of the Spirit; The New Birth; Sanctification; and Christian Perfection. In every instance Wesley aims at simplifying the truth, and bringing it down to the level of daily life.

We may fairly express his teaching on these great themes in the following statement. Salvation is of God's free grace, through faith in Jesus Christ; it consists of our forgiveness and acceptance, assured to us by the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit; and this joyful assurance constitutes the starting-point, and continues to be the inspiration, of a new life, a life of holy love, love perfect and triumphant. Love is first, midmost, and last: God's Universal Love (for such love cannot be otherwise than universal), signalled to the world by the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; revealed to each one's contrite faith by the tender persuasions of the Spirit; and winning for us the victory over self and sin, in the service of the Redeemer and His redeemed.

It will be seen that there are certain great implicates in these main doctrines of Methodism, assumed by

Wesley as hardly disputable by those with whom he had to do. He assumes the existence of a Holy God, but maintains that He is Universal Love, from whose compassions none are shut out, whether by positive decree or by neglect. He assumes equally a spiritual nature in man, which, although stricken with grievous sin, may respond, by faith, to God's free grace—or, by refusal, may condemn itself to exclusion from God. He assumes, as accepted by Christendom generally, the glorious message of the Gospel, concerning the Christ who lived for man, and died for sin, and lives for evermore; but he repudiates the assumption that any orthodoxy of belief, or ceremony, or sacrament of Christian profession, is of any avail whatever without faith that works by love. He assumes the terrible reality of sin, as threatening us all along the way of our life; but he magnifies the saving grace of Christ, which avails to master those threatenings, and thus to accomplish, in our behalf, not a partial but a perfect victory. He summons men to repentance; he warns them that, apart from Christ, they have no help, no hope; he promises them, in Christ's name, an uttermost salvation, to be experienced in this present life; and he holds out to them the prospect of life for evermore.

This is the standard teaching of Methodism. Not all that Wesley believed, in the way of opinion; not all that he taught, beyond the range of these standard truths; not all the incidental detail even of these teachings; but what he insisted upon, over and over again, with an iteration and an emphasis that leave no room for doubt or mistake, as being the essential truths of vital godliness, of practical piety—these

are the doctrines of Methodism, the doctrines by which men are saved, the doctrines to which loyalty is asked on the part of all who are entrusted with the Methodist testimony.

Not a little significance attaches to what was no doubt Wesley's considered and deliberate omission of certain things to which he held, or thought he held, tenaciously, as well as of others that he took more or less for granted, but had not explored. For example, in the 14th Sermon, 'The Marks of the New Birth,' referring to baptism, he says: "Lean no more on the staff of that broken reed, that ye *were* born again in baptism. Who denies"—for that was not his present business—"that ye were then made children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven? But notwithstanding this, ye are now children of the devil." (He had good cause to say this to many of his hearers.) "Therefore ye must be born again." And in the supplementary 39th Sermon on the same subject he says: "Baptism is not the new birth; they are not one and the same thing. For what can be more plain, than that the one is an external, the other an internal work; that the one is a visible, the other an invisible thing; and therefore [that they are] wholly different from each other?" Then, very guardedly, he goes on to say, after allowing that the Church of England 'supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy are at the same time born again': "Whatever be the case with infants"—he evidently does not feel sure—"it is sure all of riper years who are baptized are not at the same time born again." Clearly he does not intend to teach any doctrine of baptism in his Standard Sermons, but rather to insist,

whatever baptism may or may not mean, that a change of heart is the one essential, of paramount importance.

Similarly in regard to the Lord's Supper. He deals with it once only, in the 12th Sermon, on 'The Means of Grace.' After speaking of prayer, and the searching of the Scriptures, he says: "All who desire an increase of the grace of God are to wait for it in partaking of the Lord's Supper." He then speaks very tenderly of the spiritual grace which is attendant on these signs of Christ's dying love, as interpreted by a humble, contrite faith. But once more he speaks words of caution. Still referring to the three means of grace of which he has been speaking, namely, Prayer, the Word of God, and the Lord's Supper, he says: "The means into which different men are led, and in which they find the blessing of God, are varied, transposed, and combined together, a thousand different ways." (This is to be carefully noted, in our study of one characteristic type of experience; for, as we premised at the beginning, the types may vary almost without limit, if the essential principles are present.) "As to the manner of using them, *whereon indeed it wholly depends whether they shall convey any grace at all to the user*, it behoves us always to retain a lively sense that God is above all means. Have a care, therefore, of limiting the Almighty. He can convey His grace, either in or out of any of the means which He hath appointed." And again, "Before you use any means, let it be deeply impressed on your soul—there is no *power* in this. It is, in itself, a poor, dead empty thing; separate from God, it is a dry leaf, a shadow." "Remember to use all means *as means*; as ordained, not for their own sake, but in order to the

renewal of your soul in righteousness and true holiness. If, therefore, they actually tend to this, well ; but if not, they are dung and dross." Wesley has gone far from the High-Churchmanship of Oxford and Georgia days. But, in any case, whatever he may have thought, or have said in any other connection, and whatever his brother may have thought or taught, regarding the Church, the Ministry, and the Sacraments, apart from the allusions just noticed, these themes find no place in the Standard Sermons.

Wesley will regard nothing as essential which cannot be reduced to terms of spiritual experience and godly living, or which is not comprised within the limits of his first subject, 'By grace are ye saved through faith.' Nor does he philosophize on any of the doctrines. He will appeal, he will urge, he will insist, but the essential truth is not that which addresses itself to the speculative intellect ; it is that which commands the homage of the conscience and persuades the heart. Or, as we may express it relatively to the subject of our main inquiry, the essential truth of the Gospel is nothing other than what constitutes the Ethic of Christianity.

It is not the High Churchman, with his mysteries ; nor the Broad Churchman, with his moral wisdom ; much less is it the hard and arid dogmatist, with his insistence on the minutiae of an elaborate creed, who faces us in these Sermons. It is the earnest Preacher of the Gospel. And the Gospel which he presents, with its involved claims, is a Gospel of such simplicity, of such obvious accord with Scripture, of such felt agreement with the needs of the soul, and of such proved power in the transformation of heart and life,

that to require of all who accept a commission from Methodism, that they shall be loyal to such a message, and to invite those to whom the message addresses itself, that they believe it and rejoice—this surely is no bondage, this is no infringement of right or interference with freedom ; but it is rather, as properly understood, the protection of their rights, and the very charter of their liberty.

FLETCHER.

In passing from this ample testimony of John Wesley to the doctrines of experimental and practical Christianity, we may glance at the supplementary witness of one who was more to him than Melancthon was to Luther—Fletcher of Madeley.

Fletcher has been called, 'Wesley's Designated Successor.' We might almost call him Wesley's other self. Wesley says of him, "We were of one heart and of one soul." It was desired by the Preachers, as well as by Wesley, that Fletcher should become the Leader, when the Apostle of Methodism should be called higher. He half consented. But his seraph-soul burnt out the frail vesture too soon. It fell to Wesley to write his Life.

The intellect of Fletcher was one of the acutest ; the force of his logic was irresistible ; he commanded a luminously beautiful English style, although of Swiss-French birth and education. In the antinomian controversy he was the protagonist who contended, trenchantly and triumphantly, for the Ethic of Christianity, against those who would so exaggerate God's work in man's election and salvation, as to deny man's true freedom of will ; who thought to magnify

grace at the expense of righteousness. When Wesley found that he had such a Knight of the White Cross in the field, he left to him the disputancy, that he himself might pursue his more constructive work. Fletcher's argument has never been answered to this day. It is unanswerable.

He thus concludes his 'Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense':—"Irradiating thy soul with the light of His reconciled countenance, God, even thy own God, says to *thee*, from a throne blazing with grace and glory, 'Penitent believer, receive the adoption of a son. Because thou receivest My Son, My Only Begotten Son, into thy heart, I admit thee into the family of the first-born. Be thou blameless and harmless, a son of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom I allow thee to shine as a burning light in a benighted world. As thou hast received Him, so abide and walk in Him, worthy of Me, unto all pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in His knowledge, till thy faith is turned to sight, and I am all in all."

Near the end of his tractate, 'The Reconciliation,' he thus writes:—"Let our religion influence our hearts as well as our heads. Let us mind the practice as well as the theory of Christianity. The bare knowledge of Christ's doctrine 'puffeth up, but charity edifieth.'" Again, "Christianity is the religion of love. From first to last it teaches us love—free, distinguishing, matchless love."

In such words Fletcher has unconsciously drawn his own portrait. He was a personification of the Apostle Paul's Corinthian Lyric of Love. Methodism may well be content, as was Wesley, to let such a

character remain the vindication of its Ethic. Jean Guillaume de la Flechère and Mary Bosanquet, or John and Mary Fletcher, each equal to the other, each utterly devoted to the other, and both wholly devoted to the Will of God and the service of man, as perfect as any that are canonised in the reverent regard of mankind, are Methodism's representative saints.

5. THE WESLEY HYMNOLOGY.

The Methodist Revival was attended, and greatly aided, by a glorious outburst of song. JOHN RICHARD GREEN, in his 'Short History of the English People,' says, "Charles Wesley came to add sweetness to this sudden and startling light. He was the 'sweet singer' of the movement. His hymns expressed the fiery conviction of its converts in lines so chaste and beautiful that its more extravagant features disappeared. The wild throes of hysteric enthusiasm passed into a passion for hymn-singing, and a new musical impulse was aroused in the people, which gradually changed the face of public devotion throughout England."

A great American historian, DR. ABEL STEVENS, thus writes of Charles Wesley: "His thoughts seemed to bask and revel in rhythm. The variety of his metres (said to be unequalled by any English writer whatever) shows how impulsive were his poetic emotions, and how wonderful his facility in their spontaneous and varied utterance. They march at times like lengthened processions with solemn grandeur; they sweep at other times like chariots of fire through the heavens; they are broken like the sobs of grief at the grave side, they play like the joyful affections of childhood at the hearth, or shout like victors in the fray of the battlefield."

Charles Wesley wrote no fewer than 6,500 hymns, and it is amazing that so large a proportion are of the very first quality. He was an impassioned preacher, on whose words the crowds hung spell-bound. But he was a yet greater singer, and, taken all in all, was probably the greatest hymn-writer the world has ever known.

Two days after his Pentecost, that is, on Whit Tuesday, May 23, 1738, Charles Wesley broke into a hymn of rapturous praise and pleading—his first hymn of which we know anything. He exclaims, 'Where shall my wondering soul begin?' and, after rehearsing the goodness of God in thus coming to his deliverance, turns earnestly to others:—

He calls you now, invites you home—
Come, O my guilty brethren, come!

This was the hymn that they sang together on the evening of the next day, when John was brought from the Aldersgate Street meeting by a troop of friends, to tell how upon him likewise the light had shone. They all praised God together.

A year later, when the anniversary of Charles's spiritual birthday came round, he recalled it all so vividly, that once more his lips broke into a song of praise. The hymn with which he then celebrated his spiritual birthday, standing first in the Methodist Hymn Book, is rightly regarded as the great manifesto, in song, of the doctrines of grace that the Wesley brothers preached. It is too well known to need quotation. Beginning, 'O for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer's praise,' it passes, in the later verses, to earnest exhortation: 'See all your

sins on Jesus laid.' One line has been declared to be the greatest single line in the whole range of English hymnody, for marvellous compression of spiritual-ethical meaning: 'He breaks the power of cancelled sin.'

There is one significant connection of John Wesley with the minstrelsy of the Revival. In 1780 he published his final and complete collection of hymns, and the Table of Contents is one of the most effective presentments of the experience and ethic of living Christianity to be anywhere found. It is too full to be reproduced, but should be carefully studied, as a wonderful chart of the spiritual life, a vivid transcript of his own experience and teaching. One striking feature, still retained partially in the present Hymn Book, may be mentioned. Coming to the experience of believers, Wesley begins with hymns 'For Believers Rejoicing,' and then proceeds with hymns for 'Believers Fighting, Praying, Watching, Working, Suffering.' It is the right order of experience now, the true Ethic as contrasted with the inverted ethic of his earlier years. At the outset of the Christian life he places the great inspiration which was to make that life possible.

It is a singular circumstance in the history of the brothers Wesley, that, whereas during the Georgian period, John was a hymnist of unsurpassed grandeur, he seems rarely to have indulged his poetic impulse after the Methodist movement was well begun; while Charles, whose lips were sealed for song, so far as we know, in Georgia, began a lyrical outburst, with his great deliverance, that ceased only with death. Was it that John, recognising the transcendent genius of his brother, and himself absorbed in the multiplying

detail of his work, quietly yielded the place to one who, on the whole, would fill it better; and that Charles, whose genius was helpless until its great inspiration came, was then unable to repress its mighty impulse?

In the 1739 Hymn Book, John Wesley's magnificent translations, from German, Spanish, and French, fill an ample space; afterwards he contented himself chiefly—not wholly—with the revision of Charles's hymns, which owed more than we shall ever know to the almost unerring taste of the elder brother. Of the hymns which have been commonly ascribed to Charles, there are two that are assigned by some good judges to John. One of these is 'Jesu, lover of my soul'; and the Editor of the 'Journal,' in one of the bits of literary romance which we owe to his insight, has almost proved, from the Private Diary, that, on a walking journey to Oxford, Oct. 9, 1738, John Wesley composed that deeply interesting hymn of his life's pilgrimage:—

Talk with us, Lord, Thyself reveal,
 While here o'er earth we rove;
 Speak to our hearts, and let us feel
 The kindling of Thy love.

With Thee conversing, we forget
 All time, and toil, and care;
 Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
 If Thou, my God, art here.

Here then, my God, vouchsafe to stay,
 And bid my heart rejoice;
 My bounding heart shall own Thy sway,
 And echo to Thy voice.

