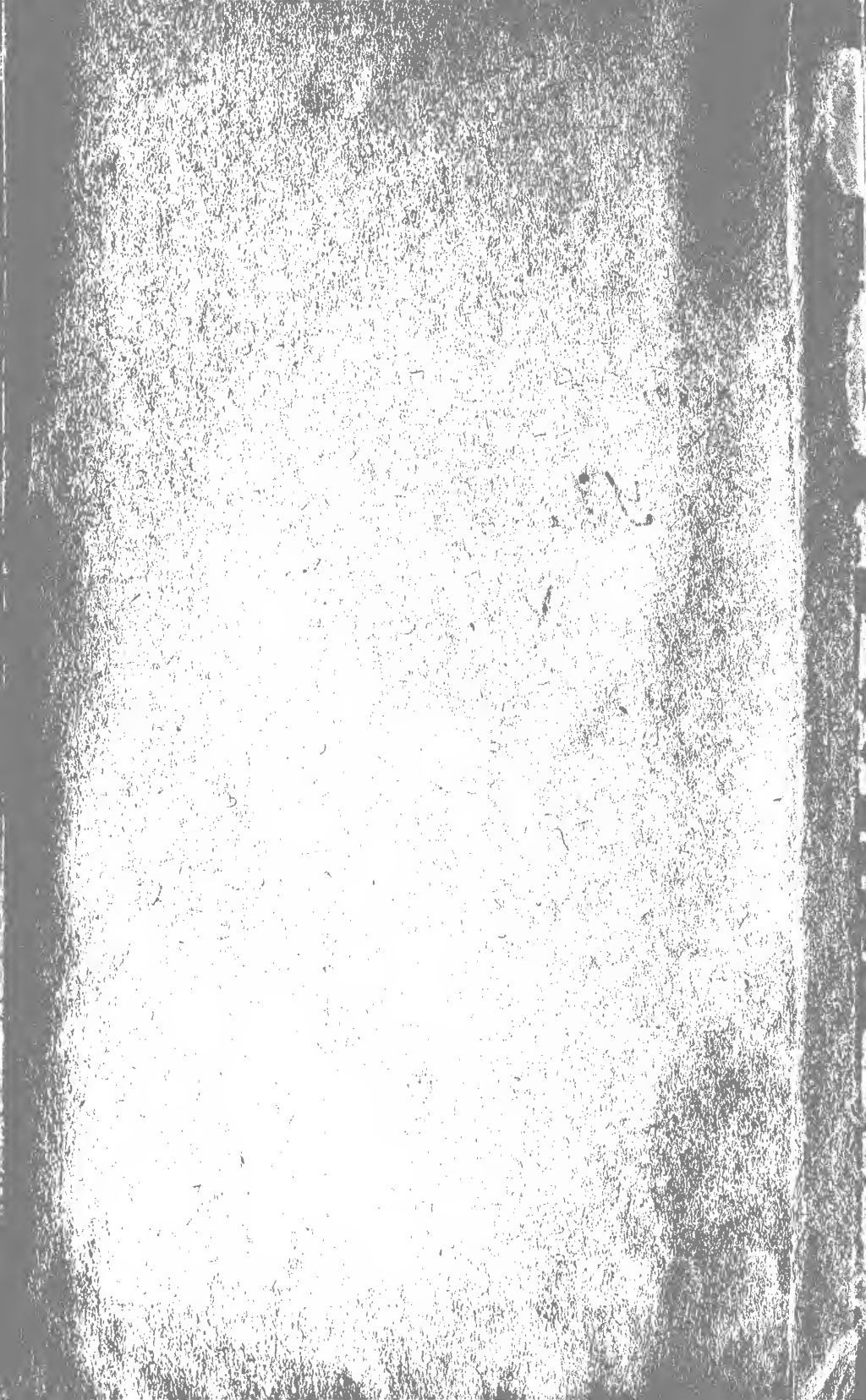
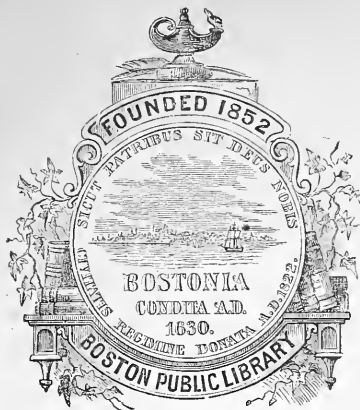


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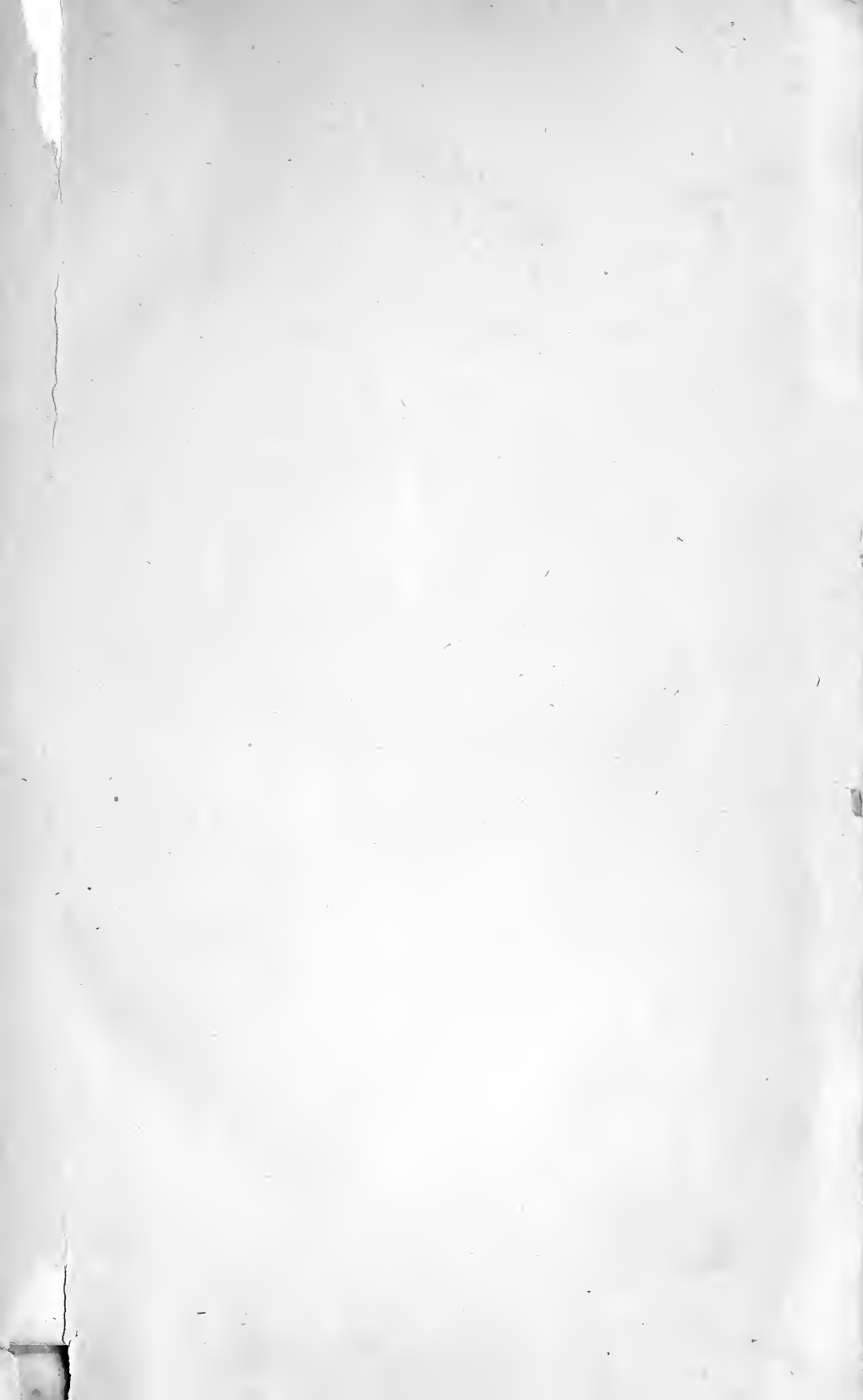
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PAMPHLETS.

