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**Light in the Dark
Places: or,
Memorial of
Christian Life in
the Middle Ages.**

Augustus Neander



Light in the Dark Places: or, Memorial of Christian Life in the Middle Ages.

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Description: Augustus Neander began his religious studies in speculative theory, but his changing interests led him to the study of church history. In his book, *Light in the Dark Places*, Neander's talent as a writer and a historian is tremendously evident; collected within this volume is an abundance of remarkable information about church history. Neander shares information about the lives of Christian individuals and communities during times of darkness and of triumph. Neander also reveals unknown facts about early missionaries and martyrs of the church. This historical analysis will provide today's Christians with insight into the church's elaborate past, so that they may learn from previous mistakes and embrace habits of righteousness.

Emmalon Davis
CCEL Staff Writer

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LIGHT
IN
THE DARK PLACES:
OR,
MEMORIALS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE
IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

FROM THE GERMAN OF THE LATE
AUGUSTUS NEANDER,
FIRST PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE ROYAL
UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN.

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1851.



PREFACE

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

NEANDER'S aim, in the work from which this volume is a translation, was to employ the most striking facts of Church History for general Christian edification. The faith, the zeal, and the piety of the early missionaries and martyrs of the Church, and the Christian life of individuals, and even of communities, amid periods of darkness and delusion, are commemorated here with that genial sympathy for pure religion, however and wherever manifested, which so strongly characterized Neander. His charity may, in some few instances appear excessive; but excess of love is so rare, that it may well be excused.

J. M'Clintock.

April 10, 1851.



PREFACE.

WHEN a child is frightened at any strange apparition, the best remedy is to lead him up to it; and when men have been accustomed to pay homage to some wonder-working image, the most effectual argument against their idolatry has sometimes been found to show them how the idol is made. Many have, perhaps, been led to make one or other of these mistakes with regard to the Middle Ages; the long shadows of the past so easily convert common things into miracles or monsters. It is hoped that the simple narratives contained in this volume may help, in some degree, to remove both mistakes, by showing things as they are.

This little work is a translation of the Second Part of Neander's "Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Geschichte des christlichen Lebens," which may be regarded as a popular and practical supplement to his "History of the Christian Religion and Church."

The translator would feel the toil of many summer hours amply rewarded, should this volume tend in any measure to strengthen our reverent love for the good men of other times, whilst manifesting their mistakes; to lessen any blind homage for the "golden mean" of time, whilst unveiling the lights which have shone before those who watched for them in the darkest ages; to dispel any sentimental worship of times and seasons, and human institutions; and at the same time to enlarge our sympathies with that holy Church of the redeemed and the regenerate, which is catholic amongst, the centuries as well as amongst the nations.

She will look on her labours as indeed blessed, should they be the means of leading one dark heart into the path of light, or one sick soul to Him who healeth "all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease," or one languid disciple to more effective service, by the inspiration of holy example. We have, all of us, but a little while to prove how we love Him, who has so loved us; and it will be no small thing to have the gracious approval of the "faithful servant" added to the recognition of the forgiven child.

May we also, with Dr. Neander, as with all human teachers, remember that they are "ours"—not we "theirs;" not, indeed, in the spirit of "right" and self-will, but of lowlier subjection to a loftier guide—and of that true loyalty to our Lord, which makes all hero-worship for us not only idolatry, but treason. And now that his words come to us with the touching solemnity of a voice which death has so recently silenced, may we listen to them, and learn from them, in the spirit which he would desire from the place of rest to which God has taken him, where all the broken glimpses of truth, which cause error and division here, are filled up and he has, ere this, learned to know even as he is known.



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MEMORIALS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

IN

THE MIDDLE AGES.

PART I.

OPERATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY DURING AND AFTER THE CONFUSION
PRODUCED BY THE IRRUPTION OF THE BARBARIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

IN the fifth century we see destruction fall on the empire of the city which called itself eternal; and even the great ecclesiastical institutions, the fruit of the blood of martyrs and the prolonged labours of enlightened and pious doctors, swept away by the tide of this mighty devastation. But whilst the heathen mourned hopelessly over the grave of these earthly splendours, and saw, despairingly, the old forms of civilization perish before the inroads of barbarism, good Christians held fast to the anchor of hope, on which they could raise themselves above all mutable things, and by which they could find a firm footing in the very midst of this torrent of destruction. They knew, that “heaven and earth should pass away, but that the words of their Lord should not pass away;” and these words gave them, in the midst of death, an inexhaustible spring of life. The existing ecclesiastical forms, as far as they were connected with the constitution of the Roman empire, might indeed perish in the universal desolation; but the essence of the Church, as of Christianity, could be touched by no destroyer; and this manifested itself the more triumphantly in these times of decrepitude and decay for the world, as the living principle of a new creation.

In that age of impending ruin, a Christian Doctor writes thus (probably Leo the Great, before he became bishop):—

“The very weapons by which the world is devastated, minister to the operations of Christian grace. How many, who, during the calm of peace, deferred their baptism, are now driven by the momentary fear of peril to be baptized! How many slothful and lukewarm spirits are there, on whom imminent terror has effected what quiet exhortations could never accomplish! Many sons of the Church, who have fallen into captivity among their enemies, have made known the Gospel to their masters, and have become the teachers of those into whose bondage they had fallen by the lot of war. Others of the barbarians who served among the Roman mercenaries, have by this means learned amongst us, what they could not have learned in their fatherland, and have returned to their homes instructed in Christianity. Thus nothing can hinder the divine grace from accomplishing what it designs; so that strife conduces to unity, wounds are converted into the means of cure, and that which threatens danger to the Church is constrained to further its growth.”

Individuals in whom the Gospel had enkindled a holy fire of love,—men who, with the strong power of faith united the spirit of wisdom, appeared like ambassadors from heaven, like beings of a nobler, god-like race; and such, indeed they were amongst the corrupt and enervated nations which fell beneath the power of the rude barbarians, and amongst the conquerors themselves. It was thus shown how much the individual can do through the power of religion. We shall first turn our eyes to the North African Churches, in which the period of desolation followed close on the period of the highest prosperity.



THE NORTH AFRICAN CHURCH UNDER THE VANDALS.

THE wild tribes of the Vandals—which, although outwardly professing Christianity, yet, instructed and guided by ignorant and fanatical priests, seem to have had no idea of its essence—overran North Africa, under their cruel and despotic king, Geiserich. A fanatical hatred to the confessors of another form of doctrine (the Vandals being the adherents of Arianism) was united with an insatiable avarice, for which it served as an apology. The depravity of the nominal Christians in the rich cities of Northern Africa was certainly very great, as is manifest from the frequent complaints of Augustine; nevertheless, there were scattered communities of genuine Christians. Persecutions would, of course, have a contrary effect on these contrary elements of the churches; they acted, indeed, as a process of sifting for them. To many the question was presented, “Wilt thou deny thy faith, in order to obtain the undisturbed enjoyment of earthly things, or wilt thou sacrifice all, and suffer, in order to remain true to thy faith?” And this demand made Christianity a matter of personal concern to many, to whom, without such a necessity for decision, it might not have become so. Shining examples of a faith, prepared joyfully to sacrifice all, and peacefully to suffer all, beam on us from amidst these persecutions. Men of Roman descent had, with Christian loyalty, served the prince of this wild people, whom God had given to be their king: at length, however, he demanded from them, as a proof of obedience, that they would profess the same faith with himself, on which condition he promised them great earthly advantages. But here, where their convictions and their consciences were concerned, obedience had its limit. For their faith they readily yielded up earthly possessions, honours, and freedom; often even, amidst many tortures, life itself.



To one of these confessors, named Arcadius, who had at first been sentenced to exile, the bishop of Constantina in Numidia, addressed a striking letter of consolation, in which, amongst other things, he exhorted him thus: “Look to Him to whom thou hast remained faithful, depend on him, cling fast to him, let him not go; look not behind to thy wife, thy wealth, or thy family. Lift up thy heart; the fallen prince of the angels fights against thee, but with thee are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Fear not, he helps thee, that he may crown thee victor. Christ was smitten on the face, spit upon, crowned with thorns. The Holy One was placed side by side with infamous thieves, was pierced with the spear, and died—the *Christ* of God—and all this on account of our guilt. How much more shouldst thou stand firm for thy soul, that no man rob thee of thy crown of victory! Fear not, for the whole Church prays for thee that thou mayest stand. With thee suffers the Lord Christ—with thee suffers the Church.”



Martinian and Maxima, after severe tortures because they would not deny their faith, were given as bond-slaves to the prince of the wild tribes which peopled the deserts of Northern Africa. They sought by preaching, and by their life, to convert these heathen tribes;

and in a district into which before no tidings of the Gospel had spread, through their agency many were gained over. Thereupon they sent messengers through pathless tracts to a city under the Roman dominion, in order to procure teachers and pastors for their new converts. These having arrived, many were baptized, and a church was built. But that these outcasts should effect such great things in their misery and bondage, for the propagation of a doctrine which the Vandals regarded as heretical, excited afresh the rage of the fierce Geiserich. His vengeance could reach them even in their exile, as the Moors were, in a measure, dependent on the Vandal king. He commanded that they should be bound in a forest to wild horses, and so dragged to death. Whilst the Moors mourned, the two martyrs with calm countenances bid each other farewell in these words: "Pray for me; God has granted our desire; thus is the kingdom of heaven reached!" And praying and singing they went to meet their death.

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Thus did God glorify himself amongst this heathen people, by the power of faith of these sufferers; and even those who were not by their example themselves led to embrace their faith, may yet have been brought by it to recognise him who imparted such strength to those who confessed him, *as a mighty God*.

When in a later age the hereditary prince of the Moors in the neighbourhood of Tripoli, was at war with the Vandal king Trasamund, he sent some of his people disguised into the districts through which the Vandal army marched; and whilst the Vandals in their passage had desecrated in every way the churches which did not belong to their fellow-believers, these Moors were ordered to pay all honour to them, as well as to the clergy, whom the Vandals had ill-treated. "For," said the Moorish prince, "I do not indeed know who the God of the Christians is; but if he is as mighty as they say, he will certainly take vengeance on those who dishonour Him, and aid those who do Him honour."

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When Geiserich, in 439, plundered Carthage, the great metropolis of northern Africa, many were precipitated from the summit of earthly prosperity into wretchedness. Whole families, who, although they had lost their all, might be thankful to have preserved even their life and liberty, wandered about hopelessly in different countries. Others, men and women of the first families, were carried away captive, and sold as slaves in various districts. Nevertheless their earthly need became to many the means of spiritual health, and an occasion for the exercise of Christian virtues. Many an one, who, in his prosperity had never troubled himself about religious matters, was, by the pressure of adverse circumstances, directed to that which he lacked. Thus was a senator, who wandered about with his whole family, and who had previously remained an alien to Christianity, now first through his sufferings brought to the faith. The bishop Theodoret wrote, in recommending them to the support of Christian love: "I have been astonished at the disposition of this man, for he; praises the Ruler of his destiny, as if he were still in the midst of earthly prosperity; and he does not think of the heavy storm which haft come upon him, because his misfortunes have brought

him the treasure of piety; whilst, during his enjoyment of earthly wealth, he would not listen to the preaching of the Gospel. Now, however, robbed of these riches, he has abandoned heathenism, and has become possessed of the riches of faith, and therefore he sets his misfortunes at defiance.”

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A maiden of a distinguished family was sold as a slave; she was bought by Syrian merchants, and thus came into the service of a family of the city of Kyros, on the Euphrates, where Theodoret was bishop. With her was sold one of her former female slaves, and they now shared the same lot. But although the outward bond between herself and her mistress was dissolved, the slave would not dissolve the inward bond of love. After the service of their now common masters, she would wait on her former mistress. This became by degrees known throughout the city, and made a great impression. Some pious soldiers made a collection in order to ransom the unfortunate maiden. The bishop Theodoret, who was absent at the time, on his return charged the deacons of the Church to provide for the maintenance of the ransomed captive. Afterwards, when it became known that her father was still living, and was filling an official situation in the west, Theodoret endeavoured to effect her restoration to him.

Amongst such maidens of rank who had been sold into captivity, was one of the name of Julia. She had for her master a heathen merchant of Palestine, called Eusebius, She fulfilled her duties towards him with Christian fidelity, so as to win his esteem both for her person and her religion. Her hour of rest, when her work was finished, she consecrated to devotion—to *the reading of the Scriptures, and to prayer*. Eusebius took her with him on a commercial journey into France. On the way he landed at Capocorso, a country of Corsica. It so happened that a heathen festival was then being celebrated there. Eusebius took part in it, and offered sacrifices. But the pious Julia remained in the ship, mourning that the heathen should give themselves up without restraint to their passions. The chief of the heathen people, who heard how she alone withdrew herself from the heathen festivities, wished to buy her from her master, in order to compel her to participate in the idolatrous worship. But her master would not part with her at any price. When, however, he had sunk into a deep sleep, in consequence of the intoxication to which he had abandoned himself at the idol feast, the heathens forcibly took Julia out of the ship. The chief promised her freedom if she would sacrifice. She answered: “*The service of Christ, whom I daily serve with a pure heart, is my freedom.*” She was ill-treated, spit upon, smitten on the face; but said: “My Lord Jesus suffered Himself to be smitten on the face and spit upon for me, and why should not I suffer myself to be smitten and spit upon for His sake?” When they scourged her, she said: “I confess Him who was scourged for me.” And so she bore all things patiently, in faith, and in love to her Redeemer, even to the martyr’s death.

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Twenty years later, Rome, the ancient metropolis of the world, experienced a similar fate with the metropolis of northern Africa. Only by the influence which the representations

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of Leo, bishop of Rome, exercised on the minds of the rude Vandals, could Rome be saved from total destruction and ruin. Notwithstanding this, so transient was the impression made by this circumstance on the light-minded Romans, that when a thanksgiving feast was ordered on account of it, Leo found the church empty, whilst the theatre and circus were full. This drew from him an admonitory sermon, in which he said: "Let that saying of our Lord's touch your hearts, where He says, that of the ten lepers whom He had cleansed through the power of His compassion, only one returned to give thanks; while the thankless nine, on the contrary, whose souls had retained their ungodly dispositions, although their bodies were healed, neglected this pious duty. Lest this rebuke to the thankless should apply to you likewise, return you to the Lord, acknowledge the miracle which God has wrought for us; and ascribe not ye, like the godless, our deliverance to the operations of the stars, but render thanks to the inexpressible compassion of the Almighty God, who has willed to soften the hearts of the furious barbarians."

One consequence of the capture of Rome by the king of the Vandal army was, that a crowd of captives were carried off to Africa. There Deogratias, bishop of Carthage, caused all the golden and silver vessels to be melted down, and employed the profits in purchasing the freedom of the captives, and reuniting the severed members of families. As no other place could be found large enough to contain the great multitude, he gave up two churches for their reception, and provided them with straw and beds. He provided also daily sustenance for each according to his rank. Many having fallen sick, in consequence of the unaccustomed voyage, and hard usage during their captivity, he went amongst them at stated times with a physician. Food was carried after him, which he divided among the sick, according to the prescriptions of the physician. At night he visited them at their bed-sides, in order to satisfy himself about the state of their health. The infirmities of age could not hinder this noble man in his pious activity. The greater the blessing which must have arisen from such a bishop to an oppressed Church, so much the greater must have been the sorrow of his flock when, after three years' enjoyment of his fatherly guidance, he at length died.

Four-and-twenty years the Church of Carthage remained orphaned; the Vandals refusing to install a new bishop. It was not until the reign of king Hunnerich, who did not at first display so persecuting a spirit, that the eastern emperor, Zeno, obtained permission for the Church to elect a new bishop. But the Vandal king made one condition, very perplexing and hard for his Roman subjects, although by no means unreasonable, considering his relations to the Eastern empire: "The Arian congregations must likewise have free toleration for their religion in the East. Also, the Arian bishops in the East must be permitted to preach *in whatever language they please*;"¹ which plainly indicates that already, in the East, certain languages only began to be regarded as sacred, and that the German language, used in Ulfilas'

1 Quibus voluerint linguis populo tractare.

translation of the Bible, was deemed too rude to be employed in the Church. Not so had Chrysostom thought, who, by permitting a Gothic presbyter to preach in the Gothic tongue at Constantinople, designed to show that Christianity is destined and fitted to be the civilizing element for all barbarous nations. If these conditions were not acceded to, all the orthodox bishops and clergy of northern Africa (*i. e.*, all who were not Arian) were to be banished amongst the Moors.

As the clergy of Carthage could easily see that a treaty with such conditions might serve as an excuse for many persecutions of the oppressed party in Africa, they declared that “on such conditions they would accept no bishops, but would trust to Christ, who hitherto had guided the Church, to guide it still.” But the Church was very desirous of having a bishop, and urged that one should be elected. The choice fell upon Eugenius, a man well fitted by his zeal and faith for this difficult and dangerous emergency. His consecration was a great festival, especially for the young, who had never before seen a bishop in the Church. We find in him a man qualified to guide the Church in those difficult times, and enabled, by the power of faith and love, to effect great things with small means. Poor as his plundered Church had been left by the Vandals, he nevertheless contrived to distribute liberal alms among the multitude of the needy. What was daily imparted to him by pious men, he on the same day distributed; and God did not suffer him for one day to lack means for the exercise of his love. Such love was sure to stir up many hearts to give. But the greater the reverence inspired by his life, even among those who differed from his creed,—the more he was thereby enabled to propagate his faith amongst the Vandals,—the more were the jealousy of the Arian clergy, and the hatred of the tyrannical prince, excited against him. It was demanded of him that he should send away all who visited his church in the costume of the Vandals. By this means, not only would the bishop be deprived of all influence over those Vandals whose conversion to the orthodox doctrine was dreaded, but at the same time all those who, although of Roman descent, had accepted an office in the state, and were therefore compelled to adopt the Vandal costume, would be obliged to abandon the old church. Eugenius replied with Christian manliness: “The house of God is open to all, and no man can exclude from it any who wish to enter.”

The oppressors determined, however, to carry out their purpose; they placed guards at the church doors, who were ordered to seize and ill-treat every man and woman in the Vandal costume who sought to enter.

After many harsh and cruel measures had been adopted, four thousand nine hundred and seventy-six of the clergy and laity, who had distinguished themselves by their zeal, were sentenced to banishment into an African desert. Amongst these were many sick; and old men whom age had robbed of sight. When they arrived at Lina, Veneria, and Cares, frontier towns of Numidia, where the Moors were to fetch them, two Vandal officers of rank, in the service of the state, came to them, and endeavoured to persuade them to comply with the

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will of the king, who would reward them with great honours: but their answer was, “We are Christians; we are orthodox Christians.” Thereupon they were thrown into a narrow prison, where they stood so close together that they could not move, and from which they were not allowed a moment’s absence; so that the confinement in this pestilential cell became the most terrible torture. Nevertheless, their faith gave them steadfastness and joy in the midst of such great sufferings. And when, on Sunday, in the miserable condition into which this painful imprisonment had thrown them, without being allowed any refreshment, they were driven forth by their pitiless Moorish escort, in spite of all kind of threats, they sang the [149th Psalm](#). Throughout the way, multitudes of their brethren in the faith came to meet them with burning tapers, and testified their grief, and sympathy, and love. “Whom,” they said, “do you leave behind with us, unfortunate ones, now that you go to win the martyr’s crown? Who will baptize these our children (whom they carried in their arms)? Who will administer to us the Holy Supper? Who will accompany us, with prayer and singing, to our last place of rest? O that we might go with you, that the sons might not be severed from the fathers!” But the rough Moors were touched by none of these things, and scarcely allowed the captives time to receive the condolence of those who came to meet them. They drove on the weary old men, and the weak, with their spears and with sharp stones. Those who were unable to walk were, without mercy, dragged along the roughest and most rocky paths, with their feet bound together. Many necessarily sank beneath this inhuman treatment. The rest were reserved for still greater wretchedness in the burning sandwastes, full of poisonous insects, where they had no nourishment but barley.

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Meanwhile, the arrival of an ambassador from the Eastern empire procured, at least apparently, milder measures. The king commanded a disputation to be held between the bishops of both parties, which was to commence at Carthage, on the first of February, 484. A favourable issue to a theological disputation can only be expected when the contending parties first agree on what is common in their faith; and when, from this common basis, they have acknowledged one another as Christian brethren, converse with one another in the spirit of love, humility, and self-denial on the points about which they differ, ready to be guided in all things by the Spirit of the Lord; then it may be expected that the Lord will actually manifest himself to those who are thus really gathered together in his name. Since, however, the greater number of disputations and negotiations of this kind were not carried on in this manner and spirit, but—if not in the spirit of profane passion—at least in the spirit of self-willed eagerness, their ordinary effect was merely to produce greater hostilities, and bitterer divisions. In this case, with such passions roused on both sides, and with the natural mistrust of the oppressed towards the dominant party, no good result could possibly be expected from a religious conference. And by the dominant party the result was not unforeseen. It was evident from the whole tone of the royal edict, that the conference was intended to give a colour of justice to the total suppression of the other party.

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Eugenius, bishop of Carthage, to whom the mandate of the king was first addressed, immediately perceived the danger which threatened his fellow-believers. If they accepted the challenge, it was easy to foresee that the dominant party would not allow them a quiet discussion of their doctrine, but would seek to bear it down by numbers and authority: if they declined it, the accusation would instantly be made that they themselves had pronounced their own condemnation, since they dared not trust themselves to defend their cause. Eugenius chose this way of escape: he declared to the king that they were by no means afraid to give a reason of their faith; but that since this affair concerned not Africa alone, but the whole of Christendom, they must desire that their brethren from beyond the sea, especially from the Roman Church, might be present at this inquiry,—a request which it could not be difficult for the king, whose power was universally recognised, to comply with. The king returned to the bishop this scornful reply: “Make me ruler of the whole world, and I will gladly fulfil your request.” Eugenius answered: “No man can demand what is impossible. I have only said this,—if the king desires to know our faith, which is the only true one, he can write to his friends. I will also write to my brethren in office to come hither and declare to you the faith which they hold in common with us.” The Vandal officer replied to this, “Dost thou make thyself equal with our king?”

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Since the Divine power which flows from Christ has been introduced into the lives of men, it is not always easy in the impressions produced by the reflection of his image—that is, by the power of faith, of love, of prayer—to distinguish between the natural and the supernatural. And the Spirit of the Lord has his peculiar modes of operation in different times, as determined by the necessities of suffering humanity. Thus it happened that a blind man at Carthage, called Felix, had repeatedly had a dream before the feast of the Epiphany, directing him to go to the bishop at the time when he was engaged in preparing the catechumens for baptism, and telling him that when he touched his eyes they should be cured. When the sick man came to the bishop, he said, as became a Christian, “Depart from me, my brother, I am not worthy to do this; I am the chief sinner of you all, and therefore is it that I survive these mournful times.” Thereupon Eugenius went, accompanied by his clergy, to the place of baptism. As he rose from prayer there, he said to Felix, who had followed him, “I have already told thee, my brother, that I am a sinful man; but may the Lord, who has honoured thee with this especial grace, do to thee according to thy faith, and open thine eyes!” His prayer was heard. His adversaries accused him of having wrought this cure by magic.

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The issue of the religious conference at Carthage was, as might have been expected, that the oppressed party was accused of having evaded a quiet investigation, and that king Hunnerich, who regarded them as convicted heretics, issued an edict in which he withdrew from them all toleration of their religion, and sentenced them to similar punishments with

those to which the Arians in the Roman empire were liable. The bishops were banished, partly to the island of Corsica, recently subjected to the Vandals, and partly to the African deserts. Eugenius was among the latter number.

These cruel persecutions gave occasion for many beautiful examples of Christian fidelity and constancy. Thus, amongst others, seven monks from the city of Capso, within the province of Byzarene, were banished to Carthage. Their persecutors sought at first to seduce them to apostasy from their faith by promises. When they declared that for no price would they be untrue to their faith, they were loaded with heavy chains, and thrown into a dark cell. But the people bribed the jailors; and day and night the prison was full of visitors, whom the captives, by their conversations, inspired with new courage to endure the worst. As they were led through the streets to the scaffold, they went to meet their death, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." And to the people they cried, "Fear no threats, and no terror of present suffering, but let us rather die for Christ's sake, as he has died for us." The Arians tried particularly to shake the faith of a boy who was of the number; but he answered, "No man shall separate me from my father (the abbot Liberatus) and my brothers, who have brought me up in the convent; and with them will I suffer, as I trust also with them to enter into the glory that shall follow."

To an eminent man of Carthage, who had formerly been much esteemed by him, the king made the most brilliant promises in order to tempt him to apostasy; but he replied, "I am assured that Christ is my Lord and my God. If even this present life were all, and we had not, as we most certainly have, an eternal life to hope for; yet would I not, in order to enjoy a brief honour, be unthankful to my Creator, who has intrusted me with his faith."

A lady, who, after much ill-treatment, had been banished into a remote desert, replied, when it was proposed to grant her a milder exile, "Abandoned of all earthly consolation, I still find one abundant spring of consolation and joy."

Bishop Eugenius was, indeed, after some years, recalled from exile by the Vandal king Guntemund; but, in the year 496, he was once more suddenly severed from his people by king Thrasimund. As he knew not what was to become of him, he took leave of his Church in a touching letter. "In order," he wrote, "not to leave the Church of God in an uncertain state during my absence, or like a faithless shepherd silently to desert the sheep of Christ, I have deemed it necessary, as a compensation for my personal presence, to address this letter to you, by which I pray, exhort, conjure you with tears, to hold fast the true faith. My brothers, sons, and daughters, in the Lord, be not troubled at my absence; for if ye remain faithful to the true doctrine, I will not forget you in the far country, nor suffer even death itself to separate me from you. Know then, that which may outwardly separate me from you, will weave for me the crown of victory. If I go into banishment, I have the example of St. John the Evangelist. If I am led to death, Christ is my life, and death my gain. If I return, God grants your desire. If I return not, I shall see you hereafter. Farewell; pray without

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ceasing. Remember what is written in [Matthew x, 28](#), Fear not them which kill the body.” Eugenius was banished to Albigeois; in France, where, in quiet and seclusion, edifying the people of that district by his life, he passed his last years.

Amongst the men who distinguished themselves by their beneficial activity during these hard times for the North African Church, was Fulgentius. He filled the office of receiver of the taxes (procurator) in the African Vandal dominions, and wail on the high road to preferment. He sought, indeed, to soften the strictness which his office demanded of him by the spirit of love, but notwithstanding this, his gentle and affectionate heart could find no rest in the administration of such an office. This contradiction between his nature and his circumstances, tended the more to develop in him a disgust with the world, and a longing for a quiet spiritual life. “May I not,” he thought, “like Matthew, become from a tax-gatherer a disciple of the Lord, and a preacher of the Gospel?” He became a monk; and afterwards, at a time when king Thrasimund would tolerate no bishop belonging to an orthodox Church, he was, against his will, chosen bishop of the orphaned Church of Ruspe, in Byzarene. He defended his faith at once boldly and respectfully against his Arian sovereign. He speaks thus to the king in an apologetic treatise which the monarch himself had called for: “If I freely defend my faith, as far as God enables me, no reproach of obstinacy should be made against me, since I am neither forgetful of my own insignificance nor of the king’s dignity; and I know well that I am to fear God and honour the king, according to [Romans xiii, 7](#); [1 Peter ii, 17](#). He certainly pays you true honour, who answers your questions as the true faith requires.” After praising the king, in that he, the monarch of a yet uncivilized people, showed so much zeal for the knowledge of Scriptural truth, he says, “You know well, that he who seeks to know the truth, strives for far higher good than he who seeks to extend the limits of a temporal kingdom.” He was banished twice to Sardinia. There he was the spiritual guide of many other exiles, who united themselves to him; from hence he imparted counsel, comfort, and confirmation in the faith to his forsaken Christian friends in Africa, and to those from other countries who sought his advice in spiritual things and in perplexities of the heart.

We will extract some passages from these letters. He thus exhorts a Roman senator: “Direct thy heart to the Holy Scriptures, and learn thence what thou wert, what thou art, and what thou shouldst be. If thou comest with a softened and lowly heart to the Holy Scriptures, thou wilt assuredly find in them that grace which raises the fallen, guides them in the right way, and finally brings them to the bliss of the heavenly kingdom.” To a widow, whom he seeks to console for the loss of her husband, he writes thus: “Pray frequently in words, but *always* with holy thoughts and a holy life. Thus mayest thou fulfil what the Apostle enjoins, ([1 Thess. v, 17](#)), that we should ‘Pray without ceasing;’ for before God every good work is a prayer in which the all-sufficient God delights.” To the same, he writes: “Let your love be ever-living to the Bridegroom who liveth forever, as it was testified after His

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resurrection by the word of the angel, ‘Why seek ye the living amongst the dead?’ The living One is He, who is the Word of the Father, and he is himself the life of them that believe.” In another letter he says, “Christ came on earth to enkindle the fire of divine love, (Luke iii, 40,) to destroy every germ of pride, and to impart to the humbled heart the glow of holy contrition. Thus it happens that for our sins we justly blame ourselves, and for our good works with true lowliness of heart praise God; giving thanks to him for what his love bestows, and confessing ourselves guilty when our weakness has transgressed against him. Contrition of heart awakens the desire to pray. The lowly mind obtains the Divine assistance. The contrite heart lays bare its wounds. But prayer seeks cure and health. And who is capable of these things? For who can pray aright, unless the Physician himself inspires him with the commencement of spiritual desire? Or who can persevere in prayer, unless God confirms what he began in us, and gives the increase to what he has sown?” Against ascetic pride he writes thus: “In vain dost thou contemn earthly goods, if thou bearest a sinful haughtiness in thy heart. For not alone do they sin who glorify themselves on account of their riches, but more deeply do those sin who glorify themselves on account of their contempt for riches.” In his third letter he writes thus: “The souls of all those who are justified and living by faith, are here sorely weighed down. Indeed, only those know true contrition on whom the Divine light has been outpoured, which enlightens every man who cometh into the world.” He warns at once against despair, false confidence, and security. “Who, by the sin of despair, would hinder the hand of the Divine Physician from effecting the cure of men? The Physician himself says, ‘The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.’ If our Physician is truly skilful, he can heal all manner of sicknesses. If our God is merciful, he can forgive all manner of sins. That is no perfect goodness, by which *all* evil cannot be overcome. That is no perfect art of healing to which there is a disease incurable. Let none, therefore, in his sickness, distrust the Physician. Let no man perish in the disease of sin, by limiting the mercy of God. The Apostle says (Rom. v, 6) “that Christ died for the ungodly,” and (1 Tim. i, 15) “that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.’ A sound conversion is two-fold,—contrition in it being not destitute of hope, nor hope of contrition, when with our whole hearts we renounce sin, and with our whole hearts rely on God for forgiveness.”

From his second banishment, Fulgentius was soon recalled by the mild rule of king Hilderich. The return of the persecuted confessors was a festival for the Carthaginian Church. Multitudes poured forth to the harbour to meet them. But the greatest love and reverence were shown to Fulgentius. As he returned from Carthage to his church, great crowds came to welcome him from all directions, with torches and wreaths, pealing forth the praises of God. Nevertheless he who had been steadfast in his faith in affliction, in this change of fortune, when assailed by the subtle and more perilous temptations of pride, continued steadfast in his humility. The honour which was paid him only made him feel the more strongly his inward unworthiness. He had no desire to work miracles, because the performance of

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marvellous things, he said, “did not give men righteousness, but glory amongst men. But he who is famous amongst men will not, if unjust, escape eternal punishment; whilst, on the other hand, he who, justified by the mercy of God, lives justly in the sight of God, shall, however little known to man, have part in the happiness of the saints.” When he was requested to pray for the sick or suffering, he prayed with this addition:—”Lord, thou knowest what will minister to the health of our souls; since therefore we pray to Thee for that which the present need requires, may Thy compassion grant us what will not hinder our spiritual welfare! Let our humble prayer, if it is fit, be so granted, that before all things Thy will be done.” When those who had requested his intercession, rendered him thanks for its success, he answered: “It was not done because of my merit, but on account of your faith. The Lord has granted it not to me, but to you.” His biographer and disciple says of him in his own spirit: “This admirable man would not have the fame of a worker of miracles, although he daily performed greater marvels, in that by his holy exhortations he led many unbelievers to the faith, many heretics to the knowledge of the truth, many who lived in the most corrupt way to a life guided by the laws of temperance; so that the drunkard learned sobriety, the adulterer chastity, the avaricious and the spoiler to distribute all to the poor, humility became sweet to the proud, peace to the contentious, obedience to the rebellious. Such miracles Fulgentius did indeed constantly seek to perform.”

SEVERINUS IN GERMANY.

As the Lord ever sends his angels when there is most need of help, so in the midst of the desolation and destruction which ensued on that irruption of the barbarians by which the Roman empire was broken in pieces after the death of Attila, the great desolator and exterminator, (A. D. 453,) He sent to the aid of the oppressed people of Germany, on the banks of the Danube, in their sore need, a man endowed with an extraordinary energy of love. His whole appearance has in it something enigmatical. As he was not wont to speak of himself, nothing certain could be ascertained as to the land of his birth. Since, however, many of all ranks, from afar and near, who had gathered around him, wished to know his fatherland, and yet would not venture to ask it, a priest from Italy, who had taken refuge with him, at length took courage, and asked him the question. Severinus at first answered him in his characteristic way with friendly raillery, "If you take me for a runaway slave, try to collect the purchase-money, that you may pay for me when I am demanded." Then he added seriously, "What avails it a servant of God to declare his home or his pedigree, when by concealing them he can the better avoid display? May my left hand know nothing of the good work which Christ strengthens my right hand to do, that I may become a citizen of the heavenly country! What need is there that thou shouldst know my earthly country, if thou art assured that I truly long for the heavenly country? But know, that the God who has granted thee to become a priest, has commanded me to live amongst this sorely oppressed people." After that, no one ever ventured to ask him such a question. Probably he came originally from the West, and had retired into some Eastern desert, in order to consecrate himself to the quiet life of holy contemplation. Here he was reached by the Divine call to sacrifice his rest to the suffering nations of the West, as again afterwards, when he would gladly have once more retired into solitude, a Divine voice frequently constrained him not to withdraw his presence from the oppressed tribes.