Thou callest me to seek Thy face,
 'Tis all I wish to seek ;
 To attend the whispers of Thy grace,
 And hear Thee inly speak.

Let this my every hour employ,
 Till I Thy glory see ;
 Enter into my Master's joy,
 And find my heaven in Thee.

Wesley wrote, in his ' Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion,' already noticed :—" By salvation I mean, not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven ; but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity ; a recovery of the Divine nature ; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and, by consequence, all holiness of conversation. Now, if by salvation we mean a present salvation from sin, we cannot say, holiness is the condition of it ; for it is the thing itself. Salvation, in this sense, and holiness, are synonymous terms. We must therefore say, ' We are saved by faith.' Faith is the sole condition of this salvation. For without faith we cannot be thus saved. But whosoever believeth is saved already. Without faith we cannot be thus saved ; for we cannot rightly serve God unless we love Him. And we cannot love Him unless we know Him ; neither can we know God unless by faith. Therefore, salvation by faith is only, in other words, the love of God by the knowledge of God ; or, the recovery of the image of God, by a true, spiritual acquaintance with Him."

That is the prose of which the hymn above quoted is the poetry. Is it not the final test of the Christian Ethic, that it turns life's prose into poetry? The righteousness of effort gives place to the freedom of faith and love. 'We are God's Poem (*ποίημα*),' said the Apostle (Eph. ii. 10): the creative touch of God upon the soul makes it break into rhythm and song. Such was the effect of the baptism of fire that came to the brothers Wesley in their memorable Pentecost week. From that time forth, John Wesley's career was transformed into an Epic of Devotion; and Charles Wesley's life became a Lyric of Praise.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

OUR work is done. Very imperfectly, indeed, but, it is hoped, along the right lines, we have made a survey of the subject with which we set out to deal—the relation of the spiritual experience to the ethical life of the Christian, as compared with the ethic of knowledge and effort in the Græco-Roman philosophy that prevailed when Christianity began its course, and that persisted so long, in various forms, through the subsequent centuries. As the result, we have found, that, unanimously and consistently, though by no means uniformly, the witnesses of the Christian Gospel, following the teaching of Christ, and claiming to be guided by His Spirit, exhibit and enforce the Ethic, not so much of knowledge, as of Faith, and not primarily or prominently of effort, but of Love. That is, they relate Ethic immediately to Experience, both the experience and the consequent ethic being of an intimately spiritual character. The treatment of this theme is not uniform, for not only do the Synoptists, followed by James and Peter, by Paul and the Pauline group, and later by John, present the subject, though always with the same essentials, yet from various standpoints of thought ; but, in the case of so prolific a writer as the Apostle Paul, there are corresponding variations, partly perhaps due to the development of his own experience, but more to the different conditions prevailing in the churches to which he wrote.

Allowing for these variations of type, we have seen that the following factors are always recognised as essential to the Religious Experience which issues in the Ethic of Christianity :—*A Great Divine Initiative, A Great Divine Redemption, An Ever Living Divine-Human Personality, A Great Divine Assurance, A Great Divine Consecration* ; or, more briefly expressed : The Grace of Salvation through Christ, Assured to the Heart by the Spirit, as the Source and Inspiration of the Life of Perfect Love. The human condition we found to be Faith—Faith working by Love ; this faith being, no mere belief, nor general conviction or confidence, but a vital, individual appropriation of the saving grace of Christ.

In pursuance of the same line of thought, and keeping in view mainly what may be recognised as the peculiarly Pauline type of Christian experience, we came to the study of what proved to be largely the same type of experience, as presented in Luther, and again in Wesley. In either case we found, both exhibited and exemplified, the same close and causal connection of experience and life ; this being manifest, in the case of Luther, more as the Righteousness of Faith, or joyful freedom for the good resulting from an assured Justification, and, in Wesley's case, as Perfect Love, working through the assurance of Adoption.

It is remarkable that, at the present time, while much Christian teaching is trending away once more from the central truth of the Gospel, either towards a sort of revival of the old Greek ethic of knowledge and effort, though reinforced by the stimulating Pattern of Jesus, or towards a new interpretation of

the ceremonial and symbolic, as justifying the ecclesiasticism, now miscalled 'catholicism,' with which Christendom experimented so long ; yet much of the best philosophy is tending towards a clearer recognition of the value of spiritual experience as the inspiration of a true ethical character and life. RUDOLF EUCKEN, in 'The Problem of Human Life,' already quoted, says : " The craving for a stronger, deeper life in a larger and a nobler setting is no mere echo of past ages, but an urgent, present need. If to-day it finds but an incomplete and halting expression, yet its presence is unmistakable, and we cannot doubt that it will grow and spread, since it is especially the young, with their quick response to spiritual appeals, who, in every civilised land, feel it most keenly." SORLEY, in his supremely important Gifford Lecture, 'Moral Values and the Idea of God' (Cambridge University Press), says : " The Divine purpose is that values should be realised in man's nature, and it can be attained only by man making this purpose his own. In meeting and welcoming the Divine grace, man's spirit is not passive, but responsive ; and the Divine influence comes as a gift, and not by compulsion. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock,' said the Master. Entry is craved, not forced. The soul may be immersed in routine without thinking of the deeper things in life, or it may assert its lower interests and remain deaf to the call of God. But that call is to its essential nature and spiritual destiny ; and, if the call is answered, the soul finds its freedom in fulfilling the Divine purpose." PROFESSOR ALFRED CALDECOTT has strikingly vindicated the psychological as well as the ethical value of spiritual experience, in his Essay,

'The Religious Sentiment : Illustrated from the Lives of Wesley's Helpers,' read some time ago before the Aristotelian Society.

For our own personal encouragement, and for our strengthening in whatever we would do to encourage others, we cannot give heed to a better testimony than that which is borne by one who was almost peerless, as a master of thought and speech, at a time when philosophy was more alien in sympathy (WILLIAM ARTHUR, 'Physical and Moral Law': The Epworth Press, London):—"He alone into whose renewed nature the grace of God has wrought the spirit of the moral law can really inherit the earth, filled with fruition of tranquil days and radiant nights, and large measure of immortal hope. For the pebbly roads of life, for the troubled fords of death, and for the unending travel of eternity, the feet need to be shod with the preparation of peace—peace that springs from good news of past sins forgiven, good news of a strong Friend who awaits one on every shore."

APPENDIX

PREFACE TO APPENDIX

It may be convenient to readers who have not access to Luther's Tractates, of such vast importance to the cause of the Reformation, 'Concerning the Freedom of a Christian Man,' and 'Prologue to the Epistle to the Romans,' in their original form, to be provided with the following translations from the original German. They may err on the side of literality, but it seemed best to keep as close as possible to the very phraseology of Luther.

One word has caused difficulty—fromm (written by Luther, frum). It now carries with it the meaning of subjective experience in religion, whereas it is quite evident from the context in certain instances that Luther uses it with an objective meaning, 'of a right religious standing, or character.' The Latin version of the 'Freedom' pamphlet (seemingly not available at present, in its separate form) must have so understood the word, for Wace and Buchheim appear to render it by 'justified.' Tyndale, in his paraphrase of the 'Prologue,' renders 'frum und selig,' 'righteous and safe.' We must remember that religious phraseology passed through a change of significance in some cases, taking on afterwards the more spiritual meaning that corresponded with the new subjective experience of religion. It has seemed best, therefore, for brevity's sake, to render the word 'religious,' understanding it to mean 'religiously right.'

Extracts are given from the 'Prologue to Romans,' in Luther's archaic German, in the Latin version by Justus Jonas, in the old English translation (from the Latin) by W. W., and in Tyndale's paraphrase, of those portions which played so important a part in Wesley's Aldersgate Street experience.

Copious extracts are given from the Gal. ii. 20 notes of Luther's Commentary on Galatians, the great saying of

that verse having so intimate a relation to the experience, first of Paul himself, then of Luther, finally of the Wesleys.

The hymn of 1523 on 'Grace,' of which a part is given, in the corresponding metre, as an attempted English rendering, in this work (see p. 205), is here presented in its original form, in full.

T. F. L.

I

CONCERNING THE FREEDOM OF A CHRISTIAN MAN

JESUS

I. That we may thoroughly apprehend what is a Christian man, and how the case stands with regard to the freedom which Christ has won for him, and given, of which St. Paul writes much, I will lay down these two propositions :—

A Christian man is a free lord over all things, and in subjection to no one.

A Christian man is a bondservant of all things, and in subjection to everyone.

These two propositions are clearly taught by St. Paul. ' I am free in all things, and have made myself servant of everyone ' (1 Cor. ix. 19). ' Ye shall be beholden at all to no one, except that ye love one another ' (Rom. xiii. 8). Love, however, this is serviceable and submissive to that which it loves. Even also as it is said of Christ, ' God hath sent forth His Son, born of a woman, made in subjection to the law ' (Gal. iv. 4).

II. To understand these two contradictory statements about freedom and bondservice, we should remember that every Christian man is of a twofold nature, spiritual and bodily. According to the soul, he is called a spiritual, a new, an inward man ; according to flesh and blood, he is called a bodily, an old and outward man. And with regard to this distinction, things will be said of him in Scripture, which are directly contrary to one another, as I said just now of freedom and bondservice.

FIRST PART

III. Let us take then, for our purpose, the inner, spiritual man, to see what belongs thereto, that he may be, and be

called, a religious, free Christian man. Now it is evident that no outward thing may make him free, nor religious, however he may be named. For his devotion and freedom, or on the other hand his wickedness and thralldom, are not bodily nor outward. What avails it the soul, that the body is unenthralled, fresh, and sound, eats, drinks, lives as it will? On the other hand, what matters it to the soul, that the body is enthralled, ill, and faint, hungers, thirsts, and suffers, as it would not willingly? These things reach not to the soul, to set it free or take it captive, make it religious or wicked.

IV. Moreover, it avails the soul nothing, if the body puts on holy array, as the priests and 'spirituals' do; not even if it is to be found in churches and holy cities; not even if it says its prayers, fasts, is excited, and does all good works that through and in the body might be always coming to pass. It must be something altogether different, that brings and gives to the soul devotion and freedom. For all these aforesaid details, works, and ways, may even a wicked man, a hypocrite and dissembler, have and practise to himself. Indeed, through such behaviour no other folk than mere hypocrites are grown. On the other hand, it matters nothing to the soul, if the body wears unholy array, is found in unholy places, eats, drinks, is not excited, nor says prayers, and forbears all the works which the aforesaid hypocrites do.

V. The soul has nothing else, neither in heaven nor on earth, wherein it lives, is religious, free, and Christian, but the holy gospel, the word of God preached by Christ; as He Himself says (John xi. 25), 'I am the Life and Resurrection: whoso believeth on Me liveth for ever.' Again (John xiv. 6), 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' Again (Matt. iv. 4), 'Man doth not live by bread alone, but by all words that proceed from the mouth of God.' So that we must now be sure, that the soul can dispense with everything, except the word of God, and, apart from the word of God, it is beholden to nothing. Where, however, it has the word of God, in that case it no longer has need of anything else, but in that word it has sufficiency,

satisfaction, joy, peace, light, skill, righteousness, truth, wisdom, freedom, and every kind of good, superabundantly. Thus we read in Psalms, particularly in Psalm cxix., that the prophet no longer cries out except for God's word. And in Scripture it is accounted the uttermost chastisement and wrath of God, when He takes His word from man. On the other hand, there is no greater grace, than when He sends forth His word, as we read in Psalm cv. (see verse 8 ff.), 'He hath sent forth His word, wherewith He hath helped them.' And Christ is come for no other office than to preach the word of God. Likewise, all apostles, bishops, priests, and the whole spiritual profession, is called and established only for the sake of the word: although, alas, things now are otherwise!

VI. Dost thou, however, ask, 'What then is the word, that gives such great grace, and how am I to make use of it?' I answer, 'It is nothing else than the preaching that has come to us concerning Christ, as the Gospel contains it; which ought to be, and is, so fulfilled, that thou hearest thy God declare to thee, how that all thy life and works are nothing before God, but thou, with all that is in thee, must perish for ever.' Which if thou truly believest, as thou oughtest, so must thou despair of thyself, and acknowledge that the saying is true in Hosea xiii. 9, 'O Israel, in thee is nothing but thy destruction; only in Me is thy help.' That thou, however, mayest come out of and away from thyself, that is, out of thy destruction, so does He set before thee His dear Son Jesus Christ, and lets it be said to thee, through His living, faithful word, that thou shouldst surrender thyself to Him with firm faith, and repose a new trust in Him. So should all thy sins be forgiven on account of that faith, all thy destruction be overthrown, and thou shouldst be righteous, assured, at peace, religious, and all the commandments should be fulfilled; and thou shouldst be free of all things. As St. Paul says (Rom. i. 17), 'A righteous Christian liveth only by his faith'; and (Rom. x. 4), 'Christ is the end and fulfilment of all commandments to those who believe on Him.'

VII. Therefore should it be the only reasonable work and practice of all Christians, that they cherish in themselves the word, and Christ, and constantly practise and strengthen such faith. For no other work can make a Christian. Even as Christ said to the Jews (John vi. 28, 29), when they asked Him, what they should do in the way of works, that they might do godly and Christian works. He said, 'This is the only godly work, that ye believe in Him whom God hath sent, whom alone God the Father hath appointed thereto.' Therefore is it quite a superabundant wealth, this true faith in Christ, for it brings with it all salvation, and takes away all guilty gloom. Even as we read in Mark xvi. 16, 'He who believeth and is baptized, is saved; he who believeth not, is condemned.' Thus the prophet (Isa. x. 23) looked at the wealth of the same faith, and said, 'God will make a swift consummation on earth, and the swift consummation will instil righteousness, like a flood'; that is, faith, wherein consists a fulfilling swiftly of all commandments, will abundantly justify all that have it, that they may fear nothing any more; that they may be righteous and religious. So says St. Paul (Rom. x. 10), 'That one believes from the heart, this makes one righteous,' and religious.