Yertullian,

By

John W. Chadwick.

Ch. Ex. Sept. 1863.

THE

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

SEPTEMBER, 1863.

ART. I.—TERTULLIAN AND MONTANISM.

1. TERTULLIANI *Opera edidit* FRANCISCUS OEHLER. Lipsiæ: T. O. Wegel. 1853.
2. *Library of the Fathers.* — TERTULLIAN. Translated by the REV. C. DODGSON, M. A. Oxford: John Henry Parker. 1842.
3. NEANDER'S *Planting of Christianity*, and *Antignostikus*. Translated from the German by J. E. RYLAND. London: Henry G. Bohn. 1859.
4. *The Ecclesiastical History of the Second and Third Centuries, illustrated from the Writings of Tertullian.* By JOHN, BISHOP OF LINCOLN. London: Francis and John Rivington.
5. *Hippolytus and his Age. Or the Beginnings and Prospects of Christianity.* By CHRISTIAN CHARLES JOSIAS BUNSEN. Second Edition. 1854. Vol. I. *Hippolytus and the Teachers of the Apostolical Age.*

IN the first of these volumes we have, in their newest presentation, the heterogeneous writings of Tertullian, just as he coined them out of his fiery heart. Such of them as were written before he became a Montanist, and a few of doubtful character, have been translated by Mr. Dodgson for the Oxford "Library of the Fathers." The translation exhibits no more of the spirit of the original than such an original must needs transmit. All that is given in the shape of notes and dissertations is vitiated by the editor's unfortunate conception of Tertullian's secession from the Church. He regards it as a sudden leap, and a very criminal one at that. The investigation of the Bishop of Lincoln is made very dull, for any one outside his own Church, by its persistency in referring everything to the canons

of that institution. Bunsen's brief sketch is valuable; but Neander's excellent monograph will do more than any of these towards giving the general reader a clear conception of Tertullian's work and spirit, and the times in which his lot was cast. The treatise, in its revised form, was one of the last results of the great German's Herculean toil. It impresses us as being better in parts than as a whole, perhaps from its very nature as a critique of Tertullian's separate works. It is a matter of regret that, since English theology is so deficient in its criticism of the great tendencies of the early Church, no one can be found to unlock for us the treasures of the German mind in this department of research. The writings of Baur and the *Montanismus* of Schweigler would be a welcome accession. But the best books do not soonest find translators.

Not all the Fathers seem real to us to-day. It is hard to think that some of them were men of flesh and blood, with human hearts and human passions like our own. We would find some point of union with them, but we cannot. If in the darkness of our souls we stretch out our hands to them, they put not forth their own, or it is as if we touched that of a corpse. And then the performance of these men seems so disproportionate to their opportunities. They wasted their strength in believing, and forgot to do and be. The echoes of Christ's footfalls had hardly died upon the earth, when they began to warp his tropes into dogma and his parables into creed, and could find nothing deeper than shallow doctrine in the agony of the Garden and the suffering of the Cross.

Doubtless the records are most unfair to these men, and tell dreadful falsehoods in not telling all the truth about them. Perhaps they were good citizens, and kind husbands, and true friends. Who knows? But we must take them as we find them, and, so taking them, they seem real or unreal to us with reference to two simple questions. Were they or were they not the representatives of some marked idea, truth, or tendency? Did they or did they not subordinate words to actions, and belief to life? As regards the first point, it does not matter whether the idea or tendency is a favorite one with us. We only ask that our writer or hero shall stand for this thing or for that, and not dabble among all things. The ground of

interest in a man is that he be good after his kind, and that his kind be marked distinctly. We are scarcely less interested by the narrowness of Peter's faith than by the breadth of Paul's. Tertullian stands this test. He is a better Montanist than Montanus himself. The object of Neander in the *Antignostikus* is to show that Tertullian is the proper representative of the Realistic tendency and system, which he sets over against the Idealistic with its ultra and moderate wings, its veritable Gnosticism, and its Alexandrian school. As the representative of this practical system, he must, if true to it, stand our second test as well, — must subordinate words to actions and belief to life. And this Tertullian certainly did.

The conception involved in Montanism has struggled into higher and lower forms of expression at every stage of the development of the Christian Church. It is the world's protest against conventional limitations of faith, — an utterance, oft-times a very imperfect one, no doubt, of man's belief in the immanent working of God. The idea of the Paraclete in the Gospel of John, the rude faith of Montanus himself, the higher and more imaginative expression of it in the writings of Tertullian, the Abbot Joachim's doctrine of the Everlasting Gospel, the belief of the sect of the Holy Ghost, which flourished at the close of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century, — namely, that an age of the Holy Ghost was at hand, that it would incarnate itself in entire humanity,* — the mysticism of Fénelon and Madame Guyon, the Quaker's "inner light," and the Methodist's illumination, with Dr. Temple's notion of the "education of the world," — these thoughts of periods so widely separated from each other are after all but different faces of this diamond truth, — that the heavens are never closed, revelation never ceases, God never dies.