The district where he settled, the modern Austria and Bavaria, was then the theatre of the greatest desolation and confusion. No place was secure, one wild tribe followed another; all social order was dissolved. The land was devastated, the inhabitants carried away as slaves. Universal destitution and famine ensued on these perpetual wars. When Severinus had lived a long time among these nations, and accomplished much amongst them, so that his fame was spread far and wide and the episcopal dignity was offered him, he declined it, saying, "it was enough for him, that he had been deprived of his beloved solitude and led by Divine Providence into these regions to live amongst men who left him no rest."

It must, indeed, have made a great impression on the enervated as well as on the savage nations, when they saw Severinus voluntarily renounce all comforts, and live at so small and mean a cost; when, in mid-winter, when the Danube was so firmly frozen that it could bear carriages, they saw him go about barefoot amidst the ice and snow.

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Those nations which corrupt civilization had made effeminate, might learn from him what was so needful for them in their present circumstances, to be independent of outward things, to elevate themselves by the life of the Spirit above their present distresses, and by spiritual joy to soften and sweeten want and destitution. The men of the barbarous tribes, on the other hand, who saw before them nothing but effeminate men, whom they might crush by the superiority of their bodily power; who acknowledged no dominion but that of physical force,—must have been struck with admiration and respect when they beheld how a man, with a body worn out by abstinence, could, nevertheless, by spiritual power alone—by the power of a spirit animated by faith and love—accomplish the greatest things.

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There was a great contrast between him and the worldly-minded clergy, as indeed one of their number once acknowledged when he said: “Depart from our city, thou holy man, that during thine absence we may enjoy a little relaxation from fasting and watching.” The warm-hearted Severinus could not restrain his tears, that a man of his holy calling should desecrate his position by such frivolous words.

Yet it was far from him to look on these renunciations as anything meritorious, and on their account to regard himself as a saint. When men praised him for them, he said, “Believe not that what you see is any merit of mine, but let it rather serve you as a wholesome example. Let human pride be abased. We are chosen to this end that we should accomplish some good thing; as the Apostle says, “that the Lord has chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him.” Pray for me that the gifts of my Saviour may not serve to increase my condemnation, but to the furthering of my justification (*sanctification*). Hard and strict as he was with himself, he was just as tenderhearted in sympathy with the need and suffering of others. He felt hunger, his disciple says of him, only when he saw others suffer from it; he felt the cold only when he saw others destitute of clothing. He gave up all that he had, in order to help the poor people of these districts. His prayer, his exhortations, the example of his active, self-sacrificing love, were able, in a devastated, impoverished, and famine-stricken land, to bring to pass the apparently impossible. From many places the tenth of the harvest, to the collection of which he exhorted the clergy by his letters, was sent him to furnish clothing for the needy. Once in midwinter, people came to him over ice and snow, through mountainous and pathless regions, laden with clothing, which the inhabitants of Noricum had sent him for the poor. Gladly, however, did he bestow on the poor more than was demanded by the mere necessities of life. Once, when, in consequence of the advice of Severinus, many had taken refuge from the surrounding villages and towns on the Danube, in the then flourishing city of Lauriacum, (now Lorch,) in order to find there a shelter from the wandering barbarous hordes, it happened that he had just received from some merchants a quantity of vegetable oil, a very rare commodity in those parts. It was a delightful opportunity for him to give joy to his beloved poor, of whom he found a great multitude in this place of refuge. He gathered them all together

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in a church, and distributed to each of them, to their great delight, a due proportion of this oil.

Whilst he thus provided for the earthly wants of men, and imparted to them earthly gifts, he never ceased to unite with these spiritual blessings, by directing the eyes of all to the fountain of all spiritual and bodily good. He opened the assembly with prayer, and was wont, before he proceeded to the distribution of the gifts, to conclude with these words, "The name of the Lord be praised." He used to remind the poor that they should receive these gifts as from the hand of the Lord, and give him thanks. His love was broad and universal; and, according to the true nature of Christian love, not narrowed by any kind of limitation. He saw in the barbarians as in the Romans, in the Arians as in the sons of the Church, brethren, needing his help. When he fell in with princes or chiefs of the barbarous tribes who professed the Arian doctrine, he did not begin with discussions about dogmas. He did not at once repel them by damnatory judgments on the doctrine which they professed, but first attached them to him by the power of love, and then imparted such exhortations and teaching as circumstances might most naturally suggest. The Arian prince of the people of Rügen, who dreaded the forces of the Goths, asked counsel of Severinus, whom he revered as an oracle. Severinus answered him, "Had we been bound together by a common faith, it would have been better that you should have consulted me about the things of eternal life. But since you question me as to the welfare of that earthly life which we share in common, receive my advice. You need not fear the power of the Goths, if you do not neglect the counsels of humility. Do not delay to seek peace even with the most insignificant, and rely not on your own strength. Cursed, saith the Scripture, is the man who trusteth in men and maketh flesh his arm, and in his heart departeth from the Lord." ([Jer. xvii, 5.](#))

It is evident, from many examples, what power Severinus exercised over the minds of these men. The son of a prince of Rügen, who had regarded Severinus as his most faithful and trustworthy counsellor, wished to fall on the city of Lorch, in which, by the counsel of Severinus, a multitude of the inhabitants of the surrounding districts had taken refuge from the swords of the barbarians, and to disperse those who had settled there into various parts of his dominions. They all besought Severinus, when this terrible rumour reached them, to go out to meet the prince and endeavour to soften his purpose. Severinus arose at once, and travelled the whole night, so that early in the morning he met the prince five miles from the town. When the prince expressed his regret that Severinus should have so fatigued himself, and asked him the cause of such haste, he replied: "Peace be with you, good king; I come as an ambassador of Christ to entreat mercy for your subjects. Think of the blessings which the Lord has frequently bestowed on your father through me His instrument. During the whole period of his reign, he did nothing without consulting me; and by following my wholesome counsels, he learned from his own experience how wise it is for the conqueror not to be puffed up by his victories." The prince pretended that he was only guided by soli-

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cititude for the welfare of the inhabitants of the city, wishing to save them from the sword or the ravages of the Alemanni or the Thuringians, by providing them with shelter in his cities and fortresses. Severinus replied to this: "Were these people snatched by your arrows or swords from the devastations of the barbarians, or were they not rather rescued by the grace of God, in order that they might serve you the longer? Despise not, O king, my counsel. Confide these your subjects to my suretyship, and deliver them not up to the ill-treatment of so great an army; for I have confidence in my Lord, that He who has caused me to dwell in the midst of these afflicted people, will also grant me power to fulfil my promise in this matter." And the king suffered himself to be persuaded to retire with his army.

People relied so much on the guardian power of this single man, that the inhabitants of the Roman fortresses besought him to dwell among them; declaring that they should be better guarded by his presence than by their walls. If he were amongst them, so they deemed, no harm could befall them. Thus he had procured himself a little cell in the city of Passau, where he established himself, when the citizens called him thence in order to be defended, by his intercession, from the ravages of the Alemanni, whose king, Gewalt, had a great respect and love for him. This king once wished to come to this city, only that he might see Severinus again. Severinus went to meet him, anxious to spare the city a burdensome guest. By his exhortations, he made such an impression on the king, that he was seized with a violent trembling; and afterwards told his people that never, in all the perils of war, had he trembled so before. When he, thus impressed, asked Severinus what request he would make of him, Severinus besought him that, for his own sake, as well as for that of others, he would restrain his army from desolating the Roman empire, and liberate the captives whom his subjects had Carried away. A number of these unfortunates were, in fact, after this set at liberty.

His high-hearted trust in God, communicated even to the weak courage and strength in their calling. Whilst he was sojourning in the city of Faviana, the whole neighbourhood, even up to the walls of the town, was disturbed by barbarous hordes of robbers, and men and cattle carried off. Many of the citizens complained to Severinus of these misfortunes. He asked the Tribune who commanded the garrison, if he had no soldiers to pursue the robbers. The Tribune replied: "With my feeble force I dare not attack the greater force of the enemy. But if you advise it, I will venture; for I shall hope to conquer, if not by the strength of weapons, by the strength of your prayers." Severinus confirmed him in this reliance on God. "Make haste," he said; "be of good cheer in the name of God. If God is with you, the number and power of men are nothing. If your soldiers are unarmed, let them take arms from the foe. Since the compassionate God goes before you, the weakest shall become strong. God will fight for you. Therefore, only be quick; but remember this before all things, bring all the barbarians you take captive unhurt to me." Thus the Tribune went forth. Half a mile from the city he found the enemy assembled: he put them to flight, armed his own men with the weapons which he took from the foe, and brought the captives, according to

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his promise, unhurt to Severinus. Severinus refreshed them with food and drink, and then liberated them with these words: “Go, and warn your people not again to venture near this city in search of plunder, for they will not escape the vengeance of that God who fights for His own.”

Severinus was regarded as a prophet. It may be that among the gifts with which God glorified himself in this extraordinary man, was included the glance of the seer. It may be, that he, with his spirit so filled with Divine life, did seem to the inferior beings amongst whom he lived, as a prophet: when he exercised such power over the heart; when, in the enthusiasm of his trust in God, he spoke with such confidence of spirit; when he announced to men, whom the horrors of devastation could neither awake to their senses, nor arouse to repentance, the impending judgment; or when he promised to believers, as if he already saw it, the help of God; when, with a glance sharpened by religion, he looked into a future veiled from the perceptions of those around him, and imparted to them, in consequence, warnings and counsels which the event justified.

He was also regarded as a worker of miracles. He himself claimed no such fame. Often did he enjoin silence on those who were witnesses of the things which he accomplished. When at one time, one sick to death was laid on her bed before the cell of Severinus, he said, weeping: “Why do you demand great things of the insignificant? I acknowledge myself totally unworthy: may I but attain forgiveness of my own sins!”

But as they persevered, saying, “We believe, if thou prayest, she will yet survive,” he threw himself, weeping, on his knees. And when his prayer had been granted, he said: “Ascribe nothing whatever of all this to *my work*. This grace has been obtained by fervent faith, and this occurs in many places, and amongst many nations, that it may be seen, that there is one God, who doeth wonders in heaven and earth—who awakens the lost to salvation, and recalls the dead to life.” We may perceive, as Severinus also perceived, that such facts might be fitted for the peculiar circumstances of those times, as means of education for these nations.

A monk, named Bonosus, who suffered from a disease in the eyes, sought to be healed by the prayer of Severinus. But Severinus advised him rather to pray to God, that his inward eye might be enlightened; and following the repeated lessons of this revered man, the monk learned at length to seek rather for spiritual than bodily sight, and to forget his sufferings in intercourse with God.

How remarkably Severinus was sustained by Providence in his labours, two examples may suffice to show. The land had been much ravaged by locusts. When the prayers of Severinus were entreated, to avert this calamity, he said: “Have ye not heard what God commanded the sinful nation by his prophets? ‘Turn unto me with your whole hearts; rend your hearts and not your garments; sanctify a fast; call the solemn assembly.’ [Joel ii.](#) Do all this, that by works of repentance ye may escape the evils of this time. Let none of you go to

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his field deeming that the locusts can be dispersed by human care.” His words penetrated men’s hearts; the feeling of repentance became predominant with every one; all assembled in the church for prayers, confessed their sins with tears of penitence, and gave alms. Only one poor man suffered himself to be absorbed by anxiety about his field—spending the whole day, whilst the rest were assembled in the church, in anxiously driving off the locusts, and only joining the rest in the church in the evening. But the next morning he found his field ravaged by the locusts, whilst the other fields had been spared. This incident made a great impression, and Severinus made use of it to exhort the people to trust in God, and earnestly to enforce on them, that care for the things of the kingdom of God should be the first of all cares. But at the same time he said to those who had escaped: “It would be well that he who by the punishment he has suffered is a warning to you to be humble, should this year receive nourishment from your liberality.” All, therefore, united to provide for the poor man during the year.

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When Gisa, the queen of the people of Rügen, had sentenced some captive Roman subjects to hard labour, Severinus entreated their release. She sent him a very angry answer, importing that he might shut himself up in his cell and pray, and leave her to do what she pleased with her slaves. When Severinus heard this, he said: “I have confidence in my Lord Jesus Christ, that she will be compelled by necessity to do that which with her perverted mind she will not do willingly.” It happened soon after, that the queen met the punishment which was a natural result of her harshness and cruelty. She had thrown some goldsmiths, who were to make certain royal ornaments, into a narrow prison, to compel them to work beyond their strength. The little son of the queen ran one day in his childish play in amongst the prisoners. They seized the boy, and threatened, that if any one dared to approach them without promising them freedom with an oath, they would first murder the child, and then themselves. Then the terrified queen acknowledged the judgment of God, and came to her senses; she released the prisoners, and instantly sent messengers to Severinus to beseech his forgiveness, sending back to him the Roman captives.

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When Severinus felt the approach of death, he invited the king of the people of Rügen, with his cruel wife, once more to visit him. He exhorted him, with fearless freedom, so to behave to his subjects, as always to remember the account he would have to render to the Lord. Then, pointing with his hand to the heart of the king, he asked of Gisa, “Which do you love best,—that soul, or gold and silver?” And when she replied that her husband was worth more to her than all the treasures of the world, he said, “Be careful then not to oppress the innocent, lest you yourself thereby prepare the downfall of your power—for you have often stood in the way of the king’s clemency. I, a lowly man, on the point of departing to God, conjure you to renounce your evil deeds, and adorn your life with good works.”

In his last hours, he gathered his monks around him, and gave them touching exhortations to lead a life devoted to God. Then he embraced each of them, and received cheerfully

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the Holy Supper, begging them not to weep, but to sing psalms. When they could not articulate for sorrow, he began himself to sing, "Praise the Lord, ye His saints; let everything that hath breath praise the Lord;" and these were his last words. After shedding blessings around him during thirty years, in the midst of desolation, he died on the 1st of January, 482.

LABOURS OF PIOUS MEN IN FRANCE.

IN ancient Gaul also many pious bishops were especially distinguished, amidst the overturning of the nations, by their unwearied zeal and Christian love.

GERMANUS OF AUXERRE (ANTISTODORUM).

SUCH was Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, who held this office in 418, from the narratives of whose life and labours we will here give some extracts. It happened, about ten years after his entering on his office, that he was summoned by Lupus, bishop of Troyes, into Britain, in order to oppose the spread of the Pelagian doctrine, as a system which taught men to rely rather on their own strength than on the grace of the Redeemer, and by the illusions of self-righteousness alienated them from the essence of true inward holiness. They preached not only in the churches, but in the streets, and in the fields; whithersoever they went, these zealous men gathered crowds around them, to whom they proclaimed the grace of God. The Britons, who could obtain no assistance from the falling Roman empire, were then driven to great distress by a war with the wild Saxons and Picts. Both bishops were called into the British camp, and their presence infused into the desponding Britons as much courage and confidence as if an army had come to their help. As it was a season of fasting, the bishops preached daily amid the perils of war, and many were induced by their sermons to be baptized. At Easter the church was splendidly decorated and garlanded with green boughs for the festival of their baptism. The Britons enjoyed their Easter festivities in quiet. The Picts had, indeed, formed a project to take advantage of their negligence, in order to surprise them unarmed; but their design was discovered, and Germanus showed the Britons a valley enclosed by mountains, where they could wait the coming of the foe. He himself went thither with them, and told them, when he should cry Hallelujah, all to join him with one accord. This was done, and the loud accordant cry of the vast multitude resounding amongst the hills, made so powerful an impression on the Picts, that they fled precipitately.

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At another time, when he was just returned from a second journey to Britain, his aid was besought by the inhabitants of the province of Bretagne, to avert a great danger which threatened that region; Aëtius, then a distinguished and influential general of the Western Empire, having called in the king of a wild tribe of Alani to chastise them for a revolt. As the biographer of Germanus relates, he, a gray-headed man, yet through the protection of Christ stronger than all, went alone to encounter the warlike people and the heathen king. He passed calmly through the midst of the army to the king, and when the monarch would not hearken to him, but persisted in riding on, he seized his bridle-rein. His daring so astounded the rude warrior, that he yielded, promising to spare the province until the bishop should have endeavoured to procure a pardon for it from the imperial government. In order to effect this, Germanus immediately set out for Italy. On his way he joined a company of poor mechanics, who were returning to their homes after having completed a bargain in a foreign country. Amongst them was a lame old man, whose strength failed him when he had to follow the rest in wading through a brawling torrent with his heavy burden. Germanus relieved him of his burden, and carried first the burden, and then the old man, through the stream.

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As he was coming out of the rich city of Milan, where he had been preaching a great deal, some poor people met him, begging alms. He asked his attendant deacon how large their store of money was. The deacon replied that he had not more than three gold pieces left. Thereupon the bishop desired him to distribute it all among the poor. "But then, what shall we live on to-day?" asked the deacon. Germanus replied: "God will feed His poor. Only do thou give away what thou hast." But the deacon thought he would be more prudent; so he gave two pieces away, and kept back one. When they had travelled a little further, two horsemen came after them, to entreat a visit in the name of a rich landed proprietor, who, with his family, was afflicted with many diseases. The place lay off the road, and his attendants therefore entreated Germanus not to accept the invitation, but he answered: "It is the first thing of all to me to do the will of my God."

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When the horsemen heard that he had resolved to come, they presented him with the sum of two hundred solidi, (a gold coin of the time,) which had been given them for Bishop Germanus. Germanus gave it to his deacon, and said: "Take this, and acknowledge that thou hast robbed the poor of one hundred of these pieces; for if thou hadst given all to the poor, He who repayeth a hundredfold would have restored to us three hundred pieces to-day." His arrival diffused universal joy at the estate; he visited master and servant, with equal sympathy, on their sick beds; he went even into the poorest huts, and strengthened all by prayer.

At the imperial court of Ravenna, Germanus received universal honour; and he could easily have obtained whatever he wished. The empress sent to his dwelling a large silver vessel full of costly provisions. Germanus divided the victuals amongst his servants, and kept the silver for himself, in order to lay it out to the best advantage for the poor. As an acknowledgment, he sent the empress a wooden dish with black bread upon it, such as he was accustomed to eat. But in the eyes of the empress it was a precious remembrance, and she afterwards had the dish enchased in gold.

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Once when, during his residence at Ravenna, he was conversing with the bishops on religious topics, he said to them: "My brethren, I wish you farewell in this world. The Lord appeared to me tonight in a dream, and gave me some travelling-money. And when I asked the object of the journey, He answered me: "Fear not, I do not send thee into a strange land, but into thy fatherland, where thou wilt find everlasting rest." The bishops sought to apply the dream to his return to his earthly country; but he would not suffer the mistake, saying: "I know well *what* fatherland the Lord hath promised His servant."

Into this heavenly country he soon after passed.²

² He died July 31, 448.

LUPUS OF TROYES.

Lupus, bishop of Troyes, the contemporary and friend of Germanus, saved his city from impending destruction, by his powerful influence over the barbarous spoiler who spread terror everywhere before him—Attila, king of the Huns, who invaded Gaul with his lawless hordes in 451. The wild warrior was penetrated with such veneration for him, that he attributed a beneficial influence to his presence, took him with him on his return, and left him with an entreaty for his prayers. A letter from Lupus could move a prince of the Alemanni to release captives without ransom. He spent his revenue in maintaining the poor, and especially in ransoming captives. He collected the refugees from various places during Attila's devastations, and established them as a colony in a secure mountain district, residing amongst them for a time himself.

Julianus, a contemporary, thus describes a pious bishop of those times:—"By a holy life and holy preaching, he converts many to God. He does nothing in a domineering way, but everything in humility. He places himself on a level with his inferiors by the efforts of holy love. He seeks, in his life and preaching, not his own glory, but Christ's. All the honour which is paid him for his priestly life and teaching, he constantly refers to God. He consoles the downcast, he feeds the poor, he clothes the naked, he ransoms the captive. He shows the erring the way of salvation; he announces to the despairing the hope of pardon. He urges on those that are already running; he diffuses light amongst the wandering. Such a man is a minister of the Word, he understands the voice of God, and is to others an oracle of the Holy Ghost." Such a man was—



CÆSARIUS OF ARLES.

He was born in the district of Chalons-sur-Saone, A. D. 470. He seems to have been early awakened, by a pious education, to vital Christianity. When he was between seven and eight years old, it would often happen that he would give a portion of his clothes to the poor whom he met, and would say, when he came home, that he had been, constrained to do so. When yet a youth, he entered the celebrated convent on the island of Lerins, (Lerina,) in Provence, from which a spirit of deep and practical piety was then diffused. France had already received many distinguished doctors from this monastery. The weak and delicate body of the young Cæsarius was so much exhausted by the severities and abstinences which he there imposed on himself, that the abbot himself desired him to repair to the city of Arles for the restoration of his health.

There were at this time in that neighbourhood many pious women, who employed their property in relieving the distress of those times of desolation, and helped the good bishops in their works of love. Such was Synagria, who, because she assisted the Church in the accomplishment of every good design, more than mere wealth could, was called “the treasury of the church.” When Epiphanius, bishop of Pavia, a contemporary of Cæsarius, came to France, with a sum given him by Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, for the purpose of redeeming some thousands of captives who had been dragged from desolated Italy, and the money proved insufficient for the great multitude, this pious lady added what was lacking from her own purse.

Another such pious lady was Gregoria, who, with Firminius, a near relation of hers, had devoted herself at Arles to works of love. She received the young Cæsarius, to take care of him. She introduced him to the bishop of the city, who, soon perceiving what was in him, appointed him to the superintendence of a convent on a neighbouring island. How far he was, with all his esteem for monasticism, from confounding the means with the end, or from setting any value on asceticism apart from the essence of the true Christian character—true inward holiness, is evident from an admonitory epistle of his to monks. “What avails it,” he says, “if our body only dwells in the place of rest, and unrest continues to rule in our hearts; if the appearance of rest is diffused over our exterior deportment, whilst storms rage within? For we are not come into this place in order to permit ourselves to be ministered to by the world, in order to enjoy plenty and repose. You ought to know, my brethren, that it avails us nothing if we distress our bodies with fasting and watching, and do not amend our hearts or care for our souls. In vain do we flatter ourselves that we are crucifying the flesh, if our outward man is tamed down by austerities, whilst our inward man is not healed of its passions. It is as if one made a column gilt on the outside; or as if a house were built with magnificence and art, and painted with the finest colours, and within were full of snakes and scorpions. What avails it that thou tormentest thy body, if thy heart is not amended?” In another exhortation he says: “Let us renounce the sweets of this earthly life, and think

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daily on eternal life; and endeavour, with hearts purified from the bitterness of worldly lusts, to attain a foretaste of that bliss. Let us now serve our Lord and God with the joyfulness with which he invites us, by his aid, to come and partake of his gifts.”

In the year 500, he became bishop of Arles. Whilst he entrusted to others the outward affairs of his Church, he devoted himself entirely to the care of souls, and to providing religious instruction. This, certainly, appears to be the most sacred duty of a bishop, and Cæsarius was quite penetrated with the sense of the responsibility of his office. He would frequently urge this duty on the foreign clergymen who visited him, who did not seem sufficiently anxious about the religious instruction of their flocks. “Brother,” he said to many, “consider, as a wise shepherd, the hundred sheep committed to thee, that thou mayst restore them twofold. Hear what the prophet says: ‘Woe to me that I have been silent!’ Hear what the Apostle says with fear: ‘Woe to me if I preach not the Gospel!’ Be careful, lest, by taking the chair of the teacher, thou shouldst exclude another, and suffer it to be said of thee as of others, ‘They have taken to themselves the keys of knowledge, they enter not in themselves, and exclude those who would enter;’ who could, perhaps, better advance the things of the Lord.”

He frequently invited his young clergy to bring him questions about the interpretation of Scripture. “I know well,” he often said to them, “that you do not understand everything;—why do you not ask, that you may learn to understand? You should spur us on by your questions, that we may be compelled to search in order to impart to you sweet spiritual nourishment.” His zeal and earnestness in the proclamation of the Divine Word, is shown by these words of a sermon:—“I ask you, my brethren or sisters, which seems to you of the most value, the Word of God or the body of Christ (the Sacrament—the bread and wine)? If ye will reply truly ye must say, that the Word of God is no wise inferior to the body of Christ. Therefore, the same care that we take in distributing the body of Christ, lest any portion of it should fall from our hands to the ground, we should take when the Word of God is distributed amongst us, lest, whilst we think or speak of other things, any of it should fall from our hearts. I would ask if, at the hour when the Word of God begins to be preached, precious stones or golden rings were always distributed, would not our daughters stay to receive them? Unquestionably they would be very eager to receive the proffered gifts. But, because we neither can nor will offer you any bodily ornaments, we are not gladly listened to. Yet it is not just that we, who impart to you spiritual things, should be looked on as superfluous. For he who gladly hears the Word of God, may know of a surety that he is receiving golden ornaments for his soul from the father-land of Paradise. If a mother wished to decorate her daughter with her own hands, and the child despised those decorations, and ran hither and thither so that the mother could not adorn her, would she not justly be punished? Regard me, then, as the mother of your souls; think that I would adorn you that ye may appear without spot or wrinkle before the judgment-seat of the Eternal.



We gather pearls from Paradise for you, and we desire no other reward from you in this world, than that we may see you joyfully receiving what we offer you, and, with God's help, perfect in good works." And in another sermon he says: "It is no trifle with which the Holy Spirit threatens the priests of the Lord by the prophet. 'If thou dost not warn the wicked from his wicked way, his blood will I require at thy hand. ([Ezek. iii, 18](#); and [Isaiah lviii, 1](#)). Be of good courage; lift up thy voice; lift it up like a trumpet, and tell my people of their transgressions.' And those fearful words for the careless priest:—"Thou shouldst have given my money to the usurers, that at my coming I might have received mine own with usury.' And afterwards:—"Cast forth the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.' This is the sentence which awaits the negligent priest, who does not diligently proclaim the Word of God."

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In that age, when the old civilization was declining amidst the convulsions of the nations, preaching became all the more important, as a means of culture for the people. On the rude men who valued sermons the less, the more they needed them, it was often necessary to exercise a kind of violence to constrain them to listen,—thus at the council held at Agde, where Bishop Cæsarius presided, it was decreed, that at Divine service, on Sunday, the people should remain till the benediction at the close. Once, when Cæsarius saw several people hastening out of the church, after the reading of the Gospel, he ran to them, and said:—"What are you doing, my children? Whither are you suffering yourselves to be led by evil counsel? For your soul's sake, hearken diligently to the word of exhortation, At the day of judgment ye will not be able to act thus. I exhort, I conjure you, hasten not hence, and be not deaf. I shall not, at any rate, have been guilty of silence."

It is clear, that in such an age as we have described, in order to obtain much and general blessing, it was especially necessary that the preacher should condescend to the position of the uneducated, and use language which they could understand. Julianus Pomerius, formerly a rhetorician of Mauritania, the contemporary and teacher of Cæsarius, calls attention to this, when he says:—"The preacher must not seek to display the eloquence of the schools, lest it should seem that his chief object is to make a show of his learning. He should rejoice, not in the acclamations of the Christian people, but in their tears; he should expect not their applause, but their sighs from a contrite heart. The endeavour of the minister should be to improve his hearers by his sound doctrine, not to gain their empty applause. The tears which his hearers should shed let him shed first, and thus enkindle them by the penitence of his own heart. As simple and clear, well arranged and dignified, should be the charge of the bishop, that he may be understood even by the ignorant, and make a favourable impression on the hearts of all. It is, in short, one thing to be a rhetorician, and another to be a preacher. The one seeks with all the force of his eloquence the fame of a skilfully-elaborated. speech; the other seeks in sober and every-day language to promote the glory of Christ."

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By such maxims as these was Cæsarius guided, as he says in one of his sermons; "If I were to interpret the Holy Scriptures to you after the manner of the fathers, the spiritual

food would only be adapted for a few educated men; the multitude of the uneducated would be compelled to hunger; therefore, I humbly entreat you, that it may please every one to hearken patiently to my simple words, that so the whole Church of the Lord may derive spiritual nourishment from them. Since the uneducated cannot raise themselves to the level of the educated, the educated must be content to abase themselves to the level of the rest. For what is spoken to the simple can be easily comprehended by the educated; but what is preached for these, the simple cannot understand.” His biographer says of him: “God had given him such a gift of speaking concerning Divine things, that he was able frequently to apply whatever was passing before his eyes to the edification of his hearers.” One example, already quoted, shows this method and faculty of his.

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We will here adduce another instance, from a Visitation Sermon in the country, in which he combats the excuse of ignorance in religious matters: “Tell me who has shown thee how thou shouldst dress thy vineyards, and at what time thou shouldst plant the new vines? Who has taught thee that? Thou hast seen it or heard it, or thou hast inquired of the best vine-dressers, how thou shouldst till thy vineyard. Why, then, art thou not as careful about thy soul as about thy vineyard? Give heed, my brethren, I beseech you,—there are two kinds of fields: the field of God, and the field of men! Thy field is thy farm—God’s field is thy soul. Is it just that thou shouldst till thine own field and let God’s lie fallow? Does God deserve this of us, that we should neglect our souls, which are to him so dear? By our husbandry, we shall only live a few days in this world; surely, then, we should expend more pains on our souls. God has intrusted our souls to us, as his husbandry, that we should cultivate them with all diligence. Let us, therefore, work with all our might, by God’s help, that when God shall require an account of his field—that is, our own souls—he may find the field well tilled and cultivated, the harvest ready, and no weeds amongst the corn. It is nothing great, nothing hard, that God requires of us. Eternal justice speaks to thee in thy soul, saying: As thou carest for thy field, care for thy soul; as thou cut-test off the superfluous shoots from thy vine, so remove evil inclinations from thy soul. As he who leaves his vine for a year without pruning, may indeed in that year obtain more abundant fruit, but afterwards remains without fruit; so he who does not prune away evil thoughts and inclinations from his soul, may, indeed, seem, by robbery and deceit, to receive fruit in this one year of earthly life; but, afterwards, he will remain barren throughout eternity.”

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The sermons which Cæsarius preached during his visitations of his diocese, both in the cities and in the country, express vividly his fatherly love to every portion of his large diocese, and his grief that the numerous occupations occasioned by the difficult circumstances of which we shall hereafter speak, prevented him from visiting them more frequently. Thus, in one of these discourses, he says: “If the necessity of the times permitted it, I would visit you not only once, but twice or thrice every year, in order thereby to satisfy as much my own desire as yours, of seeing one another. But, whilst my will desires it, the necessity of

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the times permits it not. Yet it injures neither you nor me, that we see one another so seldom, since we are ever with each other in love. In the pilgrimage of this world, we might be in the same city, and not together. *There is another city, where good Christians are never separated from each other.*” And, in another sermon:—”I thank God, that he hath led me hither to witness your love, although hindered by so much business. God knows that if I could come to you twice or even thrice in the year, it would not satisfy my desire; for is there any father who does not long to see his sons frequently, especially good and dutiful sons?” Cæsarius endeavoured also to provide that throughout the country the people should not lack preachers. To this end he employed his great influence in the guidance of the ecclesiastical affairs of his fatherland, in the French ecclesiastical councils. We perceive this influence from the fact, that at the second council of Vaison, A. D. 529, it was decreed, that there should always be preaching in the village churches—that the country clergymen should early instruct the young ecclesiastical lectors (readers) in the Scriptures, and train them up to be their successors.³

It was his earnest endeavour to make inquiry into Divine truths the personal concern of every Christian, that each should learn to draw from the Word of God for himself. He controverted the hollow reasons by which men sought to escape these requirements, and to excuse their levity and worldliness. Thus, he said in a sermon,—”I beseech you, dearest brethren, to repeat, what by Divine grace you have gladly received in these sermons, to your

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3 As the rights of the clergy seem to have been very limited in those districts, until they were extended by the influence of Cæsarius, it is probable that in many districts the village churches received no religious instruction except at the visitations of the bishop. It was now provided, that even when the parish priest (parson) was ill, the congregation should not be entirely deprived of preaching; a deacon being authorized to read something from ancient sermons. Wisely, too, was the clerical idea combated, that to deliver sermons was something too high for a deacon, although it was the deacon’s office to read the Gospels in the church. “If the deacons are worthy to read what Christ has said in the Gospel, why should they be deemed unworthy to read the comments of the fathers.” It is narrated in the biography of Cæsarius, that he instructed his presbyters and deacons, in order that the Church might lose nothing if he were hindered by sickness; saying, “What? If the words of our Lord, of the prophets, or of the Apostles, are read by presbyters and deacons, should it not be permitted them to read the words of Ambrose, of Augustine, or of my insignificant self? The servant is not greater than his Lord. Those who have the right to read the Gospels are, in my opinion, quite worthy to read in the church the sermons of the servants of God, or their interpretations of the Holy Scriptures. “I have done what I could. Those bishops who neglect to provide for these things, will have to render an account at the day of judgment. But surely no one can be so hardened in his mind, that when God calls to him, Be of good courage, cry aloud, spare not,’ he should not only not cry himself, but also hinder others from crying. Let him fear these words of the prophet [Isaiah lvi, 10](#): ‘They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark,’ (Lutheran Version, *reprove*.) For all the souls which err through the silence of the priest, he will be responsible.”

neighbours and friends, to those who could not come to church with you, or, what is worse, did not wish to come. For, as I should accuse myself if I neglected to say it to you, so should you fear that you may also have to render an account, if you do not so remember what you hear, as to be able to communicate it to others. And therefore do ye seek, by the aid of Divine grace, to fulfil what the Apostle Paul says, (*Gal. v, 1:*) ‘If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness;’ *which is applicable not only to the clergy, but to the laity.*” And in another sermon:—”Let no man, my dearest brethren, seek to excuse himself by saying, I have no time for reading, and therefore I cannot learn nor fulfil God’s commandments. And let none of you say, I cannot read, and therefore it will not be reckoned against me, if I fail to observe the Divine commandments. This is an empty and unmeaning excuse. For, in the first place, if a man cannot read the Holy Scriptures himself, he can get them read to him. And he who can read, can he not find time to read the Holy Scriptures? Who can sleep so much in the long winter nights, as not to be able to find, at least, three hours, either for reading the Bible himself, or having it read to him? Consider it well; I am telling you what you yourselves well know. We know many merchants, who, because they cannot read and write themselves, hire clerks, and by having their accounts kept by others, make large profits. And if those who cannot read or write, hire clerks in order to make earthly gain, why dost thou not much rather pay some one to read the Scriptures, that thou mayest gain everlasting wealth? I pray and exhort you, my brethren, that those who can, should diligently read the Holy Scriptures; and those who cannot, listen attentively when they are read aloud. For the light and eternal nourishment of the soul is nothing else than the Holy Scriptures, without which the soul can neither see nor live. For, as our body perishes if it receives no food, so our soul grows faint if it does not feed on the Word of God. And let not any say, I am a peasant, always occupied with my daily work; I can neither read the Holy Scriptures, nor get them read to me; for how many men and women of the peasantry learn the devil’s songs by heart, and sing them! Thus they can retain and appropriate what the devil teaches, and they cannot remember what Christ teaches.” Often would he say to those who came to him: “Believe not that it is enough for you to seek to nourish the souls of your friends and relations only with the Word which we proclaim to you. I testify to you, before God and the holy angels, that you will be responsible for the souls of your meanest servants, if you do not communicate to them, as well as to your friends and relations, what we have preached to you. The servant is indeed subjected to you by the present relations of earth, but he is not dependent on you by an eternal bond.”