VIII. But how does it come to pass, that faith alone can make us religious, and, without all works, give us such superabundant wealth, while yet many laws, commandments, works, states, and ways are prescribed to us in Scripture? Here it is for us to mark diligently, and earnestly to remember, that faith alone, apart from all works, makes religious, free, and happy, as we shall hereafter hear more fully. And it is for us to know, that the whole of holy Scripture is divided into two kinds of word, which are commandments or laws of God, and proffers or promises. The commandments teach and prescribe to us many kinds of good works, but therewith are they not yet brought to pass. They show the way, indeed, but they do not help; they teach what man should do, but give no strength to do it. Therefore they are ordered for that purpose only, that therein man may see his impotence for

good, and learn to despair of himself. And therefore are they called also the Old Testament, and all belong to the Old Testament. For instance, the commandment, 'Thou shalt not have evil desires,' shows us that we are altogether sinners, and that no man is able to be without evil desires, do what he will ; from which he learns to despair of himself, and to seek help elsewhere, that he may be without evil desires, and so fulfil the commandment through Another, which of himself he cannot do. Thus also are all other commandments to us impossible.

IX. When now man has learned from the commandments his own impotence, and has experienced that to him it is now a matter of anxiety, how he may satisfy the commandment, then is he quite abased, and brought to nought, in his own eyes ; finds nothing in himself whereby he may become religious. Then there comes that other word, the divine proffer and promise, and says : 'Wouldst thou fulfil all commandments, be free from thy evil desires and sins, as the commandments enforce and require ; behold, believe in Christ, in whom I promise thee all grace, righteousness, peace, and freedom. Believe, and thou hast ; believe not, and thou hast not. For what to thee is impossible with all works of the commandments, which must be of much and yet of no use, this becomes to thee easy and speedy through faith. For I have put all things, in brief, into faith, so that he who has it, shall have all things, and be saved ; he who has it not, shall have nothing.' Thus God's promises give what the commandments require, and bring to fulfilment, what the commandments enjoin ; so that it may all be of God only, commandment and fulfilment. He alone enjoins, He also alone fulfils. Therefore are the promises of God's word those of the New Testament, and are suitable to the New Testament.

X. Now these and all God's words are holy, sure, righteous, peaceable, free, and full of all good. Therefore the soul of that man who cleaves to them with a true faith becomes united with Him, so entirely and thoroughly, that all virtues of the word become those also of the soul. And thus through faith the soul, by the word of God, becomes

holy, righteous, faithful, peaceable, free, and full of all good, a true child of God, as it is said in John i. 12: 'He hath granted them, that they might become children of God, even all who believe on His name.' Hence we may easily perceive why faith avails so much, and that no good works can be comparable to it. For no good work cleaves to the divine word, as does faith, nor can be in the soul; but only the word and faith rule in the soul. As is the word, so also does the soul become by means of it; just as iron becomes red-hot like fire, by reason of its union with the fire. Thus we see that in faith a Christian man has enough; is in need of no work, that he may be religious. If then he is in need of no work any more, so is he certainly freed from all commandments and laws. If he is freed, so is he certainly free. This is Christian freedom, faith only, which involves, not that we may go idle or do evil, but that we are in need of no work in order to obtain religion and salvation. Of which we intend to say more hereafter.

XI. Further, it is also the result of faith, that he who believes in another, believes in him for this reason, that he accounts him a religious, faithful man, which is the greatest honour that one man can do another; as, on the other hand, the greatest insult, is when he accounts him a loose, false, wanton man. Thus also, when the soul firmly believes God's word, so does it hold Him to be faithful, gracious, and righteous, thereby doing Him the greatest honour that it can do Him. For thus it gives Him His due, thus it yields Him His due, thus it honours His name, and lets Him deal with it as He will; for it doubts not He is gracious, faithful in all His words. On the other hand, one can do God no greater dishonour, than not to believe in Him; whereby the soul holds Him to be incapable, false, wanton, and, so far as it can, denies Him with such unbelief, and sets up an idol of its own thought in its heart against God, as though it would know better than He. When, then, God sees that the soul gives Him credit for truth, and thus honours Him by its faith, so, on the other hand, does He honour the soul, and holds it also to be religious and faithful; and it is also religious and

faithful through such faith. For, that one gives God credit for truth and graciousness, that is right and truth, and makes one right and trusty. Because it is true and right, that truth should be allowed to God. Which they do not, who believe not, and yet exercise and worry themselves with many good works.

XII. Not only does faith give so much, that the soul is like the divine word, full of all graces, free, and saved; but it also unites the soul with Christ, as a bride with her bridegroom. From which honour it follows, as St. Paul says (Eph. v. 30), that Christ and the soul become one body; so too do goods, chance, mischance, and all things become common to both, so that, what Christ has, that belongs to the believing soul, what the soul has, becomes Christ's own. Thus Christ has all good things and salvation; these are the soul's own. Thus the soul has all misfortune and sin; these become Christ's own. Here arises now the gladsome change and strife. Because Christ is God and man, who yet has never sinned, and His goodness is invincible, eternal, and almighty, so then does He make the believing soul's sins—through their bride-ring, which is faith—His very own, and acts in no other way than as if He had done them: so must the sins in Him become swallowed up and drowned. For His invincible righteousness is too strong for all sins. Thus the soul becomes pure from all its sins through its love-token—that is, for the sake of faith, void and free—and dowered with the eternal righteousness of its bridegroom, Christ. Now is not that a gladsome housekeeping, when the rich, noble, good bridegroom, Christ, takes the poor, despised, wicked harlot, and divests her of all evil, adorns her with all good things? So it is not possible that the sins should condemn her, for they lie now on Christ, and in Him are drowned. Thus she has so rich a righteousness in her bridegroom, that she may stand up once more against all sins, although they press upon her. Whereof says Paul (1 Cor. xv. 54-57), 'Praise and thanks be to God, who hath given us such a victory in Christ Jesus, in whom death is swallowed up, with sin.'

XIII. Here thou seest again on what ground so much is fairly ascribed to faith, as that it fulfils all commandments, and, apart from all other works, makes one religious. For thou seest here, that it alone fulfils the first commandment, as it is commanded, 'Thou shalt honour thy God.' Now, if thou wert on the track merely of good works, thus thou wert nevertheless not pious, and wouldst be giving God no honour, and also wouldst not be fulfilling the very first commandment. For God cannot be honoured, unless to Him be ascribed truth and all good, according to what He truly is. This, however, no good works accomplish, but only the faith of the heart. Therefore it alone is the righteousness of man, and fulfilling of all commandments. For he who fulfils the first chief commandment fulfils assuredly and cheerfully all other commandments. Works, however, are dead things, cannot honour nor praise God, although they may happen to turn out practically for the honour and praise of God. We, however, are here seeking that, which is not a thing done, like works, but the doer of the same, and workmaster, which honours God, and itself does the works. This is none other than the faith of the heart; which is the head and whole being of religion. Therefore it is a gloomy, dangerous talk, when we are instructed to fulfil the commandments of God with works; whereas the fulfilling must come to pass before all works, through faith, and the works follow after the fulfilling, as we shall hear.

XIV. To see further what we have in Christ, and how great a good a true faith may be, it behoves us to know, that aforetime and in the Old Testament God selected and reserved all the firstborn males of men and of beasts (Exod. xiii. 2). And the firstborn was precious, and had two important portions before all other children, namely, the authority of lord and of priest, or kingship and priesthood (Gen. xlix. 3); so that on earth the firstborn little boy was a lord over all his brethren, and a priest or pope before God. By which figure is signified Jesus Christ, who, properly speaking, is that very Firstborn Son of God the Father, by the Virgin Mary. Therefore is He a King

and Priest, yet spiritually. For His kingdom is not earthly, nor in earthly affairs, but in spiritual good things, as are truth, wisdom, peace, joy, salvation, etc. Thereby, however, temporal good is not excluded. For to Him are all things made subject, in heaven, earth, and hell (Ps. viii. 7), although He is not seen; which means, that He reigns spiritually, invisibly. Thus also His priesthood consists not in outward postures and vestments, as we see in the case of men, but it consists in the invisible Spirit, so that He stands before God's eyes, without ceasing, for His own, and offers Himself, and does all that a gracious Priest should do. 'He maketh intercession for us,' as St. Paul says (Rom. viii. 34). Thus He instructs us inwardly, in the heart. And these are two truly proper functions of a priest. For thus also do outward, human, temporal priests intercede and instruct.

XV. Now, as Christ has the right of the Firstborn, with its honour and worth, so does He share with all His Christians, that they through faith should also all be kings and priests with Christ; as says St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 9), 'Ye are a priestly kingdom, and a kingly priesthood.' And this also comes to pass, that a Christian man through faith is lifted up so high above all things, that he becomes spiritually a lord of all; for there can nothing hurt his salvation. Yea, to him must everything be in subjection, to help his salvation; as St. Paul teaches (Rom. viii. 28), 'All things must help the elect for their good, whether life, death, sin, religion, good or evil'—as we may express it. Again (1 Cor. iii. 22), 'All things are yours, whether life or death, things present or things to come,' etc. Not that we are physically masters of all things, to possess or use them like men of the world. For we must die physically, and no one can escape death; so too must we submit to many other things, as we see in Christ and His saints. For this is a spiritual lordship, which rules in bodily subjection; that is, I can make all things serve my soul's welfare, so that death and affliction must minister to me, and be beneficial to salvation. This is a very high and honourable worth, and a truly all-powerful lordship,

a spiritual kingdom ; since nothing is so good, so evil, but it must minister to me for good, if I believe ; and yet nothing is necessary, but my faith is sufficient for me. Behold, how invaluable a freedom and dominion is that of the Christian !

XVI. Further, we are priests, which is yet much more than being king, for this reason, that priesthood entitles us to appear before God, and to intercede for others. For to stand in God's presence, and intercede, belongs to no one but the priests. So has Christ won for us this privilege, that we should, spiritually, appear before God for one another, and intercede ; as a priest appears bodily for the people, and intercedes. But to him who does not believe in Christ, nothing ministers for good ; he is a thrall of all things, and must irk at all things. Moreover, his prayer is not acceptable, nor does he come into God's presence. Who now can imagine the honour and exaltation of a Christian man ? Through his kingship, he prevails over all things ; through his priesthood, he prevails with God. For God does what he asks and desires, as it is written in Ps. cxlv. 19, ' God fulleth the desire of those who fear Him, and hearkeneth to their prayer ' ; to which honour he attains only through faith, and through no work. From this one sees clearly, how a Christian man is free from all things, and above all things, so that he is in need of no good works, that he may be religious and saved ; but faith brings it to him in full abundance. And, if he were so silly, and thought by a good work to become religious, free, saved, or a Christian, so would he lose faith, with all things else ; just as the dog, which was carrying a bit of meat in its mouth, and snapped at the shadow in the water, thereby lost meat and shadow.

XVII. Dost thou ask, ' What then is there for a distinction between priests and laymen in Christianity, if they are all priests ? ' I answer, It is the misfortune of the little words, ' priest,' ' pope,' ' spiritual,' and the like, that, from the common people, they have been transferred to the small company, which is now called the spiritual class. The holy Scripture allows no other distinction,

than that it calls the instructed or consecrated ones, *ministros, servos, oeconomos*, that is, servants, thralls, stewards, who should, to the rest, preach Christ, faith, and Christian freedom. For although indeed we are all alike priests, yet can we not all minister, or administrate and preach. Thus St. Paul says (1 Cor. iv. 1), 'We would be accounted nothing more by the people, than Christ's servants and stewards of the gospel.' Now, however, out of that stewardship there has developed such a worldly, external, stately, forbidding lordship and dominion, that real worldly power may in no way compare with it, just as if the laity were something other than Christ's people. Thereby the whole meaning of Christian grace, freedom, faith, and everything that we have from Christ, and even Christ Himself, has been taken away; we have received in their stead many laws of men, and works, and are become mere thralls of the most unfit persons on earth.

XVIII. From all this we learn, that it is not an adequate preaching, when Christ's life and work are preached superficially, and only as a history and chronicled narrative, and then no more is said; unless one says nothing at all of it, and preaches clerical right, or other man-made law and doctrine. There are also many of them, who so preach and read about Christ, that they work up a sort of compassion for Him, are angry with the Jews, or else practise more childish ways in such matters. But He should and must be so preached, that, for me and thee, faith, as a result, springs up, and is maintained. Which faith thereby springs up, and is maintained, when it is told me, why Christ is come, how one should use and enjoy Him, what He has brought me and given me. This comes to pass, where one rightly explains Christian freedom, which we have from Him, and how we are kings and priests, having mastery over all things, and how everything that we do may be well-pleasing in the sight of God, and acceptable, as I have hitherto said. For where a heart thus hears Christ preached, it must become gladsome, receive of the very essence of comfort, and become sweetly disposed towards Christ, Him afresh to hold dear. To this it can

never attain with laws or works. For who will do hurt to such a heart, or make it afraid? Sin and death fail, therefore, when it believes that Christ's goodness is its own, and its sin is no more its own, but Christ's; so must sin die away before Christ's goodness, in faith, as was said above, and the heart learns, with the apostle, to bid defiance to death and sin, and say, 'Where now, death, is thy victory? Where now, death, is thy sting? Thy sting is sin. But praise and thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord—and death is swallowed up in His victory' (1 Cor. xv. 55-57).