This was the deeper meaning of Montanistic thought. It had another less lofty meaning, which perhaps was more apparent. That was its unconscious truth, this its conscious expression. It is from the second point of view that we perceive that these Montanists were the pietists and "latter-day saints" of the second century. So viewed, their movement

* Neander, General Church History, Vol. IV. p. 448.

appears reactionary, its apparent cause the increase of worldliness and moral laxity, its evident purpose to renew ancient faith and discipline. To the body of the Church, the movement appeared extravagant. For, in fact, its method, being that of the first century, was out of harmony with the third. Without a belief in the wonder-working power of faith, we can scarcely account for the growth of early Christianity. The Montanist thought he had a right to expect that the conditions of the birth of Christianity would be those of its continuous development. The Church at large saw no necessity, and began to doubt the possibility, of a continuance of the miraculous element. Hence antagonism.

“We should but poorly understand this product,” says Neander, “growing out of the developing process in the early Church, if we considered the personal character of the founder, by whom the first impulse was given, as the main cause of all the succeeding effects.” We should be thankful that Neander was pleased to say this in his quiet way, since no one can suspect him of sympathizing too deeply with the method of Buckle and Comte.

The personal influence of the fanatical and unlettered Phrygian is altogether inadequate to account for the effects which followed his appearance. We cannot regard him as introducing any new elements, but only as being made the exponent of elements long existing, as furnishing “a point of attachment around which all these elements would gather.” “And yet,” as Neander tells us, “while we are careful not to overrate the importance of Montanus, we should also guard against the error of allowing him none at all.” Though little is known of him, his existence is too well accredited for us to suppose that he was but the personification or general tendency. Although he does not account for Montanism, we cannot account for Montanism without him. When the great ice-mass is ready for its fall, a footstep on the mountain-side is enough to start it on its way. So the anti-speculative, anti-traditional, world-resisting tendencies of the Church waited for the coming of a Montanus to set them free. And he was not needless, any more than the traveller’s footstep was needless to the avalanche’s fall.

Mr. Mackay, in his "Rise and Progress of Christianity," tells us that Montanism had much in common with Gnosis. But other writers, and Neander among them, have not thought so. "Both were based on individual consciousness of elevated sentiment and Divine inspiration"; but as they struggle forth into conscious expression, they have nothing in common but an unmistakable hostility to the regular development of the Church. Gnosticism was a thing of the intellect, Montanism a matter of the heart. So far as speculation was concerned, Montanism was retrogressive in its character. The speculation of Gnosticism was not only free, but wild. It claimed, moreover, a spiritual insight and infallibility for the individual, which the instinct of self-preservation compelled the Church to deny him altogether, while laying claim to it in her corporate capacity. Its rationalizing and generalizing tendencies were altogether incompatible with the notion of a strict ecclesiasticism, and in merging the simple meaning of the Gospel in philosophic ideas, and thus removing it from the possibility of being popularly apprehended, it plainly was at war with the universalizing spirit of the Church. From almost any point of view, the vital conflict between Church and Gnosis is sufficiently apparent. -

So, too, the difference between Gnosis and Montanism, already hinted at. For while Gnosis caught up and fused into a mystic system everything that was ideal and transcendental in the time, Montanism, in going back to the Apocalyptic eschatology, and seeking to carry out to the letter all that was severest in the theory of the Apostolic age, was necessarily practical in its character, and involved a union of all the Realistic, and therefore Anti-Gnostic, forces of the time. The movement was not Oriental in its character. It embodied the spirit of the legal, practical West, as opposed to the mystical and speculative East, — Rome, so fond of definition, matched against Alexandria, so fond of dreams.

At first glance, the gulf between Montanism and the Church seems anything but impassable. It offered nothing beyond the Scripture in the shape of doctrine, admitted, in fact, the immutability of doctrinal tradition, and, in matters of discipline, did not so much advance new ideas as it demanded a rigid

application of those already in vogue. But a Montanistic writing of North Africa gives us the key-note of the system when it says, "Faith ought not to be so weak and despondent as to suppose that God's grace was powerful only among the ancients." It claimed the inspiration of the Holy Ghost still operating through prophet souls. Moreover, the Holy Ghost was not partial, and any person was liable to be a prophet. To all of which the Church would say again and again, "The Law and the Prophets were until John."

The Montanistic notion of inspiration and prophecy certainly involved a return to the Old Testament stand-point, making the gulf as wide as possible between the human and Divine. Neander tells us that the New Testament aimed at a union between the two, grounded in redemption. However this may be, the instinct of the Church certainly led it to seek for such a union, in doing which it must cease to regard revelation as a thing external to the soul, and recognize the possibility of its coming into combination with purely human forces. "The supernatural must continually become more natural, and the age of revelation and miracles must be succeeded by that of operations carried on by the agency of the human mind, as animated by the Divine Spirit: to the formation of such a process is opposed that tendency which would retain forever in an equal degree the element of the supernatural, — of inspiration when the mind can be only passive." Such was the tendency of Montanism, and there was war between it and the Church. What harmony between stiff traditionalism and the Montanist's notion of the free operation of the Spirit? And the prophetess Maximilla had announced, "After me, no more prophesying, but the end." What harmony between this notion and ecclesiastical consolidation and the world-appropriating spirit of the Church? Montanism meant ascetism, it meant exclusiveness, — it might mean individualism.

We are now prepared to speak of its greatest representative and most able advocate. The Idealism of the East, in its attempt to substitute a true Gnosis *in* the Church for a false Gnosis *outside* of it, found its truest and ablest representative in the great Origen. The opposing Realism of the West attained its highest conscious expression in the bold, passionate, and eloquent Tertullian.