Throughout the sermons of Cæsarius, may be traced an evident effort to combat the externalizing religion of the age, to direct men’s attention to the true needs of the inward life, and to eradicate their trust in outward works. As a disciple of Augustine, of whose writings he had manifestly chiefly availed himself, he always pointed out love to God as the only true source of all goodness. “Whatever good works,” he said, “a man may do, they are



all nothing, unless true love be in him; love, which extends not to friends alone, but to enemies.” He quotes [1 Cor. xiii, 3](#): “And since selfishness is the root of all evil, and love the root of all good, I ask, what avails it a man to have a thousand branches with the loveliest and pleasantest flowers or fruit, if the true and living root is not in him? For as, if the root of self-love is eradicated, all its branches immediately wither and die away, so, on the other hand, to him who has suffered the root of love to die in him, no other means remain of attaining eternal life.” And, in another sermon: “Wherein shall we follow the example of the Lord? Herein; that we awaken the dead? that we walk on the sea? Assuredly not. But in this, that we become meek and lowly in heart; that we love, not only our friends, but our enemies. He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked. How did Christ walk? On the cross He prayed for his enemies:—‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ They are deluded—possessed by the evil spirit; therefore We should pray rather that they may be delivered, than that they may be condemned. Fasting, watching, prayer, alms, a celibate life, faith,—all avail a man nothing without love. True love is patient in misfortunes, and moderate in good fortune; is steadfast amidst severe sufferings; joyful in well doing; secure in temptation; amongst true brethren, full of sweetness; amongst false brethren, full of might; innocent in calumny, sighing under its injustice; panting after truth; humbly hearkening in Peter, boldly rebuking in Paul, ([Gal. ii](#);) manfully confessing in the Christian; divinely pardoning in Christ. True love is the soul of the whole Scriptures, the fruit of faith, the wealth of the poor, the life of the dying. Therefore, cherish love carefully; love the Highest Good with your whole heart, and with all the power of your soul; for the Lord is gracious, and sweeter than all sweetness. In communion with Him, all bitterness, in converse with Him, all delusions, are kept aloof.

“My brethren, what is there sweeter than love? Let him who knows it not, taste and see. Hear what the Apostle says: God is love.’ What can be sweeter than that? Let him who knows it not, hear what the Psalmist says, ([Psalm xxxiv, 9](#)): “Taste and see how gracious the Lord is.’ Thus God is love. He who hath love, God dwells in him, and he in God. If thou hast love, thou hast God; and if thou hast God, what canst thou lack? Dost thou indeed believe that he is rich whose chest is full of gold, and he not rich whose soul is full of God? But it is not so, my brethren; he alone is rich in whom God has graciously vouchsafed to dwell. How can the meaning of the Holy Scriptures remain hidden from thee, if Love, that is, God himself, inspires thee? What good works wilt thou not be able to accomplish, if thou carriest in thy heart the spring of all good works? What adversaries wilt thou fear, if thou art honoured to have God the Lord within thee. As long as the root in thy soul is not changed, thou canst not bring forth good fruit: in vain dost thou promise good things with thy mouth; thou canst not accomplish them, as long as thou hast not the root of all good in thy heart. One root is planted by Christ in the hearts of believers, the other by the evil spirit in the hearts of the haughty; and thus the one is planted in heaven; the other in hell. But many will

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say, 'If this root is planted in the hearts of believers, and believers still seem to be on earth, how then can this root be planted in heaven?' Wouldst thou know? Because the hearts of believers are in heaven, in that they are daily lifted up to heaven; for when the priest says, 'Lift up your hearts,' the Church calmly responds,—'Our hearts are above with the Lord;⁴ because the Apostle says, 'Our conversation is in heaven.' God does not send us wearisome journeys to the east or west to obtain our salvation; He leads us back to ourselves: what he has bestowed on us by his grace, that he requires of us; for he says this is the Gospel: 'The kingdom of God is within you.' Again; the Lord has not said: 'Go to the east, and seek righteousness. Sail to the west to obtain the forgiveness of your sins.' But what saith He? 'Forgive thine enemies, and thou shalt be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given unto thee.' God requires nothing from thee which lieth outside thee. God leads thee to thyself and thine own conscience. In thyself has he placed that which he requires of thee. Thou hast no need to seek remedies for thy wounds afar. Thou mayest, if thou wilt, find the forgiveness of thy sins in the recesses of thy heart."

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Life and preaching, with this man of God, flowed from one fountain: that which was the soul of his sermons was also the soul of his life. It is related of him, that he never prayed only for himself; that when he suffered wrong from his enemies, he used simply to say, "May God blot out thy sins; may God take away thy sins; may God chastise thy sins, that thou mayest not retain them; may God amend thy soul here below." He prayed also with fervour for his enemies. His inward life expressed itself in his outward life. A heavenly repose dwelt ever on his countenance; so that, according to the Scriptures, ([Proverbs xvii, 22](#)),⁵ as his biographer observes, a joyful heart shed gladness over his whole life.

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Although Cæsarius, in those times of dearth, often earnestly urged beneficence and almsgiving, yet he also frequently spoke with great emphasis against the delusion of those who converted almsgiving into an external justification by works, and imagined thus to make up for all their sins. Thus, in a sermon on the Festival of the Three Kings, (Epiphany,) he says: "Those wise men from the East brought worthy gifts to the Lord Christ: do ye bring Him your souls; bring Him spiritual gifts, that is, yourselves; for God loves *you* more than *yours*. There are many who give alms, and yet do not renounce sin. These give their goods to God, and themselves to the devil. But God has no fellowship with the devil; and, therefore, you must banish from you robbery, rioting, pride, hatred, and all evil things, that your Creator may possess you wholly."

He spoke thus against the delusion of those, who, attributing a magical power to the sign of the cross, were only confirmed in their sins by it: "I beseech you, dearest brethren," he said, "let us very carefully consider why we are Christians, and bear the cross of Christ

4 *Eng. Lit.*—We lift them up unto the Lord.

5 "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine."

upon our brows. For, we must know, that it is not enough to receive the Christian name, if we do not bring forth Christ-like works. As the Lord himself says in the Gospel: ‘Of what profit is it that ye call me Lord, Lord, and do not the thing that I say?’ If thou callest thyself a soldier of Christ, and constantly signest thyself with the cross of Christ, and yet dost not give alms according to thy power, and knowest nothing of love, well-doing, and chastity, the Christian name can avail thee nothing. The sign of Christ—the cross of Christ—is a great thing, and it should serve, therefore, as the sign of a great and precious thing. For what avails it if thou sealest with a golden ring, and under that seal preservest nothing but foul straw? What avails it if we bear the sign of Christ on our brows and in our mouths, and yet hide sins in our hearts. He who thinketh evil, speaketh evil, doeth evil, and will not amend himself, increases rather than diminishes his sins, by making the sign of the cross. For many, when they go forth to commit theft or adultery, will cross themselves if they strike their foot against anything, and yet will not desist from the evil deed; and these wretched people know not that thus they rather invite than repel the evil spirits. But he, who, with God’s help, repels sin and endeavours to think and do what is right—he makes the true sign of the cross on his lips, in that he strives to accomplish works which deserve to receive the seal of Christ.”

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So, also, at the consecration of churches, he sought to turn the thoughts of the assembly from the outward sanctuary to the inward sanctuary in the heart; *e.g.*—”Whenever we celebrate the festival of the consecration of an altar or a church, and at the same time lead a holy life, all that is typified in the temples made with hands, is fulfilled in the spiritual building within us. For He did not lie who said: ‘The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are;’ and, ‘Know ye not that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost?’ Since, therefore, without any merit of your own, by the grace of God, we have been made temples of God, let us strive as much as we can, that the Lord may find nothing in His temples, that is, in us, that may offend the eye of the Divine Majesty; that the dwellings of our hearts may be cleansed from sin and filled with virtues, shut against the devil and open to Christ.” In a Christmas sermon, he says: “Consider, my brethren, when a man of power or rank intends to celebrate his own or his son’s birthday, how eager he is many days before to cleanse his house from all filthiness; the house is whitewashed, the floors swept, and strewn with various flowers. All that can minister to the joy of the soul and the gratification of the body is carefully procured. If, then, thou makest such mighty preparations for thine own or thy son’s birthday, what preparations shouldst thou not make for the birthday of thy Lord! Strive, then, with all thy might, that God may not find in thy heart what thou wouldst not find in thy house. If Christ sees thee so prepared for the celebration of His birthday, He himself will come to thee, and not only visit thy soul, but rest and dwell in it forever. How happy is the soul of him who seeks, with God’s help, so to order his life, that he may be fit to receive Christ into himself as a guest and an inhabitant; and, on the contrary, how wretched is the soul of him,

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who has so defiled himself with sin that Christ cannot rest in him, but the devil already begins to reign.”

In prayer, also, he taught the distinction between the appearance and the essence. “Above all, must we pray to God in silence and quietness; He hears our very sighs, as it is said of Hannah, (1 Sam. i, 13:) ‘Only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard.’ Let us also pray with sighs according to this passage, (Psalm xxxviii, 8:) ‘I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.’ Let us pray so that our voice may not sound, but our conscience cry to God. And let every one before he casts himself down to pray, by God’s assistance chase from his soul all strange thoughts, that, enkindled by the glow of the Holy Ghost, all sinful things may be consumed by the fire of contrition and of prayer. For whatever a man sets his heart on at the season of prayer, he sets in the place of God—he seems to make his God, and to invoke as his Lord. What a sore bondage, that our tongue should speak to God, whilst the whole bent of our soul is toward earth and earthly things!”

As it was a matter of so much importance to Cæsarius to make Christianity and Christian devotion a common concern of every member of the Church, he introduced, instead of the hymns sung only by the priest, choruses, in which all were to take part; and in these, besides the Roman language, which prevailed in Gaul, he employed Greek, which had been generally introduced in southern France by the Oriental colonies. The devotional singing of his flock was a great delight to Cæsarius; yet even this was to him only a means; and in this also he warned against the overestimate of the outward means. He ever pointed to the end, the advancement of holy dispositions. “I cannot express to you,” he says in a sermon, “the joy your devotion has given me. For many years it has been the desire of my heart, that our gracious Lord might give you this habit of singing. But seek, above all, not only by prayer, but also by holy thoughts, that the Holy Ghost, who speaks by your lips, may also dwell in your hearts. It is, indeed, something good and acceptable to God, when the tongue sings truly; but then only is it *really* well, when the life harmonizes with the tongue. Above all, consider the spiritual meaning of the Psalms. When you sing Psalm cxix, 78, ‘Let the proud be ashamed;’ seek yourself to avoid pride. When we sing Psalm lxxiii, 27, ‘Lo, they that are far from thee shall perish!’ let us seek to avoid all evil desires. When we sing, ‘Blessed is he that meditateth day and night on the law of the Lord,’ let us abhor all useless and improper discourses as the devil’s poison, and frequently read the Holy Scriptures; or, if we cannot read, frequently and gladly seek to listen to those who do read them.”

He often warns against everything which tends to make men secure in their sins: as, when many gave themselves up to their lusts, in the hope that on the sick bed it would be early enough to repent and obtain absolution; or, when others thought to insure their salvation by receiving the tonsure and the monastic habit on their death-bed; or, when others excused themselves by saying, that they could not renounce the world in their youth, and imagined they were thereby saved the trouble of a true conversion: against such a delusion,

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Cæsarius says:—"We need have no hesitation in declaring what awaits the man who constantly lives in sin, and puts off his repentance to the end of his life, sinning on in the hope that a momentary repentance will obtain him the forgiveness of all his sins; the man, who, after having submitted himself to ecclesiastical penance, restores not his unjust gains, does not pardon his enemies with his whole heart, does not purpose in his heart, if he recovers, to repent all his life long with great contrition and humility; we need not say, for the Lord himself has said in the plainest way in the Gospel, what awaits such a man. 'If ye forgive not others their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.' How shall the sinner, who will not forgive, be forgiven? 'Or how shall it be given to those who have not given?' for the Lord will surely say to those who have never given alms, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire: I was hungry, and ye fed me not.' I may indeed receive such a man amongst the number of the penitents; but, that God who knoweth the consciences of all men, and who will judge every man according to his deserts, He *knows* with what faith and what intentions such a man has submitted to penance.⁶ But if, perchance, whilst we are exhorting all to repentance, any should think, 'I am a young married man, how can I submit to the tonsure or the monastic habit?' let him know, *this* is not what we preach, this change rather of costume than of life. For true conversion is enough in itself, without a change of garb. Spiritual (clerical) clothing can avail nothing, without good works, but will itself incur the just judgment of God." And, in another place: "But, perhaps, some one may think he has committed such grievous sins, that he can hope no more for God's

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6 The question, whether a death-bed repentance would avail a man, was frequently discussed at that time. The pious Faustus, bishop of Rhegium, (Reiz,) in Provence, had, in his warm zeal for practical Christianity, and in order to give no ground for security in a sinful life, denied it all significance. "Since God will not suffer himself to be mocked, that man deludes himself who begins, whilst scarcely half alive, to seek *life*, and then first resolves on the service of God, when all the faculties of soul and body fail him for the service. He seems but to mock God, who delays as long as possible to seek the physician; and begins to *will*, when he no longer *can*." Justly, and wisely, especially for that age, did Faustus here deny the value of a dead faith, not manifesting itself by works. This letter of Faustus disquieted Hundebad, the Burgundian king, who (as may be seen from the letters of Avitus, to whom he addressed many theological questions) was thoughtfully disposed, and he asked Avitus, bishop of Vienne, his opinion. He declared with reason, that if a true conversion, proceeding from repentance and faith, took place even in the last moment, it could not be in vain. He referred to [Matthew xx, 9](#); [Luke xxiii, 40](#). Avitus also spoke against the efficacy of a hypocritical repentance. He combatted, however, unfairly what Faustus had said against the value of mere faith; for Faustus had not spoken of that faith which is the foundation of all spiritual good,—of *living faith*, but of the dead, apparent faith, which is no work of the Spirit, and can bring with it no kind of spiritual blessing. On the nothingness of such a faith, it was impossible to insist too strongly with new converts. Cæsarius of Arles, also, like Avitus, admitted the possibility of an efficacious repentance in the hour of death; only he brought more prominently forward the requirements and the difficulties of it.

mercy. Far be such a thought from every sinner's heart. Man, whosoever thou art, thou lookest on the multitude of thy sins, and dost not think of the omnipotence of the heavenly Physician. For, since God will have mercy, because he is gracious, and can have mercy, because he is almighty, the man who persisteth in believing that He either cannot or will not, closes against himself the door of Divine compassion; he either distrusts God's grace or his power. Let none then despair of God's compassion; only let none delay to seek reconciliation with God, lest sin should become habitual to him, and he be no longer able, even if he were willing, to deliver himself from the snares of the devil. But, perhaps, many an one will say, I hold a station in the world, have engagements; and how can I repent? As if, when we exhort you to repentance, we meant to say that you must have your hair cut off, and not rather renounce your sins—that you should rather lay aside your garb than your disposition. But let him remember, who seeks by such hypocritical excuses to deceive rather than to excuse himself, that neither the royal dignity nor the royal garb prevented king David from repenting."

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In combatting the delusion of those who imagined that they need only repent of the grosser and more palpable sins, and in seeking to show that every Christian, even those who were considered holy, had perpetual need of repentance, he numbers as among the minor sins, neglecting to visit the sick and imprisoned at the due time, neglecting to reconcile enemies, unnecessarily irritating neighbour, or wife, or son, or servant. If, amongst men who were inclined to place religion in a dead faith and ceremonial observances, he insisted on the necessity of good works as the fruits of faith, and set the requirements of the Holy Ghost before their eyes in all their strictness, he was, nevertheless, no preacher of the law, which killeth, and can never make alive. He did not direct men to their own strength; but sought rather to bring them to a true sense of their powerlessness, that they might learn to draw from that Eternal Fountain of all strength to which he directed them; He says, after representing what belongs to a holy life, "All this, my brethren, seems to be wearisome, until it becomes habitual; or, to speak more justly, it will be deemed impossible as long as men believe they must fulfil it with human strength. But when any one is convinced that it may be obtained and fulfilled by God's power, it no longer appears anything hard and painful, but something mild and easy, according to the words of the Lord: 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'" He told me to rely on the strength of the Redeemer in the contest with the Evil One; as when he says, "How can we fear the devil, if we are united to God? Thou hast such a leader in the strife, and yet fearest the devil? Thou fightest under such a king, and yet doubttest of victory? Daily, indeed, does Satan oppose thee, but Christ is present. The devil would crush thee to the earth, Christ will raise thee erect; the one would kill, the other will keep thee alive; but be of good cheer, brethren, Christ is better able to bear you up, than Satan to beat you down." And in another sermon: "Because we were insignificant, He has

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made himself lowly. Because we lay dead, the tender Physician has bowed himself to death; for, truly, he who will not stoop, cannot raise the prostrate.”

In consequence of the convulsions from which France was then suffering, and the frequent marching and countermarchings of heathen, or recently Christianized tribes, many superstitious pagan customs were again diffused; such as, the observance of omens, the custom of beginning nothing on unlucky days, etc. Against such things as these Cæsarius would often speak. “Let none of you care,” he said, “on what day he departs from his house, nor on what day he returns, for the Lord has made every day; as the Scripture says: and ‘it was the first, second, third, fourth, and also the fifth, and the sixth day, and the Sabbath;’ and then follow these words ‘God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.’” He also warned against the misunderstanding of such Scriptural passages as the people, for want of an acquaintance with the Scriptural language, and a right interpretation, might pervert to the support of their superstitious observances. For example: on [2 Kings iv, 29](#): “Be careful, my brethren, that none of you indulge a foolish thought about this; that none of you imagine that Elisha wished to observe an omen, and, therefore, desired his servant not to greet any who greeted him on the road. We frequently read of this in the Holy Scriptures; but it merely implies haste, and no justification of a foolish observance. It is as if he had said—‘Go so quickly that thou mayest not be hindered on thy way by any conversation with any one.’”⁷



7 Among the superstitious customs which Cæsarius, perhaps vainly, sought to repress, was the abuse then becoming prevalent in France, of seeking oracles about earthly things in that book which is the guide to eternal life—*i. e.* the Lot of the Holy Scriptures. Even in earlier times, it had often happened that pious men would, in an important crisis of their inward life, take an appropriate expression of the Scriptures as a word directly addressed to them from heaven: we find examples of this in the lives of St. Athanasius and Augustin. But it was somewhat different from this to seek for decisions about uncertain earthly events in the Scriptures, and to employ them in the service of a prying, worldly, and superstitious spirit. We find the first trace of this abuse in Augustin, who would have expressed himself yet more strongly, if the use of heathen auguries—a result of mere external conversions—had not then been so prevalent in the Roman empire, especially in Northern Africa. “Although,” says St. Augustin, “it is to be wished that those who seek lots in the Gospel (*qui de paginis evangelicis sortes legunt*,) should rather do this than run hither and thither to inquire of the gods; yet this custom also displeases me, of seeking to apply the word of God which speaks of another life, to the vanities and events of this life.” But now this abuse was practised even by the clergy. So that in mere temporal perplexities, the priest would lay a Bible on the altar or on the grave of a saint, and with fasting and prayer invoke the saint that he would reveal the future by some text; and then, in the first passage which came to hand on opening the Bible, seek the decision, (*sortes sanctorum*.) Against this was directed the decree passed at the above-mentioned council of Agde, A. D. 508, that “inasmuch as many clergymen and laymen practised magic under the cloak of religion, or in some manner promised to throw light on the future by searching in the Scriptures, all who either advised or taught

For a long time there had been two parties in France, which contended on the doctrines of grace and free-will. The one (the so-called Pelagians) sought to find a *via media* between the Divine and the human, in the work of conversion; they wished to indicate God as the Fountain of all good, and the redemption as the source of true sanctification, without thereby destroying the free self-determination of man, and so making God the origin of sin and sorrow; they wished to guard from all limitations the free love of God to the whole human race. So far these men held pure Christianity; but they erred in this, that they attempted too sharply to define the boundary between the Divine and the human in conversion; that they ascribed too much to the will of the creature, which can never stand in any other relation to the Source of all good, but that of receiving or accepting. A genuine Christian spirit of seeking a mean between two opposite errors, induced many pious men in the south of France to join this party; as Faustus, bishop of Riez, in Provence. They wished to combat a spiritual sloth, which sustained itself in the idea, that God accomplishes all in man, without any co-operation on his part. To this party was opposed, another, (the so-called predestinarians), who regarded the whole development of Divine life in man as an unconditional work of Divine grace, with which the will of man had nothing to do; so that God was thus represented as blindly and arbitrarily awakening some to salvation, and casting others away into sin and eternal damnation: on which point they often expressed themselves with such harshness as to rouse every feeling of humanity. It is evident how one extreme called forth and strengthened the other. Cæsarius stepped between these two parties. He, with his pious soul thoroughly penetrated with the sense of the nothingness of human merits and human power, with the sense of complete dependence on God, and the idea of complete devotion to God, was especially anxious to bring forward the doctrine, that man can do nothing of himself; that even the first stirrings of desire for justification and holiness come to man from God; that he has only to yield himself up to the Redeemer to be sanctified by Him. His object was to cast down every meritorious claim of human pride. His whole mind was in this too much bent to one point, and he was too much impregnated with the doctrines of Augustin, to be able clearly to perceive and express that point, on which all that is practically important in this question hangs; through which alone the way can be found between the two opposite reefs with which faith, which is not sight, must satisfy itself; namely, that it depends on the free self-determination of man, either to yield himself up to the attraction and training power of grace, or to resist and exclude it. But a man, so glowing with love and tenderness, and so full of Christian moderation, could never fall into the harshness of this cold predestinarianism. He rather protested against everything that could wound the moral feeling, and be at variance with the holiness and love of God. He never expressed in precise terms

such things, should be excommunicated." This was a repetition of the decree already enacted at the council of Viennes, A. D. 466.

the doctrine of an unconditional predetermination of God; he merely clung firmly to the doctrine of all-efficacious grace, without indulging in further speculations. This spirit was manifested in the scheme of doctrine laid down by Cæsarius, as fixed by the council of Orange, (Arausium,) A. D. 529. There, amongst other things, it is said: "Even in its original state, human nature needed its Maker's help in order to retain its innocence." Which may with good reason be asserted; since God alone can be the fountain of good for any created being—the wish in any creature to be something in and for itself, is the source of all evil. Then it is added, "Since, then, human nature cannot preserve salvation once received, without the grace of God, how can it, without the grace of God, win back the lost? Let no man boast of what he has, as if he had not received it; and let no man believe that he has received it merely because the letter of the law has been revealed to him from without. (That is, let no man believe that the grace of God consists in the mere manifestation of the law, since the law, in and by itself—unless the soul, filled with Divine life, and animated by the Spirit of love, is in harmony with it—can only bring the consciousness of sinfulness, can never impart good, can never sanctify). For the apostle says (*Gal. ii. 21*): 'If righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain.' And (*Eph. iv, 8*): 'He hath ascended up on high, and hath led captivity captive, and hath received gifts for men;' (German, 'given gifts to men.')

(Christ, after destroying the power of the evil spirit, and liberating men from it, has triumphantly exalted himself to a participation of the Divine power in the heavens; and He, the victorious Redeemer, armed with Divine might, glorified above all that opposes itself to the kingdom of God, distributes Divine powers of life, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, amongst the men He has redeemed.) From Him every one has what he has. But he who denies that he has received it from Christ, either, in fact, has nothing, or from him shall be taken away that which he seemeth to have. In proportion as pride and self-will, however subtle, self-reliance, or the assertion of personal merit, gain the mastery in a man, the good in him is crushed in the germ and adulterated. Heathen heroism is called forth by worldly desires; as fame, or love of earthly freedom: Christian heroism is produced by love to God, 'which is shed abroad in our hearts,' not by our own free will, but by the Holy Ghost which is given us. As the apostle said to those who had fallen from grace, in that they had sought to be justified by the law, 'If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain:' it may be justly said to those who confound nature with grace, righteousness come by nature, then Christ is dead in vain. For the law was already there, and it justified not: and nature was already there, and it justified not. Therefore Christ is not dead in vain, but that the law might be fulfilled by Him who said, 'I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it;' that the nature lost in Adam might be restored in Him who said He came to seek and to save the lost."

"Man has nothing of himself but sin and lies. What man has of truth and righteousness, he has from that Fountain for which we thirst here in this wilderness; from which we are

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now and then refreshed with some drops, lest we should faint on the way. The branches are so joined to the vine, that they give nothing to it, but receive the sap of life from it. The vine, on the other hand, affords the sap to the branches, but receives nothing from them. It is, therefore, for the advantage of the disciples, not of Christ, that Christ should dwell in them and they in Him. For if the branches are cut off, another branch can easily shoot forth from the living root. But the branches thus cut off cannot live without the root.” But he also expressed horror against those who taught that God predestined men to evil. A beautiful testimony of a genuine Christian spirit, and clear Christian knowledge in the midst of uncivilized nations.

The faith of Cæsarius was proved by many severe trials in these stormy times. One of his secretaries accused him falsely and craftily to Alaric, second king of the Visigoths, of endeavouring, out of attachment to his Burgundian fatherland, to bring Arles under the dominion of Burgundy. In the year 505, he was torn away from his church and banished to Bordeaux. Here, also, he inspired great reverence. The people attributed the extinction of a great fire to his prayers. Instead of exciting insurrection, as he had been falsely accused of doing, he exerted himself to repress the fermentation of mind which arose from discontent with the Arian princes; and impressed on all the Christian duty of obedience to the authorities—of rendering to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar’s, and to God the things that were God’s. He exhorted them, according to the command of the Apostle Paul, to obey kings and magistrates, if they commanded nothing contrary to the Divine law; and in the prince, to see the prince, not the Arian. His conduct was the best answer to the accusations against him. Alaric himself acknowledged his innocence, and called him back. His slanderer would have been stoned, had not Cæsarius himself procured his pardon. After the death of Alaric II., in 507, in the unsuccessful war with the Franks, the district of Arles was occupied by an Ostrogothic army, which hastened to the aid of the Visigoths, and the city of Arles, being in the possession of the Goths, had to sustain a siege from the united forces of the Franks and Burgundians. It happened, during the siege, that a young priest, a relation of Cæsarius, in order to escape from confinement, was imprudent enough to let himself down from the wall by a rope. This excited a suspicion amongst the Goths against Cæsarius, that he wished to betray the city to the enemy. He was ill-treated and thrown into prison, until the untruth of the accusation against him was brought to light.

When the Goths had gained the victory, they brought back a number of captives into the city. Cæsarius received them into his church and house, and provided them with clothes and food, until he was able to obtain their freedom, by paying the ransom. In order to bring this about, he not only —after emptying the church-treasury—sold all the gold and silver vessels of his church, but caused all the gold and silver which could be found on any part of the pillars and walls to be removed, that he might turn it all into money. He held this to be the duty of a bishop; and he used to say of those who would not act in a similar way, or



found fault with his doing so: “When I see amongst our priests men who, from a strange love for superfluities, will not exchange the dead silver and gold for the servants of Christ, I would ask them, if *they* had met with such a misfortune, if they would not wish to be ransomed by these dead gifts; or if they would deem it sacrilege, if any one came to their help with these consecrated gifts. I can never believe that it is contrary to the will of God, to employ what is destined for His service for the liberation of men, when He gave Himself to redeem men.”

After this time of affliction, Cæsarius said, in a sermon: “The riches for which we hope, are not to be found in this world; ‘for hope that is seen, is not hope’ (Rom. viii, 24): for the hope of the world, which is seen, consists really in bitterness. The world presents a bitter draught to her wooers. O, the wretchedness of mankind! The world is bitter, and yet is beloved. How would it, then, be loved if it were sweet? Truth speaks thus to you, ye lovers of the world: ‘Where is that which you loved, which you so prized? where is that with which ye would not part? where are so many countries, so many splendid cities?’ It would make a great impression only to hear of such desolation. But now our eyes have seen the dreadful misery of the siege, we have seen such numbers of the dead, that the living were scarcely enough to bury them! Consider this affliction, which has fallen on us by the just judgment of God: whole provinces dragged into captivity; mothers of families carried away, the mistress of many servants now herself the handmaid of the barbarians. On tender and delicate women, the barbarians have, without pity or humanity, imposed hard bond-service. But we, dearest brethren, whom the Lord has spared, not because we deserved it, but that we might have yet time left us for repentance; we should consider, not without trembling, that this should be a warning to us all. Let us, from the wounds of others, extract cures for ourselves; let us always fear what the Lord says in the Gospel (Luke xiii, 2): ‘Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I say unto you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.’”

Cæsarius was again accused to Theodoric, the Arian king of the Ostrogoths, and in 513 he was, at his command, carried off to the royal residence at Ravenna. But this generous prince was too susceptible of impressions from what was excellent and noble, not to be at once convinced, by intercourse with a man so penetrated with the spirit of the Gospel as Cæsarius, of the emptiness of these accusations. “I trembled,” he afterwards said, “when I saw him. I beheld before me an angelic countenance, an apostolic man; of so noble a man, I can believe nothing evil.” It grieved him much, that Cæsarius should have been compelled by bad men to make such a long and wearisome journey. At mid-day, he sent him a silver dish as a remembrance, weighing about sixty pounds; and, besides this, a sum of money (three hundred solidi). Three days afterwards, Cæsarius had the dish sold, and employed the money in ransoming whole bands of captives, whom the Goths had carried off.

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The house in which he resided was so filled with the poor and the suffering, that room could hardly be found amidst the crowd for his visitors. Such respect was felt for his person, that all the people of rank sent him gold to distribute. He was enabled to send back a multitude of captives in carriages to their families in France; and also to bring back with him a considerable sum of money (eight thousand solidi) for the poor and the captives.

Even whilst this district was in its saddest condition, impoverished as his church was, Cæsarius never lacked means to alleviate the misery of the people; his love, and his inexhaustible trust in God, overcame all difficulties, and brought him through. There was once a great multitude of captives collected at Arles, amongst whom were many of high rank, for whom he had paid the ransom; but who, nevertheless, could not return in safety to their friends. As they were compelled to remain at Arles without any means of sustenance, the bishop provided daily for their maintenance. One day his steward told him there was no resource but that the captives must beg that day in the streets for themselves; for if they were nourished that day by the Church, he would have no bread on his own table to-morrow. When Cæsarius heard this, he went into his cell, and prayed that the Lord would provide for the poor. He then returned full of joyful trust, and said to his secretary. "Go into the granary, and empty it, until not one grain remains; then have the bread baked as usual, and we will all eat together; to-morrow, if there is nothing to be had, we will all fast together,—so that to-day, people of high birth, and the rest of the captives, may not have to wander about the streets and beg, whilst we sit eating and drinking." But he whispered to another of his confidential friends: "To-morrow, God will surely provide; for they who give to the poor shall never suffer want." On the next day, which they all anxiously awaited, early in the morning, three ships appeared, full of grain, sent to Cæsarius by the Burgundian princes, Gundebad and Sigismund, to support his beneficence.

He would often send out his servant to see if there were any poor waiting at his gate, fearing to enter and disturb his quiet; sighing that it should be so hard for the poor to gain access to the hearts of their brethren; believing that in those who waited without—in the suppliants, and in the deaf and dumb—he saw Christ himself asking for help. He said: "Truly it is Christ who waits outside, who pleads so hard, who is deaf and dumb,—and still does He entreat, exhort, conjure all [to give]."

When once a poor man begged money of him, to ransom a captive, and he had nothing to give him, he said: "What shall I do for thee, my poor friend? What I have, give I thee." He went into his cell, took up his episcopal state-robles, gave them to him, and said: "Go, sell that to any clergyman, and with the money set thy captive free." His affectionate heart could never refuse to intercede for any sufferer; and people had great confidence in his prayers, so often were they granted; but he always rejected the fame of a worker of miracles.

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When a mother once thanked him with tears for his prayers, to which she ascribed the recovery of her son, he told her rather to thank Him whose omnipotence and grace are always ready to help the afflicted who call on Him.

And often he would say: "He to whom the charge of souls is committed, must take good care, that people do not rather seek bodily than spiritual help from him [the cure of bodily sickness, rather than the cure of the maladies of the soul]. Divine grace has much more frequently bestowed such miraculous gifts on the simple than on the learned. May the merciful God grant us, to lead an acceptable life in His sight, with the talent he has lent us, with that moderation, which does not seek to go beyond its measure! To work miracles, must not be attributed to men unworthy as we are."

Thus bad Cæsarius laboured as a bishop forty years, and reached his seventy-third year, when he was seized with a severe illness. In the midst of great pain, he asked if Augustin's day was still far off. And when he heard that the day was near, he said: "I trust in the Lord, that he will not suffer the day of my death to be far from his; you know how I have loved him as a teacher of the truth, great as the distance is between him and me in worth." And he died the day before, August 27th, 542.



EPIPHANIUS OF PAVIA.