SECOND PART

XIX. Enough has now been said of the inner man, of his freedom, and the sovereign righteousness, which needs no law nor good work; yea, it is prejudicial to it, if any one would thereby presume to become justified. Now we come to the second part, to the outer man. Here, we wish to answer all those who take offence at the foregoing statements, and are apt to say: 'Why, if then faith is everything, and alone avails enough to make one religious, why are good works prescribed? In that case we will have our being in good things, and do nothing.' No, dear man, not so. It would be all right, if thou wert only an inner man, and hadst become quite spiritual and inward; which will not happen till doomsday. There is, and continues, on earth only a beginning and growth, which is completed in yonder world. Hence the apostle calls it '*primitias Spiritus*,' that is, 'the firstfruits of the Spirit' (Rom. viii. 23). Therefore this is the place for what was said above: A Christian man is a serving thrall, and subject to everyone; alike, where he is free, he need do nothing; where he is a thrall, he must do all sorts of things. How that comes to pass, we will see.

XX. Although man inwardly, according to the soul, is sufficiently justified through faith, and has everything that he ought to have, except that the same faith and sufficiency must always grow till yonder life, yet he still

remains in this bodily life on earth, and must rule his own body, and mingle with people. Now in this way works take their rise ; here he must not go idle ; the body must certainly be exercised and disciplined with fastings, watchings, labours, and with all cautious care, that it may be obedient and conformable to the inner man and to faith ; not hinder nor rebel, as is its wont, where it is not under control. For the inner man is at one with God, joyous and merry for Christ's sake, who has done so much for it ; and all its delight consists in this, that in its turn it may serve God also disinterestedly, in the liberty of love. Yet it finds in its flesh a rebellious will, which will serve the world, and seek what it longs for. This cannot faith bear, and seizes it eagerly by the throat, to stifle and suppress it. As St. Paul says (Rom. vii. 22, 23), ' I have a delight in God's will after my inner man ; even so, I find another will in my flesh, which is bent on bringing me into captivity to sin.' Likewise (1 Cor. ix. 27), ' I chastise my body, and discipline it into obedience, that I may not myself be castaway, who have to teach others.' Again (Gal. v. 24), ' All who belong to Christ crucify the flesh, with its evil lusts.'

XXI. But these very works must not be done in the sense that thereby man becomes religious before God, for this false meaning faith cannot bear, which alone is, and must be, our righteousness before God ; but only in the sense that the body becomes obedient, and purified of its evil lusts, and the eye only regards the evil lusts in order to drive them out. For, because the soul is pure through faith, and loves God, it is eagerly wishful that all things also were pure, above all, its own body, and that every man, with itself, loved and praised God. Thus it comes to pass, that man, for his own body's sake, cannot go idle, and must employ many good works on its account, that he may have it under control. And yet the works are not the true good, whence he may be religious and righteous before God, but he does them in the liberty of love, disinterestedly, for God's pleasure, with nothing therein sought nor regarded, than that God should thus be pleased,

whose will he does willingly to the uttermost. On this account, then, each one can himself use moderation and discretion for chastising the body ; for he fasts, watches, labours, as much as he sees to be necessary to the body, for suppressing its wantonness. The others, however, who think to become religious with works, have no concern for chastisement, but have an eye only to the works, and suppose, if they only do many of those, and great, then it is a good performance, and they become religious ; at times they rack their brains and ruin their bodies over it. That is a great folly, and misunderstanding of Christian life and faith, that they, without fail, are bent on becoming religious and saved through works.

XXII. That we may give some illustrations of this, the works of a Christian man, who through his faith, and of God's pure grace, is become justified and happy, should be regarded no otherwise than as the works of Adam and Eve in Paradise might have been. Hereof it is recorded (Gen. ii. 15), that God placed the man whom He had made in Paradise, that he should there labour and keep guard. Now Adam was created by God religious and good, without sin, so that he, through working and watching, needed not to become religious and righteous ; yet, that he might not live idle, God gave him, for his employ, the planting, tilling, and keeping of Paradise. This would have meant works of mere freedom, done for nothing else than God's good pleasure, and not to attain to religion, which he had before ; which for us also would be quite naturally in-born. So too with the work of a believing man, who through his faith is again placed in Paradise, and new-created ; who needs no works to become religious, but, that he may not live idle, and may exercise and keep his body, there are such works of freedom commanded him to do, alone for God's good pleasure. Again, just as a consecrated bishop, when he consecrates churches, confirms, or otherwise practises the work of his office, yet is not made a bishop by these works ; indeed, if he had not been consecrated a bishop before, none of these works would be of any use, but would be mere fool's work ; so a Christian, who,

consecrated through faith, does good works, becomes through the same no better or more truly consecrated as a Christian—for that is according to the increase of faith; indeed, if he did not before believe and were a Christian, then all his works would be nothing worth, but would be mere silly, culpable, damnable sins.

XXIII. Therefore are the two sayings true: Good, religious works never make a good, religious man; but a good, religious man makes good, religious works. Wicked works never make a wicked man; but a wicked man makes wicked works. So that always the person must first be good and religious, before all good works, and good works follow, and proceed from the religious, good person. Even as Christ says (Matt. vii. 18), 'An evil tree bringeth forth no good fruits. A good tree bringeth forth no evil fruits.' Now, it is evident, that the fruits do not bear the tree, as also the trees do not grow on the fruits; but, on the other hand, the trees bear the fruit, and the fruits grow on the trees. Now, as the trees must be before the fruits, and the fruits do not make the trees either good or bad, but the trees make the fruits; so must the man be first good or wicked in person, before he does good or wicked works, and his works make him not good or wicked, but he does good or wicked works. We see the like in all handicrafts. A good or bad house does not make a good or bad carpenter; but a good or bad carpenter makes a bad or good house. No work makes a master according to what the work is; but, as is the master, accordingly is his work also. So too are the works of man; as it is with him in regard to belief or unbelief, accordingly are his works good or bad. And not, on the other hand, as his works are, is he accordingly religious or believing. The works, just as they do not make a man believing, so too do they not make him religious. But faith, just as it makes religious, so too does it make good works. So then the works make no one religious, and the man must first be religious, before he works. Thus it is evident that only faith, out of pure grace, through Christ and His word, makes the person sufficiently religious and

saved ; and that no work, no commandment, is necessary to a Christian for salvation, but he is free of all commandments, and, of pure freedom, does disinterestedly all that he does, and seeks nothing therewith to his own advantage or salvation (for he is already satisfied and saved through his faith, and God's grace), but only therein to please God.

XXIV. On the other hand, for him who is without faith no good work is conducive to religion and salvation, nor can any wicked work make him wicked and damned ; but unbelief, which makes the person and the tree evil, this does evil and damnable works. Therefore, if one is religious or wicked, it does not arise from works, but from faith [or from unbelief]. As the wise man says, 'The beginning of all sin is to fall from God, and not trust Him' (Ecclesiasticus x. 12 ?). Thus Christ also teaches how one must not begin with works, and says, 'Either make the tree good, and its fruit good ; or make the tree evil, and its fruit evil' (Matt. xii. 33) : as much as to say, 'He who will have good fruits must first begin with the tree, and have that good.' So he who will do good works must not begin with the works, but with the person who is to do the works. The person, however, no one makes good, but only faith ; and no one makes the person wicked, but only unbelief. This is quite true : works make one religious or wicked before men ; that is, they show outwardly who is religious or wicked. As Christ says (Matt. vii. 20), 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' But that is all in appearance, and outwardly. And this consideration makes many people go astray, who write and teach that man should do good works and become religious ; thus they nevertheless think nothing of faith, but go along, one blind man always leading the other, worry themselves with many works, and yet never arrive at a true religion. Of whom St. Paul says (2 Tim. iii. 5, 7), 'They have an appearance of religion, but the inward reality is not there ; they are for ever and ever going on to learn, and yet never arrive at the knowledge of true religion.' Now he who would not err with those blind ones must look farther than works, commandment, or doctrine of work. He must look at the

person, before all things, how the person becomes religious. The person does not, however, through commandment and works, but through God's word (that is, through His promise of grace), and faith, become religious and saved ; in that His divine glory constrains Him, not through our works, but through His gracious word, freely and of pure compassion, to make us saved.

XXV. From all this it is easy to understand how good works are to be rejected and not rejected, and how one should understand all doctrines which teach good works. For where the false condition and the perverted meaning is in them, that through works we are to become religious and saved, they are indeed not good, and quite damnable ; for they are not free, and do despite to the grace of God, which only through faith makes us religious and saved, a thing that works cannot do, and yet assume to themselves to do, and thereby strike at grace in its work and glory. Therefore we reject good works, not on their own account, but on account of that very wicked addition, and false, perverted meaning, which causes men only to appear good, and yet to be not good, to deceive themselves and every one therewith, just like ravening wolves in sheep's clothing. But the same evil addition and perverted meaning in works is invincible, where faith is not. It must abide in the same hypocrisy, until faith come and drive it away. Nature cannot drive it out of itself, yea, cannot even recognise it, but esteems it a precious, blessed thing ; therefore also are so many of them led astray thereby. On this account, although it is quite good to write and preach of repentance, confession, satisfaction, if, however, one does not proceed further to faith, it is certainly mere devilish, misleading doctrine. One must not preach one sort of thing only, but both sorts, in preaching God's word. The commandments must be preached, for the conviction of sinners, and the exposure of their sins, that they may find repentance, and be converted. But the matter ought not to remain there ; the other word, the promise of grace, must also be preached, for the teaching of faith, without which the commandments, repentance, and everything else

comes to pass in vain. There are indeed yet preachers remaining, who preach repentance of sin, and grace ; but they do not set forth the commandments and promise of God, that it may be learnt whence and how repentance and grace come. For repentance flows from the commandments, faith from the promises of God ; and thus man becomes justified through the faith of God's word, and lifted up, who, through the fear of God's commandment, is humbled, and is come to the knowledge of Him.

XXVI. This may be said of works in general, and which a Christian man ought to practise towards his own body. Now we will speak of more works, which he does towards other men. For man lives not alone in his body, but also among other men on earth. Therefore he cannot be without works towards the same, he must always hold converse and have dealings with them ; although he has no need of those works for religion and salvation. Therefore should his intention in all works be free, and only directed to this, that he may therewith serve other people, and be useful ; that it may set before him nothing else than what is necessary to others. That is then a real Christian life, and there faith works along with delight and love, as St. Paul teaches the Galatians (v. 6). Then to the Philippians (ii. 1-4), when he has taught them, how they had all grace and sufficiency through their faith in Christ, he teaches them further, and says : ' I exhort you by all consolation, which ye have in Christ, and by all consolation, which ye have of our love to you, and by all fellowship, which ye have with all spiritual, religious Christians, that ye should perfectly delight my heart ; and along with this, that ye should henceforth be of one mind, show love to one another, serve one another, and each one care, not for himself, nor for his own things, but for others, and what is needful for them.' Lo, here Paul has clearly set forth a Christian life as consisting in this, that all works should be directed to one's neighbour for good ; because each one has enough for himself in his faith, and all other works and behaviour remain to him over and above to serve his neighbour therewith out of

free love. In confirmation of this, he brings forward such a one as Christ for an example, and says (Phil. ii. 5, 6) : ' Be ye so minded, as ye see in Christ, who, although He was fully in the form of God, and had enough for Himself, and needed not His manner of life, His doings and sufferings, that thereby He might become religious or saved, yet hath He stripped Himself of everything, and demeaned Himself as a servant, having considered nothing but our good ; and so, although He was free, yet for our sakes became a bondservant.'

XXVII. Thus a Christian man, like Christ, his Head, should be fully and completely content with his faith, always to increase the same, which is his life, religion, and salvation, giving him all that Christ has, and God, as was said above. And St. Paul says (Gal. ii. 20), ' The life that I now live in the body, I live in the faith of Christ, God's Son.' And although he is now quite free, yet a Christian should willingly make himself a servant again, to help his neighbour, to behave and deal with him, as God, through Christ, has dealt with himself. And all this disinterestedly, seeking nothing therein but the good pleasure of God, and thinking : ' Lo, my God has given to me, an unworthy, guilty man, without any merit, in pure disinterestedness, and out of sheer compassion, through and in Christ, the full wealth of all religion and salvation, so that henceforth I need nothing more, than to believe that it is so. Ah, so will I, for such a Father, who has thus overwhelmed me with His superabundant good, again do freely, cheerfully, and disinterestedly what is well-pleasing to Him, and towards my neighbour will be even as a Christ, as Christ has been to me, and do nothing more than what I see to be needful for him, useful, and blessed ; while yet I through my faith have enough of everything in Christ.' Behold, thus from faith flows love and longing towards God, and from love a free, willing, cheerful life, for the disinterested service of one's neighbour. For just as our neighbour suffers want, and needs our superfluity, so have we suffered want before God, and needed His grace. Therefore, as God has helped us

disinterestedly through Christ, so should we, through the body and its works, do no other than help our neighbour. Thus we see how lofty and noble a life is a Christian life, which, alas, now in all the world is not only neglected, but also no more thought of, nor preached.