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, the son of a pro-consular centurion, was probably born at Carthage, in the latter part of the second century. He flourished at the close of this century and the beginning of the third. We learn from his writings that he was at first a heathen, of those "once blind without the light of the Lord." At this time he appears to have been an advocate or *rhetor*. Bunsen without hesitation ascribes to him the juristic fragments in the Pandects, which bear his name. Even if testimony of a more direct character were denied us,* we might infer, from the bitterness with which he speaks of the corruptions of the heathen world, that he did not know of them only at second hand. And as sinner or saint it was not possible for this man to go half-way. Paul's remembrance of the time when "he breathed forth threatenings and slaughter," and the cry of Augustine, "Too late have I come to thee, O thou Beauty, so ancient and yet so new, — too late have I come to love thee," — are not more sad than the backward glances of Tertullian to a time the thought of which was like a curse. We shudder with him at the mention of that time, as when, in speaking of the gladiatorial shows, he tells us: "No one who has not been a spectator of these scenes can adequately describe them. I would rather fail in describing, than think of them again." No doubt it was the rebound from the sins and follies of his early life which compelled him, in his Christian experience, to adopt that ascetic method which most naturally, at a later period, found a point of union with the Montanistic spirit of the time. He does not appear to have embraced Christianity until he arrived at manhood. We do not learn from his own writings whether he had an office in the Church before his secession. Jerome tells us that he was a presbyter. His commanding talents make it probable. But it must have been at Carthage rather than at Rome, as Jerome would have us believe.

Christianity, though it might redeem, could not transform, the character of this man. Heathen or Christian, he must still be angular and rough, still be hot-headed and warm-hearted. "We find the new wine in an old bottle," says

* De Resurrect. Carnis, Cap. 59.

Neander, "and the tang which it has contracted there may easily embarrass the inexperienced judge." As Saul the persecutor and "Paul the servant of Jesus Christ," though different, are yet the same, so we know that Tertullian, at every stage of his life, must have been quick-tempered, impatient of contradiction, not slow to condemn, yet ready to forgive, impulsive, fearless, positive, and strong. "He was a man of smart and acute wit," says Dr. Cave, "though a little too much edged with keenness and satyrisms. *Acris et vehementis ingenii*, as St. Jerome characterizes him, one that knew not how to treat an adversary without salt and sharpness." "A man of such quick and weighty parts," Vicentius tells us, "that there was scarcely anything which he set himself against that he did not either pierce through with the acumen of his wit, or batter down with the strength and solidity of his arguments."

Bunsen makes Tertullian's departure from the Church coincide with the terrible persecution of Severus, which took place in the eleventh year of his reign, in the year 202 of our era. Jerome is pleased to account for it by the envy and persecution of the Roman priesthood; but his opinion is very much invalidated when we remember the bitterness with which he regarded the Roman clergy, and how prone the Church has always been to account for the secession of her members by external considerations. Pamelius again accounts for his secession on the ground of disappointed ambition, the absurdity of which is apparent when we remember how void of pretence was the character of this man,* how little desirous he could ever have been of any outward distinction, and, furthermore, which is a much stronger consideration, how perfectly congenial to his habit of mind the doctrines and practices of the new Prophecy must have been.

As a Montanist, notwithstanding the new duties that must have devolved upon him as a leader of the opposition, as he would naturally and actually did become, he still applied himself as indefatigably as before to the exposition and defence of the Christian doctrines. Bunsen and Neander alike assign

* Spiritual pretence he had, no doubt. But this would lead him to seek the desert rather than a bishopric. It was so with the later ascetics.

all of his polemic writings, except the *Præscriptio adversus Hæreticos*, to this period. Of the close of his life we know nothing. It is not likely that he suffered martyrdom, since we have not even a legend, as in Justin's case, pointing to such an event. That God was not pleased to grant him such great honor must have been a sadder thing than death to his great, passionate soul. He would have asked no higher boon, and nothing could seem more fitting, than that a harsh death should end so harsh a life, — that, having lived in battle, he should pass in storm.

The writings of Tertullian which relate to the connection of Christians with the heathen world are deeply interesting in their character. Now with fiery rhetoric and no mean logic he vindicates the cause of the first, and attacks the vices of the second. Again, from the fountains of his own abiding faith, he pours forth healing waters to refresh and strengthen the souls of those who waste in dungeons,

“Longing, and yet afraid to die.”

And here most strongly do we feel, in considering the method of his consolation, that, since we cannot ascribe the work * to the Montanistic period of his life, there must have been Montanism in the very fibre of his soul. Anon he summons the soul as an unconscious witness of the Christian's doctrines and the Christian's God: —

“I summon thee, not such as when formed in the schools, exercised in libraries, nourished in the Academies and Porches of Athens, thou utterest thy crude wisdom. I address thee as simple and rude and unpolished and unlearned, such as they have thee who have only thee; the very and entire thing that thou art, in the road, in the highway, in the weaver's factory.”

The tract *Ad Martyres* is the first writing of this class in order of time. The occasion of it was, no doubt, the persecution attendant on the refusal of Christians of the stricter sort to participate in the public festivities with which Severus celebrated his final triumph over Piscennius in the East and Albinus in Gaul. As the rescript of Trajan had never been

* The tract *Ad Martyres*.

repealed, Christianity still remained a *religio illicita*, and its followers were liable, at any time and for the most fanciful reasons, to be subjected to popular outrage, or imprisonment and death at the hands of unfriendly magistrates. "If the Tiber overflows the walls, if the Nile does not irrigate the fields, if the skies are shut, if the earth quakes, if there is a famine or a pestilence, immediately the cry is raised, *Christianos ad leonem!*" Such abuses called out the two Apologies of Justin under Marcus Antoninus; such, under Aurelius, some thirty years later, summoned him to "witness a good confession"; and now again, in A. D. 197, similar outrages filled the prisons with the condemned, and furnished occasion for Tertullian's earnest words of encouragement and consolation. Many expressions throughout the tract show us how strong was his mental relationship to Montanism; as, for instance, his comparison of the world to a prison, and his condemnation of those whom he considered too anxious to supply the bodily wants of their imprisoned friends. The former of these passages is quite remarkable:—

"For if we only reflect that this world itself is a prison, we must think that we are rather come out of a prison than entered into one. The world has greater darkness, with which it blinds the hearts of men. It imposes heavier fetters,—fetters which bind the very souls of men. Darkness is in the prison, but ye yourselves are light. It has fetters, but in God's sight ye are free. Its air is noisome, but ye are a sweet-smelling savor. Ye are waiting for the judge; but ye shall judge the judges themselves. Shall he be sad there, who sighs for the enjoyments of the world? Outside the prison, the Christian has renounced the world; but in prison, the prison also. It matters not where ye are in the world, who are not of the world."