ABOUT the same time that Cæsarius was thus labouring in France, Epiphanius, Bishop of Pavia, was labouring in a like spirit in Italy. He also was a blessing for his land, convulsed by the disturbances of war, and deluged by one barbarous tribe after another. Amidst the strife of hostile tribes, he gained equal confidence and equal respect from the leaders of the adverse parties, and shed benefits alike on friend and foe. When the wild hosts of Odoacer were destroying and plundering Pavia, in 476, Epiphanius alone was able to overcome the rage of the barbarians and deliver many of his unfortunate countrymen. By him the restoration and re-population of the ruined city was effected. In reliance on God, he undertook the re-construction of a church which had been reduced to ashes, although he had no means of paying the expenses. He used to say, that the rich soul (he meant that which possessed the true and inward wealth of faith) could never lack means; whilst, on the other hand, it was the hardest thing in the world for a man who was poor in soul, ever to have enough. Although he was in spirit dead to the world, and lived in constant reference to eternity, he nevertheless took a lively interest in earthly affairs, from love to his brethren. He sacrificed his repose; he appeared at the camps and courts of princes; undertook dangerous and wearisome journeys, on which he denied himself every convenience, and bore all kinds of privations, in order to obtain from the princes of the dominant tribes, peace, an alleviation of public burdens, and liberty for the captives. A journey which he undertook to the camp of king Theodore, in his fifty-eighth year (A. D. 497), in the severest season, under many inconveniences, in order to promote some object of this kind, appears to have caused his death. He returned to Pavia in ill health, and although the joy of meeting his Church again, after having obtained for them the desired help, made him forget his sickness for a time, it overcame him at last. As those words which he often repeated, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain," had been the watchword of his life; so, when he felt the near approach of death, he said with a calm cheerfulness, ([Ps. xxxix, 1:](#)) "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, with my mouth will I make known His faithfulness to all generations;" and, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit;" "My heart is joyful in the Lord, my horn is exalted in the Lord, because I rejoice in thy salvation." [2 Sam. i, 1](#). And thus, singing psalms of thanksgiving, he left this world.



ELIGIUS, BISHOP OF NOYON.

THE life of this pious bishop is so much the more worthy our consideration, on account of his having passed many years in the position of an ordinary citizen, before he entered on the clerical office; because his life may thus afford us a picture of the pious citizens of his time. Eligius was born at Chatelât, a mile from Limoges, A. D. 588. His family had been Christian for many generations, and he received a pious education,⁸ the result of which extended throughout his life. In his youth, his father, Eucherius, apprenticed him to a celebrated goldsmith, who inspected the public mint at Limoges. By the skill which he obtained in this trade, by his other talents, and by his judicious Christian conduct, he soon became known throughout the neighbourhood. Religion gave him strength and interest in his work; and as his work constrained him to attend to earthly things, he felt all the more the necessity of refreshing his spirit with spiritual things. He regularly and zealously attended Divine service; and what he heard read from the Holy Scriptures made a deep impression on his mind, and frequently occupied his thoughts. When, subsequently, he obtained a Bible of his own, he used constantly to lay it open before him at his work. He afterwards left his native land, and repaired to the royal residence of the Frankish king, Clotaire the second. Clotaire's treasurer, Bobbo, made his acquaintance, and took him into his house. It happened that the king wished to have a chair adorned with gold and precious stones, made after a design of his own. None of his court workmen being able to make it as he wished, the treasurer invited Eligius to accept the order, and he declared himself ready. Much gold was given him for this work, and he used it with such economy and fidelity, that he was able to make the king two chairs, instead of one. He sent one chair to the king, and kept the other himself. The king admired the skill of the workman, and testified his gratitude. But he was still more astonished when Eligius brought him the other chair, and said: "In order not to be guilty of



8 The mind of a pious mother of those times is expressed in the letters of the mother of Desiderius, a friend of Eligius, who lived at the Frankish court at the same time with himself, and afterwards became Bishop of Cahors. In the letters of Archanefreda, to her young son, Desiderius, she says: "My dearest son,—I exhort thee always to think of the Lord, always to have God in thy soul, and neither to do evil deeds, nor consent to them. Be loyal to the king, and kind to thy companions; and ever love and fear God. Be carefully on thy guard against all evil deeds, by which the Lord may be offended, lest by thy bad example thou shouldst draw others into sin. May thy neighbours, or thine equals, have no cause to blame thee, but may they rather, seeing thy good works, glorify the Lord! Remember constantly, my son, what I have promised God for thee, [the parents were then commonly the sponsors,] and walk continually in the fear of the Lord." After the loss of both her other sons, she wrote to him: "What would thy wretched mother do, if thou too shouldst die? But thou, my beloved son, take heed, now that thou hast lost thy dear brothers, that thou lose not thyself. Depart from the broad way which leadeth to destruction, and keep thyself in the way of God. I believe grief will put an end to my life do thou pray, that He may receive my soul, for whom love makes me sigh night and day."

negligence, I have employed the remainder of the gold in this work.” The king remarked: “He who is so faithful in little things, will be faithful also in greater things;” and Eligius was highly respected after this incident, both on account of his skill, and his character. So great was the confidence reposed in him, that when any work was to be done for the court, gold, silver, and precious stones were sent him without measure or weight; because it was well known, that he would never use more than was necessary. He once begged the king to give him a piece of land, which was the property of the state, to build an abbey on. The king granted his request; but Eligius afterwards found that he had described the land as about a foot less than its real circumference. This grieved him sorely, and he went at once to the king and told him of it. The king said to his attendants: “See what a glorious thing Christian fidelity is!—my dukes and finance-ministers seize large estates for themselves, and this servant of Christ, because of his faithfulness in the Lord, could not bring his heart to be silent about a handful of earth.” The king once desired him, in some, affair, to take an oath, and, in order to give it greater solemnity, to lay his hand, after the custom of the times, on a box of relics. But this was a heavy requirement from the tender conscience of Eligius. He did all in his power to avoid it. The king at length ceased to press him, and took a cordial leave of him, saying: “He believed him more than if he had taken many oaths.” Although Eligius lived at court, in the midst of the world, his heart was always turned away from the world, and set on God and Divine things. His going out and coming in, the commencement of all his undertakings, were accompanied with prayer;⁹ and he prayed not for earthly riches for the body, but for heavenly gifts for the soul. At first, he conformed outwardly to the world; for he knew that the Christian calling consists only in renouncing the world in heart. He appeared

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9 Concerning prayer, Eustasius, abbot of Luckow, in this century, said: “The more the Lord is sought, the more He is found. Nothing should be so important to us as diligent prayer; for the Lord says to us through the Apostle: ‘Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.’ The Apostle also exhorts us to ‘pray without ceasing;’ the whole Scripture tells us to call upon God; for he who neglects to call upon God, is cut off from communion with the members of the body of Christ.” In a biography of this age, mention is made of the imparting of that true light, which enlightens every saint who prays for himself and for all believers in Christ. When Wandregisel, abbot of Fontanelles, in this century, was yet a layman, he came into a village, whose inhabitants were very ill-spoken of, and a quarrel arose amongst them which seemed likely to end in bloodshed. He had recourse to prayer, and succeeded in restoring peace. After that his heart began to glow, and he praised God, saying: “Surely He is to be loved above all, who is instantly present whensoever He is called upon, as he himself has said by the prophet, ([Jer. xxix, 13](#)): ‘And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with your whole heart.’” Similar examples of the operations of Christianity and Christian men lie about us at this day. Who does not think of the life and labours of the Apostolic Swartz in the East Indies! What an impression he produced by his sermon on the thievish Railer! How they were converted by Christianity into quiet, peaceable husbandmen. (See “Modern History of the Protestant Missions in the East Indies.”—Knapp. Halle, 1804.) (The influence of Swartz

therefore in the most splendid clothing, which courtiers were then accustomed to wear, in order to avoid singularity. But when he had gained respect enough by his conduct to be able to depart from the common custom without giving offence, he laid aside all ornaments, and went about in a plain dress, in order to be able to give whatever he could save to the poor. When a stranger asked for his house, the usual direction was, "Go wherever you see a crowd of poor people gathered together, there dwells Eligius." Once, when he heard that ship-loads of slaves were arrived for sale, captives of Roman, Gaulish, British, and Moorish descent, especially Saxons, who were driven forth in herds, like cattle, he hastened to the spot, and immediately redeemed a hundred of them. When money failed him, he gave not only his jewels, but even necessary articles of clothing, and stinted himself even in his daily food. He went at once with them to the king, and obtained letters of manumission for them, giving them the choice either of returning free to their country, in which case he would supply them with money for their travelling expenses, or of remaining with him, *not as bondmen, but as free brethren*; or of becoming monks, in which case he would secure them good lodging in a convent. It sometimes happened that Eligius, in this way, gave away all that he had, and then he seated himself at the table with the poor, who were his ordinary guests. His servants either ridiculed him, or expressed their compassion but he said: "O ye of little faith, will He who fed Elias and John in the desert, withdraw his blessing from us to-day, in the midst of such a company? I trust in my Creator, that although we ourselves deserve it not, these poor people shall not leave this room unrefreshed by his gifts." And scarcely had he spoken these words, when some people knocked at the door of the house, bringing him bread and other provisions from the king, or some rich man or other person of piety, who knew his boundless beneficence. It was painful to his gentle heart to see the corpses of condemned criminals hung in chains; and he obtained permission from the king, to take them down and bury them. He went himself to provide for their interment. But he first touched them carefully on every side, to see if any signs of life yet remained; and when once he actually did see such signs in one of them, he said, not dreaming of any miracle, although his admirers gave it out as such: "How grievously we might have sinned, if the Lord had not prevented, in thus burying a living man!" He provided carefully for the recovery of the wretched man; the prosecutors indeed urged that he should be again delivered up to justice, but Eligius obtained his pardon.

Eligius took great interest in the propagation of religious knowledge. On his journeys he preached edifying sermons to the people. He founded convents, which formed a strong contrast by their severe discipline to the degenerate Frankish monasteries, and provided

on the Pagan and Mohammedan princes of the East Indies, even on Hyder Ali; compare the third and first volumes of that very learned collection with the traits from the life of that noble man, in the excellent Magazine for the recent history of Protestant Missions and Bible Societies, first year, fourth part. Basil, 1816.)

them with Bibles. The universal reverence which he inspired by his pious life, and the confidence which was placed in his Christian zeal, occasioned his election to a vacant bishopric, which needed a laborious and devoted man to fill it, (A. D. 841.) It was the extensive diocese of Vermondes, Tournay, and Noyon, in which, and on the borders of which, dwelt many still heathen tribes, to whom no preacher of the Gospel had yet been sent, who as yet knew nothing of vital Christianity, and rather looked on it as a mere outward appearance, a ceremonial service, with which many heathen superstitions were mingled. At the peril of his life, and amidst many contumelies, which were heaped upon him, did he labour amongst the wild heathen, and the nominal Christians, who would not renounce their heathen superstitions and pleasures. Sometimes he gained the victory over the rage and hatred of the heathen by his Christian love and gentleness, sometimes he was constrained to use vigorous measures against the mighty of the land, who would continue to mingle heathen lusts and superstitions with their nominal Christianity, promoting both amongst the people by the power of their example. Once, when the festival of the apostle Peter was celebrated with heathen rejoicings, in a diocese beyond that of Noyon, Eligius, attended only by three of his clergy, went into the midst of the wild tribes, enraged as they were against him on account of his preaching. He ascended an elevated place in front of the church, and spoke severely against these heathen customs; whilst the crowd—consisting of people of German descent, looking on him as a foreigner, on account his Romano-Gallic origin, called out to him in a threatening way: “Preach, Roman, as much as thou wilt, thou wilt not succeed in destroying our old customs: no man shall deprive us of our old games, which afford us so much amusement.”¹⁰

Fragments of the sermons of Eligius have been preserved, from which it may be seen how anxious he was to combat the delusion, that a mere outward historical faith, and an outward ceremonial were enough homage to render to religion; and to impress on men the necessity of true sanctification. “It is not enough,” he said, “my beloved friends, to have adopted the Christian name, if you do not bring forth Christian works; for to be called a Christian only profits him who constantly keeps Christ’s doctrines in his heart, and manifests them in his life; who commits no theft, bears no false witness, lies not, does not commit adultery, hates no man, but loves all as himself; who does not render his enemies evil for

10 It is related of Samson, bishop of Dot, in Bretagne, in the sixth century, that, after having preached successfully on the 1st of January, on a certain island, against the heathen festivities common at that time, he gathered around him the children who were wandering about in consequence of these customs, and whilst he kindly advised them in the name of the Lord to refrain from those heathen superstitions in future, gave to each of them a golden coin, in order, by this token of love, to win more favour for his exhortations in their childish minds.

evil, but rather prays for them; who excites no strife, but rather reconciles those who strive; for this commandment we have from the Lord himself—(He quotes [Matt. xix, 18, and vii, 12](#), and still greater commandments than these).— (v, 44:) ‘Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you.’ See! it is a strict commandment: it seems a hard thing to men,—but it has a great reward; hear what—‘That ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven.’ O what grace! In ourselves we are never worthy to be servants of God,—and by love to our enemies we become children of God. Therefore, my brethren, love your friends in God, and your enemies for God’s sake. For he who loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law, as the apostle says: whosoever will be a true Christian, must keep this commandment; whosoever keeps it not deceives himself. He, therefore, is a good Christian who relies on no amulets, or inventions of Satan, but sets all his hopes on Christ alone; who entertains strangers as joyfully as if they were Christ himself,—because He has said: ‘I was a stranger, and ye took me in. In that ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.’ He is a Christian who believes no slander, who himself lives soberly, and teaches his sons and neighbours to do the same; who knows the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed by heart, and instructs his whole household in them. In such an one Christ dwelleth, for He hath said: ‘My Father and I will come unto him and make our abode with him.’”

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Eligius also exhorts them to bring up their children, for whom they had stood sureties to God at their baptism, in the fear of God, and to visit those who were sick and in prison; he warns them against many kinds of heathen superstition: not to hang amulets about the neck of man or beast, *even if they were made by a priest*—even if they were said to be *holy things, or to contain passages of the Scriptures*; for such things were no medicines of Christ, but poisons of the devil.¹¹ “Let no woman hang amber about her neck, or, in weaving or dyeing, invoke Minerva or any other demon; but let every one desire, that in every work the grace of Christ may be present with her, and rely with her whole heart on the power of His name. Let no one cry aloud when the moon is eclipsed, for it is eclipsed at certain times by God’s command; and let no one fear to begin any undertaking at the new moon, for God created the moon to divide time, and to soften the darkness of the night, not to hinder any business, or to make any one mad, as fools believe. Let no one believe in destiny, or in any

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11 Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustin, also speak against this superstitious abuse, of making amulets of fragments or passages of the Gospels. We see thus how superstition everywhere takes the same direction; because it does not come to man from without, but issues from the abundant fountain of his corrupt heart. “No need,” says the significant old proverb, “to paint the devil on the wall; he comes in without being invited.” The Mohammedans in Asia and Africa, we know, sell sentences from the Koran as amulets.

influence of the stars, as some say; ‘as the birth of a man is, so will it be with him;’ for God wills that all men should be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth; and He guides everything with wisdom, as He decreed before the foundation of the world. High, indeed, are the heavens, wide is the earth, immeasurable is the sea, beautiful are the stars, but yet more inconceivable and glorious must He be who made them all; for if these visible things are so incomprehensible, the manifold fruits of the earth, the beauty of flowers, the various kinds of beasts,—if visible things are of such a nature, that we cannot comprehend them,—what idea can we form of those heavenly things which we cannot yet see? Or what must the Creator of all these things be, at whose bidding all are created, by whose will all are ruled? Fear Him, then, my brethren, above all; pray to Him at all times; love Him above all; cling to His mercy; despair not of His grace.” “Let no one care when he goes out, or comes in, what comes to him, what he hears the birds cry or sing, what he sees any one carrying; for he who minds such things is still partly a heathen, whilst he who despises them may rejoice that he can apply to himself the words of the Psalm, ([Psa. xl, 4](#);) ‘Blessed is the man who maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.’ The apostle also exhorts us to the same thing, ([Coloss. iii, 17](#);) ‘And whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.’”

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He especially counsels them to despise dreams, because, as the Holy Scriptures say, they are vain; and he appeals to [Leviticus xix, 26](#): “Have Christ in your heart, and His sign on your brow. The sign of Christ is a great thing—the cross of Christ; but it only avails those who keep the commandments of Christ. Let no man deceive you; he who doeth righteousness is righteous, he who committeth sin is of the devil; and no sin, whether adultery, theft, or lying, is committed without’ the co-operation of the devil. Let no man deceive himself; he who hateth one man in this world, loses all that he offers to God in good works; for the apostle does not lie, when he addresses to us those fearful words, ([1 John iii, 15](#);) ‘He who hateth his brother is a murderer, and walketh in darkness.’ By brethren we must here understand every man, for in Christ we are all brethren. Despise not, therefore, the poor, or the bondman; perhaps he is better before God than thou art. Strive that ye may be separated from the devil, and united to God who has redeemed you. Let the heathen wonder at your conduct; and even if they ridicule your Christian life, let not that disquiet you; they will have to render an account to God. Wherever ye may be, be mindful of Christ in your intercourse; for he says: ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.’”

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He uses this as a motive to beneficence, that all are redeemed by one ransom, and serve one Master. He introduces the Saviour as speaking thus at the last judgment to the sinner: “I made thee from a clod of clay into a man, with My hand; I placed thee, without any merit of thine, amidst the joys of Paradise; but, despising My commandments, thou chocest rather to follow the tempter,—thus hest thou justly merited condemnation. Afterwards, I

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had compassion on thee; I appeared in the flesh,—dwelt among sinners. I bore stripes and shame for thee: I took thy sufferings on me, that thou mightest be healed. I took thy punishment on Me, that I might give thee glory.”

“Let us,” he says, in another place, “love God above all; for it is, indeed, a crime not to love Him, to whom we can repay nothing, even if we love Him: for what can we poor sinners render unto the Lord for all He has given us? To Him who, without any merit of ours, has done such great things for us unworthy creatures? Who, to deliver us from the dreadful condemnation, came down from the throne of His Father’s majesty to us, and bore all our shame on earth.”

The affectionate disposition of Eligius, and the constant bent of his mind towards the things of another life, are expressed in this letter of his to his old friend Desiderius, bishop of Cahors. “Before all, I entreat thee, as often as thou art able to lift up thy soul amidst the cares of the world to the life of eternal rest, to bind up the remembrance of my insignificant person with your prayers. For it is certain, that nothing in this world penetrates the heart with such a strength of longing, as the thought sympathy for the grief of his beloved. At length of eternal life, and the blessed country of the just. What the heart is full of, the mouth will overflow with. Therefore, my Desiderius, whom I have in my heart, remember thine Eligius when thou spreadest forth thy prayer before the Lord. And although distance separates us one from another, let us, nevertheless, be constantly together in Christ; and let us strive so to live, that, ere long, we may be reunited in soul and body, and dwell together thus united forever. I trust our most gracious Lord Jesus Christ will grant this to our persevering and believing prayers.”

Eligius had, in the exercise of steadfast and unwearied activity, reached his seventieth year, when he became calmly conscious of the approach of death. One day, as he was walking about with the young clergymen who were educated under his eye at Noyon, he remarked something out of repair in a church which they were passing, and immediately sent for workmen to restore it. When his scholars said to him, that it would be better to wait for a more convenient time, that the work might be more durable, he replied: “Let it be done now, my children; if it is not repaired now, I shall never see the restoration.” Deeply grieved by these words, his scholars answered: “Far be that from thee; may the Lord preserve you yet many years, for the glory of his Church and the good of the poor!” But Eligius exhorted them to resign themselves to the will of the Lord, and said: “Be not troubled at this, my children, but rather rejoice, and wish me joy; for long have I desired my release from the long sorrow of this life.”

A slight fever was to him a sure sign of the approach of death. He had his whole household called together, announced to them his approaching end, and exhorted them all to live in peace and love one with another. His illness lasted five or six days, and as he was still able to go about, leaning on a staff, he continued active as ever. On the last day of his

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life,—the last day of November, 659,—he again assembled all his household and all his young clergy, and spoke to them thus: “If you love me, as I love you, listen to my last words. Strive continually to keep God’s commandments; sigh continually for Jesus; let His lessons be deeply graven on your hearts. If ye love me, love the name of Christ, as I love Him. Think always of the uncertainty of this life; keep the judgment of God continually before your eyes, for I go now the way of all flesh. Ye will live henceforth without me in this world, for it pleaseth the Lord now to call me away; and I, too, long for my dissolution, and for rest, if it please the Lord.” He then called to him, one by one, the young men whom he had educated and trained for the clerical life, and told each of them in what abbey he wished to be buried. It was long ere their tears or complaints would allow him to speak; for, much as he yearned for everlasting life, and rejoiced in the nearness of the goal, yet was he deeply moved by he spoke again: “Mourn not so bitterly, and afflict me not still more by your tears. If ye were wise, ye should rather rejoice than mourn; for, although I shall be far from you in bodily presence, yet I shall be present with you in a far better way—in spirit; and even if that were not so, God is ever with you: to Him I commend you, to Him I commit my cares for you. Whenever it was in my power to do any good, I have laboured in all things for your welfare; that ye will acknowledge on that day when the Lord shall judge the hidden thoughts of men. I know, indeed, well, that I, as an unprofitable servant, have not done what I ought; yet the Lord knows what my will has been.” After he had again solemnly conjured them to be faithful to his instructions, and to look after his religious institutions in the convents, after he had said farewell to those so dear to his heart, he fell on his knees, and commended the sheep which had been committed to him to the Eternal Shepherd. When he was near his last moments, he once more caused his disciples to be gathered around his bed, and whilst they embraced one another, weeping, he said yet again: “I cannot now speak to you any more, and ye will see me no more amongst you; therefore live in peace, and let me now go to my rest.” It was remarked, that he prayed long in silence, looking towards heaven. Then he prayed aloud, “‘Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word.’ O remember that Thou hast formed me from clay. ‘Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.’ Remember me, Thou who only art without sin, Christ the Saviour of the world, take me out of the body of this death, and save me in Thy heavenly kingdom. Thou hast ever been my guardian, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. I know that I deserve not to see Thy face. But Thou knowest that my hope has always been in Thy mercy, and that I have clung firmly to Thee in faith, and in the confession of Thy name I spend my last breath. Receive me, then, according to Thy great mercy, and let me not be ashamed of my expectation. Let Thy gracious hand protect me, and lead me into the place of refreshment; be it but the meanest dwelling which Thou hast prepared for Thy servants and those that fear Thee.” And, whilst praying, he departed.

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THE ABBOTS EUROUL AND LOUMON.

To the examples already given in the previous biographies, of the power which religion exercised over the rough and savage mind, we may add the following. The abbot Ebrolf (Euroul) had settled with his monks in a thick forest, infested by wild beasts and robbers. One of the robbers came to them, and, struck with reverence at their aspect, said to them: "Ye have chosen no fit dwelling for you here. The inhabitants of this forest live by plunder, and will not tolerate any one amongst them who maintains himself by the work of his own hands. Ye cannot remain here long in safety. But what would ye do in this wild, barren region?" The abbot Ebrolf answered him: "Know, my brother, that the Lord is with us; and since we are under his guardianship, we fear not the threats of men; for he himself has said: 'Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.' For know, that the Lord is able to feed his servants even in the desert. And thou, also, mayst share in these blessings, if thou wilt abandon thy wicked pursuits, and promise to serve the true and living God; for our God forgets all the evil that the sinner has done, on the day when he turns from all his sins, as the prophet says. ([Ezekiel xviii, 21.](#)) Therefore, my brother, despair not of the goodness of God on account of the greatness of thy sins; but follow the exhortation of the Psalm, ([Psa. xxxiv:](#)) Depart from evil, and do good; and be sure that the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and His ear is open unto their cry. But let these terrible words also resound in thine ears: 'The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.'"

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Thereupon the robber went away; but the words which the excellent abbot had spoken to him in such affectionate and penetrating tones, had left a deep impression on his soul. The next morning, he hastened back to the monks; he brought the abbot from his poverty three of his coarse loaves and a honeycomb; and promising, with a softened heart, amendment of life, he remained there as a monk. And after his example, many other robbers of this forest were persuaded by the exhortations of this pious abbot, either to become monks or to commence agriculture, and maintain themselves in an honest way by the work of their hands.

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Another Frankish abbot of this age, Lauman, (Loumon,) was surprised in his cell by robbers; but the loftiness of his aspect overcame them so much, that they fell down at his feet, embraced his knees, and cried out, "Pardon us, holy man of God." He replied: "Why do ye ask pardon, my children '? wherefore are ye come hither?" They then confessed everything to him, and he gently replied: "The Lord have mercy on you, my dearest children; arise and renounce your robberies, that you may partake of the mercy of God."

GREGORY THE GREAT, BISHOP OF ROME.

IT pleased God, to whom all his works are known from eternity, to prepare Gregory by a twofold process, for the great and difficult work of the guidance of the Western Church, then agitated by so many storms. Destined to be plunged into the midst of an immense multitude of avocations of the most varied character, he was trained to bear such a burden by administering, until his fortieth year, an important civil office. Then, yielding to a long-felt yearning of his heart, he retired into a monastery, and there, in still, devout tranquillity, was able to hold converse with himself, and to strengthen and stablish the Divine life within him.

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From the calm repose of the monastic life,—for which he often afterwards sighed,—he was next thrown into a whirl of business which left him no rest, and was in a great measure alien to the spiritual life and calling, as he himself complains: “For since,” he says, “as the world draws near its end,¹² the times are full of disquiet, and evils increase, even we, whose life is consecrated to Divine mysteries, are entangled in outward cares.”

Gregory draws vivid pictures of the devastation of the world in that age, and avails himself of this to press on the hearts of his contemporaries the hollowness of earthly things, and to direct their eyes to things eternal. Thus, he says in a sermon: “Those saints on whose graves we stand, had hearts exalted enough to despise the world in its bloom. There was then long life amongst men, continued prosperity, rest, and peace; and yet, whilst the world was still blooming in itself, its charm had already faded from their hearts. But now, lo! the world itself has faded, and yet its charm over our hearts decays not. Everywhere death, everywhere mourning, everywhere destruction; we are smitten on all sides, on all sides bitter waters overflow us; and yet, with senses blinded by earthly passion, we love the very bitterness of the world, we pursue the world flying from our embrace, we cling to the world sinking from our grasp, and, not being able to sustain the sinking world, we, cleaving to it as it sinks, sink with it into the deep. Once the world enchained us by its charms, now it is so full of misery that, of itself, it points us to God. The perishing of those earthly things, shows that even when they seemed firm they were nothing. Be mindful of these things, that, despising earthly glory, ye may through our Lord Jesus Christ attain that glory which by faith is already yours.” And in another sermon he says: “I demand of you, what is there that can now rejoice us in this world? Everywhere do we see mourning, everywhere do we hear sighs. The cities are destroyed, the castles are ruined, the fields are laid waste, the whole land is desolate. The villages are empty, and scarcely an inhabitant is left in the cities; and even this scanty remnant

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¹² The convulsions—which the God who killeth in order to make alive, who can call forth new life from death, designed to be heralds of a new creation—appeared to those who suffered from them, to betoken the end of all things.

of the human race is daily exposed to slaughter. The scourge of heavenly justice is not withdrawn, because even under the scourge no amendment takes place. We see some carried into captivity, some maimed, and others slain. What is there to rejoice the heart in such a life, my brethren? If we still love such a world as this, we are in love, not with joys but with wounds. We have seen what has become of her who was the mistress of the world.” He then points out how other great cities had experienced a similar fate, and concludes with the exhortation: “Let us, therefore, at least take courage to despise the world now that it has fallen; may our yearnings after the world at least end with the world, and let us imitate the saints as far as we are able.” He makes use of the state of the world to enforce on bishops the responsibility of their calling. “You see,” he says, “by what sword the world is destroyed; ye see beneath what blows the world is daily perishing. Is not this chiefly on account of *our* sins? Behold! the cities are depopulated, the castles destroyed, the churches and abbeys are in ruins, the land is laid waste! But *we* are guilty of the death of this perishing people,—*we*, who should have been their guides to life.”

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Italy was devastated by the Lombards, who frequently threatened the Roman territory, and Gregory, as one of the mightiest vassals of the eastern empire, had to take part in its defence. We may conceive what a melancholy position it was for a man, who would gladly have lived for spiritual realities alone, to be placed between the Lombards, eager for conquest, the governors of the eastern empire, often neglectful of their duty, and a court full of dissensions. In addition to all this, there was the care of the numerous lands which the Roman Church possessed in different continents and kingdoms, whose revenues were necessary to the bishop, in order to enable him to provide, as his office required, for the maintenance of a number of poor, and the ransom of a number of prisoners. One example will sufficiently show how strongly Gregory felt this to be part of his episcopal duty. A few poor old men once came to him from Ravenna, and related to him how much had everywhere been given to them on their journey. But when he asked them what they had received from Marinian, the new bishop of Ravenna, who had been a monk with him in his youth, they replied, that he had refused them any alms, saying, as an excuse, that he had nothing to give. Gregory therefore wrote to a friend, whom he commissioned to admonish bishop Marinian: “I am surprised that one who has clothes, who has silver, who has a cellar, should have nothing to give to the poor. Tell him, that with his position, he must also change his way of life. Let him not think that reading and prayer are enough for him now; nor that he should sit solitary in a corner, without bringing forth fruit in action. He must help those who suffer need, regard the wants of strangers as his own, otherwise the title of bishop is for him an empty name.”

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He himself has given us a sketch of his own situation, in these few words of a letter: “I must care at once for the bishops and the clergy, the monasteries and the churches; must

be vigilant against the snares of enemies; ever on my guard against the treachery and wickedness of those in authority: what anxieties and troubles these are; you will be able to appreciate better in proportion to the purity of the love you bear me.” He also complains, in a sermon: “While I lived in the cloister, I could keep my soul almost perpetually disposed to prayer. But now that I have taken upon me the burden of the pastoral office, my soul, harassed by many distractions, cannot always collect itself; since, sometimes I have the affairs of the churches, sometimes those of the convents to investigate; often I am forced to acquaint myself with the life and actions of individuals, sometimes to take upon myself the business of the citizens, sometimes to sigh over the desolating swords of the barbarians, and to fear the wolves which lie in ambush for the flocks committed to my charge; sometimes to provide for the administration of the Church property, so that those who live according to lawful order (*i. e.*, clergy, monks, nuns) may not lack means of subsistence; sometimes patiently to endure robberies of Church property, sometimes, without failing in love, to resist them. How can the soul, torn by cares so many and so various, return to itself in order to collect itself for a discourse, and not to neglect the ministry of the Word?” And, in another sermon: “How can I be enabled to provide for the daily maintenance of the brethren, to insure the defence of the city against foreign swords, to guard the citizens against a sudden surprise, and, besides all this, to impart the word of exhortation in the most perfect and efficient way to the souls of men? For we need have a free and quiet soul to speak of God.”

Yet he knew *in whom he had believed*. For when he says, “What sort of a watchman am I—I, who stand not on the height of the mountains, but still lie in the valley of weakness?” he answers himself: “But the Creator and Redeemer of mankind is mighty; and, unworthy as I am, if, from love to Him, I spare not myself in the preaching of His Word, he is able to bestow on me the fulness of life, and the power of utterance.” He was able also to turn this struggle to profit for his inner life; it became clear to him, through his own experience, how easily a man living in the undisturbed tranquillity of contemplation, might deceive himself about his own spiritual state; that it is only amidst temptations and conflicts that we learn rightly to discern between the human and the Divine. He says himself: “By contemplation man is raised to God; but by the weight of trial he is thrown back upon himself. Trial bows down, that contemplation may not puff up; and again, contemplation elevates, that trial may not overwhelm. By an admirable ordinance of God, the soul is poised in a certain equilibrium; so that it may be neither unduly exalted in prosperity, nor unduly depressed in adversity.” And he observes beautifully on [Matt. xx, 22](#): “The disciples were already longing for high places; the truth recalls them to the road by which they must gain the heights. *By the bitter cup of sorrow we attain to glory*. What is that ‘which He had heard from His Father, and would make known to all His servants, that they might be His friends?’ ([John xv, 15](#).) Is it not the inward blessedness of love, the feast of the heavenly country, of which, by the breathings of His love, He daily gives our souls some foretaste. For in loving

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the heavenly things which we have received, we already know that which we love, love being itself knowledge. The friends of the Lord proclaim the news of the eternal home by word and life; they enter into it through sorrows. But let him who has attained to the dignity of a friend of God, look on himself as he is in himself, and on the gifts received as something sublime, exalted above himself.”

The spiritual duties of his office were the dearest and weightiest to him; his admonitory discourse to bishops shows how he was penetrated by the consciousness of the greatness and responsibility of the office of spiritual pastor. “There are but few labourers,” he complains, “for the great harvest; we cannot say it without sorrow; for, although there is no lack of those who like to hear what is good, there is a lack of those who can preach it. See! The world is full of priests, yet but few labourers for God’s harvest are to be found; because, though we have indeed assumed the priestly calling, yet we do not fulfil its duties. If any man is not able to address the whole congregation in a connected discourse, let him instruct individuals as far as he is able, edifying them in private conversations, producing fruit in the hearts of his children by simple-hearted counsel. He must always consider what was said to the Apostles, and through them to us: ‘Ye are the salt of the earth.’” He expresses his grief that the duty of preaching, the most important of all, should be neglected for the secular business connected with the episcopal office. “That what I say,” he added, “may offend no one, I accuse myself at the same time, although it is with great reluctance, that, forced by the necessities of our disturbed times, I yield to these things. For we have sunk into mere men of business. We neglect preaching, and still, to our condemnation, call ourselves bishops. Let us reflect—who has ever been converted through our words? What gain have we brought to God—we who, after receiving the talent, were sent out to traffic with it? For He says: ‘Occupy till I come.’ Behold, He comes now! Behold, He demands profit from our traffic! What gain of souls shall we be able to show to Him from our trading?”

To a bishop of Messina, who wished to pay his respects to him at Rome, he wrote, wishing to avoid such empty honours: “Do not trouble yourself to come to me, but pray for us, that although we are separated from each other by the sea, we may, by Christ’s aid, through love be united to each other in spirit; that we, supporting each other by mutual admonitions, may one day resign the pastoral office intrusted to us, without reproach, into the hands of the coming Judge.”