XXVIII. Thus we read (Luke ii. 22) that the Virgin Mary went to the temple after the six weeks, and received purification according to the law, like all other women, though she nevertheless was not impure like them, nor liable to that purifying, indeed needed it not. But she observed it out of the willingness of her love, that she might not seem to reflect upon other women, but make herself kindred with them. Thus St. Paul let St. Timothy be circumcised (Acts xvi. 3), not that it was necessary, but that he might not give occasion for evil thoughts to those Jews who were weak in the faith; though, on the other hand, he would not let Titus be circumcised, when they were determined to insist upon it, that he must be circumcised, and that it was necessary for salvation (Gal. ii. 3). And it is written of Christ (Matt. xvii. 24 ff.), that, when the tribute money was asked of His disciples, He reasoned with St. Peter, whether the king's children were not free from paying tribute, and St. Peter said 'Yes'; yet He bade him go to the sea, and said: 'That we may not offend them, go, and the first fish that thou catchest, take, and in its mouth thou wilt find a piece of money; that give for Me and thee.' That is a fine example of this teaching, when Christ calls Himself and His own, free King's children, who have need of nothing, and yet condescends, willingly serves, and pays the tribute. Now, just as much as this work was necessary to Christ, and ministered to His religion or salvation, so much are all His other works, and the works of His Christians, necessary to Him for salvation; but actually they are altogether free ministrations, for the sake and for the benefit of others. Thus also should the works of all priests, convents, and monasteries be done, so that each one should do the work of his class and order for this reason only, to oblige others, and to rule his body, as an example to others for doing

the same, they also needing to control their bodies ; yet seeing to it, all the time, that it is not represented as being their aim to become religious and saved thereby, this being the prerogative only of faith. In this wise St. Paul also commands (Rom. xiii. 1, 2, and Tit. iii. 1), that they should obey worldly authority willingly ; not that they had to become religious thereby, but that they might thereby freely serve others, and the magistracy, and do their will out of love and freedom. Now he who has this understanding, the same can easily conform to the innumerable injunctions and laws of the pope, the bishops, the convents, the monasteries, of princes and lords, which some foolish prelates insist upon, as necessary to salvation, and call them injunctions of the church, though wrongly. For a free Christian speaks thus : ' I will fast, say prayers, do this and that, as is bidden, not that I need do it, or would thereby become religious or saved ; but I will do it for the pope, or bishop, for the community or my comrade, doing and enduring all for the sake of lords, for example and service, just as Christ for my sake has done and endured much greater things, of which He had much less need. And even though tyrants do wrongly, requiring such a thing, yet it hurts me not, providing it is not against God.'

XXIX. Hence may each for himself exercise a sure judgment and discrimination, among all works and commandments ; also what sort are blind, foolish prelates, or genuinely sensible. For whatever work is not performed to this end, to serve another, or to endure for his sake—so far as he does not urge us to act against God—is not a good Christian work. Therefore it comes to pass that, as I am afraid, few monasteries, churches, convents, altars, masses, wills [in which masses for the soul are ordered], are Christian, besides also fasts and prayers that are rendered expressly for certain saints. For I fear that in them all alike each one seeks only his own, to wit, whereby to atone for his own sins, and to become saved ; all which comes of ignorance of faith and Christian freedom. And certain blind prelates urge the people to it, and praise such behaviour, tricked out with indulgences, and never teach

faith. I advise thee, however, if thou wouldst found anything [by endowment], say prayers, fast, so to do it as not thinking that thou wilt do something good for thyself; but contribute it freely, that other people may enjoy the benefit, and thus do it for their good; thus art thou a genuine Christian. What shall thy good things and good works be to thee, which remain over and above, for governing and caring for thy body, when thou hast enough in faith, wherein God has given thee all things? Behold, thus must God's good things flow from one to the other, and become common, so that each one may so assume his neighbour's case, as if it were his own. From Christ they flow to us, Who Himself has assumed our case in His life, as if He were what we are. From us should they flow to those who need them, even so completely, that I must set even my faith and righteousness before God for my neighbour, to cover his sins, to take them on myself, and not do otherwise than as if they were my own, even as Christ has done for us all. Behold, that is the nature of love, where it is genuine; there it is genuine, however, where faith is genuine. Therefore the holy apostle assigns to love for its property (1 Cor. xiii. 5), that it seeketh not its own, but its neighbour's.

CONCLUSION

XXX. From all this follows the conclusion, that a Christian man lives not in himself, but in Christ, and his neighbour; in Christ through faith, in his neighbour through love. Through faith he rises above himself to God; from God he passes again below himself through love, and yet remains always in God and godly love. Even as Christ says (John i. 51), 'Ye shall yet see the heaven stand open, and the angels ascend and descend over the Son of Man.' Behold, this is the genuine, spiritual, Christian freedom, which makes the heart free from all sins, laws, and commandments, which excels all other freedom, as the heaven the earth. Which may God grant us truly to understand and maintain! Amen.

II

LUTHER'S PROLOGUE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

THIS epistle is the very climax of the New Testament, and the pure essence of the gospel, being quite worthy and deserving that a Christian man should not only know it word for word by heart, but be occupied therewith daily, as with daily bread of the soul. For it never can be too much and too well read or pondered, and the more we have to do with it, the more precious it becomes and well relished.

Therefore I will also add my service, and through this prologue prepare an introduction thereto, in so far as God has enabled me, in order that it may be the better understood by everyone. For hitherto it has been badly obscured with comments and all sorts of chatter, being nevertheless in itself a clear light, almost enough to enlighten the whole Scripture.

I

In the first place, we must be acquainted with the language, and know what St. Paul meant by these words : Law, Sin, Grace, Faith, Righteousness, Flesh, Spirit, and the like ; else we cannot profitably read therein.

LAW. The little word 'Law' thou must not here understand after the manner of men, as that it is an instruction, what sort of works are to be done or to be left undone, as is the case with human laws ; for one keeps that law well enough with works, although the heart is not in it. God judges according to the heart's innermost motive. Therefore His law also requires the heart's motive, and does not allow it to be content with works, but rather condemns works done without the heart's motive, as hypocrisy

and lies. For that reason, all men are called liars (Ps. cxvi. 11), because no one keeps God's law from the heart's motive, nor can keep it; for every one finds in himself dislike of the good and delight in the bad. Now where there is not free delight in the good, there the heart's motive is not in the law of God; there indeed is even sin, and the incurring of God's wrath, although outwardly many good works appear, and reputable behaviour.

Therefore St. Paul concludes (ii. 12, 13) that the Jews are all sinners, and says that only the doers of the law are righteous before God. He holds nevertheless that no one by mere works is a doer of the law, but says rather to them in verse 22, 'Thou teachest that one should not commit adultery, and thou committest adultery.' Again (verse 1), 'Wherein thou judgest another, therein thou condemnest thyself; for thou doest the very same thing that thou judgest.' As if he should say, 'Thou livest with fine outward show in the works of the law, and judgest those who do not live so, and knowest how to teach every one. Thou seest the splinter in the other's eye, but of the beam in thine own eye thou art not aware' (Matt. vii. 3).

For, though thou indeed outwardly keepest the law with works, for fear of punishment or love of praise, yet so thou doest all without free delight and love for the law, but with dislike and constraint; thou wouldst rather do otherwise, if it were not for the law. For it follows thence that from the bottom of the heart thou art hostile to the law. For of what good is it that thou teachest another not to steal, if thou in heart thyself art a thief, and wouldst willingly be one outwardly, if thou durst? Though even the outward work does not long remain, with such hypocrites. Thus thou teachest another, but not thyself; thou knowest not even thyself what thou teachest; hast even never yet rightly understood the law. Indeed, for that reason the law increases sin, as he says in the fifth chapter, verse 20, that man becomes only more hostile to it, the more it demands that of which he can do nothing.

Therefore he says in the seventh chapter, verse 14, 'The law is spiritual.' What is that? If the law were bodily, then it would be served sufficiently with works;

now however that it is spiritual, no one does enough for it, for all that thou doest must proceed from the innermost heart. But such a heart no one can give, save the Spirit of God, who makes man equal to the law, so that he gains delight in the law from the heart, and henceforth does all, not from fear, nor of constraint, but out of a free heart. Thus the law is spiritual, that will be loved and fulfilled with such a spiritual heart, and that requires such a Spirit. Where He is not in the heart, there remains sin, dislike, hostility to the law, which nevertheless is good, righteous, and holy.

So now accustom thyself to the statement, that doing the work of the law is a very different thing from fulfilling the law. The work of the law is all that man does, or can do, in the law, of his free will and his own strength. Since, however, underneath and close to such works there remains in the heart dislike and constraint with regard to the law, such works are all spoiled and of no use. This is St. Paul's meaning in iii. 20, where he says, 'Through the work of the law is no man righteous before God.' Therefore thou now seest that the school-wranglers and sophists are misleaders, if they teach him with works to prepare himself for grace. How can he with works prepare himself for grace, who can do no good work without dislike and unwillingness in his heart? How shall God desire the work that proceeds from a disliking and repugnant heart?

But to fulfil the law is to do its works with delight and love; and freely, without the law's constraint, to live godly and well, as if there were no law or punishment. Such delight, however, of free love is the gift of the Holy Spirit in the heart, as he says in v. 5. The Spirit, however, is not given except in, with, and through faith in Jesus Christ, as he says in the preamble. Now faith does not come, save only through God's word or gospel, which preaches Christ, how He is both God's Son and Man, who died and rose again for our sakes, as he says in the third, fourth, and tenth chapters (iii. 25, iv. 25, x. 9).

Thus it comes to pass, that only faith makes righteous, and fulfils the law, for it brings the Spirit, through the merit of Christ. The Spirit, however, creates a cheerful

and free heart, as the law requires ; so then good works proceed from faith itself. That is his meaning in iii. 31, after he had repudiated the works of the law, so that it sounded as if he would abolish the law through faith. No, says he, ' we establish the law through faith,' that is, we fulfil it through faith.

SIN. ' Sin ' means in Scripture, not only the outward work in the body, but all the activity that is astir with it, and issues in the outward work, namely, the motive of the heart, with all its force. Note also that the little word ' do ' should mean, when man altogether plunges and is carried away into sin. For no mere outward work of sin is in question, if man is quite carried away into it, with body and soul. And Scripture especially looks into the heart, and on the root and main source of all sin, which is unbelief in the innermost heart. Note also that, as faith alone makes righteous, and brings the Spirit, and joyful compliance, to good outward works, so unbelief alone commits sin, and brings in the flesh, and pleasurable compliance, to bad outward works, as befell Adam and Eve in Paradise (Gen. iii. 6).

Therefore Christ calls only unbelief sin, as He says in John xvi. 8, 9, ' The Spirit will convict the world of sin, because they believe not on Me.' For that reason also, before good or bad works come to pass, as good or bad fruits, there must first of all be faith in the heart, or unbelief, as the root, sap, and chief force of all sin, which in Scripture also for that reason is called the serpent's head, and the head of the old dragon, that Christ, the woman's Seed, must crush, as was promised to Adam (Gen. iii. 15).

GRACE. ' Grace ' and ' Gift ' are of this difference, that grace properly means God's favour or goodwill, which He vouchsafes us for His own sake, on account of which He is graciously disposed to give us Christ, and to shed abroad the Spirit with His gifts in us ; as is clear from v. 15, where he says, ' Grace and gift in Christ,' etc. Now, if these gifts, and the Spirit, daily grow in us, and yet are not fully accomplished, so that evil desires and sins still survive in us, which war against the Spirit, as he says in

vii. 14, f., 23, and Gal. v. 17, and as in Gen. iii. 15 is announced the conflict between the woman's Seed and the seed of the serpent, yet does grace avail so much, that we are accounted altogether and fully righteous before God. For His grace does not divide and separate itself, as His gifts do, but receives us altogether and entirely into His favour, for the sake of Christ, our Advocate and Mediator, and because in us His gifts are begun.

Thus then thou understandest the seventh chapter, where St. Paul still blames himself as a sinner, and yet in the eighth, verse 1, he says there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, because of the as yet uncompleted gifts, and because of the Spirit. On account of the unslain flesh we are still sinners ; but because we believe on Christ, and have the earnest of the Spirit, God is to us so benevolent and gracious, that He will not consider nor judge such sin, but will bear with us according to our faith in Christ, till sin is destroyed.

FAITH. ' Faith ' is not human opinion and dream, which some mistake for faith. And when they see that no improvement of life nor good works follow, and yet they are able to hear and talk much about faith, they fall into error, and say : ' Faith is not enough ; one must do works, if one is to be religious and saved.' This causes them, when they hear the gospel, to fall from it, and fashion for themselves, by their own power, a notion in the heart, that says : ' I believe.' This then they mistake for a true faith. But, as it is a human fiction and notion, that the inmost heart never experiences, just so it does nothing, and no improvement follows after.

Faith, however, is a godly work in us, that changes us, and causes us to be born again of God (John i. 13), and slays the old Adam, makes us quite different men in heart, mind, motive, and all our faculties, and brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, there is something so lively, creative, operative, mighty about faith, that it is impossible that it should not without ceasing work that which is good. It does not ask indeed whether good works are to be done, but before one can ask, it has done them, and is always

doing them. But he who does not such works is a faithless man, fumbles and looks about him for faith and good works, and knows not what either faith or good works are, yet babbles and prattles much of faith and good works.

Faith is a living, deliberate reliance on God's grace, so sure, that it would die for it a thousand times. And such reliance, and knowledge of God's grace, makes us glad-some, courageous, and cheerful towards God and all creatures ; which thing the Holy Spirit accomplishes in our faith. Therefore man becomes joyfully willing, without constraint, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to bear all kinds of suffering for God's love and praise, who has shown him such favour ; so that it is impossible to separate works from faith, just as impossible as that heat and light should be separated from fire. Therefore beware of thy own false thoughts and unprofitable imaginations, which would fain be skilful to judge of faith and good works, and are the greatest mockery. Pray God that He work faith in thee, else thou remainest indeed for ever without faith, contrive and do what thou wilt or canst.

RIGHTEOUSNESS. 'Righteousness' is henceforth such faith, and is called God's righteousness, or the gift of God, for the reason that God gives it and reckons it for righteousness, for Christ's sake, our Mediator, and so creates man's new nature, that he renders to all men their due. For through faith man becomes free from sin, and gains delight in God's commandments. Therewith he gives God His glory, and pays Him His due ; but he willingly renders service to men, to the best of his ability, and therewith also pays his due to everyone. Such righteousness can neither nature, free will, nor our own strength bring to pass. For, as no one can give faith to himself, so can no one take away his own unbelief ; how then will he take away only one least sin ? Therefore everything is false—it is hypocrisy and sin—that is done apart from faith, or in unbelief (Rom. xiv. 23), let it make as brave a show as it may.