And again:—

"The prison is to the Christian what the desert was to the prophets. The Lord himself frequently retired into solitude, that he might pray more freely, and be apart from the world: lastly; he manifested his glory to his disciples in solitude. Let us discard the name of prison, and call it retirement. Though the body is shut up, though the flesh is detained, yet all things are open to the spirit."

It is possible, though by no means certain, that the writing *De Spectaculis* was called out by the festivities, for refusing

to participate in which the persons addressed in the tract *Ad Martyres* were cast into prison. It deals with a most difficult question, which could not be blinked, however, by any earnest Christian in Tertullian's time, — "How far the Christian may venture to place himself on a level with the world, and adopt its existing manners and forms of life; and how far this may be done without doing violence to Christian principles and the Christian spirit." We feel at once that there is no danger of Tertullian's erring on the side of a too pliant accommodation. Rather he will advocate the rejection of every heathen usage, to the most absolute extent. Very few old bottles will he find worthy of his new wine. Not one jot of sympathy will he have with anything that looks like appropriation of the world. And we are not disappointed. Did we not feel certain that, if he had been a Montanist at this time, he would have fallen back on the specific commands of the Paracletic revelation, we should certainly class the writing among his Montanistic works. But he is obliged to defend himself on the ground that the Scripture must be interpreted with reference to its general principles, particular applications of which often render it obligatory to do certain things not specially commanded. The clearness with which he distinguishes between the theatres themselves and the use that is made of them, goes far to absolve him from the charge of superstition.

"May God avert from his people such a love of destructive pleasure," he goes on to say. "For what is it to go from the church of God to the church of the Devil? to weary those hands in applauding a player which thou hast been lifting up to God? to give a testimony to a gladiator with a mouth that has said Amen to the Holy One? to say 'for ever and ever' to any being save to God and Christ, — *εἰς αἰῶνας ἀπ' αἰῶνος alii omnino dicere nisi Deo et Christo?*"

This passage gains additional interest, as indicating that liturgical forms and responses were already in use. In conclusion, he contrasts the joys that the Christian gains with those that he abandons.

"Wouldst thou have fightings and wrestlings? Behold immodesty cast down by chastity, perfidy slain by fidelity, cruelty crushed by compassion, impudence eclipsed by modesty. Such are our contests, in

which we gain the crown. Wouldst thou also have somewhat of blood? Thou hast Christ's."

The closing passage of the tract is simply devilish. All attempts to excuse it, with the indignation heaped on Gibbon for quoting it as he does,* seem altogether absurd. It shows plainly enough that Christianity had not been able to subdue the natural harshness of his disposition, if it does not also show that that harshness had been increased by a too careful study of certain portions of Scripture, which are beacons, not to guide us into safe harbors, but to keep us from perilous shoals.

"And yet there remain other shows: that last and eternal day of judgment, the unlooked for, the scorned of the nations, when all the ancient things of the earth, and all that are rising into life, shall be consumed in one fire. What then shall be the expanse of this show! How shall I wonder, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult! beholding so many kings declared to be admitted into Heaven, with Jupiter himself and all that testify of him groaning together in the lowest darkness."

There is more and worse. But that Tertullian should write thus in the third century seems not so strange, when we find his Oxford editor in the nineteenth commenting as follows: "A truth lies at the basis of this painful description, since Scripture says, 'The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance.'"

The tract *De Idololatria*, the *Apologeticus*, and the treatise *De Testimonio Animal*, are writings of a similar character, written before he left the Church. In the first, the attempt is made to show in how many ways idolatry may be committed. He calls upon all who get their livelihood by the manufacture and decoration of idols to resign their employment. He manifests a tendency which, if carried out, would separate the Church entirely from the world. He is hostile to commerce; he unconditionally denounces traffic in anything that may serve the purposes of heathen worship. He would not have a Christian accept any magisterial office.

* Roman Empire, Vol. I. Ch. XV. Sec. 2. His translation is slightly incorrect, but does little violence to the original.

"Who should more have used these honors than the Son of God? What faces, and how many, would have attended him! What purple would have glistened on his shoulders! What gold would have gleamed from his head, if he had not decided that the glory of the world was foreign to him and his followers! What, therefore, he would not have he rejected, and what he rejected he condemned, and what he condemned he assigned to the pomp of the Devil."

The Apology presents to us a most vivid picture of the suffering Christian community. Hard indeed was the lot of its members, — arrested without authority, condemned without a hearing, executed without judgment. Most earnestly, and most beautifully at times, does Tertullian demand that the Church shall have at least the liberty to defend herself.

"She asketh no favor for her cause, because she feeleth no wonder at her condition. She knoweth that she liveth a stranger upon earth, that among aliens she easily findeth foes; but that she hath her birth, her hope, her favor, and her worth in the heavens. One thing, meanwhile, she earnestly desireth, that she be not condemned unknown."

He contrasts the foolish charges brought against the Christians with the unconscious testimony to their purity of life. That he was not without such speculative temper as could not always be curbed by his will or spoiled by his imagination is shown when he sets forth the difference between Christianity and the philosophic systems in their relation to the world. There is in this analysis the strongest mixture of strength and weakness. Clearness and dulness have met together; bigotry and truth have kissed each other. Anselm long afterward expressed the same thought in somewhat similar language. "I strive not, Lord, to pierce thy height, but I desire to understand thy truth, which my heart believes and loves." Tertullian thought that the philosopher's attempt was the exact reverse of this. He sought truth in order that he might gratify his intellectual faculties, his interest in it being altogether subjective. But "Christians seek the truth impelled by an inward necessity, and retain it in its integrity as men anxious for their salvation." The charges against the Christians were of the most dreadful sort, — no less than cannibalism and incest. The heat of Africa and the fury of her sand-storms

are in his reply. Eternal joys would be dearly bought by such sacrifice of all natural feeling. Can it be that he was a father himself, he speaks of the little one so tenderly, "the foe of none, the accused of none, the child of all" ?

The Apologies of the second century were anything but conciliatory in their tone, and must, it would seem, if read, have made the matter infinitely worse. The way in which Tertullian contrasts the Roman virtue of earlier days with that of his time could but the more exasperate the enemies of the Church.

"In the women now, owing to their gold, no limb is light; owing to their wine, no kiss is free; and for divorce, — it is now even the object of a wish, as if it were the proper fruit of matrimony."