To a bishop, whose unclerical life he censured, he wrote: “You ought to acknowledge that you have undertaken not the care of earthly things, but the guidance of souls. To this you must bend your heart,—on this expend your whole solicitude, your whole diligence.” To another he wrote: “Let the word be in our mouth and fervent zeal in our hearts, so that we may belong in truth to the number of those of whom we read in the [Acts ii, 3](#), for verily fiery tongues descend on us, when we become inflamed by the fervency of the Divine Spirit, to announce the word of exhortation to our brothers and sons.” He himself once arose from



his sick bed and preached with a feeble voice: “The voice (he said) fails beneath the exertion of speaking, and I confess that, because I cannot be heard by many, I am ashamed to speak amongst many. But I myself blame this shame in myself. What! Because I cannot profit many, shall I therefore not care for the few?” He preached, while the Lombard army was spreading its devastations into the neighbourhood of Rome itself; and he finally concluded his discourses on Ezekiel, which he did not continue further than the fortieth chapter, with these words: “Let no one blame me for leaving off this exposition; for as you all see, our sorrows have reached the highest point, we are everywhere surrounded by swords, death threatens us on all sides. Some come back to us with their hands cut off, others we hear are imprisoned or killed. What resource is there for us, but to thank God with tears, under the rod which is the punishment of our sins? For our Creator has become our Father through the Spirit of adoption which he has given to us. Sometimes He nourishes His children with bread, sometimes He corrects them with the rod; both by sorrows and by gifts He educates them for their eternal inheritance.”



It was Gregory’s strenuous endeavour to extend the study of the Scriptures among the clergy and the laity. He says in a sermon: “As we see the face of strangers and know not their hearts, until these are opened to us by confidential intercourse, —so, if only the history be regarded in the Divine word, nothing else appears to us but the outward countenance. But when, by continual intercourse, we let it pass into our being, the confidence engendered by such communion enables us to penetrate into its spirit.” “Often,” he observes elsewhere, “when we do something, we believe it to be meritorious. But if we return to the word of God, and understand its sublime teaching, we perceive how far behind perfection we stand.”

A bishop, whom Gregory advised to study the Scriptures, had excused himself on the plea that the troubles of the times would not permit him to read. Gregory showed him the barrenness of this excuse, referring him to [Rom. xv, 4](#). “If,” he replied, “the Holy Scripture is written for our consolation, we should read it more, the more we feel oppressed by the burden of the times.” The bishop rejoined in the words of [Matt. x, 19](#); misunderstanding the words, he thought to conclude from them that the minister of the Church, without being bound to the study of the Divine word, need only rely on the immediate suggestion of the Holy Ghost. But Gregory knew well how to combat such an excuse. “The Divine word is bequeathed to us in vain, if we, filled with the Spirit, do not require the outward word. But what we may rely on in the time of persecution is one thing, and what we should do in times of tranquillity is another; for we must receive through this Spirit in reading, what, when occasion comes, we must prove in suffering.” He reproached a physician of the Imperial Court, because, amidst the distractions of the world, he neglected the daily reading of the words of his Redeemer. “What else is Holy Scripture,” he wrote to him, “but a letter from the Almighty God to his creature? Surely, if you resided far from the palace, and received a letter from the earthly emperor, you would not be able to rest or to sleep till you knew what



he had written you. The King of heaven, the Lord of men and of angels, has sent you a letter to conduct you to eternal life, and yet you delay to read it zealously. Bestir yourself then, and meditate daily on the words of your Creator. Learn the mind of God in the word of God, that you may sigh for eternal things with more ardent desire, that your soul may be inflamed by greater longing after the heavenly joys. For all the deeper will be the rest of your soul when love to your Creator leaves you no rest. May the Almighty God himself infuse His Spirit into you, that you may attain to this! May he fill your soul with his presence, and thus raise you to himself!”

Gregory did indeed use the saying of the Lord, “Ye are .the salt of the earth,” in too limited a sense, if he meant to restrict these words, applicable to all Christians as such, to the doctors of the Church as successors of the apostles. But it was far from him not to regard the vocation of labouring for the extension and furtherance of God’s kingdom, as common to all Christians. After indicating the high dignity of priests from [Mal. ii, 7](#): “For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts;” he adds, referring to all the members of the congregation, “but you also may all obtain the high dignity of this name, if you wish it. For if every one of you, as far as he can, and as far as he has received grace from above, seeks to recall his neighbour from evil, and to exhort him to a good conversation, speaking to him words of holy admonition, he is thus truly the messenger of the Lord. And let no one say: I am not fit to advise others; give as much as you can, that a strict account may not be required from you for having used ill the talent received; for he who preferred rather to hide his talent, than to put it out to usury, had not received more than *one*. As far as you have yourself advanced, draw others towards you, seek to gain companions on the way to God. When one of you, my brethren, goes to the market or the hath, he invites any one who seems to him idle to go with him. Let this which you are wont to do in earthly things, serve you as an example; and if God be your goal, endeavour not to reach it alone. For therefore is it written: Let him that heareth say ‘Come,’ ([Rev. xxii, 17](#)), that whoever has heard the voice of celestial love in his heart, may speak words of exhortation to his neighbour. He may perhaps have no bread to give to the needy, but there is something greater, which every one who has a tongue can give. For it is more to refresh the soul destined to eternal life, by the nourishment of the word, than to satisfy the mortal body with earthly bread. Thus, my brethren, withhold not from your neighbour the alms of the word.” And he says in another sermon: “There is no one who can truly say, I have received no talent, and so need render no account; for the little that every poor man has received will be accounted to him as a talent. One has received knowledge; he is bound to employ his talent in discharging the office of preacher. Another has received earthly goods; the property, of whose use he has to render an account, is his talent. Another has neither knowledge of heavenly things nor superfluity of earthly goods, but he has learned a trade and supports himself by it; his trade will be reckoned his talent.

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Another has none of these things: but perhaps he stands in a confidential relation to some rich man; if then he does not take advantage of his position for the needy, he will be judged for the neglect of his talent.”

While recommending the study of Holy Scripture, he discriminates between its false and its true use; and counsels that manner of reading the Bible in which the regard to self-improvement should be paramount. “Those,” says he, “who seek to fathom the mysteries of God beyond their power of comprehension, become unfruitful by their hunger; for they seek not what can train them in humility, patience, and long-suffering, but only what serves to show off their learning and enables them to talk. They often speak boldly about the being of God, while they are so unfortunate as not to know themselves. While they strive after what they cannot comprehend, they neglect that which might have made them better men.” He shows, however, at the same time, how every one, seeking in the right way, may find an answer to his questions, and the satisfaction of his wants in the Holy Scriptures. “God does not,” he says, “answer individual minds by special voices, but he has so arranged his word as to answer all questions thereby. If we search for our particular cases in the Scripture, we find them there. A general answer is given therein to us all about that which each in particular suffers. Let the life of those who have gone before be a pattern for those who follow. To adduce one instance amongst many: When we are seized with pain or any bodily annoyance, we wish perhaps to know its hidden causes, finding some consolation even in knowing what it is which we suffer. But since no especial reply is bestowed on our especial search, we have recourse to the Holy Scripture. There we find how Paul, when he was tempted with the infirmities of the flesh, received this reply: My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness.” It was said to him in his particular infirmity, that it need not be particularly repeated to each one of us. Thus we hear the voice of God in the Holy Scripture, on occasion of the sufferings of Paul, in order that we, if we have sorrows to bear, need not each one seek a similar voice for his own consolation. The Lord does not answer our every word, because He has once spoken and will not repeat it. That is to say, whatever was said to our fathers through the Holy Scriptures, was said for our instruction. The teachers of the Church may, therefore, confidently say, when they see many grieving and faint at heart, because God does not answer their every word, that God had once spoken and will not repeat it; that is to say, that he does not now come to the aid of individuals in their thoughts and temptations, by special prophetic voices and angelic ministrations; because the Holy Scriptures include all that is necessary to meet individual cases, and they are constructed so as to mould the life of later times by the examples of the earlier.”

Gregory, no less than the earlier ecclesiastical doctors, combated the delusion that it is enough to confess the pure doctrines contained in the creeds, and to be zealous for these without the practical influence of faith on the life. To a bishop, who boasted to Gregory of his zeal in the conversion of heretics, and of whom he had good reason to think that he was

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not sufficiently concerned about the sanctification of himself and others, he wrote: “I thank Almighty God, that through you the teachers of error are recalled to the Church. But you must take care that those who are in the bosom of the Church so live, that they do not become her enemies by their bad conduct. For if, unconstrained by love for Divine things, they serve earthly desires, in the very bosom of the Church herself children are nourished, alien to her.” When Reccared, king of the Visigoths in Spain, was converted from Arianism to the doctrine of the Church, Gregory warned the first Spanish bishop, Leander of Seville, that whilst rejoicing at the king’s conversion he should watch over him and see that the good work begun in him was completed, and that he should not exalt himself as if he had done enough good already; that also, by the course of his life, he should show himself true to the faith he had confessed, that he might by his works prove himself a citizen of the eternal kingdom.” And he wrote thus to the king himself on this event: “You must seek to observe great moderation in the discharge of your government, that the plenitude of power may not carry your soul away; for government is only well conducted, when ambition does not vanquish honour, You must guard against allowing anger to insinuate itself, lest you should execute your determinations in a precipitate manner. Anger must not master the soul, when it punishes a crime, but it must obey reason as a servant; for where it has once begun to take possession of the soul, it deems its own cruel actions just. Therefore it is written: ‘The wrath of men worketh not the righteousness of God.’” (James i, 4.)

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Although Gregory was credulous about the miraculous tales of his time, and took delight in them, yet he was far from that thirst for marvels which forgets, in solitary instances of the miraculous, that which is the aim and centre of all miracles. He uttered many a golden word upon the true end of miracles which are addressed to the eye, to raise the gaze of men from the visible to the invisible, and on the relation of all miracles to that highest miracle, the goal of them all,—the work of God in the minds of men redeemed and sanctified by Him, *the work of the bringing forth of the new creature*. In one place he speaks thus: ‘When Paul came to Malta and saw the island full of unbelievers, he healed the father of Publius,—who was afflicted with dysentery and fever,—by his prayer; and yet he said to Timothy, when he was sick, only this: ‘Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake, and thine often infirmities.’ Why, O Paul, do you restore the sick unbeliever through your prayer, and for so great a fellow-labourer in the preaching of the Gospel, only prescribe natural remedies in the manner of a physician? Is it not because external miracles serve the purpose of leading the soul to internal ones; so that, by the outward appearance of the visible miracle, faith in the greater and invisible miracle is produced? The father of Publius had to be cured by such a miraculous sign, in order to be renewed in spirit, whilst he recovered his bodily health by the miracle. Timothy needed no outward miracle, because *he had already the inner life complete*.’ And in another sermon: “Faith must be nourished by miracles, in order that it may grow; for we also, when we plant herbs, water them until we see that they

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have taken firm root in the ground, and then we leave off watering them. A few of these miraculous signs must be regarded more closely. For the Church works every day spiritually, what she then worked through the apostles corporeally. Those believers who renounce the language of their former worldly life, utter holy truths, and declare the praise and the power of their Creator, what do these but *speak with other tongues*? When they hear pernicious counsel, but do not suffer themselves to be seduced to evil deeds, they drink, indeed, fatal poison, but it does not harm them. When they see their neighbours weak in virtue and help them with all their might, strengthening them by their example,—what do they but lay their hands on the sick that they may be healed? These miracles are surely the greater, the more spiritual they are—greater, because not the body but the soul is awakened by them. These miracles, my dearest brethren, you can perform by God’s grace, if you will. Strive after these miracles of love and piety, which are the more certain the more they are hidden.” And, in another place: “We should distinguish between those gifts of the Spirit, without which we cannot attain to life, and those by which a testimony is given to the sanctity of our life for the good of others. For meekness, humility, patience, faith, hope, are gifts of the Spirit, but gifts without which men cannot attain to eternal life. The gifts of prophecy and of healing are also His gifts, but such as manifest the presence of His power for the good of the beholder.”

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Gregory rejoiced in the success of the abbot Augustine, sent forth by him for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, who also believed himself supported in his work by miracles. Gregory gave thanks for the Divine grace, but held it necessary to warn Augustine not to be unduly exalted on account of it. Such a warning was very needful to this active missionary. There was danger lest the Divine work itself, of which he served as the instrument, might be hindered by his want of humility. Perhaps, if he had had more of this salt of all Christian virtue and labour, he might have succeeded in effecting much for the confirmation and extension of the new Church in England; even in inducing the ancient Britons, who, by their traditional customs, and their spirit of ecclesiastical freedom, were separated from the Romish Anglo-Saxon Church, to unite themselves into one whole with it. The Britons consulted a pious hermit on the proposal made to them. He answered, that they might follow Augustine if he were a man of God. When they further questioned him, by what token they were to recognise a man of God, he replied: “If he be meek and lowly in heart, like the Lord, it is to be expected that he will bear the yoke of his master as a disciple of Christ, and not wish to impose on you any other burden. But if he be of a violent and proud spirit, it is clear that he is not born of God, and we must not give heed to his words.” However, when they further asked, by what signs they would know whether he were a meek and humble man, he said, “they had better cause him and his retinue to enter first, and take their places in the assembly, where these affairs were to be discussed. If, when they afterwards went in, he rose at their entrance, they should acknowledge him as a servant of Christ. But if he remained

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sitting, although their numbers far exceeded his, they were not to recognise him.” Such an external sign is certainly very deceptive; it may, however, as a spontaneous expression of the inward character, have a special significance. The character often shows itself most clearly in trifles, and this might be the case here. And the old Britons came to an accurate judgment when they found humility wanting in Augustine, if it was true that he needed the advice and warning which Gregory gave him.

Gregory wrote him this letter, imbued with the spirit of Christian wisdom: “Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and goodwill *to* men, because the ‘*corn of wheat is fallen into the ground, and has died,*’ so that He, by whose death we live, by whose weakness we are made strong, by whose suffering we are saved from sufferings, from love to whom we seek out, in Britain, brethren whom we know not, through whose grace we have found those whom we sought without knowing them, shall not reign in heaven ‘*alone.*’ Is it not the word of Him who said: ‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,’—who, in order to show that He would not convert’ the world by human wisdom, but by *His* power, chose for the preachers whom He sent into the world unlearned men, which is now being fulfilled in the performance of mighty things by weak instruments among the English people? But, beloved brother, there is something in this heavenly gift which should cause you to fear in the midst of your great joy. You must indeed rejoice that the souls of the English are drawn to the inward grace by the outward miracles, but you must fear lest your weak soul be lifted up on account of the miracles which have taken place; for we must remember that when the disciples returned delighted from their preaching, and told their heavenly Master, ‘Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy name,’ they at once received this counsel—‘Rejoice not in that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’ While they were exulting in the miracle, they had suffered their souls to be invaded by a self-seeking and temporal joy. But they were thus recalled from a selfish to a universal, from a transitory to an eternal joy. For all the elect do not perform miracles, but all have their names written in heaven. The disciples of truth ought to rejoice only over that inheritance which they share in common with all, and of which the joy is without end.

“This also remains for you to do, my dearest brother: that whilst you work these things outwardly by the power of God, you judge your own heart with strictness,—remembering well what you are, and how great the grace of God towards his people, in that he enables even you to work miracles for their sakes. If you recollect to have sinned in any way against our Creator, by word or by deed, recall it continually to your thoughts, that the consideration of guilt may repress rising pride. And remember in all the signs and wonders which you have received, that they were not given to *you*, but to those for whose salvation they were granted. It is necessary to restrain the soul from seeking its own honour in miracles, and from becoming elated with joy at its own elevation. Nothing but the winning of souls should be sought by miracles, and the glory of Him through whose power those miracles are accom-

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plished. The Lord has given us one sign, however, at which we may indeed rejoice, and by which we may recognise our own election, when he says: ‘By this shall every one know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.’”

A golden counsel is this at all times, for all to whose labours the Lord gives great results, and who incur the temptations of wishing to glorify themselves in what God has done through them.

A lady who was tormented by the sense of her sins, sought consolation from Gregory, and wrote to him that she would give him no peace until he told her that he had received a special revelation that her sins were forgiven. Gregory wrote to her that he was unworthy to receive a special revelation, and directed her to the fountain of the compassion of the Redeemer, open to all, saying: “I know that you fervently love the Almighty God, and I confide in his mercy that these words from the lips of truth, are spoken in relation to you also, ‘Her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much.’” In a sermon, he says, concerning Christian self-knowledge: “The more holy men advance in the Divine life, the deeper insight do they gain into their own unworthiness; for when they are nearest to the light, they discover what had been hidden from them in their hearts, and their outward life appears to them so much the more odious, as that which they see within appears more beautiful. For every one is revealed to himself when he becomes enlightened by contact with the true light; *in learning what holiness is, he also learns what guilt is.*”

But he also warned men against that false humility, which nourishes vanity by that which is the most contrary to all vanity and pride. “We know many,” he says, “who, without being accused by any one, acknowledge that they are sinners; but when blamed by any one else on account of their sins, seek to defend themselves in order not to appear sinners. If such persons, when speaking of their own accord, acknowledged their sinfulness with genuine humility, they would not, when reproached by others, deny their being what they themselves before confessed.”

Of the nature of self-denial, he says: “It is not enough to renounce our possessions, if we do not renounce ourselves. Whither then should we flee from ourselves? We should renounce ourselves in that which sin has made us, and remain ourselves in that which we have become through grace.” And in reference to this, he says elsewhere: “The more holiness daily grows in us through the Spirit of God, the more does our selfish nature decrease. We attain to a perfect stature in God, when we renounce ourselves entirely.”

Gregory always deprecated the externalizing and isolating of virtues and good works; pointing out, that there is a close connexion between all that is really good,—that *love* is the soul of all good, without which nothing has any value. “Purity, soberness, distributing our property amongst the poor, are nothing, he says, without love. Satan trembles to see in us that true lowly love which we bear to one another; he grudges us this harmony; for we thus display that which he himself was not able to. retain. Evil spirits fear the multitude of the

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elect, when they see them banded together against them by the unity of love. But how great the importance of unity is, appears from this: that without it, the other virtues are not even virtues.”

“In order to show mercy to the needy,” he says, “two things are requisite: a man to give, and a thing to be given. But the man is incomparably better than the thing. Thus, he who gives of his substance to his famishing neighbour, but does not guard his life from the evil one, gives his goods to God, and himself to sin. He has offered the meaner thing to his Creator, and preserved the nobler for the evil one. Then only is any sacrifice acceptable to God when the branches of piety spring from the root of righteousness.” He terms love the compensating principle in all diversities of gifts among men, both corporeal and intellectual, because thereby the gifts peculiar to each are made common to all. In speaking of the diversities of gifts among the Apostles, who were appointed to supply and complete, he says: “The Almighty God deals with the souls of men as with the different countries of the earth. For He might have bestowed all productions on every country; but if every land did not need those of others, there would have been no intercourse between them. Therefore, He gave to one a superabundance of wine; to another, of oil; to one, great numbers of cattle; to another, richness of vegetable productions; so that, by each supplying what the other wants, the several lands become united by an interchange of gifts. As the different lands are related to each other, so are the souls of the saints, who share their gifts, like the countries their fruits, that all may be bound together in one love.” Thus Gregory shows how the variety, and inequality among men is a necessary arrangement, and ordained by God, and the wish to reduce everything to an external uniformity, would be a mutilation of nature and a disturbance of Divine order; whilst the love resulting from the Gospel is the equalizing principle, all natural or conventional inequalities being but material for the manifestation and preservation of love.

Of true prayer: “We see, dearest brethren,” says Gregory, “in what great numbers you have assembled at this festival; how you bow your knees, beat your breasts, utter words of prayer and confessions of sins, wet your faces with tears. But test, I beseech you, the quality of your prayers; search whether you pray in the name of Jesus, that is, whether you ask for the joys of eternal salvation, for in the house of Jesus ye seek not Jesus, if, in the very temple of eternity, you pray in an inordinate way for what is temporal. One prays for a wife, another for an estate, another for a maintenance. We may, indeed, when we want such things, pray to the Almighty God for them, but we must at the same time remember what our Saviour has commanded us: ‘Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.’”

And in another place: “True prayer consists not in the utterance of the lips, but in the feeling of the heart, for it is not our word but our desires, which, as a mighty voice, reach to the hidden ear of God. When we pray for everlasting life with the *mouth*, and do not desire

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it in the heart, our cry is only a silence. If we long for it out of the abundance of the heart, our silence is a cry, for in the inmost soul, in the desire of the heart, there is then the hidden cry, which does not reach human ears, yet fills the ear of the Creator.” Of the operation of the Holy Ghost on the human mind, he says: “The breath of the Holy Spirit raises the human soul when it touches it, and, repressing earthly thoughts, influences the soul with heavenly longing, so that it has more joy in the things above than in anything else, and despises all that springs from the earth and the corruption of men. Thus, to comprehend the hidden word, implies the reception of the Holy Ghost into the soul. This word can only be apprehended by him who has it. It is a thing to be felt, but cannot be expressed in words.”

Of the manifold modes in which the Holy Spirit draws men to himself and trains them, he says: “Sometimes God awakens us to repentance by love, sometimes by fear. Sometimes He shows the nothingness of the present, and directs our desires to the love of the eternal; sometimes He reveals eternal things to us first, that the temporal may appear as nothing in their light. Sometimes He represents to us our own sinfulness, thus softening us into compassion for the sins of others. Sometimes He holds up to our view the wickedness of others, and by thus leading us to repentance, delivers us in a wonderful way from our own wickedness.”

A man who so well appreciated the nature of Christianity, as intended to influence the inward being of man, would necessarily understand that men, in order to lead their brethren to repentance, can only bring this Divine power near to their hearts by their life and doctrine, and that the work which the Lord alone can accomplish by His Spirit, cannot be enforced by human contrivance or power. And we find in his writings many beautiful observations on this point, although he was sometimes carried away by untempered zeal, and did not always faithfully act up to the opinions here laid down. He emphatically declares his disapprobation of those blind zealots who forcibly compelled the Jews in Italy to be baptized, or disturbed them in the free exercise of their religion. He wrote to a bishop of Naples: “Those who sincerely seek to guide the unbelieving to the true faith, must try to effect their purpose in a friendly, and not in a violent manner, lest the souls which might have been won by a patient exposition of doctrine, should be repelled by hostility. Those who act otherwise, and under the cloak of zeal seek to hinder them in their wonted religious observances, show that they are seeking their own things rather than the things of God. Why do we prescribe to the Jews rules for their Divine service if we cannot thereby win them? We should endeavour rather to draw them to us by rational conviction and by mildness, and not cause them to shun us; that, whilst arguing with them from the Holy Scripture, we may convert them by God’s grace.” And to a bishop of Terracina: “Those who are still distant from Christianity we must try to lead into the faith by gentleness and mildness, with admonition and persuasion; lest those who might have been induced to believe by the gentle force of preaching, should be repulsed by threats and terror.”

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CHRISTIANITY IN POVERTY AND LOWLINESS, AND ON THE SICK BED.

THE working of Christianity is not less seen in small than in great things. It needs no grand or public theatre in order to display itself. It is the light that, wherever it may be, cannot remain hidden under the bushel. Indeed, what Christianity is, is best seen in this, that it fills with heavenly glory vessels despised or esteemed as nothing in the eyes of men—a glory which far outshines all earthly splendours; that it pours into them the powers of the world to come, beside which all the powers of the earth are nothing. In all ages, that which the apostle Paul so nobly expresses in **1 Cor. i, 27**, is evident in the operations of the Gospel. “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world, and things that are despised hath God chosen; yea, the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are.”

A large portion of these operations of Christianity remains, indeed, hidden from the eyes of the greater portion of mankind, and cannot, therefore, find a place in the pages of history. So much the more unwise, therefore, is it to judge of the effect of Christianity in any age, by what floats on the surface; and so much the more important is it for the historian to search everywhere in the midst of the darkness for these scattered beams of light, and by the side of a man whom God set on so high a place, and to whom he intrusted so broad and manifold a sphere of activity as Gregory, to introduce one who, in the meanest station of this world, in the neediest and most helpless condition, yet manifested the glory of the Divine life.

We should know nothing of the life of this child of God, if the great bishop (Gregory) had, like the world, suffered himself to be so dazzled by appearances, as not to perceive the treasure in the earthen vessel. We will listen to the bishop himself, as he describes to us the life of this man.

“In the vault through which we enter the church of Clermont, lived a certain Servulus, whom many among you know, as I know him, poor in earthly goods, rich in God, worn out by a long illness; for, from his childhood until the end of his life, he lay paralyzed in all his limbs. Did I say he could not stand? He could not even raise himself so as to sit upright on his bed, he was never able to lift his hand to his mouth, nor even to turn from side to side. His mother and his brother were always with him to wait upon him, and what he received in alms he used to distribute to the poor. *He could not read; but he had bought himself a Bible*, and used to welcome all pious men, and *make them read to him from this Bible*. And thus, without reading, he was, nevertheless, able to become acquainted with the whole Bible. He sought, amidst his sufferings, constantly to thank God, and to spend day and night in praising him. When he felt the approach of death, he begged his visitors to stand up with

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him, and to sing Psalms with him, in expectation of his approaching end. And, dying as he was, he sang with them, when suddenly he ceased, and cried aloud: ‘Hush, hear you not how the praises of God resound in heaven?’ And while he turned the ear of his spirit to catch these praises of God, his holy soul departed from his body.”

Gregory appended to this narrative these words of exhortation to his Church: “Behold the end of him, who bore the sufferings of this life with resignation! But I beseech you, my dearest brethren, think what excuse shall we be able to offer at the day of judgment, who, although we have received goods and hands, are slothful in good works, whilst this poor man, who had not the use of his hands, could, nevertheless, fulfil the commandments of the Lord? Even if the Lord should not lead forth against us the Apostles, who drew hosts of believers into the kingdom by their preaching; the martyrs, who, pouring forth their blood, entered the heavenly country; what shall we say when we see this Servulus, whose limbs were paralyzed by sickness, without paralyzing him in the accomplishment of good works?”

Let us compare with this Servulus—whose life in that maimed and helpless body was not spent in vain, who did more for the glory of his God and the good of his brother men, than others who lived in the splendour of the world, and in great activity—those noble Romans, of whom the younger Pliny speaks, who, in long and desperate sickness, with the stoic composure of the wise of this world, put an end to their lives with their own hands. We will not condemn the noble spirits to whom the grace of knowing the Gospel was not vouchsafed. But in which of the two do we find the true dignity of man, that true elevation which is founded in humility, and on that very account, can never be cast down or robbed of its crown?



PART II.

**MEMOIRS FROM THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS IN THE MIDDLE
AGES.**

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS IN THIS AGE.

THE operations of Christianity are always radically the same, because they flow from its essential character, and its relations to human nature; yet it makes some difference whether it is received amongst nations to whom it was previously quite unknown, either plunged in barbarism or endowed with a certain degree of civilization, proceeding from some other form of religion, or whether it attaches itself to an already existing Christian tradition. In the latter case, it will indeed have to combat the same reactions of the nature of the old man, which, whilst they manifest themselves undisguisedly amongst nations to which Christianity is quite strange, are yet also to be met with under a Christian disguise where a Christian tradition is found. And even with those nations amongst which Christianity is now received, a class of men may ever be found who, in their condition of barbarous recklessness, have remained almost totally estranged from its influence, and in reference to whom our missionary activity is still needed, so that the distinction between home and foreign missions is in this respect just.

In foreign missions, we should distinguish between the different conditions of the nations to which these missionary labours are directed, whether they are quite uncivilized, or whether they already possess a certain indigenous civilization. The principle of Christianity must always manifest itself as a reforming principle; whether it becomes to savage nations—by being engrafted into the wild stock of the natural man—the germ of all the human training needed by them,—or whether it introduces a new spirit into an already existing civilization. In this latter case, Christianity will find a point of contact in the previous national culture, but must purify, enlighten, and reanimate it, by that higher spirit of life which is lacking in all which is not born of the Spirit. In the former case, it will itself first communicate to the wild stock of human nature, the impulse and the energy for all kinds of civilization, corresponding to the individual characteristics of each nation. The latter operation we have seen in the first appearance of Christianity; the former is exhibited amongst the nations of Germanic descent, in which Christianity prepared the way for the whole of the characteristic civilization of the Middle Ages.

Whilst, among the ancients, the existing opposition between nations seemed invincible, and civilization was deemed to be the privilege only of certain tribes,—Christianity, on the other hand, distinguishes between that which is founded in the original nature of man as it came from the hand of God, and that which has proceeded from sin. It teaches us to perceive that, whilst all nations are of one blood, and, by this common origin, have all received the same nature destined to be conformed to the image of God; so, by means of redemption and regeneration, what has proceeded from the corruption of sin, may again be restored in all men, and the cause of all opposition and division be overcome. And Christianity, as will



more and more be seen in the “History of Missions,” is able actually to accomplish that which it sets before it as its ideal-goal and requirement; and even whilst the intellectual gifts of nations and individuals remain unchanged, to communicate, nevertheless, the same: higher life to all,—to awaken, in all, the consciousness of that in which alone the dignity of man consists, and to lead to its realization. But how has Christianity brought this about? What was the characteristic of the process of culture everywhere carried on by it? It is contained in the words of the Lord, that the new wine must not be poured into old bottles—a new piece must not be added to the old garment, but all must be made new. There is the same law in the education of nations as in that of individuals. It is the nature of Christianity not to mould and reform from without—not first to combat barbarism and vice in individual outbreaks; lest the evil spirit which is cast out, should return with seven other spirits worse than himself, and the last state of that man be worse than the first. (Luke xi, 26.) Christianity does not begin with forcing the old nature into an outward propriety or moral restraint; nor with intruding on nations a civilization shaped in a foreign mould, as has been the case with other attempts at civilization, which have consequently repressed free individual life, and so contained in themselves the seeds of decay; but by attaching itself to, or first calling forth, that consciousness of sin by which humanity feels itself separated from God, it imparts to those who had arrived at this consciousness, the joyful tidings of redemption; and from the appropriation of this, the new life of faith and love develops itself in a Divine life—the opposite to all barbarism and decay, and the source of all true civilization.

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Athanasius speaks of this operation of Christianity, at the time when this new creation first began to manifest itself amongst those tribes of Germanic descent which had been brought by war into contact with the Roman empire. “Who amongst men,” he said, “would ever have been able to conquer so large a portion of the earth; to penetrate amongst the Scythians, Ethiopians, Persians, Armenians, and Goths, who dwell beyond the ocean, and preach to them of the vanity of their idols, of virtue and purity of morals—who but our Lord Jesus Christ, ‘the power of God;’ He who not only proclaimed salvation through his disciples, but was also able to move the minds of men amongst those nations to lay aside their barbarous customs, no more to honour their national gods, but through Him, to honour the Father. For in ancient times, when the Greeks and barbarians were given to idolatry, men waged war against each other, and were fierce to their kindred; no one could travel by land or by sea without a sword in his hand, because there was irreconcilable hatred amongst them all. Weapons were amongst their necessities of life, and the sword instead of the staff was their indispensable stay. But now that the nations come over to the doctrine of Christ, they lay aside in a wonderful way, with truly contrite hearts, these savage customs, and no longer plan war, but all tends to peace. Who is it that has effected this, or who is it that has bound together those who hated each other? Who else but the beloved Son of the Father, the common Saviour of all, Jesus Christ, who, because of his love, has suffered. all things

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for our salvation? For, from the beginning, the peace was proclaimed which was to proceed from Him: 'And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more' [Isa. ii. 4](#). And this can no longer seem incredible to us, since we see the barbarians, to whom rudeness of manners was habitual as long as they sacrificed to their idols, and who could not remain an instant without their swords, as soon as they receive the doctrine of Christ, turn from war to agriculture, and instead of arming their hands with weapons, clasp them in prayer; instead of waging war against each other, arm themselves against Satan and his forces, and contend against them by virtue and purity of morals. This is a monument of the Divine power of the Saviour; and to this is added yet this further marvel, that for Christ's sake they despise death, and die as martyrs for him."

Jerome also, in his time, when men of the nation of the Goths, who were regarded by the Greeks and Romans as barbarians incapable of civilization, laid questions before him about the interpretation of Scripture, and a zeal for the study of the Scriptures was diffused amongst these wild tribes, (as we now see a similar zeal amongst the Australian tribes, in whom Christianity has produced a germ of civilization,) sees in this fact with Athanasius a fulfilment of this promise in Isaiah: "Who would have believed that the barbarous tongue of the Goth should search the primitive Hebrew Scriptures, and that, whilst the Greeks sleep, or quarrel with one another, Germany should seek to fathom the Word of God. Now I experience the truth, 'that God is no respecter of persons;' but in every nation he who feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted. of Him [Acts x, 34, 35](#). The finger which managed the arrow becomes soft enough to guide the pen; the breast of the savage warrior is changed to gentleness." Then he quotes the above-cited passages of Isaiah, and adds these words: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid. The cow and the bear shall feed together, and their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox,' [Isa. xi, 6, 7](#). "Not," adds Jerome, "that simplicity shall become savage, but that the savage shall learn simplicity."

As such results could only flow from Christianity, so through Christianity alone could the impulse and the power be given to carry Divine light to savage nations. What was it that impelled men to leave their country and their kindred, in order to expose themselves to all kinds of difficulties and perils amongst savage nations? It was the sense of the love of the Redeemer, which constrained him to exchange his glory for the wretchedness of men, and to yield himself up to death for sinners. The sense of this love constrained them to show similar love to their brethren who were still estranged from God, and to risk all in order to impart to others that salvation in which they partook only by grace.

It is precisely because Christianity works from within to mould the savage nature in all its parts—because therefore it did not give anything ready-made to the nations, but imparted to them the first germ of Divine life, from which all must develop itself freely and therefore

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gradually, that it had long to contend with the barbarism which it was thoroughly to overcome. In the frequently vain complaints of the barbarism of certain ages of the Church, it is forgotten that the true dignity of man does not consist in the harmonious development of all the spiritual and moral faculties of his nature, but in the reception of that Divine life into the depths of the soul, from which, indeed, when it has thoroughly penetrated the stock of human nature from root to branch, this harmonious development necessarily springs, but which can exist amidst the predominant mass of barbarism, and even propagate itself in the midst of the torrent. Thus, amidst the most barbarous ages, we find operations of the genuine Christian spirit or manifestations of that Divine life such as we have already seen in the previous portion of this history, and which we shall not entirely miss in any of the subsequent ages. That fire which the Saviour came to enkindle amongst men, has since then never ceased in any age to burn with a more or less bright flame. It could never be entirely quenched by the power of the spirit of the world. The living water of the Holy Spirit flows with more or less admixture through all the centuries. The highest and deepest things in humanity having in heaven their origin and their end, remain exalted above the changes and chances of time—ever the same—and all who have a portion in them feel and know themselves to be one with the band of believers in all times and in all places. Therefore the *idea of progress*, which belongs to the region of mutable things, *can have no place here*.