FLESH and SPIRIT. By 'Flesh' and 'Spirit' must thou here also not understand, that 'Flesh' is only what

concerns unchastity, and 'Spirit' what concerns the inmost heart; but St. Paul calls flesh, as does Christ in John iii. 6, what is born according to the flesh, the whole man, his body and soul, his understanding and all his mind, for the reason that it all lives and moves in him according to the flesh. Mind also that thou knowest how to call him 'fleshly,' who without grace speculates much, profiers instruction, and talks glibly of high spiritual things; as thou mayest indeed learn from the works of the flesh of Gal. v. 20, where the apostle calls even heresy and hate fleshly works. And in Rom. viii. 3, he says that through the flesh the law is made weak, which is said, not of unchastity, but of all sins, chiefly however of unbelief, which is the chief of all vices of spirit.

Mind again that thou callest him 'spiritual,' who is occupied with the most outward kind of works, as Christ, when He washed the disciples' feet, and Peter, when he managed the boat and fished. Also, that flesh signifies a man who lives and works, both inwardly and outwardly, the sort of life and work that serves the interests of fleshly advantage and of the present life; while spirit signifies one who lives and works, inwardly and outwardly, in a way that serves the interests of the spirit and of the future life.

Without such understanding of these words, thou wilt never understand this epistle of St. Paul, nor any book of holy Scripture. Therefore take heed of all teachers who use these words differently, be they who they will, though they were even Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, Origen, and the like, or even those of higher rank. Now we will take up the study of the epistle.

II

CHAPTER I. Inasmuch as it beseems an evangelical preacher, at first, through manifestation of the law and of sin, to reprove and represent as sinful all that is not actuated by the Spirit and by faith in Christ, whereby men are led to self-conviction and sorrow, so that they become humble and desire help; thus also does St. Paul, and begins in the first chapter by reproving gross sins

and unbelief, that are open in the light of day (as were, and still are, the sins of the heathen, who live without the grace of God), and says, 'There is revealed, through the gospel, God's wrath from heaven upon all men, on account of their godless behaviour and unrighteousness.' For, though they alike know and acknowledge daily that there is a God, yet nature in itself is so evil, apart from grace, that it neither renders Him thanks, nor honours Him, but beguiles itself, and falls without ceasing into worse behaviour, until it works in its idolatries even the most disgraceful sins, with all vices, unashamed, being, for the rest, given up thereto unpunished.

CHAPTER II. In the second chapter, he extends such accusation even more widely to those who outwardly seem religious, but are secretly sinful, as the Jews were, and all hypocrites still are, who, without inclination and love, live well and respectably, and in heart are at enmity with God's law; though they are ready enough to judge other people, as is the manner of all dissemblers, so that they think themselves pure, and are yet full of avarice, hatred, pride, and all filthiness (Matt. xxiii. 25). They are just these, who despise God's goodness, and after their hardness heap to themselves wrath; so that St. Paul, as a true interpreter of the law, lets no one be without sin, but proclaims the wrath of God to all, who would live well by nature or free will, and accounts them no better than open sinners; yea, he says, they are stubborn and impenitent.

CHAPTER III. In the third, he throws them both together into one mass, and says, of the one as of the others, they are all alike sinners before God, except that the Jews have God's word; for although many have not believed therein, yet thereby God's faithfulness and truth is not at an end. And he adduces incidentally the saying in Psalm li. 4, that God is justified in His words. Afterwards he returns to it, and proves also through Scripture that they are all sinners, and no one is justified through the work of the law, but the law is given only for the knowledge of sin.

Thereafter he begins to teach the true way, how one is

to become religious and saved, and says, ' They are all sinners, and fail of the glory which they should have in God, but must be justified without merit ' through faith in Christ, who has won such merit for us through His blood, and become for us a mercy-seat before God, who forgives us all former sins ; whereby He demonstrates that His righteousness, which He gives by faith, alone avails us, which at this present time is manifested through the gospel, and formerly was testified through the law and the prophets. Moreover, the law is established through faith, although the works of the law are thereby brought to nought, together with its glory.

CHAPTER IV. In the fourth, since now throughout the first three chapters sin has been made manifest, and the way of faith unto righteousness is taught, he begins to take up certain objections and claims, and examines this first, which all those commonly urge, who hear of faith, how it makes righteous without works, and say, ' Ought one then to do no good works ? ' Thus for himself he brings forward the case of Abraham, and says, ' What then has Abraham done by his works ? Has it all been in vain ? Were his works of no use ? ' And he concludes that Abraham, apart from all works, has been justified through faith only, so entirely, that even before the work of his circumcision he is commended in Scripture as having been justified on account only of his faith (Gen. xv. 6). Since, however, the work of circumcision accomplished nothing for his justification, which yet God commanded him, and which was a good work of obedience, so certainly will no other good work accomplish anything for justification ; but, as the circumcision of Abraham was an outward sign, wherewith he evidenced his justification by faith, so are all good works only outward signs, which follow from faith, and are the evidence, like good fruits, that man is already inwardly righteous before God.

Thereby St. Paul now confirms, as with a powerful example from Scripture, his former teaching in the third chapter (verse 27) concerning faith, and brings forward yet another witness, namely David, from the 32nd Psalm,

who also says that man is justified without works ; although he does not remain without works, when he is justified. Afterwards he extends the example in opposition to all other works of the law, and concludes that the Jews cannot be Abraham's heirs on account of blood alone, much less on account of the work of the law, but must inherit Abraham's faith, if they would be his true heirs ; since Abraham, before the law, both of Moses and of circumcision, was made righteous through faith, and is called a father of all that believe. Moreover, the law works much rather wrath than favour, because no one does it with inclination and love ; so that much rather comes disfavour than favour through the work of the law. Therefore must faith alone obtain the favour promised to Abraham. For such examples also are recorded on our behalf, that we too should believe.

CHAPTER V. In the fifth, he comes to the fruits and works of faith, as being peace, joy, love to God and every-one, besides assurance, courage, cheerfulness, spirit, and hope in tribulation and afflictions. For every such thing follows, where there is true faith, because of the superabundant goodness which God shows us in Christ, in that He has suffered Him to die for us, before we could ask Him for it, yea, while we were yet enemies. Thus then we find that faith makes righteous, apart from all works ; and yet it does not follow from this, that one should therefore do no good works, but that goodly works cannot be restrained ; of which hypocrites know nothing, and feign to themselves works of their own, wherein is neither peace, joy, assurance, love, hope, courage, nor any kind of true Christian work and faith.

Then he makes a spirited outburst and expatiation, and tells where both sin and unrighteousness, death and life, originate, and accounts the two as hostile the one to the other, namely Adam and Christ. He goes on to say : ' Therefore must Christ come, a second Adam, who bequeaths to us His righteousness, through a new, spiritual birth by faith, just as that former Adam has bequeathed sin to us, through the old fleshly birth.'

Thereby, however, it is known and proved, that no one can deliver himself from sin unto righteousness with works, as little as he can help being born bodily. It is also thereby shown that the divine law, which yet should properly avail, as it should help us somewhat towards righteousness, has come to be not only without avail, but has even increased sin, for this reason, that our evil nature becomes the more hostile to it, and will the rather indulge its lust, the more the law restrains it. So that the law makes Christ yet more necessary, and asks for more grace, that may come to the help of nature.

CHAPTER VI. In the sixth, he takes the particular work of faith by itself, the conflict of the spirit with the flesh, for the entire destruction of the rest of the sins and lusts, which remained over after justification, and teaches us, that we are not so freed from sin through faith, that we should be idle, lazy, secure, as though no sin were any longer there. There is sin there, but it is not reckoned for condemnation, on account of faith, which is in conflict with it. Therefore we have enough to do with ourselves as long as life lasts, that we may tame our body, slay its lusts, and subdue its members, that they may be obedient to the spirit and not to the lusts ; in order that we may be conformed to the death and resurrection of Christ, and fulfil the meaning of our baptism (which signifies the death of sin and the new life of grace), till we are quite pure from sin, so as to rise again also bodily with Christ and live for ever.

And this we can do, he says, because we are in grace, and not in the law. Which he himself explains, as that to be without law is not, as is often said, that one has no law, and may do, everyone what he likes ; but to be under the law, is when we occupy ourselves with works of the law apart from grace. Then certainly sin lords it over us through law, since no one is kindly disposed to the law by nature ; but that is great sin. Grace, however, makes the law lovely to us ; so then there is no sin there any more, and the law is no more against us, but is at one with us.

That, however, is the true freedom from sin and from law, of which he continues writing to the end of this chapter, namely, that it is a freedom, only for doing good with delight, and living well without constraint of the law. Therefore such freedom is a spiritual freedom, which does not flout the law, but provides what is required by the law, namely, delight and love, wherewith the law is satisfied, and has nothing more to urge and to require. It is just as if thou wast in debt to a liege lord, and couldst not pay. From him thou mightest get free in two ways : on the one hand, that he should exact nothing from thee, and cancel his bond ; on the other, that a benevolent man should settle the matter for thee, and give thee wherewith thou mightest satisfy his bond. In this way has Christ made us free of the law. Therefore it is not a wild, fleshly freedom, that shall do nothing, but one that does much and manifold, and is free of the law's demand and debt.

CHAPTER VII. In the seventh, he confirms all this with a comparison of the matrimonial life. To wit, when a man dies, then is the woman unmarried, and is thus released and parted from the other one. Not thus, that the woman may not or should not take another man, but rather, that she is now, first of all, quite free to take another, which she could not do formerly, till she was parted from that man.

So is our conscience bound to the law under the old sinful man ; when this is slain through the Spirit, then is conscience free, and released from the other one. Not that conscience should not act, but it is now, first of all, in a right condition to attach itself to Christ, the New Man, and bring forth the fruit of life.

Then he opens out more widely the nature of sin and of the law, how through the law sin is now all astir, and becomes violent. For the old man becomes only the more hostile to the law, because he cannot pay what is required by the law. For his very nature is sin, and can of itself be nothing else ; therefore the law is its death and its thorough torment. Not that the law is evil, but that our evil nature cannot bear the good, as requiring good from

it ; just as a sick man cannot bear that one should require him to run and jump and do other works of a healthy man.

Therefore St. Paul here concludes, that, where the law is truly recognised and understood at its best, there it can do nothing more, for it reminds us of our sin, and slays us through the same, and makes us liable to eternal wrath, as it shows itself altogether hostile, and asks of the conscience, if it has quite fallen in with the law ; also that one must have something other and more than the law, to make man religious and saved. Those, however, who do not truly recognise the law, are blind, they proceed therein with presumption, they think to do enough for it with works ; for they know not how much the law requires, namely, a free-willing, joyous heart. Therefore they do not see Moses, just before their eyes ; the veil is spread before them, and hides him from view.

Then he shows, how spirit and flesh are at conflict with each other in a man, and sets himself before them as an example, that we may learn truly to recognise the work—how to slay sin in ourselves. He calls both, however, the spirit and the flesh, a law, for this reason, that, just as it is the nature of the divine law that it urges and insists, so does the flesh also urge and insist and rage against the spirit, and will have its way. On the other hand, the spirit urges and insists against the flesh, and will have its way. This contention goes on in us, as long as we live, in one more, in another less, according as the spirit or the flesh is stronger. And yet the whole man himself is wholly both, spirit and flesh, who is at conflict with himself, till he becomes quite spiritual.

CHAPTER VIII. In the eighth, he comforts such combatants, in that such flesh does not condemn them, and indicates what is the nature of flesh and of spirit, and how the spirit comes from Christ, who has given us His Holy Spirit ; who makes us spiritual, and suppresses the flesh, and assures us that we are nevertheless God's children, however fiercely sin may rage in us, so long as we follow the Spirit, and strive against sin, to slay it. Since,

however, nothing is so good for deadening the flesh as cross and affliction, he comforts us in affliction, because of the aid of the Spirit of love, and of all creatures ; to wit, that both the Spirit in us sighs, and the creature itself with us longs, that we may be free from the flesh and from sin. Thus we see that these three chapters, vi., vii., viii., insist on the work of faith only, which there signifies slaying the old Adam, and subduing the flesh.

CHAPTERS IX., X., XI. In the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters, he treats of the eternal purpose of God, whence primarily it comes to pass, who shall believe or not believe, who can be free or not free from sin ; whereby it is quite taken out of our hands, and placed entirely in God's hand, that we become religious. And this is of the very highest necessity. For we are so weak and uncertain, that, if it remained with us, there would certainly be not one man saved ; the devil would surely overpower them all. Now, however, that God is sure, in that His purpose does not fail Him, nor can any one hinder Him, we yet have hope against sin.

But here is the place for setting a limit to the mischievous and high-flown spirits, that bring their understanding hither at the outset, and lift it up on high, to peer beforehand into the abyss of divine predestination, and vainly to worry themselves therewith, whether they are predestined. They must then come to this, that they either despair, or take a loose chance.

Do thou, however, follow this epistle in its order ; concern thyself beforehand with Christ and the gospel, so that thou knowest thy sin and His grace, and then contendest with sin, as here chapters I., II., III., IV., V., VI., VII., and VIII. have taught. Then, when thou art come to chapter VIII., bowed beneath cross and affliction, that will teach thee rightly the predestination of chapters IX., X., and XI., how comforting it is. For without affliction, cross, and peril of death, one cannot deal with predestination, without harm and secret wrath against God. Therefore must Adam first be well slain, before this thing is allowed, and the strong wine drunk. Therefore take heed to

thyself, that thou drink not wine, when thou art still a suckling. Every kind of teaching has its measure, time, and age.

CHAPTER XII. In the twelfth, he explains the right kind of divine service, and represents all Christians as priests, in that they should offer, not money, nor animal sacrifice, as in the law, but their own bodies, with the slaying of lust. Then he describes the outward behaviour of the Christian in the spiritual discipline, how they ought to teach, preach, govern, serve, give, suffer, love, live, and act, towards friend, foe, and everyone. Those are the works that a Christian does. For, as it is said, faith does not take rest.