In the tract *De Testimonio Animæ*, Tertullian asserts man's immediate consciousness of certain spiritual truths. A believer in original sin he was, no doubt, but a much stronger believer in original goodness. "O testimony of the soul, by very nature a Christian," he says, in the Apology. The title of a later tract, *Testimonium Animæ Naturaliter Christianæ*, explains its purpose. "The soul divines what is Divine," he tells us. Man's natural consciousness, he thinks, cannot be at fault. The unity of God is proved from men's casual expressions, e. g. "God sees all things," "God judge between us," in which they use the word *Deus*, and not the name of this god or the other.

Belonging to the same class with the works which we have already mentioned are the tracts *De Corona Militis*, *De Fuga in Persecutione*, *Contra Gnosticos Scorpiace*, and the address *Ad Scapulam*, all written after his secession. The occasion of the first was the refusal on the part of a soldier in the army of Severus to wear a garland at a time when largesses were to be distributed. The soldier was thrown into prison, and many Christians united with the heathen in condemning him. They declared that the wearing of garlands was not disallowed in holy writ. But Tertullian undertook the man's defence. No doubt he would have done this before he became a Montanist; but now he did it the more heartily, and, identifying the opposers of Montanism with those who could not approve of the soldier's stiffness, he attacks them boldly, charging the bishops

with cowardice, calling them "lions in peace, but deer in war." In the absence of any positive command, he lays down the maxim, "Whatever is not expressly permitted is forbidden," and still, in default of Scripture proof, falls back on tradition. His argument against crown-wearing, on natural grounds, is, to say the least, amusing. In the Apology, it was: "I use flowers as I think most agreeably, when free and loose and straying out of all order. But if we have them gathered into a wreath, we have our wreath for the nose. Let those please themselves who smell with the hair." And now he says: "It is as much against nature to follow after flowers by the head, as to follow after food by the ear, or sound by the nose."

In the *De Fuga* and *Scorpiace*, the desire for martyrdom which we find in *De Corona* has grown into a passion, and, in opposition to the idea that it should be avoided, the revelations of the Paraclete* are referred to as decisive. "Be unwilling to die on your beds in miscarriages and soft fevers, but desire to die in martyrdom, that He may be glorified who suffered for you."

In those writings of Tertullian which concern the private and Church life of the Christian, that ethical warmth, in which Bunsen places his chief strength, is most clearly manifested. No writer of the first centuries attained sublimer views of Christianity in its moral aspects than he. The writing *De Patientia* is perhaps the most beautiful of this class. Its pervading love contrasts strangely with the harshness which marks so many of Tertullian's works. He did not himself fail to perceive how foreign was the Divine patience of which he spoke to the natural bitterness of his disposition. "I confess before God, my Lord, that I venture, rashly enough if not shamelessly, to write concerning patience, for the practice of which I am altogether unfit, as a man in whom there is no good thing." Still he would reason about that which he cannot enjoy, "like those sick persons who, while they lack health, know not how to be silent about its blessings." Patience is

* We are not justified in supposing that Tertullian thought that Montanus himself was the Paraclete. He was *one* of its instruments.

the soul of Christianity, the true imitation of its Founder, who was himself its perfect living image. In many passages there is quietism, if it is not something better. He would not, by his own wilful action, hinder the action of the Divine through him.

“ Why labor at the dull mechanic oar,
When the fresh breeze is blowing,
And the strong current flowing
Right onward to the eternal shore ? ”

The writings on Prayer and Baptism belong to this period of his life, as also the two tracts *Ad Uxorem*. The first of these advises his wife not to marry again in case of his death, the objection being thus stated : —

“ The husband being dead by the will of God, the marriage also is dead by the will of God. Wouldst thou restore a relation to which God has put an end? The joy of having children is the bitterest of joys. What can we wish better for them than we wish for ourselves, — that they be taken to the Lord, out of this wicked, persecuting world? ‘And woe unto them that are with child, to them that give suck in those days.’ ”

In the second book, he is less unwilling that his wife again marry; but he would have her wed no one but a Christian. He supports his thesis with a great array of texts and arguments. It is not likely that any writings of the early Church contributed more than these to clothe marriage with that lofty significance which, as a sacrament of the Church, it afterward obtained. The difference between them and his Montanistic writings on the same subject is very strongly marked. In the first of these, *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, a second marriage is not merely inexpedient, — it is a crime. But he argues almost exclusively from the Christian, and not from the Montanistic point of view. This distinguishes it from the tract *De Monogamia*, where he appeals directly to the Paracletic revelation. The objection that the race would die out is easily met. It was near the “end of the times,” and no more men were needed. It did not occur to Tertullian that in this matter he could marry the sensuous and spiritual elements of his conception, and that their union would be beautiful. So he would dissever them altogether, and we have the germ of

that unnatural relation of the *Subintroductæ* in the later ascetic phenomena.

“A partnership of domestic burdens is necessary. *Have a spiritual wife*; take a widow, adorned with faith, dowered with poverty, guarded by age. You will have married well. To have even more wives of this kind is acceptable to God.”

The doctrinal views of Tertullian are to be found, for the most part, in his polemic works, scattered over a wide ground, and never developed harmoniously or in logical connection. Notwithstanding his avowed hostility to all speculation, the impressive life of the man will manifest itself here, no less than in his more congenial labors.

His strict monotheism was manifested in opposition to the dualism of the Gnostics and the Valentinian doctrine of *Æons*. But the purity of his conception is marred by that materialism which so constantly fettered him. He insisted so much on God's being substantial, that he made him corporeal. But there is nothing gross in his idea.* The corporeity which he asserts cannot convict him of anthropomorphism. The Stoics, while insisting on the first notion, certainly avoided the second. And he does as well.

But his failure here is the condition of his success when we come to the doctrine of the *Logos*. For it is in virtue of his materialist notions that he can so readily conceive how God should send forth from himself a being of like substance, related to him as the sunbeam to the sun. In the beginning, God was alone; and yet not alone, “because he had with him that Reason which he had in himself.” This seems to be his expression of God's self-consciousness. The Word, the Son, that was implied in this Reason and proceeded from it, stands for God's consciousness of himself as creating. “One may say,” says Bunsen, “that the Sonship is, to Tertullian, God in his relation to the world, — God in his mundane activity, — that element in God which is turned to finiteness. His illustration is that of thought and speech. Life is full of contradictions. Could an angel from heaven have convinced

* Indeed, Tertullian is never gross; even his millennial notions are far from being so. He contrasts most favorably with Irenæus in this respect.

Tertullian, to whom 'nothing was more foreign than the *staté*,' that the time would come when, in the great Council of Nicaea, this doctrine of the unity of substance would, at the beck of the red-handed Constantine, be made the keystone of the Church's creed?"