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We must, moreover, not forget that the rude Northern races were to diffuse their barbarism over the visible Church, in order in their turn to be remoulded by it, a result which, in consequence of the freedom of man, could only be attained in this way.

Christianity can indeed be propagated in a few generally comprehensible doctrines, which are preserved by the power of God in the minds of men. These doctrines, as is shown by the experience of recent times amongst Hottentots, Greenlanders, and Negroes, as also by the experience of earlier ages, are such as to find access even amongst those deficient of all kind of civilization; for everywhere there lies hidden in man something akin to God, which can only be awakened to consciousness by the revelation of its source,—can only be released from its veil of corruption by the breath from above. Ire-wens was able to appeal to the fact, that without paper and ink, the doctrine of salvation could be written by the Holy Spirit on the hearts of those who were unacquainted with letters, and could not have received any doctrine in writing.

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But experience also teaches that Divine truth has never been able to propagate itself continuously, when the written records have not been added to the oral preaching; those records from which every age and every individual may draw afresh the living truth in its purity, and appropriate it in its characteristic and applicable form. By the propagation of these records, the Divine contents could be preserved from all falsifications; or, if these had arisen could be purged from them. Certainly all which has proceeded from the operations of pure and genuine Christianity, all which in all ages has been thought, and purposed, and

done, and instituted in the true Christian spirit,—is inwardly linked together; all the operations of the Holy Spirit in the life of humanity, form one great invisible chain, and it must ever give us a holy joy when we can recognise the links of this chain in history, and in this sense trace a Christian tradition in all times and places in which the Gospel has been preached. But this operation of the Holy Ghost, this Christian tradition flowing from it, is never, and nowhere, pure and untroubled, but is everywhere, and at all times, disturbed by the mixture of the flesh, and of that which is not Divine. Everywhere, and always, we find in tradition the Antichristian beside the Christian, as every one must in himself, in his inward and outward life, be conscious of the same mixture, and what is seen in a small scale in the life of every individual Christian, is seen on a large scale in the life of the whole Church. We are thus always in danger of confounding the Christian with the unchristian, what is of the flesh with what is of the Spirit; if *we have not in the Divine Word, which mirrors to us purely the operations of the Holy Spirit*, a trustworthy source of knowledge, a sure testing principle, a fixed rule, by which, as in our own souls, so also in the traditions of the whole Church, to separate that which is of God from that which is not.

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And the experience of all ages teaches us further, that Christianity has only attained a firm and living growth, when, according to its essential tendency, if working vitally, it bears with it the germ of all human civilization, however gradually this may be developed. Christianity could not last amongst a nomad tribe, as is evidenced by the history of the Arab races, amongst others. It could indeed there, as in all other cases, find access; but if it really obtained a firm footing, it must bring about a complete revolution in the whole mode of living. Wisely, therefore, did the first Christian teachers of the barbarous nations, impart a knowledge of letters with that of Christianity, for the sake of Christianity itself, and also to be the germ of all future culture for the people and the country. Thus, in the fourth century, the admirable Ulphila invented an alphabet for his Goths, and gave them the word of God in their own language. Patrick gave letters as well as Christianity to the Irish; he imparted to his scholars the little store of knowledge which he possessed, and also zeal for the attainment of more. The convents of Ireland, insulated by its isolated position against the ruin which fell on the rest of Europe, became schools where, in quiet solitude, religion and science were cherished in close connexion with one another, and from which both Christianity and the germs of scientific culture were transplanted into other countries; as Abbot Alcuin, while he exhorted the Irish monks to make further efforts, “that through them, and from them, the light of truth and science might be spread over all parts of the world,” also reminded them that, in old times, the most learned teachers had come forth from Ireland to Britain, France, and Italy, and had thereby brought great gain to the Church. If other religions, reposing on a blind faith, had cause to fear the light of science, which revealed the untenable nature of their doctrines, Christianity, on the contrary, both in its first efforts to penetrate the spiritual life of humanity or of a nation, and in its reappearance in new purity and glory, entered into

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an alliance with scientific culture. It was thus at the Reformation, that work of God for the restoration of the Apostolic Church, Luther says beautifully, in a letter to Eoban Hess, in 1523: "I see that there never has been an especial revelation of the Divine Word, when God has not first prepared the way by the resuscitation of languages and sciences, as by the forerunning of John the Baptist."¹

When the Christian Church was founded in England amongst the Anglo-Saxons, many of all ranks were seized with such a thirst for knowledge, that they visited the cells of the Irish monks, who shared with them in Christian love their spiritual and temporal goods, giving them daily maintenance, books, and instruction without recompense. In the second half of the seventh century, an admirable old man, Theodore of Cilicia, who brought sciences with him from Greece, made a progress through all England, as Archbishop of Canterbury, with his friend Abbot Hadrian, and sought to gather scholars around him. The instructions which were thus communicated to the English Church were soon after collected together by Bede, that simple and thoughtful as well as inquiring and scientific priest and monk. This man, who shone as a light for his own and subsequent times, says himself of his life since his seventh year: "I have used all diligence in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and in the observance of the conventual rules, and the daily singing in the Church; it was ever my joy, either to learn, or teach, or write something."

The last days of this man, who is a model of a true Christian teacher, and met his death as he was exercising his calling amongst his devotedly attached pupils, is described to us by Cuthbert, who was one of them. He mentions how Bede passed the last weeks of his life in a sickness, which brought him to the grave, A. D. 735, in his sixty-third year. We will let the scholar himself speak: "He lived joyfully, giving thanks to God day and night, yea, at all hours, until the Feast of the Ascension; every day he gave lessons to us, his pupils, and the rest of his time he occupied himself in chanting psalms. He was awake almost the whole night, and spent it in joy and thanksgiving; and when he awoke from his short sleep, immediately he raised his hands on high, and began again to give thanks. He sang the words of the Apostle Paul: 'It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' He sang much besides from the Holy Scriptures, and also many Anglo-Saxon hymns. He sang anti-phons according to our and his custom, and amongst others this one: 'O King of glory, Lord of power, who this day didst ascend a victor above all the heavens, 'leave us not orphaned behind thee, but send to us the promised Spirit of the Father. Hallelujah.' And when he came to the words 'leave us not orphaned behind Thee,' he burst into tears. And in an hour he began to sing again. We wept with him—now we read—then we wept—but we could not read without tears. Often would he thank God for sending him this sickness; and often would he say, 'God chasteneth the son whom he loveth.' Often, too, would he repeat these

1 See Luther's *Briefe herausgegeben von Dr. de Wette*, B. II.

words of St. Ambrose: 'I have not lived so that I should be ashamed to live amongst you; yet neither do I fear to die, for we have a good Lord.' Besides the lessons which he gave us, and his psalm-singing during those days, he composed two important works:—a translation of the Gospel of St. John into our native tongue, for the use of the Church; and extracts from Isidore of Seville; for he said: 'I would not that my pupils should read what is false, and after my death should labour in vain.'

"On the Tuesday before Ascension Day, his sickness increased, his breathing became difficult, and his feet began to swell. Yet he passed the whole day joyfully, dictating. At times he would say: 'Make haste to learn, for I do not know how long I shall remain with you, whether my Creator will not soon take me to himself.' The following night he spent in prayers of thanksgiving. And when Wednesday dawned, he desired us diligently to continue writing what we had begun. When this was finished, we carried the relics in procession, as is customary on that day. One of us then said to him: 'Dearest master, we have yet one chapter to translate; will it be grievous to thee, if we ask thee any further?' He answered: 'It is quite easy—take the pen and write quickly.' At three o'clock he said to me: 'Run quickly, and call the priests of this convent to me, that I may impart to them the gifts which God has given me. The rich of this world seek to give gold and silver and other costly things; but with great love and joy will I give to my brethren what God has given me.' They all wept, chiefly for that he said, that in this world they should see his face no more. But they rejoiced in that he said: 'It is time that I go to my Creator, I have lived long enough, the time of my departure is at hand, for I long to depart and be with Christ.' Thus did he live till evening. Then that scholar said to him: 'Dearest master, there is only one passage left to write?' He answered: 'Write quickly.' Soon the scholar replied: 'Now this also is written.' He answered: 'Thou hast well said. It is finished. Raise my head in thy hand, for it will do me good to sit opposite my sanctuary, where I was wont to kneel down to pray; that sitting, thus I may call upon my Father.' So he seated himself on the ground in his cell, and sang the 'Glory to Thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;' and when he had named the Holy Ghost, he breathed his last breath."

We have already spoken of the various modes of conversion: whether effected in a purely spiritual way, proceeding from within outwards, by an impression on the inward nature; or whether men, in whom the needs of the higher life were not yet felt, were led from the corporeal to the spiritual, from the outward to the inward, from the earthly to the Divine. As regards the latter, great results were often prepared by trifling circumstances, which, nevertheless, gained a peculiar significance by a certain concatenation of events,—results which, without such a concatenation, without this connexion with other operations of a higher nature, could not have ensued. How important was the great draught of fishes in leading the apostle Peter to Christ! and thus, also, the earlier and later history of missions, teaches how, by trifling outward events, much was often done towards the conversion of

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individuals and of nations. It made, indeed, a great difference, whether the outward impulse led to a true inward conversion, or whether the result remained merely external.

Clovis, the pagan king of the Franks, was destitute of all special interest in religious subjects; he lived after the customs of his fathers, without troubling himself about religion. His gods were only known to him as mighty beings, whom he feared, and whose help he sought to win in his wars. Looking at religion from this point of view, the misfortunes of the fallen Roman empire were to him a proof that the God of the Romans was no mighty being. But he espoused the pious Christian princess, Clotilda of Burgundy. She often spoke to him of the nothingness of his gods, and the power of the God whom she worshipped. Clovis constantly combated her with his argument from the impotence of Rome. But, doubtless, even more than her discourses, must the example of her pious life have impressed the heart of the rough heathen; that influence of daily intercourse which leaves at last even the roughest not wholly unmoved,—the example of her confident faith and prayer,—although the king may himself have been unconscious of the impression, and have resisted all her exhortations. She obtained permission to have her first child baptized. But when soon after the child died, Clovis was thereby confirmed in his unbelief. The pious mother did not suffer herself to be misled by this, but rather expressed her joy, that her babe was counted worthy to pass in the robes of innocence into the assembly of the blessed. Clovis permitted her to have a second child baptized. It fell sick, and Clovis prophesied that it too would die. But Clotilda prayed fervently and trustfully for the deliverance of her child. When the child actually recovered, she told her husband with joyful assurance, what her prayers had obtained. She employed yet another means, seeking to bring together everything which could contribute to change the mind of her husband. From ancient times, many churches which had been built on the graves of holy men, especially of martyrs, had been famed for the marvellous cures of various diseases, particularly nervous diseases, which had been effected there. Whether it be, that especial answers to prayer were there experienced—for the love of God meets the longing of the pious heart, even when it is mixed up with erroneous ideas—as in the woman with the issue of blood, ([Luke viii, 44;](#)) or that the agitation of religious feeling exercised a strong influence on the condition of the body; or whether, as was sometimes undoubtedly the case, deception was practised about these cures: however this might be, Clotilda spoke from sincere conviction, when she directed the attention of her husband to such cures effected at the tomb of Martin, bishop of Tours; and the less he was able to explain them, the greater the impression they must have made on him.

It was in reference to this, that Nicetius, bishop of Treves, wrote thus in the year 561, to Chloeswinde, queen of the Lombards, the granddaughter of Clotilda: “You have heard from your grandmother Clotilda, how, after her arrival in France, she converted king Clovis to Christianity, and as he was a man of great acuteness, he would not rest until he ascertained the truth of these miraculous cures. As soon, however, as he recognised the truth of what

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had been related to him, he bowed himself down humbly on the grave of Martin, and was immediately baptized.”

But it was another circumstance which gave the first impulse to the wavering mind of Clovis. In the battle of Zulpich, against the Alemanni, A. D. 486, his army had become entangled in a perilous situation; in vain had he called on his gods for help. Then he; turned to the God of the Christian, called on him for aid, if he were indeed Almighty, and vowing to become a Christian. His victory was to him a proof of the might of the God of the Christians, as, formerly to Constantine, his victory over Maxentius and Licimus. Remigius, bishop of Rheims, whom he now sent for, was easily able to find access to a mind already so prepared. As he related to him the history of the Passion of our Lord, the king exclaimed: “If I had been there with my Franks, I would soon have chastised those Jews.”

Such outward providences and impressions might often, in leading the heathen to recognise Christ as a mighty Being, prepare them also to receive Him as the Redeemer from the misery of sin; and whilst at first they only learned to place Him as a new god beside their old gods, they might at length learn to know him as the only true God, and the Almighty Creator.

Anschar, the apostle of the North, who was sustained by. no earthly power in the preaching of the Gospel, often experienced the help of God in difficult situations, by means of outward circumstances, which made a powerful impression on the heathen. When, in 823, he had undertaken his second missionary journey to Sweden, he found at first an unfavourable feeling produced on the heathen, by the representations which had been made to them of the indignation of their gods against the worship of a strange God. An assembly of the people was held to deliberate on this question, and it had a great effect on this assembly, when an old man stepped forth and said: “Hear, O king and people! It is already known to many amongst us, that this God can afford great help to those who trust in him, for many of us have proved this in perils at sea, and in manifold dangers.” With this we may compare what Adam of Bremen says of Sweden, in the second half of the eleventh century. “When they are pressed in battle, they call on one amongst the many gods whom they worship for aid, and to him, if they are victorious, they afterwards especially devote themselves, giving him a precedence over the rest. But they already declare the God of the Christians to be mightier than all, they say that the other gods often deceive, but that this God manifests himself on all occasions as the surest defence.”

Whilst Otho, bishop of Bamberg, the apostle of the Pomeranians, was labouring in 1124, for the first time, towards the foundation of the Christian Church in Stettin, he succeeded in converting and baptizing a man of high rank in the nation, called Witstock. Although his knowledge of Christianity was as yet by no means pure, this man had nevertheless a firm

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and strong faith. The image of the excellent bishop, whom he saw labouring with such self-sacrificing love and such a firm trust in God, seems in particular to have left a strong impression on his mind, as the Saviour is wont most powerfully to manifest himself in the lives of those who have truly received him, and by his image engraven on them to win others to himself. After his conversion, Witstock would only wage war against the heathen, his unenlightened zeal seeking thus to manifest itself. In one battle he was taken prisoner, with many others, carried off to the still heathen island of Riigen, and there put in chains. During his imprisonment, he found his strength and consolation in prayer. One night when he fell asleep after fervent prayer, his revered bishop Otho appeared to him in a dream, and promised him help. This cheered him much. He was afterwards liberated by many remarkable providences. He looked on his deliverance as a miracle; as a witness to the holy life of Otho, and to the Divine origin of Christianity. It was to him a call from God to bear witness amongst his countrymen for the God who had so delivered him, and to labour for the propagation of his worship amongst them. On his return, he caused the skiff in which he had escaped to be suspended at the gate of the city as a constant memorial of his deliverance, and a testimony for Him who had so delivered him.

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When afterwards the bishop reappeared amongst the people of Stettin, who had for the most part relapsed into idolatry, Witstock said to him, in reference to this skiff, "This boat is the witness to thy holy life, the confirmation of my faith, and the proof that God has sent me to this people." And he was the especial instrument in again preparing the way for the preaching of Bishop Otho, and in leading back the apostates to the Lord. A beautiful contrast to the indifferent and careless Clovis is found in Edwin, the pagan king of Northumbria, during the first part of the seventh century. His marriage with a Christian princess from the kingdom of Kent was, with him, as with Clovis, the first step to his conversion. But Edwin was more susceptible of religious impressions, and more disposed to meditation on Divine things. He first renounced idolatry, and remained a long time in a state of indecision. He caused himself to be more fully instructed in Christianity by Bishop Paulinus, who had accompanied his wife, conversed much on religion with those of his great men whom he deemed the wisest, and was often seen alone, lost in deep musings. At length he assembled the great and the wise of his people for a last consultation on the great subject.

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In this assembly one of the nobles arose and said: "It seems to me to be, in this earthly life of ours, with regard to what is uncertain to us, just as if, when ye were sitting at table in winter with your officers and servants in the well-warmed hall, whilst wind and snow were raging outside, a sparrow came and flew swiftly through, from one opening to another. Whilst it is within, it is not touched by the wintry tempest; but when the brief moment of repose is over, it soon vanishes from our eyes, returning from the storm to the storm. Thus is this earthly life of man only visible, as it were, for a brief moment, whilst of what has gone

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before, or of what shall follow, we know nothing whatever. If, therefore, this new doctrine brings us something more certain, we shall do well to follow it.”

Bishop Paulinus, who was present at the assembly, was then asked to make a statement of the Christian doctrine, and the chief-priest himself declared afterwards: “Long already have I known that what we have worshipped is nothing, since the more zealously I sought for truth in that religion, the less I found it. Now, however, I confess openly that the truth, which is able to confer on us the gift of life, salvation, and eternal happiness, has been made manifest to me in this discourse.”

And when the question was proposed, who would be the first to commence the destruction of the temples and altars of the idols, this priest offered himself for the service. “For,” said he, “who is better fitted than I to destroy that which in my foolishness I worshipped, now that wisdom is given me from the true God?”

As a contrast also to Clovis and Constantine, may be adduced Pomare, the first Christian king of Tahiti, as he is described by the English missionaries.



THE LIFE AND LABOURS OF INDIVIDUAL MISSIONARIES.

PATRICK, THE APOSTLE OF THE IRISH.

THIS remarkable man was prepared by very peculiar circumstances for his important work; and in his instance also it may be seen, how that infinite wisdom which guides the development of the kingdom of God amongst men, is able to bring great things out of what seems insignificant to the eyes of men.

Patrick, called in his native tongue Succath, was born A. D. 372, in a village between the Scottish towns of Dumbarton and Glasgow, (then appended to England,) in the village of Bonaven, since named in honour of him Kilpatrick. He was the son of a poor unlettered deacon of the village church. No particular care was bestowed on his education, and he lived on light-heartedly from day to day, without making the religious truths taught him by his parents matters of personal interest, until his seventeenth year. Then it happened that he was awakened by a severe chastisement from his heavenly Father from this sleep of death to a higher life. Some pirates of the wild tribe of the Scots, who then inhabited Ireland, landed at the dwelling-place of Patrick, and carried him off with other captives. He was sold into slavery to a Scottish prince, who committed to him the care of his flocks and herds. Necessity directed his heart to that God, of whom in his days of rest in his father's house, he had not thought. Abandoned of men, he found consolation and blessedness in Him, and now first learned to perceive and enjoy the treasures which the Christian has in heaven. Whilst he roamed about with his flocks through ice and snow, communion with his God in prayer and quiet contemplation were his portion. Let us hear how he himself, in a confession which he subsequently wrote, describes this change which took place in him. "I was about sixteen years old, and knew nothing of the true God, when I was led into captivity with many thousands of my countrymen, as we deserved, in that we had departed from God, and had not kept his commandments. There God opened my unbelieving heart, so that I, although late, remembered my sins, and turned with my whole heart to the Lord my God, to him who had regarded my lowliness, had had compassion on my youth and my ignorance, and had watched over me before I knew him,—who, ere I knew how to choose between good and evil, had guarded and cherished me as a father doth his son. This I know assuredly, that, before God humbled me, I was like a stone lying sunk in deep mire; but he who is able came, he raised me in his mercy, and set me on a very high place. Therefore must I loudly bear witness to this, in order in some measure to repay the Lord for such great blessings in time and eternity, great beyond the apprehension of human reason. When I came to Ireland," he says, "and used daily to keep the cattle, and often every day to pray, the fear and the love of God were ever more and more enkindled in me, and my faith increased, so that in one day I spoke a hundred times in prayer, and in the night almost as often, and even when I passed the night on the mountains, or in the forest, amidst snow, and ice, and rain, I would wake before daybreak to pray. And I felt no discomfort; there was then no sloth in me, such as I find in my heart now, for then the Spirit glowed within me."

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After he had passed six years in the service of this prince, he thought he heard a voice in his sleep which promised him a speedy return to his native land, and soon afterwards announced to him that a ship was already prepared to take him. In reliance on this call, he set out, and after a journey of many days, he found a ship about to set sail. But the captain would not at first receive the poor unknown youth. Patrick fell on his knees and prayed. He had not finished his prayer before one of the ship's company called him back, and offered him a passage. After a wearisome voyage, in which he experienced from the grace which guided him many a deliverance from great peril, and many a memorable answer to prayer, he arrived once more amongst his people. Many years after this, he was again carried off by pirates. But in sixteen days, by the special guidance of Providence, he regained his freedom, and again returned, after many fresh perils and fatigues, to his people. Great was the joy of his parents to see their son again after so many perils, and they entreated him thenceforth to remain with them always. But Patrick felt an irresistible call to carry to the people amongst whom he had passed the years of his youth, and amongst whom he had been born again to the heavenly life, the tidings of that salvation which had been imparted to him by Divine grace whilst amongst them. As the apostle Paul was by the Lord called, in a nocturnal vision, to carry to the people of Macedonia the first tidings of salvation, so there appeared to Patrick one night, in a vision, a man from Ireland with many letters. He gave him one, and Patrick read the first words, "The words of the Irish." And as he read these words, he thought he heard the simultaneous cry of many Irish tribes dwelling by the sea, "We pray thee, child of God, come and dwell once more amongst us." He could not read further from the agitation of his heart, and awoke. Another night, he thought he heard in a dream a heavenly voice, whose last words only were intelligible to him; namely, these words, "He who gave His life for thee, speaks in thee." And he awoke full of joy. One night it seemed to him as if something that was in him and yet above him, and was not himself, prayed with deep sighings, and at the end of the prayer it spoke as if it were the Spirit of God himself. And he awoke, and remembered the expressive words of the apostle Paul concerning the inward communion of the children of God with his Spirit. "The Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." And in [Rom. viii, 24](#): "Christ which also maketh intercession for us."

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As the Almighty Shepherd of souls does not draw all to Himself by the same means, nor guide and nourish them alike, but on the contrary reveals and communicates himself to them in divers manners, according to his various purposes for them and their various wants, it pleased Him to grant Patrick, by many manifestations of His grace, the pledge of the certainty of his fellowship with Himself, and of his call to preach the Gospel in Ireland. His parents and friends sought to hold him back, representing to him that such an undertaking far exceeded his capacity. He himself informs us of this when he says, "Many dissuaded

me from this journey, and said behind my back, ‘Why does this man throw himself into danger amongst the heathen who do not know the Lord?’ It was not said maliciously, but they could not comprehend the thing on account of my rustic life and manners.” But nothing could mislead him, for he trusted in the power of the Lord, who imparted to him the inward confidence that He had called him, and was with him. He himself says of this, “Whence came to me so great and blessed a gift, that I should know and love God, and be able to forsake my country and my kindred, although large gifts were offered me with many tears if I would remain? And against my will I was compelled to offend many of my kindred and my well-wishers. But, by God’s guidance, I yielded not to them; it was not my own power, it was God who triumphed in me, and resisted them all; so that I went amongst the people of Ireland to preach to them this Gospel, prepared to suffer much contempt from the unbelieving, and many persecutions, even to chains, and if needful to sacrifice my freedom for the good of others. And if I am counted worthy, I am ready also to lay sown my life with joy for His. name’s sake.”



Patrick accordingly went to Ireland in the year 431. He could now make use of his early proficiency in the Irish language. He gathered great multitudes of the people together in the open air by beat of drum, to tell them of the sufferings of the Saviour for sinful men; and the doctrine of the Cross manifested its characteristic power over many hearts.

Patrick met indeed with much opposition; the priests and national bards, who possessed great influence, excited the people against him, and he had to endure many a hot persecution. But he overcame by his steadfastness in the faith, by his fervent zeal, and by a love which drew all hearts to itself. The following incident furnishes us with a beautiful example of the power which he exercised over the heart.

He was once in a family of rank, whose members he baptized. The son of the house conceived such an affection for Patrick, that he resolved, in spite of all the opposition of his family, to forsake all, and follow the preacher of the Gospel through all dangers and difficulties. Patrick bestowed on him the name of Benignus, on account of his gentle and affectionate character. He availed himself of the fine voice of the youth to influence the people by means of hymns. Benignus was his zealous fellow-labourer in the preaching of the Gospel until his death, and then became his successor in the pastoral office. Many of the national bards also were converted by him, so that they themselves sang in their songs the nothingness of the idols, and the praises of God and of Christ. Patrick addressed himself especially to the chiefs and princes of the people. They could do the most mischief if they were excited by the Druids against the strange religion, and, on the other hand, if they received the Gospel, they might make their people also more accessible, and form a counterbalance to the influence of the Druids. Many of these chiefs were also probably more easily



persuaded of the vanity of idolatry on account of their superior education.² But he by no means sought through the conversion of the princes to bring about a mere external conversion of the multitude. He frequently travelled through the whole island, attended by many of his scholars and assistants, read to the assembled people something from the Gospels, and then preached on what he had read. Sons and daughters were filled with love for the spiritual life; and also many female slaves, who did not suffer themselves to be moved by the threats or ill-treatment of their heathen masters.

Patrick took the part of the servants who had suffered hard usage from their masters. When he found youths of the lower ranks, who seemed to him fitted for a higher calling, he provided for their education, and trained them to be teachers of the people.³ He had

2 The apostle Paul says:—"God hath not left himself without witness in any nation; He is not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being." He says of men in general: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them; for the invisible things of Him, (His invisible essence,) that is, his eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, namely, by the creation of the world." In the midst of the reign of the darkest idolatry, there were always men who felt its vanity, and raised themselves to a belief in one Almighty God. Doubtless, this general belief without a more accurate and assured knowledge of the relation of God to men, without the doctrine of a Redeemer, was by no means enough to satisfy the religious and moral wants of men. There is a wide difference between a belief in a hidden God, dwelling in a light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, and the knowledge of God, as the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him unto us. Yet that belief may serve as a preparation for this knowledge, as has frequently been the case. Thus, in the latter part of the fourth century, Cormac, a great Irish prince, after abdicating his government, and devoting himself in solitude to quiet meditation and religious contemplation, had attained to this faith, and to a conviction of the vanity of the idolatrous system of his Druidical priests, and no re.. presentations or arts of the Druids could win him back to it. The definite way in which this is related, is a presumption in favour of the truth of the story; and, indeed, the Christian monks and priests of later times could hardly have had any temptation to invent such a thing.

3 We have shown in another volume how Christianity, although it might suffer for a while the outward continuance of slavery, (contradictory as that institution was to that universal dignity of man which it brought to light,) nevertheless gradually brought about a total remodelling of this relation in spirit and character. So, also, in these times Christianity led to the recognition of the equal human dignity of those whom fate had placed in that relation to others as their lords, in which no man should ever stand to another,—of that common image of God, and the higher destiny arising from it, to accomplish which in all, the Son of God appeared in His flesh, and gave His life. It was often the habit of the missionaries to buy heathen slaves, especially boys, and educate them as missionaries for their countrymen. Thus Gregory the Great caused Anglo-Saxon slaves to be bought by the administrators of the Church property in Gaul; and thus also did Amandus, bishop of Maestricht, preacher of the Gospel in the Netherlands in the seventh century, of whom it is related: "When he met with captives or slaves who had come across the sea, he baptized them, had them well educated, and after having



from his youth, as we have seen, experienced the especial guidance of the Lord, and his heart was penetrated by it. Now whilst he laboured in the fervour and the power of faith, he was able to produce effects on the rude minds of the Irish such as never could have been produced by ordinary human power. He saw himself, moreover, sustained by the peculiar direction of that God whose word he preached. Patrick speaks of it, not in spiritual pride, but full of the sense of his unworthiness and impotence, as well as of the consciousness of the grace working in and through him.

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After speaking in one of his letters of such marvels as God granted him to perform amongst the barbarous people, he added: "But I conjure all, let no one, on account of these or the like things, think to place me on an equality with the apostles and other perfect men, for I am an insignificant, sinful, and despicable man." And more marvellous still to him was the simple fact which filled his whole soul, that by him who, until God drew his soul to Himself by severe chastisement, had himself cared so little about his own salvation, many thousands of the people, who had hitherto known nothing of the true God, should be brought to salvation. "Marvel," he says, "ye who fear God, small and great, and ye eloquent talkers, who know nothing of the Lord, inquire and acknowledge who it is that has awakened me, a simple man, from the midst of those who are accounted the wise, learned, and mighty, in word and in deed. For I, who was abandoned beyond many others in the world; even I, in spite of all this, have been called by His Spirit, that in fear and trembling, yet faithfully and blamelessly, I should serve the people to whom the love of Christ has led me. Unweariedly must I thank my God, who has kept me faithful in the day of temptation, so that I can this day trustfully offer my soul as a living sacrifice of thanksgiving to my Lord Christ, who has delivered me out of all my afflictions, so that I must also say, Who am I, Lord, and what is my calling, that Thou halt so gloriously revealed to me Thy Godhead, that I can now constantly rejoice amongst the heathen, and glorify Thy name wherever I may be, not only in prosperity but also in adversity, so that whatever may befall me, good or evil, I can calmly receive it, and continually thank that God who has taught me to believe in Him as the only true God?"

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given them their freedom, divided them among different churches; and of many of these we have afterwards heard that they have become bishops, priests, or abbots." Bonitus, (Bonet,) bishop of Clermont in the seventh century, when he was governor of Provence, would sentence no one to slavery, but ransomed all whom he could find, who had been sold into slavery, and restored them to their own people. It also contributed to place this class of men in a more favourable light amongst the Frankish nation; that the bishops (often indeed moved by selfish interests) received people of this condition into the clergy. When, in the middle of the eighth century, Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, declared himself against the consecration of none but slaves to the priesthood, from bad motives, he added, to prevent a depreciation of people of that station, that "he would by no means exclude from the clerical office slaves of respectable character, since there is no respect of persons with God."

Patrick endeavoured to avoid all appearance of seeking his own gain or glory. A man who, according to the judgment of men, was not fitted to effect such great things, who from obscurity and poverty had been called to so high a place, and in whom, therefore, as is frequently the case, those who had formerly known him after the flesh would not recognise what the Spirit had accomplished,—such a man was obliged, with all the more circumspection, to avoid giving any occasion to those who were disposed to declare a thing which they could neither measure nor comprehend by the common standard, altogether beyond flesh and blood. When many, full of love and gratitude to the teacher of salvation, their spiritual father, freely offered him gifts, and pious women offered their ornaments, Patrick, although the donors were at first offended at it, in order to avoid all evil report, declined everything. He himself gave presents to the heathen chiefs, (one of whom once robbed him, threw him into chains, and kept him a captive fourteen days,) in order thereby to purchase peace for himself and his Churches; he ransomed many Christians from captivity; and was himself prepared, as a good shepherd, to lay down all, even to his life, for his sheep. In his confession of faith, which, after labouring for thirty years in this calling, he addressed to his converts, he says: “That ye may rejoice in me, and I may ever rejoice in you in the Lord, I repent not what I have done, and even now it is not enough for me. I shall go further, and sacrifice much more. The Lord is mighty to confirm me yet more, that I may yield up my life for your souls. I call God to witness in my soul, that I have not written this to seek glory from you. The glory which is not seen, but believed on in the heart, is enough for me. Faithful is that God who has promised, and he lieth not. But already in this world I behold myself exalted above measure by the Lord. I know very well that poverty and hardship suit me better than wealth and ease. Yea, even the Lord Christ became poor for our sakes. Daily have I expected to be seized, carried into captivity, or slain. But I fear none of these things, because of the promises of heaven; for I have cast myself into the arms of the Almighty God, who reigns everywhere, as it is said in the Psalm ([Psa. lv, 23](#)), ‘Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.’⁴ Now I commend my soul to my faithful God, whom in my insignificance I serve as His messenger. For since with Him there is no respect of persons, and since He has chosen me for this calling, that I, as one of the least of His people, should serve Him, what shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits? What shall I say or promise unto my Lord? For I can do nothing, unless He himself give it me! But He trieth the hearts and reins, and He knoweth how greatly I long that He may give me to drink of the cup of

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4 Compare with this the beautiful words of Levinius, (preacher of the Gospel in Brabant in the seventh century, who died as a martyr:) “Brabant is thirsting for my death. How have I sinned against thee, in bringing thee the tidings of peace? It is peace that I bring thee; why dost thou threaten me with war? But thy rage brings me a glorious victory—will obtain for me the martyr’s crown. I know in whom I have believed, and my hope shall not be ashamed. God is the surety. Who can doubt?”

His sufferings, as He has granted to others who love Him. I pray God that he may give me perseverance, and enable me to bear a faithful witness until my departure. And if I have striven after anything good for my God's sake, whom I love, I beseech Him that I, with those my new converts who have fallen into captivity, may shed my blood for His Name's sake, even though I should never be buried, even though my body should be torn in pieces by wild beasts. I believe firmly if this should befall me, I should gain my body as well as my soul; for, undoubtedly, in that day, we shall arise and shine like the sun, that is, in the glory of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the living God, as joint heirs with Christ, renewed in His image; for by Him, through Him, and with Him, shall we reign. That sun which we see, rises daily for us, by God's command; but it will never reign, and its brightness will not last forever. All those also who worship it will (unhappy ones!) draw down punishment on themselves. But we pray in faith to Christ, the *true Sun*, that will never set, and he also who doeth His will shall never set, but shall live forever, as Christ lives forever, and reigns with God, the Almighty Father, and the Holy Spirit, from everlasting to everlasting."

Patrick would gladly, after the absence and labours of many years, have once more visited his relations and his old friends in his native Britain and in Gaul, but he sacrificed his inclination to the higher calling. "I would gladly," he says, "have journeyed to my fatherland and my parents, and also once more have visited my brethren in Gaul, that I might have seen again the countenances of the saints of my Lord; God knows I longed for it much, but I am restrained by the Spirit, who witnesseth to me, that if I do this, He will hold me guilty, and I fear lest the work I have commenced should fall to the ground."



COLUMBAN.

THE wild districts of Ireland were occupied with convents, after the example of Patrick, and cultivated by the hard labour of the monks. The Irish convents were distinguished by their strict Christian discipline, their diligence and their zeal in the study of the Scriptures, and of science in general, as far as they had the means of acquiring it. Irish monks brought learning from Britain and Gaul, they treasured up this learning and elaborated it in the solitude of the convent, and they are said to have brought back these germs of science, together with a living Christianity, to those regions from which they had first received them, but where they had been crushed by the spread of barbarism.