CHAPTER XIII. In the thirteenth, he teaches us to honour worldly rule, and be obedient to it, which is established for this very thing: if indeed it does not make the people religious before God, yet it does this much, that the religious have outward peace and protection, and the wicked cannot do evil freely, without fear, or with peace and quiet. It therefore makes for honouring the religious also, although they indeed do not need it. Finally, however, he sums up everything in love, and confirms it by the example of Christ, that, as He has done to us, we also ought to do, and to follow Him.

CHAPTER XIV. In the fourteenth, he teaches us to deal gently with consciences that are weak in the faith, and to bear with them, that Christian freedom be not used for the hurt, but for the help of the weak. For, where this is not done, there follows discord, and contempt of the gospel, wherein nevertheless all our interests are involved; so that it is better to bear a little with those that are of weak faith, till they become stronger, than that in all things the teaching of the gospel should come to ruin. And such work is a special work of love, which indeed even yet is needed, where, with flesh-feasting and other insolent and rough freedom, altogether gratuitous, the weak consciences are disturbed, before they arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

CHAPTER XV. In the fifteenth, he presents Christ as an example, that we also should bear with other weak ones, when they are otherwise sickly, in open sin or from disgusting customs ; whom we must not cast off, but bear with, until they also become better. For so has Christ acted with us, and still acts daily, that He bears with very serious vice and evil customs, besides all manner of imperfection, on our part, and helps us unceasingly.

Then in conclusion he prays for them, praises them, and commends them to God, and proclaims his office and ministry, and asks them very gently for their contribution to the poor at Jerusalem ; and it is pure love, of which he speaks, and wherewith he holds converse.

CHAPTER XVI. The last chapter is a chapter of salutation ; but therewith he intermixes quite a valuable warning concerning human teachings, which make inroads beside the evangelical teaching, and cause scandal ; just as if he had actually seen that from Rome, and through the Romans, should come the seductive, irksome canons and decretals, and the whole verminous ulceration of human commandments and statutes, which now have deluged all the world, and destroyed this epistle, and all holy Scripture, along with the Spirit and faith, so that nothing more has survived than the idol-paunch of the minister. Them here St. Paul reprimands. God save us from them ! Amen.

Thus we find in this epistle most abundantly, what a Christian ought to know, namely, what law, gospel, sin, punishment, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, cross, are, and how we ought to behave towards everyone, be he religious or sinner, strong or weak, friend or foe, and towards ourselves. Added to this [we find] the whole excellently grounded in Scripture, evidenced by illustrations of its own, and of the prophets, so that, here, there is nothing more to be desired. Moreover, it also seems as if St. Paul has in this epistle intended once for all to put together in brief the whole Christian and evangelical teaching, and to provide an introduction to the whole of the Old Testament. For without doubt,

he who has this epistle truly in his heart, has the Old Testament's light and strength with him. Let every Christian allow it to be familiar to him, and constantly in use. God grant His grace! Amen.

III

EXTRACTS FROM LUTHER'S PROLOGUE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS (NEW TESTAMENT OF 1522).

(From the sections of the Prologue on Law and Faith.)

ABER das gesetz erfüllen ist, mit lust und lieb seyn werck thun, und frey, on des gesetzes zwang, Gotlich und wol leben, als were keyn gesetz oder straff. Solche lust aber freyer liebe gibt der heylige geyst ynsz hertz, wie er spricht am funfften Capitel. Der geyst aber wirt richt denn alleyn ynn, mit, and durch den glawben an Jhesum Christ geben, wie er ynn der vorrhede sagt. So kompt der glawbe nicht on alleyne durch Gottis wort oder Evangelion, das Christum predigt, wie er ist Gottis son und mensch, gestorben und auffstanden umb unser willen, wie er am 3. 4. und 10 Capitel sagt.

Daher kompt das alleyn der glawbe rechtfertig macht, und das gesetz erfüllet, denn er bringet den geyst aus Christus verdienst; der geyst aber macht eyn lustig and frey hertz: wie das gesetz fodert, so gehen denn die gutten werck aus dem glawben selber. Das meynet er am 3 capitel, nach dem er des gesetz werck verworffen hatte, das es lautt als wollt er das gesetz auff haben durch den glawben. Neyn (spricht er) wyr richten das gesetz an durch den glawben, das ist, wyr erfüllens durch den glawben.'

'Glawbe ist nicht der menschliche whan und trawm, den ettlich fur glawben hallten, und wenn sie sehen das kein besserung des lebens noch gute werck folgen, und doch vom glawben viel horen, und reden kunden, fallen sie ynn den yrthum, und sprechen, der glawbe sey nicht gnug, man musse werck thun, sol man frum und selig werden.'

'Aber glawb ist eyn gotlich werck ynn uns, das uns wandelt, und neu gespirt aus Gott (Johan. 1), und todte den allten Adam, macht uns gantz ander menschen von hertz, mut, synn, und allen krefiten, und bringet den heyligen geyst mit sich. O es ist eyn lebendig, schafftig, thettig, mechtig ding umb den glawben, das unmuglich ist, das er nicht on unterlas solt gutts wircken.'

'Glawb ist eyn lebendige erwegene zuversicht auff Gottis gnade, so gewis, das er tausent mal druber sturbe. Und solch zuversicht und erkenntnis Gottlicher gnaden macht frolich, trotzig, und lustig gegen Gott, und alle Creaturn, wilchs der heylig geyst thut ym glawben. Doher on zwang willig und lustig wirt, yderman guttis zu thun, yderman zu dienen, allerley zu leyden Gott zu lieb und zu lob.'

EXTRACTS FROM LATIN TRANSLATION OF LUTHER'S
PROLOGUE BY JUSTUS JONAS, 1524.

TALIS uero alacritas, hilaritas, et propensa uoluntas ac ardens affectus non contingit cordibus, nisi per spiritum uiuificantem, et uiuum eius impulsum ac agitationem in corde. Spiritus uero donatur per solam fidem in Iesum Christum, quemadmodum initio dixit Apostolus. Fides est per auditum Euangelii uerbi dei, per quod praedicatur Christus pro nobis mortuus: sepultus et suscittatus a mortuis. Tota igitur iustificatio ex deo est, fides et spiritus ex deo sunt et non ex nobis. Hinc et sola fides iustificat, solaque legem implet. Fides enim per meritum Christi impetrat spiritum sanctum. Hic spiritus cor nouat, exhilarat, et excitat et inflammat, ut sponte faciat ea quae uult lex. Ac tum demum ex fide, sic in corde efficaciter agente et uiuente, sponte fluunt opera uere bona.'

'Fides, non est frigida quaedam opinio, aut uaga humani animi cogitatio, quam quis sibi audiens Euangelii historiam posset ipse sic comminisci, et stulte fingere.' 'Tam efficax autem, uiua, spirans et potens energia in corde est fides, ut non possit otiosa esse et non erumpere in opera.'

' Fides ergo est fiducia constans misericordiae dei erga nos, in corde uiuens et efficaciter agens, qua proiicimus nos toti in deum, et permittimus nos deo, qua certo freti non dubitemus milies mortem oppetere. Et haec tam animosa fiducia misericordiae dei, cor exhilarat, erigit et excitat, rapitque dulcissimis quibusdam affectibus erga deum, animatque sic cor illud credentis ut deo fretus non reformidet, se solum opponere omnibus creaturis. Hoc ergo pectus heroicum, hos ingentes animos indit cordi dei spiritus, qui datur per fidem. Atque hinc consequimur, tum et hac uiua energia in corde impellimur ad bonum. Hanc hilarem propensionem consequimur, ut sponte et ultro ardentem et promptissimi simus, facere, tolerare et pati omnia in obsequium tam clementis patris et dei, qui per Christum tanta opulentia gratiae nos ditauit, et tantis opibus ceu adobruit. Fieri nequit, ut haec efficacia et uita fidei in ullo sit, quin assiduo operetur, quin deo fructificet.'

N.B.—A few obvious misprints have been corrected in the above extracts. The first quotation is from the section on Law ; the rest are from the section on Faith.

EXTRACTS FROM OLD ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE LATIN TRANSLATION OF LUTHER'S PROLOGUE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, BY W. W., STUDENT, 1632.

(Corresponding to the extracts from the Latin of Justus Jonas.)

" SUCH a cheerfulness, readiness, willingness, and ardent affection, cannot come into our hearts but by the quickening Spirit, and His lively impulsions and agitations in our heart. Now the Spirit is given only by faith in Christ, as the Apostle said in the beginning. Faith cometh through the hearing of the Gospel, through which word Christ is preached unto us, to have died, to have been buried, and to have risen again from death for us. Therefore our whole justification is of God. Faith also and the Spirit are of God: they come not of ourselves. Wherefore let

us conclude that Faith alone justifies, and that Faith alone fulfilleth the Law. For Faith through the merit of Christ obtaineth the Holy Spirit, which Spirit doth make us new hearts, doth exhilarate us, doth excite and inflame our heart, that it may do those things willingly, of love, which the Law commandeth ; and so, at the last, good works indeed do proceed freely from the faith which worketh so mightily, and which is so lively in our hearts."

" Faith is not a certain cold opinion, or a wandering cogitation of a man's mind, such alone as any man (hearing the history of the Gospel) may foolishly imagine himself to have." " Wherefore Faith is such an effectual, lively, quick, and mighty operation in our heart, that it cannot be idle, but must needs break out, and show itself by good works."

" Faith, therefore, is a constant trust, and a sure confidence of the mercy of God towards us, which is lively, and worketh mightily in our hearts, whereby we commit ourselves wholly to God, casting all our care upon Him. Leaning and trusting assuredly to this Faith, we are not afraid to die a thousand times. For this so bold an assurance of the mercy and favour of God doth make our hearts merry, glad, and light ; doth also erect, raise, and even ravish us with the most sweet motions and affections towards God ; yea, and doth so embolden the heart of the true believer, that, trusting to have God on his side, he is not afraid to oppose himself alone against all creatures. But it is the Spirit of God which giveth us this heroical heart and stout stomach through faith, which, working effectually in our hearts, doth incite and inflame us to do good. Now we have this cheerful towardness and forwardness, to the end that we might be most prompt and ready, willingly and of our own accord, to do, tolerate, and suffer all things, whereby we may be obedient to so gentle and favourable a Father, who through Christ hath enriched us with so great abundance of His graces. It cannot possibly be but that, in whomsoever this efficacy and life of faith is, it should daily work, fructify, and give increase to God."

N.B.—The spelling and punctuation are modernised.

EXTRACTS FROM PROLOGUE TO EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS
IN THE 1534 (2ND) EDITION OF TYNDALE'S
NEW TESTAMENT.

(Corresponding with the Extracts from the German
original of Luther's Prologue.)

“ To fulfil the law is to do the works thereof, and whatsoever the law commandeth, with love, lust, and inward affection and delectation, and to live godly and well, freely, willingly, and without compulsion of the law, even as though there were no law at all. Such lust and free liberty to love the law cometh only by the working of the Spirit in the heart. Now is the Spirit none otherwise given than by faith only, in that we believe the promises of God without wavering, how that God is true, and will fulfil all His good promises toward us, for Christ's blood's sake; as it is plain in the first chapter, ‘ I am not ashamed,’ saith Paul, ‘ of Christ's glad tidings, for it is the power of God unto salvation to as many as believe.’ For at once and together, even as we believe the glad tidings preached to us, the Holy Ghost entereth into our hearts, and looseth the bonds of the devil, which before possessed our hearts in captivity, and held them that we could have no lust to the will of God in the law. And, as the Spirit cometh by faith only, even so faith cometh by hearing the word of glad tidings of God, when Christ is preached, how that He is God's Son, and Man, also dead and risen again for our sakes. All our justifying then cometh of faith, and faith and the Spirit come of God, and not of us.

“ Hereof cometh it that faith only justifieth, maketh righteous, and fulfilleth the law, for it bringeth the Spirit through Christ's deservings, the Spirit bringeth lust, looseth the heart, maketh him free, setteth him at liberty, and giveth him strength to work the deeds of the law with love, even as the law requireth. Then at the last, out of the same faith so working in the heart, spring all good works by their own accord. That meaneth he in the third chapter: for, after he hath cast away the works of the law, so that he seemeth as though he would break and disannul the law through faith, he answereth to that

mighty lie laid against it, saying, 'We destroy not the law through faith, but maintain, further, or establish the law through faith.' That is to say, 'We fulfil the law through faith.' "

" Faith is not man's opinion and dream, as some imagine and feign, when they hear the story of the Gospel ; but, when they see that there follow no good works nor amendment of living, though they hear, and yet can babble, many things of faith, then they fall from the right way, and say, ' Faith only justifieth not, a man must have good works also, if he will be righteous and safe.' "

" Faith is a lively thing, mighty in working, valiant, and strong, ever doing, ever fruitful, so that it is impossible that he which is endued therewith should not work always good works without ceasing."

" Faith is then a lively and stedfast trust in the favour of God, wherewith we commit ourselves altogether unto God ; and that trust is so surely grounded, and sticketh so fast in our hearts, that a man would not once doubt of it, though he should die a thousand times therefore. And such trust, wrought by the Holy Ghost through faith, maketh a man glad, lusty, cheerful, and true-hearted unto God and all creatures. By the means thereof, willingly and without compulsion, he is glad and ready to do good to every man, to do justice to every man, to suffer all things, that God may be loved and praised."

N.B.—In this case, also, the spelling and punctuation are modernised.

IV

EXTRACTS FROM COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS.

Gal. ii. 20.