In Tertullian's view of human nature, what was original with him was his traducianism. It resulted naturally from his corporeal conception of the soul. In the soul of Adam was the germ of all souls. In refusing to submit his will to God's, Adam sinned, and the taint of his soul was propagated. In the light of what we know to-day of inherited diseases and transmitted tendencies, we can see how sad a truth was hinted at in this philosophy. But history and science alike teach us that this is but half the story. "God makes new Adams every day."

"Yet there is," he says, "in the soul that original good, divine and genuine, and which is properly natural to it. For what comes from God is not extinguished, but rather obscured. For it cannot be extinguished, because it is of God."

In most of the Fathers we have a threefold division of human nature, which they think is justified by the Scriptures. Thus, according to Justin, man is made up of body, animal soul, and thinking reason, while in Christ the Logos takes the place of this reason. But Tertullian accepts no such division. Man is simply body and soul; while in Christ the natural human soul is the mediating element between his body and the Logos. The relation of Christ to the Father is thus expressed: "I call the ray sun, but not the sun ray. So I call the Son God, but not God the Son." These views were heretical to the later Church; but they were so in virtue of their realistic rather than their Montanistic sense. In Tertullian's conception of the Holy Spirit, as proceeding from the Father through the Son, there is nothing which was not already in the Church. His doctrine of salvation is very indefinite and obscure, at one time indicating such views as Augustine and Luther afterwards held, at another implying the Catholic doctrine of merit.

Tertullian's arguments in favor of such a progressive reve-

lation as was implied in Montanism are quite fully developed in the tract *De Virginibus Velandis*:—

“In the works of grace as in the works of nature, which proceed from the same Creator, everything unfolds itself by certain successive steps. From the seed-kernel shoots forth first the plant; then comes the blossom, and finally this becomes the fruit, which itself arrives at maturity only by degrees. So the kingdom of God unfolds itself by certain stages. In the first place there was the fear of God awakened by the voice of Nature, without a revealed law (the Patriarchal religion). Next follows the stage of childhood under the Law and Prophets; then that of youth under the Gospel; and at length the unfolding of spiritual life to the fulness of manhood through the new outpouring of the Holy Ghost, as connected with the appearance of Montanus through the new instructions of the promised Paraclete. How should the work of God stand still and make no progressive movement, while the kingdom of evil is continually enlarging itself and acquiring new strength?”

The character of Tertullian was reflected in an earnest, impetuous, headlong style, the rudeness of which was indefinitely increased through his difficulty in struggling to express himself in the defective Latinity of Northern Africa. The use of legal forms, while sometimes forcible, oftener tends to confuse. Balzac compares his diction to the brilliancy of ebony. Carlyle uses words in a very different connection, which describe it better: “Short sun-gleams with long tropical tornadoes; touches of guitar-music soon followed by Lisbon earthquakes.” It has been said that his earnestness was a rhetorical earnestness, and no index of his life and character. But in reading him, one is rather tempted to think that the man was even better than his books. A strange vanity it must have been that would lead one in Tertullian’s time to be as bold as he was in the name of a despised and persecuted sect. If fame was all, could he not have walked to it by a more flowery path than that which led to the dungeon and the arena?

Heresy is continually hardening into creed. The radicalism of one century is the conservatism of the next. Much that was esteemed heretical in Tertullian passed over into the creed and practice of the Mediæval Church, while Protestantism was the attempt to build a communion after the pattern which he saw in the Mount: *Ubi Spiritus, ibi Ecclesia*. His was the

true Apostolic succession, not that of bishops and of priests, but of all men on whom the Holy Ghost descends. His superstition, his weakness, his passion, were born of his period, were nourished by its prejudices, and should be buried in its grave. But his earnestness, his devotion, his hatred of cant, of hypocrisy, and religious oppression, his willingness to follow God's beckoning hand wherever it might lead him, are for us also, and for all time. "The animosities are mortal, but the humanities live forever."

ART. II.—THE REALITY OF FICTION.

Works of CHARLES DICKENS. Household Edition. Illustrated from Drawings by F. O. C. Darley and John Gilbert. New York: Sheldon & Co.

CHARLES DICKENS has grown gray telling stories, and is a story-teller still. How successful he has been in his vocation, and how welcomed by millions as a benefactor, is proved, among other things, by this new edition of his tales, admirably illustrated by the pencils of congenial artists. We avail ourselves of the appearance of these volumes to offer a few thoughts on the relation of works of fiction to the imagination and the moral nature. Each of them is a refutation of the common notion, that a sharp line divides the world of fiction from the world of fact; that in reading a novel we quit that which is real to converse with that which is unreal. That unique production, by which, at first and almost instantly, Dickens gained his popularity, exemplifies this remark. Every reader is acquainted with Sam Weller, has listened to his "Wellerisms," and laughed at the dry eccentricities of his devotion to the Pickwick Club. Every reader knows the bland, bald-headed President, the serene, simple-hearted philosopher, Mrs. Bardell's unsuspecting victim, with his round-eyed spectacles and his placid dignity. Equally familiar are the appearance and dress, the sayings and doings, the haps and mishaps, of each clearly individualized member of the