The most distinguished amongst the Irish convents was Bankor, founded by abbot Comgall, who had three thousand monks under his control; it was especially a training school for missionaries and teachers of the rude tribes around. From this school issued, in the latter part of the sixth century, an Irishman, named Columban. When he had reached the age of thirty years, he felt himself constrained to go forth to preach the Gospel, and introduce Christian education amongst the rude tribes. He himself says, in a letter written after the persecutions in France, "It was my wish to visit the heathen tribes, and to proclaim to them the Gospel."

His scholar and biographer, Jonas, expresses this thus: "He began to long for a pilgrim life, mindful of that command of the Lord, Depart from thy country, and thy kindred, and thy father's house, and go into the land that I shall show thee.' God bestowed on father Columban that fervour of heart, that longing enkindled by the fire of the Lord, of which He saith, 'I am come to enkindle a fire upon earth.' Columban himself says of this holy fire of love, 'O that God,—since, petty as I am, I am his servant,—O that God would so arouse me out of the sleep of sloth, that he would deign so to enkindle in me the fire of Divine love, that this Divine flame may constantly burn in me! O that I had the fuel with which perpetually to feed that fire, that it might never more be extinguished, but might constantly increase in me! O Lord, give me, I beseech thee, in the name of Jesus Christ thy Son, my God, that love which can never cease; that my lamp may be kindled, and may not be extinguished; that it may burn in me, and shine to others. And thou, Christ, our dearest Saviour, do thou thyself kindle our lamps, that they may shine evermore in thy temple, that they may receive inextinguishable light from thee the inextinguishable light, that our darkness may be enlightened, whilst the darkness of the world flies from us. My Jesus, I beseech thee to give thy light to my lamp, that in its light may be manifested to me that Holy of Holies in which thou, the eternal Priest, dost dwell, that I may continually contemplate thee only, long for thee, gaze on thee, and yearn for thee in love. Let it be thy concern, O Saviour full of love, to show thyself to us who knock, that we may perceive thee, love thee alone, think only of thee day and night, that thy love may possess our whole souls, and this so great love may never more



be extinguished by the many waters of this earth, as it is written that many waters cannot quench love.” ([Canticles viii, 7.](#))

After having obtained permission from the abbot, Columban repaired, in the year 590, to France, with twelve youths, who were being trained under his direction for the clerical life. Barbarism was fast spreading at that time in France, in consequence of constant war, political disturbances, and the carelessness of certain worldly-minded bishops; and among the convents in particular, in consequence of many of them having been granted by the princes to laymen of rank, great corruption had crept in. So much the more respect must Columban have obtained amongst the uncivilized and ignorant crowd by his strict piety and his learning. He was entreated to settle in the kingdom of Burgundy, and might have obtained a convent, where he could have lived in comfortable repose and great esteem with his friends. But he declared that he sought not earthly wealth, but felt himself constrained to follow the words of Christ: “Whosoever will follow Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” He therefore went to a wild and desolate place amongst the Vosges mountains, and there selected for his abode the ruins of an old castle called Anegray. As the monks were compelled themselves first to bring the land into cultivation, they often suffered want; but even in such circumstances, when no human aid appeared, Columban could never be made to waver in his reliance on God, and this could not be brought to shame. Once the monks had nothing left to eat but the bark of trees, and herbs; and their need pressed all the more sorely on them, because one of their number was sick, and they were thus prevented from doing anything for him. They had passed three days in prayer that their sick brother might be relieved, when they saw a man, whose sacks were laden with provisions, stop before the gate of the convent. He told them he had felt constrained by a sudden impulse to assist according to his means those who from love to Christ suffered such great need in the wilderness. At another time they had already suffered from a similar scarcity during nine days, when the heart of another abbot was moved to send them provisions. Once when a priest visited them, and seemed astonished that Columban could be so tranquil when he had so little corn in his granary, Columban answered: “If the people faithfully serve their Creator, they shall suffer no want, as it is written in the Psalm, ‘I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.’ ([Psa. xxxvii, 25.](#)) He who could satisfy five thousand with five loaves, can also easily fill our granary with meal.”

Columban united great outward power and activity with a heart disposed to religious contemplation and rejoicing in inward quiet; and the fact that both these things could be so blended in him, as in many other pious men of that age, is a proof of their Christian simplicity, and of a mind firmly resting on God. He frequently went deep into the forest, with his Bible on his shoulder, read as he went, and meditated on what he read, or seated himself on a hollow trunk with the Bible in his hand. On Sundays and other feast days, he



retired into caves or other lonely places, and gave himself up entirely to prayer and meditation on Divine things.

The respect felt for Columban caused men of all classes to repair to him and entrust themselves to his guidance, or commit their sons to his training. The number of the monks became so large that one convent would no longer suffice, and two others were founded, both in solitary places,—one at Luxen, and one at Fontaines.

Columban regarded self-denial, and the entire yielding up of the will to God, as the highest object, and to effect this in those who were committed to his guidance was the aim of all his conventual arrangements. In his instructions to his monks, he says many excellent things about this highest aim of self-ennobling, this main point in Christian sanctification, this “one thing needful.” “He tramples on the world who overcomes himself; no one who spares himself can hate the world. In our own souls alone do we hate or love the world.” And in another instruction: “We must willingly resign for Christ’s sake, all that we love besides Christ. Firstly, if it is necessary, our natural life must be yielded up to the martyr’s death for Christ. Or, if the opportunity of such blessedness fails, the crucifixion of the will must not be lacking, so that those who thus live, may no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them. Let us therefore live unto Him, who although He died for us is our life; let us die to ourselves, in order to live unto Christ. For we cannot live unto Him, if we do not first die to ourselves, that is, to our own will. Let us be Christ’s, and not our own; we are dearly bought,—dearly bought indeed,—for the Master gave himself for the servant, the King for the subject, God for man. What shall we return for this, that the Creator of the universe has died for us sinners, for us His creatures? Dost thou not think that thou shouldst also die to sin? Surely thou shouldst. Let us therefore die, let us die for Him who is the Life, since the Life has died for us, that we may be able to say with Paul, ‘I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,’ who hath died for me; this is the voice of God’s people. No man can die to himself, if Christ does not first live in him. Live in Christ, that Christ may live in thee. With violence must we now take the kingdom of heaven, for we are not only opposed by our adversaries, but yet more fiercely by ourselves. It is a great misery when a man injures himself and does not feel it. If thou halt overcome thyself, thou hast overcome all.”

Although the genuine spirit of Christian self-denial—that self-denial which is linked with love—is here evidenced, nevertheless this spirit did not display itself unmixedly in the conventual rules which Columban instituted. Even though love ruled in his heart, and he sought to train his monks to a free love of the children of God, they were subjected to a strict legal discipline. They were to exercise self-denial in the entire annihilation of their own will, and in the servile dependence on the will of another human being, who was represented to them as the absolute instrument of the Lord for their guidance. They were, as passive (will-less) instruments, to serve their superiors, in whom they were to see the Lord, who guided them through them. This was the externalizing spirit which prevailed in every century, until,

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by means of the Reformation, the sign was given for the restoration of that freedom which Christ has purchased for his own. True humility conducts itself with regard to our relation with God in a way which is applicable to no relation with any creature whatsoever. He who abases himself before God, for that very reason can abase himself to no human being, although ready to serve every man according to his degree in free love. He who bows his knee to God, on that very account bows it to no man. The spirit of true freedom is grounded in true humility,—as the Apostle says, “Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men.” But according to the false interpretation of the materializing spirit, instead of subjecting our own will with true inward self-denial to God, and suffering ourselves in voluntary submission to be guided by his Spirit, we are to subject our will to that of another man, by whom we are to be guided in all things—the very opposite of that which the Apostle indicated in these words.

Columban, in his monastic rules, encourages his monks by the assurance that by this blind obedience they would attain all the more repose and security, since they would thus be freed from all responsibility about the things which they did at the command of another, and since the guilt would fall on the head of him from whom, according to *his* calling, they had received the command which they, according to *their* calling, had only to obey. This, indeed, flatters the indolence of men, who would gladly avoid the personal conflict and the personal trial to which they are called. But this is contrary to the Divine scheme of education for men since man, having arrived at a mature age, is to be enabled by Christianity to walk in the light of his God, freely to test everything by the word of God with the aid of an enlightened reason, and to regulate his actions without any outward restraint, by the law written in his regenerate heart by the Spirit. That which Columban sets before his monks as their object,—“that man should ever be dependent on the mouth of another,”—is contrary to the spirit and essence of Christianity, which teaches, that men should learn to depend only on that which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

It was always a perilous thing to seek to break the will of man by the stern discipline which monasticism employed for this will can only be truly subjected and remoulded by the inward power of Divine love, through which, renouncing itself in its own personality, it regains itself in a higher sphere as the illuminated organ of the Divine will. In monastic education, that yearning for free individual development innate in a reasonable being created in God’s image, that mighty consciousness which stirs in the breast of youth, of being created in God’s image and to His glory, is frequently confounded with the sinful and selfish efforts which do indeed too easily attach themselves to it. The despotic restraint, which did not know how to discriminate between the one and the other, whilst it repressed all free individual development, could only produce a stunted existence. That self-will, which is not to be quelled by *human* power, would either, incited by outward pressure to a more obstinate resistance, produce a scornful pride; or, if self-will was broken, all fresh individual life per-

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ished with it, and nothing remained but a dull, slavish character, incapable of all loftier things; or otherwise the result was such a distortion, that with the slavish character was united pride, disguising itself in the likeness of humility, that “voluntary humility” of which Paul speaks, [Colossians ii, 23](#).

What Anselm of Canterbury said towards the close of the eleventh century, against this severe monastic discipline, is excellent. An abbot complained to him, in the course of conversation, of the incorrigible youths under his charge, who were not to be improved by any amount of beating. Anselm replied, “You never cease beating these boys,—what sort of men then do they make when they grow up?” “Stupid, brutish men,” answered the abbot. “A good token of your skill in education,” observed Anselm, “that you educate men to be brutes.” The abbot replied, “Is that our fault? We seek by all possible means to compel them to be better, and we get nothing out of it.”

“You *compel* them?” answered Anselm, “tell me, my dear abbot, if you were to plant a tree in your garden, and inclose it tightly on all sides, so that it could not shoot forth a branch on any side, and after some years were to set it free, what kind of a plant would it have become? Doubtless, a useless tree, with crooked, intertwined branches. And whose fault would it be but yours, for having unduly restrained its growth?”

In order, however, to judge Columban justly, we must not forget in what circumstances he lived, what men he had to mould, and what difficulties to contend with. Bands of rude men had to be governed, rescued from the prevailing barbarism and lawlessness, and trained to industry, endurance of difficulties, and privations of all sorts, and as the highest aim, to be led to a truly spiritual life, a life of self-renunciation and consecration to God. He himself says in a letter, “We must attain to the city of God in the right way, by mortification of the flesh, contrition of heart, bodily labour, and humiliation of spirit, by our own efforts, (doing in this only what it is our duty to do, not as if we could merit anything,) and what is above all, by the grace of Christ, by faith, and hope, and love.”

In the monastic rules of Columban it is written: “Let the monk live in the convent under the control of a father, and in fellowship with many, that from the one he may learn humility, from the others patience,—from the one silent obedience, from the others gentleness; let him not do his own will—let him eat what is commanded him, let him take as much as he is given, let him accomplish his daily task. Let him retire weary to his bed, let him sleep slightly, and before he has slept out his sleep, let him be compelled to arise. Let him fear the superior of the convent as a master, and love him as a father.”

In spite of all this stern discipline, there was a spirit of fatherly love about the abbot, which, as we see from his life, knit many hearts to him. But he always kept it in view, so to train the monks, that this precise order should not be to them anything dead and mechanical, or become an intolerable burden, but that it should grow natural to them, that everything should be made easy by the spirit of love and self-sacrifice. “If the monks learn the lowliness

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of Christ, the yoke will become easy to them, and the burden light. Lowliness of heart is the rest of a soul wearied out by conflict with its corrupt inclinations, and by its inward sufferings; this is its only refuge from such manifold evils, and the more it withdraws to this contemplation from restless distraction amongst vain and external things, the more it rests, and is inwardly refreshed, so that the bitter becomes sweet, and what was formerly too hard and difficult to be borne, becomes smooth and easy.”

Columban’s instructions to the monks show an endeavour to bring Divine things home to their hearts, and when we see how easily those who have to extract their food from the soil by hard daily labour, forget, beneath the weight of daily heavy toil and earthly cares, the higher concerns of the spirit and the heart,—cleaving to the dust, so much the more praiseworthy does that man appear, who, in the very midst of the conflict with savage nature, endeavoured by the power of Christianity to train men to make the highest interests of the inner man the chief concerns for themselves and others; nay, who even sought to use this daily conflict as an exercise of self-denial, of devotion to God, and unconditional trust in Him. Columban once saw, after the foundation of the abbey of Fontaines, sixty men laboriously loosening the soil with their mattocks, to prepare it for the future crop, whilst a very small stock of provisions remained in the magazine of the convent to satisfy their hunger and thirst during such hard labour. How much does this imply! Here we see the power of that faith which could remove mountains. Others would have lost all heart and strength amidst such great difficulties and with such dark prospects, but Columban’s faith inspired courage and strength in those under his control. The monks were to prove that faith multiplies what we have, and can create means when they fail, because it fills men’s hearts with courage, strength, and gladness; just as a distrustful despondency diminishes the gifts of God, by enfeebling our strength, and makes earthly want doubly felt, because it abandons the soul altogether to its sufferings, crushes it to the earth, and adds anxiety for the future to the privations of the moment.

Some passages from the instructions of Columban to his monks may exhibit to us his profoundly Christian spirit, and his endeavour to awaken the like in them. Whilst he condemns idle subtleties about the Trinity, he says: “Who can speak of the essence of God—how He is everywhere present and invisible, or how He fills heaven and earth and all creatures, according to those words, ‘Am I not He who filleth heaven and earth,’ [Jer. xxii, 24](#). The universe is full of the Spirit of the Lord; “heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool.” Thus God is everywhere present in all His infinity, everywhere He is quite near us, according to His own testimony concerning himself. “Am I a God that is near, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?” We do not therefore seek God as one who is far off from us, since we can draw nigh to Him in our own souls; for He dwells in us as the soul in the body, if we are not dead in the service of sin. If we are fit to receive Him, then we are made truly living by Him, as His living members. “In Him,” says the Apostle, “we live, and move, and have our being.”

Who can search out the Highest in this His unutterable and incomprehensible essence? Who can fathom the depths of the Godhead? Who can boast that he comprehends the infinite God, who fills and embraces all things, who penetrates all things, and is sublime above all? For no man has seen how He exists. Let no one then venture to search into the unsearchable essence of God; let us only believe simply, yet firmly, that God is and will be that which He has been, because He is the unchangeable God. God is apprehended by the pious faith of a pure heart, but not by an impure heart and vain discourse. If thou wilt dare to search out the Unutterable with thy prying subtilties, wisdom will remain further from thee than she was, ([Eccles. vii, 24](#);) but if, on the other hand, thou clingest to Him by faith, wisdom will stand at thy door. Therefore should we beseech the omnipresent, invisible God himself, that the fear which is linked with faith and love may abide in us; for this fear of God, blended with love, makes us wise on all occasions: and piety teaches us to be silent about the Unutterable.” Of the happiness of him who has vital Christianity, he says, “Who indeed can be happier than the man whose death is life, whose life is Christ, whose reward is the Saviour, to whom the heavens bow down, to whom paradise is open, for whom hell is closed, whose Father is God, whose servants are the angels?” In his eighth instruction: “It behoves pilgrims to hasten to their home. They have cares as long as they are on their pilgrimage, but in their fatherland they have rest. Let us, therefore, who are on our pilgrimage, hasten towards our fatherland, for our whole life is as a day’s journey. The first thing for us is, not to set our affections on things below, but on things above: to desire only, to meditate only on the things which are above; to seek our fatherland there only where our Father is. Here on earth, then, we have no fatherland, because our Father is in heaven.”

Of love as the soul of the Christian life he says: “What has the law of God prescribed more carefully, more frequently, than love? And yet you seldom find any one who really loves. What have we to say in excuse? Can we say, it is something painful and hard? Love is no labour; it is, on the contrary, a sweet, and wholesome, and healing thing to the heart. Unless the soul is diseased within, its health is love. He who fulfilleth the law with the zeal of love hath eternal life. As John says, ‘We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He who loveth not his brother abideth in death. He who hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.’ We must, therefore, do nothing but love, or we have nothing to expect but punishment. May our gracious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our God, the Creator of peace and love, inspire us with this love, which is the fulfilling of the law!”

In his little poems, also containing exhortations and lessons to his disciples and friends, Columban expresses his deep love to Christ. “Let no one,” he says in them, “live unto himself, but everywhere let each of us live unto Christ. If thou truly lowest Christ, seek not thine own, but Christ’s glory. Love not thyself nor the world, but Christ alone.” Columban requires from the true monk that he should unite lowliness and long-suffering with steadfastness

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and strength in the conflict for truth and justice, against the high and mighty of this world; that he should be ready to contend for essential things; that he should, indeed, be lowly with those of low degree, but that he should resist the proud; that he should be brave for the truth; that he should be yielding and obliging to the good, but invincible in conflict with the wicked. It was in this spirit that Columban himself acted in contending for Christian freedom and Christian morality. By his zeal for strict morality, and against the barbarism which had crept into the Frankish churches, and by his frankness, he necessarily made enemies of many powerful men both amongst the clergy and laity, and these gladly availed themselves of an opportunity to rid themselves of so obnoxious a man. Columban had brought with him from the Irish Church many peculiar arrangements as to Divine service, which differed from the customs of the Roman Church, then universally introduced into those districts. As his convents formed a little complete whole in themselves, in the midst of the wild forests, he chose to follow the customs of his fathers, and would not submit himself to the prevalent ecclesiastical customs. He might, indeed, have been more yielding in trivial outward things, in order to win the more in things essential; but it was his purpose to oppose himself to an usurping ecclesiastical authority, which did not recognise the rights of Christian freedom, and which sought by its ordinances to compel uniformity in external things. His enemies gladly availed themselves of this departure of his from the dominant ecclesiastical customs, to annoy him. Columban by no means wished to enforce the ritual observances which he had brought with him from Ireland on all men, although he himself gave them the preference; he merely desired that liberty might be allowed him to act in his own way in his convents.

With Christian candour, submitting to no human authority in matters of religion, he wrote to Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome. He entreated him not to suffer himself to be fettered by the opinions of former bishops of Rome, but freely to test both sides, and to adopt whichever he approved. "In such matters," he wrote, "you must not abandon yourself to your humility, or consult the dignity of persons, which often deceives. A living dog is perhaps better in such inquiries than a dead lion. (*Eccles. ix, 4.*) The living saint can amend what was not amended by a greater saint who is dead." He meant that, in this case, where free inquiry into the truth was concerned, Gregory ought not to suffer humility to deter him from subjecting to further tests what had been ordained by his predecessors. Later he wrote to Boniface IV., bishop of Rome, that "as they were knit together in the unity of the faith, as they both believed with the heart, and confessed with the mouth, one Father in heaven, of whom are all things, and one Saviour, the Son of God, by whom are all things, and one Holy Spirit in whom are all things, he trusted it would be permitted him and his people, without disturbing the peace of the Church, to retain their customs, as once Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and Anicetus, bishop of Rome, had parted without any scandal to the faith, and in undisturbed love, though each adhering to the customs of his ancestors." When

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in the year 602, a French synod was held to deliberate on this subject, Columban addressed to this episcopal assembly a letter full of zeal for the welfare of the Church. As, partly in consequence of the political disturbances in the Frankish empire, and partly of the carelessness of the bishops who had entangled themselves too much with the affairs of this life, the wholesome institution of Provincial Synods had long been neglected, Columban thanked God that these divisions had called forth such a synod, and he prayed God to grant that they might occupy themselves on this occasion with more important things—with things touching on faith and life. He represented to them, with all respect, the great truth, that if they did not show by their lives that they had heard the words of the True Shepherd, and follow Him, they could not expect that His words, which they announced as mere hirelings, would obtain obedience.

He said justly, (a word well to be remembered in all divisions,) that if all the children of God were only first united by the fellowship of love and the unity of evangelical convictions, all strife would easily be adjusted. “Difference of manners and customs has, indeed, been very injurious to the peace of the Church; but if we only hasten to extract the poison of pride, envy, and the pursuit of vain glory, by the exercise of true humility, according to the teaching and example of our Lord, who says, ‘Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart,’ as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall mutually love one another with our whole heart; *for the lowly cannot strive*, since the truth will soon be recognised by those who, with the same purpose and the same desire to know the truth, seek what is best—where only error is vanquished, and no man glories in himself, but in the Lord.” He concludes the letter with these words: “Since we should love one another with love unfeigned, let us diligently consider the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ., and if we understand them, strive to fulfil them, in order that, through His teaching, the whole Church, in a glow of holy zeal, may set her affections on things above. May His unmerited grace grant us this—to fly the world and love Him alone, to seek Him with the Father and the Holy Ghost! For the rest, O fathers! pray ye for us, as we, insignificant as we are, pray for you, and regard us not as strangers; for we are members of one body, be we Gauls, Britons, Irishmen, or of any nation whatsoever. Thus may we all from all nations rejoice in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, and hasten to become a perfect man, after the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; in which effort may we mutually help one another, care for one another, pray for one another, and triumph and rejoice together!”

An attack from another quarter had important results for Columban. He was held in high honour by Theodoric II., king of Burgundy, in which country his abbeys lay. He availed himself of this to reprove the king for his voluptuous life, and to exhort him to amendment of conduct. But his influence on this side interfered with the policy of Brunehild, the powerful grandmother of the prince, and she, in concert with the nobles and prelates, to whom Columban’s presence had long been burdensome, plotted to banish him. It was



Columban's way not to avoid the machinations which were directed against him. True to his axiom, "to be bold in the cause of truth, invincible by the wicked," he opposed an unyielding firmness to all these plots. At length, after twenty-five years of activity, he was driven out of the country, A. D. 610. It was at first decreed that he should be conveyed to Ireland, but circumstances hindered the execution of this decree. On his journey through France, he experienced many consolatory proofs that God was with him. When he had arrived with his escort at the city of Nantes, and was lingering in contemplation in his cell, a beggar came to the window. Columban caused the last measure of meal in his stock to be given to the hungry man. He knew that he and his people would in consequence be compelled to endure want during the two following days, yet he remained joyful in faith and hope about it, when suddenly some one knocked at the door. It was the servant of a pious lady in the city, who brought from her an abundant stock of corn and wine. From Nantes he wrote a letter full of fatherly love to the monks whom he had left behind in France, exhorting them to concord and humility. "It were better," he wrote to them, "that ye should not dwell together than that ye should not desire and avoid the same things." He supposes God to say to the proud self-righteous soul: "As thou hast suffered thyself to be misled by thy pride and imagined holiness, now come down and be reckoned amongst sinners for what is done with pride is of no value in My sight." Of a monk to whom he was peculiarly attached, called Waldolin, he writes, on the other hand: "May God bless him, may he be lowly! and embrace him for me, as I, in my haste, could not."

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He then went to Switzerland, to Zug and Brienz, where he laboured many years for the conversion of the Suevi and Alemanni.⁵ Then he repaired to Italy, and founded in the neighbourhood of the Apennines the celebrated abbey of Bobio, where he found rest in the last years of his life.

To the last he was active in endeavouring to heal a schism which had endured many years in Italy. The emperor Justinian, who by his unwise and despotic interference with ecclesiastical affairs, and by his darling project of uniting the emperor with the theologian, instead of occupying himself only with the faithful accomplishment of his duties as a ruler, had produced such serious divisions in the Greek Church, had also suffered himself to be moved by the rancour of a theological party at the court, publicly to anathematize the memory of three great Syrian doctors, (Theodorus, Theodoret, and Ibas;) and the weak and indecisive Roman bishop Vigilius had at length consented to join in this foolish undertaking of the emperor. As the later Roman bishops followed the decision of their predecessor, the consequence was a schism in Italy, many important Churches (in Istria and the Venetian territory) refusing to yield to this decision. Many accusations were thereby occasioned against the orthodoxy of the Roman Church. Columban therefore wrote a bold though re-

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5 See in the life of Gallus.

spectful letter to Pope Boniface IV., in which he requested him to institute an unprejudiced inquiry into this matter, and entreated him to seek the restoration of the peace of the Church. “Watch,” he wrote to the Pope, “first over the faith, then to encourage the works of faith, and to eradicate vice; for your watchfulness will be the salvation, as your neglect will be the destruction of many. We do not regard persons, but truth. Since you, in consequence of the dignity of your Church, have great honour, you should use great diligence in order not to lose your dignity by any error; for power will remain with you as long as you remain on the right side. He is a true bearer of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, who by true knowledge opens it to the worthy and closes it against the unworthy. If he does the contrary, he can neither open nor shut. Since, therefore, you, perhaps with a degree of pride, claim for yourself a higher dignity and power with regard to Divine things, you should know that your power will be so much the less with the Lord, the more you think of it in your own heart; for unity of faith throughout the world has also brought forth unity of spiritual power, so that everywhere truth must be allowed a free access to all men, whilst error must be equally denied it. The confession of the truth obtained his privileges for our common father Peter.” Then follows the beautiful exhortation, applicable to so many divisions, which arise from the estimation of minor differences higher than unity in the essentials of the faith, and thus rend the bond of love. “Therefore, beloved, return quickly to concord, and do not recur to old strifes, but rather be silent, and consign them to eternal oblivion. If anything is doubtful, leave it to the decision of God. But about what is evident—what is open to the judgment of men, judge ye without respect of persons. Receive ye one another, that there may be joy in heaven over your peace and union. I know not how a Christian can strive with Christians about the faith. What the orthodox Christian, who praises the Lord in the right way, says, another will confirm with his Amen, since both believe and love the same thing.”

Columban died in his seventy-second year, or perhaps older, after having, in an active life, full of manifold labours, scattered the seeds of Christian knowledge in France, Switzerland, and Italy; and by the disciples whom he left behind his labours were continued in the subsequent ages.

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GALLUS, APOSTLE OF SWITZERLAND.

AMONGST the disciples whom Columban brought with him from Ireland to France, one of the most distinguished was Gallus. He was of a noble Irish family, and was early intrusted by his pious parents to Columban, to be trained for the service of the kingdom of God. Columban, who, as we observed above, was a zealous student of the Scriptures, had implanted a deep love for them in the youth's breast. He spoke from the Scriptures with simplicity and affection, pressing the words home to men's hearts. When Columban with his friends met with a hospitable reception from pious men, and after having laid aside his travelling clothes, wished to have something read aloud out of the Scriptures, it was his favourite pupil Gallus who was desired to do it, and who, after reading, had to unfold the meaning of the passage. When they settled near the ruins of the old castle of Brienz, they stumbled on an old fallen chapel, which they resolved to consecrate to the Christian worship, and around which they built their cells. But in this chapel they found three gilded idols, which the heathen natives revered as guardian deities. As Gallus, during his residence in the Frankish empire, had made himself well acquainted with the German language, Columban desired him to preach the Gospel to the multitudes who flocked together to see the solemn consecration. It is, indeed, a true saying of Luther's: "It is God's work alone to banish idols from the hearts of men. What is done from without is mere puppet-play. If some of their idols are taken from men, they will make themselves others yet worse. But if the preaching of Divine grace prepare the way to the heart, it may be an additional help if the sensible image to which the idolatrous worship attaches itself, is also removed from the eyes." Thus Gallus may have confirmed the impression produced by his sermon, by courageously dashing the idols in pieces, as he did before the eyes of the wild heathen multitude, and may thus have proved to them by ocular demonstration, the nothingness and powerlessness of their idols.

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The monks then proceeded to busy themselves in cultivating their garden, and planting fruit-trees. Gallus wove nets, and carried on a fishery. He was so successful in this, that he not only provided the rest of the monks with fish, but also was able to entertain strangers, and often to make presents to the people.⁶ When they were driven out of that neighbourhood, and Abbot Columban turned his steps to Italy, Gallus was prevented by sickness from fol-

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⁶ It is related also of bishop Wilfred, preacher of the Gospel in Sussex in the latter part of the seventh century, that "When he arrived there, a famine was prevailing. The sea and rivers were full of fish, but the people only understood how to catch eels. He had first to instruct them in fishing. He caused all the nets to be brought together; his people used them in the right way, and caught three hundred fish of various kinds. One hundred of these he kept for his own people; one hundred he gave to those who had lent the nets; one hundred to the poor. By this means he won the love of the people: and now that they had to thank him for earthly blessings, they heard him so much the more gladly when he told them of heavenly things."

lowing him: and this circumstance was productive of much blessing to the tribes of that district: since, but for this illness, Gallus would never have become what he did for the country. Gallus repaired with his fishing nets to a priest called Willimar, who lived in an old castle, and who had once already entertained him with the abbot Columban, and pointed out a residence for them. When, by his affectionate care, Gallus had recovered, he wished to find a place in the wilderness to build in. With this object, he addressed himself to the deacon Hillibald, whose business it was to provide his convent with fish and game, and who had therefore often traversed the wilderness, and knew its paths well. Attended by him, he set out to seek a place adapted for building, and well provided with fresh water. The deacon gave him a terrific description of the wild beasts in the forest: but Gallus answered, "It is the saying of the Apostle—If God be for us, who can be against us? and, all things work together for good to those who love God. He who delivered Daniel from the den of lions, can also deliver me from the power of the wild beasts." Then the deacon said: "Only put some bread and a small net in thy knapsack, and to-morrow I will guide thee into the wilderness. The God who has brought thee to us from the far country, will send his angel with us, as once with his servant Tobias, and will show us a place suitable to thy pious work." Armed by prayer, Gallus set out on his journey. When they had journeyed about three hours, Hillibald said: "Let us now take some bread and water, that we may be strengthened to go the rest of the way." Gallus answered: "My son, do thou what is needful to strengthen thee; I am resolved to taste nothing until God has shown me my desired place of rest." But the deacon replied: "Nay, we will share the inconvenience, and then also the joy, with one another." Then they pursued their way until the evening, when they came to a stream full of fish, which precipitated itself from a rock. They succeeded in catching many fish; the deacon lighted a fire; he cooked the fish, and took bread from the knapsack. Gallus meanwhile went a little apart to pray; but he entangled himself in the bushes, and fell. The deacon hastened forward to help him; but Gallus motioned him back, saying, "Leave me; this is appointed for my resting-place throughout my life—here will I dwell." He consecrated the place by prayer; and when he arose from his knees, he made a cross out of the branch of a tree, and planted it in the ground; and on the cross he hung some relics, which he carried in a basket round his neck. Then, again, they both fell on their knees in prayer, and there they founded the convent which afterwards went by the name of St. Gall. There Gallus laboured in the education of youth, and in the training of monks and priests, by whom the seeds of Christian knowledge were further spread; and thence he diffused many spiritual and temporal blessings among the people. When he received presents from the great men of the country, he used to assemble the poor of the district, and distribute what he had received amongst them. On one of these occasions, one of his scholars said to him: "My father, I have a costly silver vessel, beautifully embossed; if you will permit me, I will keep it for a sacramental chalice." But Gallus answered: "My son, think on the word of Peter, 'Gold and silver have I none,'

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and in order not to do anything contrary to so wholesome an example, hasten to employ the vessel for the good of the poor. My teacher Columban used to distribute the body of the Lord in vessels of common metal.”

The vacant see of Constance was offered to Gallus; but he preferred to continue his quiet labours in the convent, and refused the office. He recommended for the office, in his stead, the deacon John, a native of the country, who had studied the Holy Scriptures under his guidance. When, at the consecration of the bishop, a great multitude flocked together, Gallus availed himself of this opportunity, in order to describe to the new converts the love of God as manifested in Creation and Redemption, and to lay before them the great scheme of God for the salvation of men. He ascended the pulpit with his disciple John, and what he said in the Latin language, was interpreted by John into German, for the assembled multitude. Of the Creation, he said: “God created beings endowed with reason to praise Him; and by Him, in Him, and through Him, to live happily. This cause of your creation, ye should recognise, my Christian brethren, lest ye should have to regard yourselves as lost beings, destroying your dignity by a brutish life. For that God, who is the highest good, resolved to create beings in His own image, endowed with reason, that, acknowledging Him as their Lord, and the Author of their existence, and filled with His love, they should rejoice to find their happiness in Him.”

Then he deduces the origin of all evil, from the desire of reasonable beings, to be the basis of their own existence, and to find life and happiness in themselves; thence arose their *inward void*, inasmuch as the creature, if turned away from the fountain of life, and abandoned to itself, must sink from fulness into emptiness, from existence to nothingness. He closed the whole discourse with this exhortation: “We, who are the unworthy messengers of the faith in this age, conjure you, in the name of Christ, that ye ever renounce the devil and all his works, as ye have once renounced him in your baptism; that ye acknowledge the one true God and Father, who ruleth eternally in heaven—the Eternal Wisdom, who for us became a man in time—and the Holy Ghost, the earnest of eternal bliss granted us on this pilgrimage; and that ye seek to live as becomes the children of God. Be ye kind to one another, forgiving one another, as God has forgiven you your sins. The Almighty God, who wills that all men should be saved, and should come to a knowledge of the truth,—who sends this message to your ears by the ministry of my tongue,—may He Himself cause it to bring forth fruit in your hearts by His grace!”

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BONIFACE, APOSTLE OF THE GERMANS.

BONIFACE, or Winfried, as they called him in Anglo-Saxon, born at Crediton in Devonshire, in 680, deserves to be honoured as the father of the German Church, although he was by no means the first who brought the seeds of the Gospel to Germany. Many had already laboured before him; but the efforts which had been made here and there did not suffice to secure the endurance of Christianity amongst the many perils to which it was exposed. Christianity needs to be linked with firm ecclesiastical institutions, and this was first done by Boniface, to whose labours so many even to this moment owe their salvation.