Ego sum Christo conrucifixus. Hoc addit, quia vult declarare legem devoratricem legis. Non solum, inquit, per legem legi mortuus sum, ut Deo viverem, sed etiam Christo conrucifixus sum. Christus autem est dominus legis, quia ipse crucifixus et mortuus est legi ; igitur et ego sum dominus legis. Nam et ego legi crucifixus et

mortuus sum, crucifixus enim et commortuus sum Christo. Per quid? Per ipsam gratiam et fidem. Hac fide dum crucifigor et morior legi, amittit ipsa omne jus in me, sicut et in Christum amisit. Quare sicut Christus ipse legi, peccato, morti, diabolo crucifixus est, ut nullum jus in eum amplius habeant, ita et ego per fidem, concrucifixus Christo in spiritu, crucifigor et morior legi, peccato, etc., ut et ipsa nullum jus amplius in me habeant, sed mihi crucifixa et mortua sint.

Vivo autem. Diserte et proprie loquitur. Non, inquit, de morte et crucifixione mea sic loquor, quasi jam non vivam. Imo vivo, quia ista morte et crucifixione, qua morior, vivificor; hoc est, dum gratia et fide liberor a lege, peccato, et morte, vere vivo. Itaque illa crucifixio et mors, qua crucifigor et morior legi, peccato, morti, et omnibus malis, est mihi resurrectio et vita. Christus enim crucifigit diabolum, occidit mortem, peccatum damnat, et ligat legem. Hoc credens liberor a lege, etc. Ergo lex est mihi surda, ligata, mortua, et crucifixa, et ego vicissim sum illi surdus, ligatus, mortuus, et crucifixus. Illa ipsa ergo morte et crucifixione, hoc est, illa ipsa gratia seu libertate, vivo.

Non jam ego. Hoc est, non in persona vel substantia mea. Ibi ostendit clare, quomodo vivat, et docet, quae sit justitia christiana, ea scilicet, qua Christus in nobis vivit, non quae est in persona nostra. Itaque cum disputandum est de justitia christiana, prorsus abjicienda est persona. Nam si in persona haereo, vel de ea dico, fit ex persona, velim, nolim, operarius legi subjectus. Sed hic oportet Christum et conscientiam meam fieri unum corpus, ita ut in conspectu meo nihil maneat nisi Christus crucifixus et resuscitatus. Si vero in me tantum intueor, excluso Christo, actum est de me. Nam tum statim mihi incidit ista cogitatio: Christus est in coelis, tu in terris; qua ratione nunc venies ad eum? Ego sancte vivam, et hoc, quod lex requirit, faciam, atque ita in vitam ingrediar. Ibi in me conversus et considerans, qualis ego sim vel esse debeam, item, quid mihi faciendum sit, amitto ex oculis Christum, qui solus est justitia et vita mea. Hoc amisso, non est consilium aut auxilium,

sed necesse est certam desperationem et perditionem sequi.

Vivo autem, jam non ego, sed vivit in me Christus. Quod dicit: 'Vivo autem,' sonat personaliter, quasi Paulus loquatur de sua persona. Ideo mox corrigit, dicens: 'Iam non ego,' hoc est: Non ego jam in mea persona vivo, sed, 'Christus in me vivit.' Persona quidem vivit, sed non in se aut pro sua persona. Sed quis est ille ego, de quo dicit: 'Iam non ego'? Is ego est, qui legem habet, et operari debet, quique est persona quædam segregata a Christo. Illum ego Paulus rejicit, quia ego ut distincta persona a Christo pertinet ad mortem et infernum. Ideo inquit: 'Iam non ego, sed Christus in me vivit.' Is est mea forma, ornans fidem meam, ut color vel lux parietem ornat (sic crasse res illa exponenda est; non enim possumus spiritualiter comprehendere tam proxime et intime Christum haerere et manere in nobis, quam lux vel albedo in pariete haeret). Christus ergo, inquit, sic inhaerens et conglutinatus mihi et manens in me, hanc vitam, quam ago, vivit in me; imo vita, qua sic vivo, est Christus ipse. Itaque Christus et ego jam unum in hac parte sumus.

Vivens autem in me Christus abolet legem, peccatum damnat, mortem mortificat, quia ad praesentiam ipsius illa non possunt non evanescere. Est enim Christus aeterna pax, consolatio, justitia, et vita; his autem cedere oportet terrorem legis, moerorem animi, peccatum, infernum, mortem. Sic Christus in me manens et vivens tollit et absorbet omnia mala, quae me cruciant et affligunt. Quare haec inhaerentia facit, ut liberer a terroribus legis et peccati, eximar e cute mea, et transferar in Christum et regnum illius; quod est regnum gratiae, justitiae, pacis, gaudii, vitae, salutis, et gloriae aeternae. In illo autem agens, nihil mali potest nocere mihi.

Quod autem nunc vivo in carne, in fide filii Dei vivo. Hoc est: In carne quidem vivo, sed ego hanc vitam, quantulacunque est, quae in me agitur, non habeo pro vita. Quia hoc vitae tempus, quod ego vivo, in carne quidem vivo, sed non vivo ex carne vel secundum carnem, sed in fide, ex fide, et secundum fidem. Non ergo negat se vivere in carne, quia facit omnia opera animalis hominis;

deinde utitur rebus carnalibus, victu, vestitu, etc., quod certe est in carne vivere ; sed ait hanc non esse suam vitam, nec secundum haec se vivere : se quidem uti rebus carnalibus, sed non illis vivere, ut mundus ex carne et secundum carnem vivit ; quia extra hanc carnalem vitam nec novit nec sperat aliam vitam. Ergo quantulacunque est, inquit, ista vita, quam in carne vivo, in fide filii Dei vivo. Quia illa vita est in corde per fidem, ubi exstincta carne regnat Christus cum suo Spiritu sancto, qui jam videt, audit, loquitur, operatur, patitur, et simpliciter omni agit in ipso, etiamsi caro reluctetur. Brevitur, ista vita non est carnis, licet sit in carne, sed Christi filii Dei, quem fide possidet christianus.

Qui dilexit me, et tradidit semet ipsum pro me. Hic descriptam habes veram rationem justificationis et exemplum certitudinis fidei. Qui haec verba : 'Vivo in fide filii Dei, qui dilexit me, et tradidit semet ipsum pro me,' certa et constanti fide cum Paul dicere posset, is vere beatus esset ; et illis ipsis verbis Paulus in totum abrogat et tollit justitiam legis et operum, ut postea dicemus. Sunt autem diligenter expendenda haec verba : 'Filius Dei dilexit me, et tradidit semet ipsum pro me.' Quare Paulus non nos, sed Christum incepisse, hic dicit. 'Ipse, ipse' (inquit) 'dilexit me, et tradidit semet ipsum pro me' ; quasi dicat : Non invenit in me bonam voluntatem et intellectum rectum ; sed Christus misertus est mei, vidit me impium, errantem, aversum a Deo, et semper longius recedentem ab eo, et pugnans contra Deum, captum, rectum, et vectum a diabolo. Sic ex misericordia praeveniente meam rationem, voluntatem, intellectum, dilexit me, et sic dilexit, ut semet ipsum traderet pro me, ut sic a lege, peccato, diabolo, morte liberarer.

Pro me. Quis est ille 'me' ? Ego scilicet, peccator perditus et damnatus, sic dilectus a filio Dei, ut se ipsum traderet pro me. Si ergo operibus vel meritis de congruo et condigno potuissem diligere filium Dei, et venire ad eum, quid opus fuisset eum tradi pro me ? Quid est ergo, quod jactantur opera et merita ? Si ego, perditus et damnatus peccator, potuissem alio quodam pretio redimi, quid opus fuisset pro me tradi filium Dei ? Sed quia

nullum erat in coelis nec terris praeter Christum filium Dei, ideo summa fuit necessitas eum pro me tradi. Deinde hoc fecit summa caritate, quia Paulus inquit, 'qui dilexit me.' Quare hae voces, 'qui dilexit me,' etc., plenissimae fidei sunt, et qui hoc breve pronomen (me) illa fide dicere et applicare sibi posset, qua Paulus, is etiam futurus esset optimus disputator, una cum Paulo, contra legem. Per illam igitur traditionem filii Dei in mortem respiro, et eam applico mihi; istaque applicatio est vera vis fidei. Fides ergo, ut dixi, apprehendit et involvit Christum filium pro nobis traditum, ut Paulus hic docet, quo apprehenso per fidem, habemus justitiam et vitam. Christus enim est filius Dei, qui ex mera caritate tradidit se ipsum pro nobis redimendis. Itaque Christus non est Moses, non exactor aut legislator, sed largitor gratiae, salvator, et miserator; et, in summa, nihil nisi mera et infinita misericordia donata et donans. Discamus igitur diligenter discernere, non verbum tanto, sed opere et vita, Christum a legislatore, ut veniente diabolo sub larva Christi, et fatigante nos sub nomine ejus, sciamus eum non esse Christum, sed vere diabolium. Christus enim est laetitia et suavitas cordis pavidum et contribulatum, auctore Paulo, qui eum hic suavissimo titulo ornat, scilicet diligentem me, et tradentem se ipsum pro me. Est ergo Christus amator eorum, qui sunt in angustia, peccato, et morte, et talis amator, qui tradat se ipsum pro nobis, fiat pontifex noster, hoc est, qui interponat se mediatorem inter Deum et nos miseros peccatores. Quid, quaeso, jucundius aut laetius dici posset? Si ista vera sunt, ut vera esse oportet, vel totum evangelium inanis fabula est, tum certe non legis justitia, multo minus propria justitia, justificamur. Lege igitur cum magna emphasi has voces, 'me,' 'pro me,' et assuefacias te, ut illud 'me' possis certa fide concipere, et applicare tibi, neque dubites, quin etiam sis ex numero eorum, qui dicuntur 'me'; item, quod Christus non tantum dilexerit Petrum et Paulum, et se ipsum pro eis tradiderit, sed quod illa gratia in isto 'me' comprehensa aequae ad nos pertineat et veniat, ac ad illos. Sicut enim negare non possumus nos omnes esse peccatores, et cogimur dicere Adam peccato suo perdidisse nos, fecisse nos hostes

Dei, obnoxios irae et iudicio Dei, et reos aeternae mortis (hoc enim sentiunt et fatentur territa corda, et plus aequo), ita negare non possumus, quin Christus pro peccatis nostris mortuus sit, ut justificaremur. Non enim mortuus est, ut justos faceret justos, sed ut peccatores faceret justos, amicos et filios Dei, et heredes omnium honorum coelestium. Cum igitur me peccatorem sentio et fateor propter transgressionem Adae, cur non dicerem me justum propter justitiam Christi, praesertim cum audiam eum dilexisse me, et tradidisse se ipsum pro me? Paulus hoc firmissime credidit, ideo etiam cum tanta πληροφορίᾳ loquitur. Quam et nobis, saltem aliqua ex parte, concedat ille idem, qui dilexit nos, et tradidit se ipsum pro nobis! Amen.

V

LUTHER'S HYMN OF GRACE

(1523)

- (1) Nun freut euch, Christen insgemein,
 Und lasst uns fröhlich springen,
 Dass wir getrost und All' in Ein
 Mit Lust und Liebe singen,
 Was Gott an uns gewendet hat,
 Und seine süsse Wunderthat;
 Gar theur hat er's erworben.
- (2) Dem Teufel ich gefangen lag,
 Im Tod war ich verloren.
 Die Sünd' mich quälte Nacht und Tag,
 Darin ich war geboren.
 Ich fiel auch immer tiefer drein,
 Es war kein guts am Leben mein:
 Die Sünd' hat mich besessen.

- (3) Mein guten Werke golten nicht,
Mit ihnen war's verdorben.
Der Freiwill hasset Gott's Gericht,
Er war zum Gut erstorben.
Die Angst mich zu verzweifeln trieb,
Dass nichts denn Sterben bei mir blieb ;
Zur Hölle musst' ich sinken.
- (4) Da jammert Gott in Ewigkeit
Mein Elend übermassen.
Er dacht' an sein' Barmherzigkeit,
Er wollt' mir helfen lassen.
Er wandt' zu mir sein Vaterherz ;
Und dass er heilte meinen Schmerz,
Er liess sein Bestes kosten.
- (5) Er sprach zu seinem lieben Sohn :
Zeit ist's sich zu erbarmen ;
Fahr' hin, meins herzenswerthe Kron,
Und sei das Heil dem Armen,
Und hilf ihm aus der Sünden Noth,
Erwürg' für ihn den bittren Tod,
Und lass ihn mit dir leben.
- (6) Der Sohn so gern gehorsam ward,
Er kam zu mir auf Erden
Von einer Jungfrau, rein und zart ;
Er sollt' mein Bruder werden.
Gar heimlich wirket sein' Gewalt,
Er ging in meiner armen Gestalt ;
Den Teufel wollt er fangen.
- (7) Er sprach zu mir : Halt' dich am mich,
Es soll dir jetzt gelingen ;
Ich geb' mich selber ganz für dich,
Da will ich für dich ringen :
Denn ich bin dein, und du bist mein,
Und wo ich bleib, da sollst du sein ;
Uns soll der Feind nicht scheiden.

- (8) Vergiessen wird er mir mein Blut,
Dazu mein Leben rauben.
Das leid ich alles dir zu gut;
Das halt' mit festem Glauben.
Den Tod verschlingt das Leben mein,
Mein' Unschuld trägt die Sünde dein;
Da bist du selig worden.
- (9) Gen Himmel zu dem Vater mein
Fahr' ich aus diesem Leben.
Da will ich sein der Meister dein;
Den Geist will ich dir geben,
Der dich in Trübniss trösten soll,
Und lehren mich erkennen wohl,
Und in der Wahrheit leiten.
- (10) Was ich gethan hab' und gelehrt,
Das sollst du thun und lehren,
Damit das Reich Gottes werd' gemehrt
Zu Lob und seinen Ehren;
Und hüt' dich vor der Menschen G'satz,
Davon verdirbt der edle Schatz.
Das lass' ich dir zu letzte.

Amen.

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