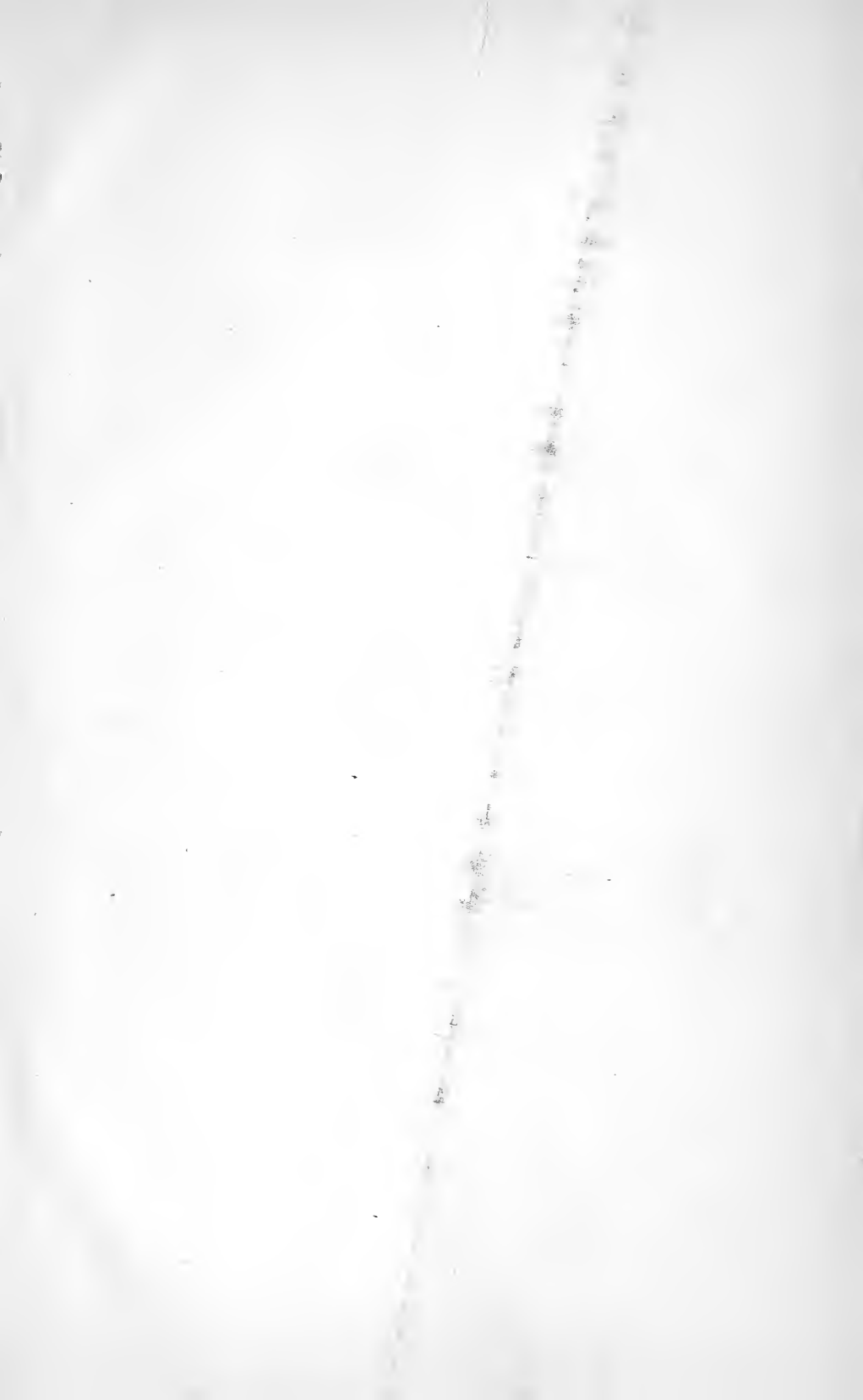
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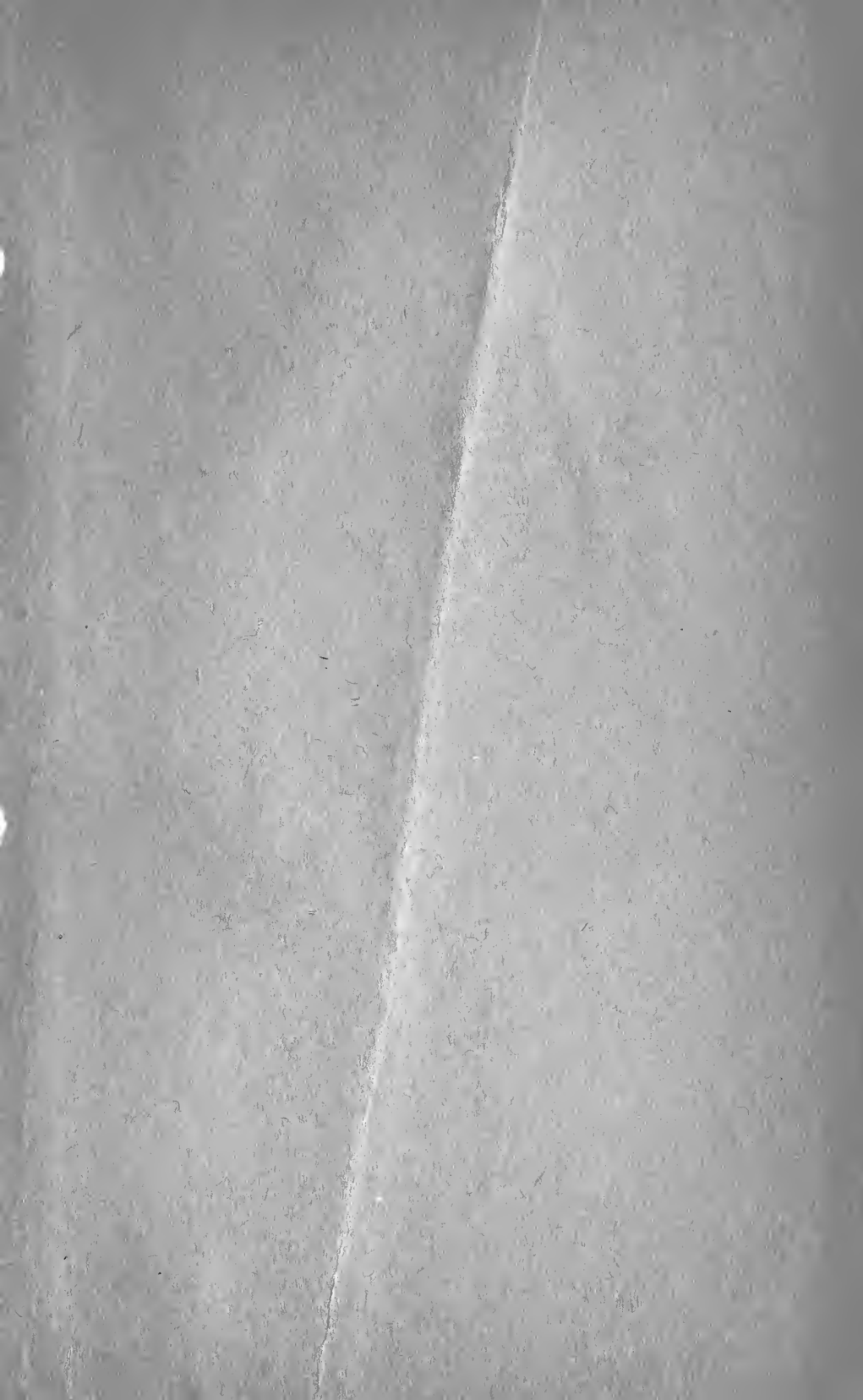
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