It is remarkable in the history of the first training of Boniface, that the germs of religion were early developed in his heart. The custom had been retained in England, from the days of the first pious Irish missionaries, of the clergy visiting the houses of the laity, and giving exhortations to their families on religious subjects.. The boy used attentively to listen on these occasions, and they gladly conversed with him on matters of religion. His father sought to repress his inclination for a religious life, for he had destined him for a distinguished place in the world. But as is so frequently the case, this disposition of mind only gained the more strength, the more his father endeavoured to repress it, and the father was at length moved by a severe sickness to yield to his son's inclination. Boniface educated himself .in many famous English convents, where he became especially learned in the Holy Scriptures, which were hereafter to serve him as a light on his way amongst the uncivilized nations. His spirit was indeed cramped by many prejudices which hindered him from perceiving the pure doctrine of the Scriptures, and which must necessarily have hindered his subsequent missionary labours—for the purer and freer Christianity is, the less darkened by human work, the more easily can it penetrate into the hearts of men, the more easily the Divine power of attraction in it is preserved in all situations.



When Boniface had passed his thirty-fifth year, he felt incited by the example of the earlier missionaries amongst his countrymen, to carry the message of salvation to the heathen. What would have become of our fatherland, if God had not then awakened by his Spirit, especially in England and Ireland, this zeal for missions! As we now look joyfully back on the labours of those heroes of the faith to whom we owe the blessings of Christianity and all our civilization, so one day will the Churches gathered out from the heathen in Southern India, Asia, and Africa, when they shall have received through Christianity the abundance of earthly and heavenly blessings, look thankfully back on the awakening missionary zeal of these our days. Egbert, an English priest, had given the first impulse to this missionary activity. This Egbert had vowed, in a mortal sickness, to consecrate his life, if it should be restored to him, to the service of the Lord amongst foreign nations. He afterwards set forth with other Christians to travel to the German tribes; and although he himself, when on the point of sailing, was detained by many circumstances, this was the first impulse to the great work.

Boniface himself confesses that the natural instinct implanted in his nation combined with the religious interest to impel him to missionary labours,—”the love of travelling, and the fear of Christ,”—as he expresses it in a letter. He calls it the fear of Christ, because he regarded it as a debt which he owed to the heathen, as a duty laid upon him by Christ, which he believed himself bound to fulfil. He would have exclaimed with the Apostle Paul, “Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel.” He had at first assisted the zealous Willibrord in his labours, one of those missionaries who had followed the impulse given by Egbert, and founded the Church in East Friesland and the Netherlands. Willibrord wished to retain him, that he might succeed him as archbishop of Utrecht; but his Divine calling withheld him. He felt constrained to commence a new work amongst the heathen tribes of Germany. That which by day lay on his conscience recurred to him by night in admonitory dreams, and great prospects opened to him for the future, as a female friend from England afterwards reminded him, observing that God had appeared to him in a dream, and promised him a great harvest amongst the heathen.

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The estimation in which he held the Holy Scriptures is shown in these words of his to a young compatriot, whom he exhorted to the diligent study of the Bible: “Cast all which hinders thee away, and direct thy whole study to the Holy Scriptures, and seek there that Divine Wisdom which is more precious than gold; for what does it become youth more to seek, what can old age more profitably possess, than the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, which guide our souls without risk of shipwreck through the storm to the shores of the blessed Paradise, to the eternal and heavenly joys of the angels!” To an abbess, who had sent him some Bibles, he wrote in thanking her: “That she had consoled the exile in Germany with Divine light; for he who has to visit the dark recesses of the German tribes, would fall into the jaws of death, if he had not the Word of the Lord as a light to his feet and a lamp unto his path.” He begged his old friend Daniel, bishop of Winchester; to send him a manuscript of the prophets left behind by his deceased teacher and abbot Wimbert, which was written in clear and well-divided letters. “If God puts this into your heart,” he wrote him, “you cannot confer a greater and more living consolation to my old age; for such a manuscript of the prophets as I desire, I cannot procure in this country; and with my already decaying sight, I cannot read small and confused letters.”

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We can see in these words of his to an English abbess, what was the ground of his confidence in all his labours and conflicts: “Pray for me, that He who dwelleth on high, and yet looks on the lowly, ([Psa. cxiii, 5,](#)) may forgive me my sins, that the Word may be given me with a joyful liberty of speech, that the Gospel of the glory of Christ may have full course amongst the heathen, and be glorified.” In his twenty-second letter to some English nuns: “I beseech you, (as I have confidence also towards you that ye constantly do,) pray diligently to the Lord that we may be delivered from unrighteous and cruel men; for all men have not faith. And know that we praise God, although the sufferings of our heart are many. May the

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Lord our God, who is the refuge of the poor and the hope of the humble, deliver us from our need, and from the temptations of this evil world, that the glorious Gospel of Christ may be glorified, that the grace of God in me may not be in vain! And although I am the last and worst of all the messengers which the Roman Church has sent forth to proclaim the Gospel, yet would I not die unfruitful, without bringing fruit to the Gospel; I would not go home without leaving some sons and daughters behind me, lest, when the Lord comes, I should be found guilty of burying my talent; lest, for the guilt of my sins, instead of the reward of labour, I should receive the punishment of unfruitful labour from Him who has sent me." Thus (as becomes an humble labourer in the Lord's vineyard, who can distinguish between the Divinity of the thing and the infirmity of the human organ) did he seek first in his own sinfulness and deficiencies the cause of the hinderance of his labours. In a treatise addressed to the English clergy, he says: "Seek to obtain by your prayers that our God and Lord Jesus Christ, who wills that all men should be saved and should come to the knowledge of the truth, may convert the hearts of these heathen Saxons to the faith, that they may be delivered out of the snares of the devil in which they are entangled, and may become children of the mother-Church. Have compassion on them; for even they are wont to say, 'We are of one flesh and bone' with the Anglo-Saxons." To an English abbot: "We beseech thee earnestly, that thou wouldest aid us, who labour amongst the wild and ignorant tribes of Germany, and scatter the seeds of the Gospel, with thy prayers. For neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase." In a letter to an English bishop: "I need your prayers, because the sea of Germany is so perilous to navigate, that through your prayer, and under God's guidance, without defilement or injury to my soul, I may reach the haven of eternal rest; that I may not, whilst I seek to bring the light of evangelical truth to the blind, who know not their darkness and will not look up, be myself covered by the darkness of my own sins; that I may not have run or laboured in vain; that I, supported by your intercession, may attain, unstained and enlightened, to the light of eternity." And: "Pray the beloved Champion of our life, the only refuge of the distressed, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, that he may preserve us uninjured by his guardian hand, that our gracious Father may place burning torches in our hands, and that He may enlighten the hearts of the heathen to see the Gospel of the glory of Christ."

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Boniface availed himself of the help of the secular power, to guard his churches and cloisters from the devastations of the barbarous heathen, to secure the life of the monks and nuns whom he had invited from his fatherland to educate the heathen, and civilize the converts, and to procure the necessary means of sustenance; and when Christianity had gained an entrance, to destroy the old traditional objects of heathen idolatry, which were continually recalling the rude tribes to their old worship, and perpetually restored to their old uses. One remarkable incident will show how Boniface was able to work on uncivilized men by means of outward impressions. When he was preaching the Gospel in Hesse, an

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ancient oak, of gigantic size, consecrated to Thor the Thunderer, the sight of which filled the people with great reverence, powerfully counteracted the influence of his sermons. The people could not get freed from their faith in the Divine power of this oak, and were, therefore, even when the sermons of Boniface made a momentary impression, ever ready again to fall into heathenism. So Boniface, by the advice of those Hessian Christians who had resisted the seductions of heathenism, went with a few attendants to the oak. He himself cut down the tree with an axe, whilst the heathen crowd furiously surrounded him. When, however, they saw the oak fall asunder in four pieces, without their god being able to take vengeance on Boniface, their delusion at once fell with it. In order to perpetuate the impression of this circumstance, Boniface immediately caused a chapel to be built of the wood.

The chief effort of Boniface was to produce an impression on the hearts of the young by religious education, and the communication of Christian culture. His zealous attention to the educational institutions attached to the convents, as well as many other things, contradict the accusation of his having endeavoured to compel the outward conversion of the people by means of the secular power, of whose co-operation he availed himself in the instances adduced above.

His fatherly care for the education and training of the new converts, is beautifully expressed in a letter, in which he entreated the Frankish court-chaplain, Fulrad, to endeavour, that after his death a zealous and able man should be placed at the head of his work, which, after twenty years of activity, he was on the point of leaving: "I beseech his majesty the king," (Pepin,) he writes, "in the name of Christ the Son of God, that he would deign to show me in my lifetime what reward he will hereafter bestow on my scholars: for they are almost entirely strangers—some are priests, appointed in various places to the service of the Church and the congregations; some monks, who have been appointed in our cells to teach children to read; some old men, who have laboured with me long and sustained me. I am anxious on account of all these, lest after my death they should be scattered as sheep that have no shepherd, and lest the people who dwell on the borders of the heathen should lose their Christianity again. My clergymen on the frontiers of the heathen lead a wretched life. Bread to eat they can obtain, but clothes they cannot, if they do not get advice and assistance from other quarters, as they have from me, that they might be enabled to remain in such places in the service of the people."

His friend Daniel, bishop of Winchester, when first he entered on his sphere of action, gave him instructions which contain much that is useful: "Before all, he should show the heathen that he was accurately acquainted with their religion; he should, by means of questions, let them find out for themselves what was unreasonable and contradictory in their doctrines, in such a manner as not to ridicule or irritate them, but with all gentleness and moderation, here and there instituting a comparison between their own and the



Christian doctrines, yet letting these only appear by the way, so that the heathen should not be so much embittered against him, as disgusted with their own false opinions.”

The following is a specimen of his mode of preaching: “See, my beloved, what a message we bring you,—not a message from one from whose service you may purchase exemption;⁷ but a message from Him to whom you are indebted for His blood shed for you. We exhort you, live in lawful wedlock; let no one further defile himself with a prohibited union; let no one who has so erred approach the body of so great a Lord, before he has truly repented, that it may not injure instead of benefitting him. My beloved, we are ourselves unclean men, and yet we would not suffer our limbs to be touched by anything unclean; and can we believe that the only-begotten Son of God will suffer us to approach Him with sin in our hearts? See, brethren, our King, who has deigned to send us this embassy, Himself comes to us. Let us then prepare Him a pure dwelling, that He himself may dwell in our body. We entreat you, dearest sons, that ye who are wont to fear the laws of the world, would also willingly submit to the laws of our God. It is He who speaks to you by our lips—whose Easter festival ye have lately kept—who did not withhold His only-begotten Son from the hands of His persecutors, in order to admit us into the inheritance of His children. If you have learned what wonderful grace He has shown towards us by His sufferings, obey then the more zealously His commands, lest by our disobedience to His commands we should be guilty of ingratitude for His kindness.”

He then controverts the objection which is often made amongst heathen nations to the preaching of the Gospel: “How could God, if Christianity were the only saving religion, have left men for thousands of years without it?” Undoubtedly, the missionaries, fettered as they were by arbitrary opinions, may have contributed to arouse such objections, by asserting more than the Holy Scriptures justified them in saying,—by applying to all unbelievers, even to such as could not have believed, because they had not heard, (*Rom. x, 14,*) what the Scriptures only apply to those who obstinately reject the Gospel preached to them. The example of Cornelius, and what the apostle Peter says in connexion with it, justifies us in deducing thence the general law, that those who, even without knowing anything of Christ, follow the guidance of that God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, will, like Cornelius, if not here below, yet in another existence, be led to the knowledge of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Without further occupying himself with answering this objection, Boniface addresses himself to that careless tendency to seek excuses for unbelief and sin, from which, in many instances, these doubts arose, and recurs to the personal necessities of each. “There are some amongst you,” he says, “and O that they may be but few! who complain of our neglect, in

7 According to the custom of the German tribes, of purchasing exemption from punishment; of repaying wrongs by a fine in money, which was the origin of the pernicious system of indulgences.

having so delayed to preach to you the way of salvation. Their sorrow would be more just, if they were, at least, now willing to accept the means of salvation; for how can he who, however late, refuses to suffer himself to be healed, complain of the dilatoriness of the physician? Indeed, the longer the sickness has lasted, the greater should be the submissiveness of the patient. For who can bear the pride of the sick man, who complains of his sickness, and yet will not take the remedies for it? How many, my beloved sons, do we find, who, whilst they continue in sin, yet murmur at Christ's having come so late—at His having suffered so many thousands to perish before His incarnation! If we yield to the complaints of such people, we must also remain sick after the gift of such a physician. Wherefore, O man, dost thou murmur at the Sun of Righteousness, for having arisen so late, when, even after its rising, thou still walkest in darkness? Shall we, because clouds have long covered the heavens, on that account refuse to rejoice at the return of fine weather?"

He frequently begged his friends in England to send him expositions of certain passages in the Bible, which he wished to use in his sermons—for instance, a manual of Bede's expositions of the texts for Sundays and holidays, which was useful for preachers. In order to impress a due reverence for the Holy Scriptures on ignorant men, he caused a copy of a portion of the Bible, which he intended to employ in his sermons, to be written in England with golden letters. For this purpose he specially chose the Epistles of the apostle Peter, because, on account of his relations with the pope, he looked on himself as an ambassador of that apostle. "He wished," he wrote, "to have the words of him who had preceded him on the good way, ever before his eyes." From these words we perceive how genuine, even though prejudiced, and how far from the designs of worldly policy, was his reverence for the popes. His care for the diffusion of religious knowledge amongst the people, may be inferred from his repeated orders that every layman should know the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the baptismal formula of renunciation, in German, before his baptism.

How full Boniface was of the grandeur and responsibility of his calling as archbishop of the German Church, may be gathered from his letter to an English bishop: "The apostle (Paul) calls the priest an overseer, (bishop;) the prophet (Ezekiel) calls him a watchman; the Redeemer, a shepherd of the Church; and all declare that the teacher who is silent about the sins of his people, by his silence incurs the guilt of the blood of souls. Therefore a great and fearful necessity constrains us, according to the apostle's words, to be examples to the flock,—that is, the teacher ought to live so piously, as not to paralyze his words by inconsistent deeds, and so as not, even whilst living prudently himself, by his silence, to incur condemnation for the sins of others. 'Thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me, saith the Lord.' [Ezek. iii, 17.](#)" He proves from this that the priest should say that which he has learned from the study of the Divine Word,—what God has committed to him, not what human wit has devised. *From me*—my words, not thine, shalt thou proclaim;



thou hast no cause to exalt thyself on this account. “If I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou, givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his evil way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand.” *Ezek. iii, 18.* Let us not, then, have so stony a heart, that these words of the Lord fail to strike us with dread. All that God would have observed He has so clearly revealed, and confirmed with the authority of His name, that it were better —shameful as this would be—to confess that we despise it, than lyingly say we have not understood what He has so plainly revealed. Have we not heard it, “*Thus saith the Lord.*” Who, then, unless he disbelieve God himself, can doubt that what God has said will happen? Since, therefore, these things are so, the weary soul flies for refuge to Him who says, through Solomon, “Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. Commit thy way unto Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” And in another place, “The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous fleeth unto it and is safe.” Let us therefore stand firm in righteousness, armed against temptation, and bear what the Lord gives us to bear, saying to Him, “Lord God, thou art our refuge from everlasting to everlasting.” *Psa. xc, 1.* Let us trust in Him who hath laid the burden on us. What we cannot bear by ourselves, let us bear through Him who is Almighty, who says, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

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Devoted as Boniface was to the popes, he yet by no means shrank from telling them the truth, when the welfare of the new Church required it. Relics of the old superstitious Pagan customs and excesses on New-Year’s day had been still retained at Rome; amulets were worn there by women, and recommended by the authorities. Now, as members of the new Churches frequently journeyed to Rome, such people ever after deemed such abuses, which were tolerated under the eyes of the Pope, as thereby authorized, and murmured against Boniface, who strove with so much zeal thoroughly to annihilate all Pagan superstitions and customs. Boniface made earnest remonstrances on this subject to Pope Zacharias: “Carnal men,” he wrote, “ignorant Germans, Bavarians, and Franks, when they see some of the evil things which we forbid practised at Rome, imagine that they are permitted by the priests; they then throw out accusations against us, and take offence, and thus our preaching and teaching are hindered.”

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This Christian boldness, united with a wise consideration and tolerance, were also shown by Boniface in his behaviour towards Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. As, amidst his universal activity, he still took a warm share in the affairs of his fatherland, it pained him much to hear of the unchaste life of this prince, and he resolved himself to write to him. He began his letter by acknowledging and commending what was good in the king: “I have heard that you distribute many alms, and I rejoice at this on your account; for he who gives alms to the least of his needy brethren, will, in the day of judgment, receive this gracious sentence from the Lord, ‘In that you did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’ I have also

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heard that you strictly prohibit theft, rapine, and perjury; that you show yourself a friend of the widow and the poor, and preserve a steady peace in your dominions; for this also I have praised God; for He who is himself the truth and peace—our Lord Jesus Christ—says: ‘Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.’” Then he proceeds to the reports of the disorderly life of the prince, and says, “I conjure you by Christ, the Son of God, by his coming again, and His kingdom, that if this is true you amend your life by repentance, and think how unseemly it is that by serving your lusts you should change the image of God created in you into the image of the devil; and that you, who, not for your own deserts, but by the rich grace of God, have been made a ruler over many, should, by sin, make yourself a slave of the evil spirit; for, as the Lord says, He who committeth sin is the servant of sin.” Then, to the shame of nominal Christians, he brings forward the example of the German Saxons, who were distinguished for their chastity, even before their conversion to Christianity. “Thus the heathen who know not God, and have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, having the law written in their hearts.” “It is time,” he says, “that you should have compassion on the multitude of perishing people who, following the example of their sinful prince, are sinking into the abyss of destruction; for as many as we by our good example draw to the life of the heavenly country, or by our bad example mislead to destruction—for so many we shall doubtless receive either reward or punishment from the Eternal Judge.” He then declares to the king, that if the sanctity of marriage is not upheld in a nation, a race of degenerate youth, ever sinking lower and lower, will be the result, as amongst the nations of Spain, who had at length fallen under the power of the Saracens. In order to prepare the king for this letter, he sent him another shorter letter by another messenger, in which he made no allusion to the contents of the first, and which, according to the custom of the times, he accompanied with some appropriate presents for the king,⁸ two falcons, two shields, and two lances. “Although the gifts are unworthy of your acceptance,” he writes, “yet accept them as tokens of love. And, finally, may we all hearken to these words: ‘Fear God, and keep his commandments;’ and when you receive another letter by another messenger, I entreat you carefully to observe what is written therein.”

But this first letter was not to come immediately into the hands of the prince; Boniface sent it to Herefried, a presbyter, to read it aloud to the king. “For we have heard,” he wrote to Herefried, “that you, by the fear of God, are delivered from the fear of man, and that this prince has often deigned in some measure to hearken to your exhortations; and you must know that I have addressed these words of exhortation to the king out of pure love, and

⁸ It was customary in that age to unite presents with letters. The gift was simple, according to the character of the age. To the Pope Zacharias, Boniface sent a woollen cloth for wiping the feet (a gift which he frequently bestowed, alluding to the washing one another’s feet as a sign of humility) and some silver; to an English bishop, two flasks of wine; to a Roman ecclesiastical officer, a silver goblet and a linen cloth.

because I was born and brought up amongst Englishmen, because I rejoice in the welfare of my people, and the praise bestowed upon it, but mourn over its sins, and the reproach cast upon it." Thus did Boniface combine all Christian prudence with the holy zeal which bears the sword of the Spirit.

Whilst we acknowledge the work of the Divine Spirit in a man employed by God as an instrument to found His kingdom amongst an important portion of mankind, and must be careful not to deny this work of the Spirit, manifesting itself by its fruits to be such, in consequence of the imperfections of the flesh, nevertheless we must not leave these imperfections unnoticed and unexposed. We must, as in testing ourselves, so also in testing others, be ever on our guard not to confound the things of the flesh with the things of the Spirit.

That which marred the operations of Boniface was, that he did not recognise in its full extent the liberty of the children of God, who are dead with Christ to the elements of the world, whose life no longer belongs to this world, but, hidden with Christ in God, belongs to heaven, and therefore cannot be led captive by the elements of this world. He knew, indeed, the basis of Christianity, and possessed it in his inward life; he possessed in this more than he knew how to explain in words, because his knowledge was not yet developed in proportion to the life of his faith. But with this inward Christianity he combined a certain clinging to outward things which are foreign to it. He did indeed build on the only foundation, which is Christ; and therefore his work, as a Divine thing, was sure to endure, and to be unfolded by Divine power in the course of centuries, and to be purified in the fire; but on this foundation he had built not pure gold alone, but also wood, hay, and stubble. And here it ought to be said in excuse for him that he was not himself the originator of this confusion, but that it was already existing before his time. It was fiat by the fire enkindled by the Lord at the Reformation that the wood, hay, and stubble were consumed, so that the foundation shone out in its genuine brilliancy.

What the apostle Paul says to the Galatians is applicable, in a measure, to the whole Church:— "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh? Why therefore do ye turn again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire to be in bondage?" But in this development of the Church also we recognise the guiding wisdom of her invisible Ruler, who suffered the law again to become the schoolmaster of uncivilized humanity, in order to lead to the righteousness of faith, to the Gospel of the Spirit, which was again clearly brought to light in the Reformation, in opposition to the old confused mixture of the law and the Gospel. Even under the shell of these ordinances respecting outward things, the kernel of the Gospel was ever preserved, and it only needed to burst this shell in order to manifest itself in its genuine energy. And even this mixture of the law and the Gospel diffused itself in the Church after the things of the Spirit were fettered by outward traditions; the Spirit of the Gospel was ever awaking individual witnesses, who manifested more purely the things of the Spirit, and who felt themselves constrained to resist this bondage under

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the elements of the world. They were the lights shining in the dark place until the day should break, and the day-star arise on the Church of God. To this number would seem to belong Clement of Ireland, the opposer of Boniface. The British and Irish missionaries were, in freedom of spirit and purity of Christian knowledge, far superior to Boniface. It is a beautiful memorial of the “spirit of Christian freedom, that answer of an abbot of the British Abbey of Bangor to the claim of Augustine, of obedience to the Roman Church: “Know ye, and be assured that we all are subject to the Church of God, to the Pope of Rome, and also to every believer in Christ, inasmuch as we are ready to love every one in his degree, and to help every one in word and deed. Of any other obedience which we owe to him whom you call the pope or the father of the fathers, I know nothing. This obedience we are ready eternally to render to him and to every Christian.” Thus also had Clement brought with him from his fatherland a pure Christian wisdom, free from the human traditions of the Roman Church. In questions of faith he would only recognise the authority of the Holy Scriptures; he contested the authority of the ecclesiastical laws, and of those eminent fathers of the Western Church, whose opinions were even then referred to as an arbitrating power. He asserted, in conformity with the teaching of the New Testament, that a bishop might be married without injuring the dignity of his office. And how much might he have effected, had he united the spirit of love and wisdom with this free insight, and built the German Church upon the basis that the Scriptures, explained by themselves, were the only fountain of Christian knowledge! What fruits would Christianity, thus embraced in its purity, have produced!

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Yet it may be questioned whether Clement were as well fitted as Boniface to deal with uncivilized men: whether he knew how appropriately to distinguish between the milk and the strong meat; to separate the practically important from the unimportant; to exercise due consideration for the powers of comprehension of uncivilized men. If Providence designed to lead uncivilized men through the discipline of the law to the Gospel, we can clearly see that a Boniface, and not a Clement, must have been chosen as the instrument for the formation of the German Church.

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Beside this Clement, stands Adalbert the Frank, who must not be compared with Clement as to insight and practical wisdom. He was a predecessor of those mystic sects who opposed a certain inward religion of the heart, to ceremonial services and the traditions of men; but, inasmuch as they followed only their feelings and their imagination, whilst the Holy Scriptures were not at their side to remind them to watch over themselves,—as a warning voice against the angels of darkness who clothe themselves as angels of light in lowly guise, and a guide to the discerning of spirits,—or, inasmuch as they made themselves masters of the Holy Scriptures, instead of following them,—they fell into many perilous self-delusions of enthusiasm, and often opposed, to the errors against which they contended, errors of another kind. A sincere piety is breathed in this prayer of Adalbert’s: “Almighty

God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou who art the Alpha and the Omega, (the beginning and the end of all being,) who sittest enthroned above the cherubim and seraphim; Thou great love, sum of all joy, Father of the holy angels; Thou who halt created heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is; on Thee I call, to Thee I cry, to me, an insignificant creature, I entreat Thee to come; for Thou halt graciously promised, 'Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, that will I do.' Thus, it is only Thee I desire; for on Thee my soul doth wait," He spoke also against the too high estimation of pilgrimages to Rome. But, from the extraordinary names of angels mixed up with this form of prayer, as from much besides, it may be seen that Adalbert was the victim of much enthusiasm, which it would have been most pernicious to have diffused amongst an uncivilized people; especially as the rude multitude paid him an exaggerated reverence, which he perhaps did not desire.

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Tightly as the spirit of Boniface was bound, on many sides, by the traditions of the Roman Church, the quickening spirit of Christianity seems sometimes to have raised him above them. For instance: he was sorely perplexed when he heard that, according to the laws of the Church, the so-called spiritual relationship of sponsorship, was a hinderance to the conclusion of a marriage, and could not conceive how, in this one instance, spiritual relationship could be so great a barrier to a temporal union, whereas by baptism all were made sons and daughters of Christ and the Church,— brothers and sisters.⁹

Even the last days of his threescore and ten years, Boniface would not spend in comfortable repose. As he could then happily leave the continuance of his work in Germany to his successor Lall, the constraint of love impelled him to go where the labourers were few, where great conflicts had still to be endured for the Gospel. The thought of labouring for the conversion of the Frieslanders, for whom, since the fifty years' labours of the zealous Willibrord, nothing had been done, and of whom a great number were still heathens,—this thought had never left him; and now that there was no more for him to do in Germany, it possessed his soul with fresh power.

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He took leave of Lall, his successor, saying to him, "I can do no otherwise,—I must go forth, as the impulse of my heart constrains me,—for the time of my departure is at hand. But thou, my beloved son, finish the foundation of the churches in Thuringia, which I have begun; call back the people diligently from errors; complete the erection of the church at

9 In a similar way did Luther, the second apostle of Germany, arrive at the knowledge of the nothingness of these traditions of the canon law. In a letter of the year 1523 (v. *De Wette*, vol. 1, p. 351,) he says: "And it is to be observed, that it is a very great thing that we all have one baptism, one sacrament, one God, and one Spirit, by virtue whereof we are all spiritual brethren and sisters. Since, then, this spiritual brotherhood does not hinder me from taking a wife, who has the same baptism with myself, why should my having stood for her at the font hinder me, which is far less? The evil spirit has invented this law, to confound God in his free governance."

Fulda, (the darling institution of Boniface;) and there be the resting-place of my body, bowed down as it is with the burden of years.” He desired Lall to provide all things necessary for his journey, and especially to place in his trunk books (be always carried religious books with him, from which he used to read on the way) and a cloth, in which they might wrap his body when they brought it back to Fulda.

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He collected the last strength of his old age, increased by the inspiration of faith, and travelled through Friesland in his seventieth year with the energy of youth; he preached, he convinced, and baptized thousands, he destroyed heathen temples, and founded churches. The baptized had been scattered, and he; desired them all to assemble on a certain day, before him, to receive confirmation. Boniface and his companions had, meanwhile, pitched their tents by the river Burde, near the city of Dorkingen, then the boundary between East and West Friesland. When the morning of the appointed day broke, Boniface watched, with a full heart, the arrival of his new converts. He heard the tramp of a coming crowd; but it was a great host of armed and furious heathen, who had bound themselves by an oath to destroy on that day the foe of their gods. The Christian youths who accompanied Boniface wished to defend him, and a battle was about to begin; but as soon as he heard the tumult, he came forth, attended by his clergy bearing the relics which they had with them, and he said to the youths, “Cease to strive; for the Holy Scriptures teach us plainly, not to recompense evil with evil, but with good. Long have I desired this day, and of itself the day of my departure cannot be far off. Be strong in the Lord, and bear with thankful resignation what His grace shall send. Trust in Him, and he will deliver your souls.” And to the priests he said, “My brethren, be of good cheer, and suffer not yourselves to be terrified by those who can indeed kill the body, but cannot touch the soul destined for eternal life. Rejoice in the Lord, and cast the anchor of your hope upon Him, who will soon bestow on you the meed of eternal joy. Endure steadfastly the brief moment of death, that ye may reign everlastingly with Christ.” Thus, on the 5th of June, 755, he died the martyr’s death.

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GREGORY, ABBOT OF UTRECHT.

BONIFACE had especially directed his attention to youth, and had thus scattered seed which continued to bear fruit after his death. He was by these means enabled to leave men behind him, who, trained and moulded by him, carried out his labours in various spheres in his own spirit. Among these scholars of his, the abbot Gregory was especially distinguished. The way in which Boniface first became connected with him, shows, in a remarkable manner, what power he exercised over youthful minds.

When Boniface left his first sphere of action in Friesland and proceeded to Hesse, he arrived at a convent of nuns situated on the banks of the Moselle, in the neighbourhood of Treves, where the abbess Addula received him very hospitably. At table something was to be read, according to custom, from the Holy Scriptures. For this purpose the abbess selected her grandson Gregory, a youth of fifteen, just returned from school. After Boniface had given him his blessing, he read aloud a passage from the Latin Bible. Boniface thought that he perceived a lively mind in the boy, and said to him when he had ceased to read, "You read well, my son, if you understand what you read." The boy, who did not catch Boniface's meaning, replied, "that he knew perfectly what he had been reading." "Well," answered Boniface, "tell me, then, how you understand it?" The boy began to read the passage through again. Boniface then said, "No, my son, that is not what I mean; I know well that you can read, but I want you to translate what you have read into your native language." The boy acknowledged that he could not. "Shall I tell you, then, what it means?" said Boniface. And when the boy begged him to do this, Boniface told him to read the whole passage through again distinctly, and then he translated it into German, and preached on it to the whole company. "And," as Lindger, the scholar of abbot Gregory, and the narrator of this incident, says, "it was manifest from what source those words flowed; for they penetrated with such rapidity and force into the mind of Gregory, that, on this one exhortation of a hitherto unknown teacher, he forgot his country and his kindred, and going at once to his grandmother, told her that he would go with Boniface, and learn from him to understand the Holy Scriptures." The abbess sought to restrain him, telling him that he did not know the man, nor whither he was going. "But many waters could not quench this love," *Cant. viii.* Gregory kept to his purpose, and said to his grandmother, "If thou wilt not give me a horse, to ride with him, I will go with him on foot."

Then the grandmother perceived that something higher was stirring the heart of the youth; she gave him a horse and servant, and suffered him to go away with Boniface. Lindger observes on this: "It seems to me that the same Spirit then stirred in this youth, as enkindled the Apostles, when, on a word from the Lord, they left their nets and their father, and followed the Redeemer. This was effected by the Great Teacher—the One Spirit of God, who worketh all things in all men, dividing to every man severally as He will."

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Gregory henceforth followed Boniface everywhere, amidst all dangers and difficulties, as his most faithful disciple. Subsequently he travelled with him to Rome, and brought thence Bibles, which he used in the instruction of youth. He accompanied him on his last journey to Friesland, and, as abbot of a monastery in Utrecht, he was most active after the death of his master, in the diffusion of Christianity and Christian civilisation. He occupied himself especially in training missionaries and teachers for the Church. Youths from France, England, Friesland, Saxony, Swabia, and Bavaria, bound together by the bond of holy love, were there formed into a training-school for the kingdom of God; and messengers of the Gospel went forth from hence in all directions amongst the heathen and the recently-converted nations. Early in the morning he sat in his cell, and waited, with fatherly solicitude, for each one of his scholars to come to him, that he might communicate to each some portion of the Word of God suited to the wants and dispositions of each. He frequently, in his sermons, pressed it home on the hearts of his scholars, that the new man can have - no space to grow, if we do not daily more and more die to the old man; and, in this sense, he used often to quote the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "I set thee to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, and to build and to plant," ([Jer. i, 10.](#)) and therewith he would often, as an encouragement in the conflict, connect the promise, "Eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him."

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In his seventieth year, three years before his death, Gregory injured his left side. Still he remained cheerful, went about with his scholars, or allowed himself to be carried about by them, continued to expound the Holy Scriptures and to preach to them, and to give them compositions to study. In the last year of his life his lameness had so increased, that—as of old the Apostle John, when he was grayheaded—he was obliged to suffer himself to be carried whithersoever he would go. At length he was confined to his bed, when he caused the Holy Scriptures to be read to him, or psalms to be sung. He retained his full consciousness to the last day. His scholars had assembled round his bed, and were comforting one another with the oft-repeated words—"He will not die today;" but he gathered his remaining strength together, and said: "To-day ye must give me leave to depart." He then caused himself to be carried by his scholars to the altar in the church, prayed there, received the Holy Supper, and casting a longing look towards the altar, departed above, where he longed to be.

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ABBOT STURM OF FULDA.

AMONGST the most active of the scholars of Boniface, besides Abbot Gregory, may be mentioned Sturm, a man of a noble Bavarian family, who was early given up by his parents to Boniface to be educated. After having assisted Boniface, during three years, in the office of a preacher, the idea, seized him of founding a convent in one of those enormous wildernesses which then covered Germany, and which were only to be reclaimed by the civilizing influence of Christianity. As Boniface looked on monasteries as an especial instrument of civilization both for the people and the country, he was quite content with this project. He gave Sturm two travelling companions, and when he had prayed for them and given them his blessing, he said: "Go into the beech forest (Buchoma, the forest which then covered Hesse)—God can prepare his servants a place in the desert." Two days they journeyed through the wilderness, and saw nothing but heaven and earth, and gigantic trees. On the third day, they came to a place, which seemed to them calculated for building, (then Hersfeld, Heroldesfeld, now Hirschfeld.) After calling on Christ to give his blessing, that this place might become a dwelling for them, they erected little huts roofed with bark, and abode there for a time. Then Sturm repaired to his beloved master, and was required by Boniface, who prudently considered all sides of a question, and did not reckon only for the moment, to give an accurate account of the situation, the nature of the soil, and the springs. Boniface did not immediately tell Sturm his opinion, but made him rest awhile near him, and refreshed him by spiritual converse. Then he candidly told him that the chosen place was too much exposed to the ravages of the barbarous Saxons, and that they must seek some spot lying deeper in the wood. Long did Sturm and his companions search in vain; they could find no suitable place, corresponding to the wishes of their bishop. At length Sturm set out quite alone. Alone, he rode on an ass through the wildest regions, singing psalms as he went, and lifting up his heart to heaven with sighs,—praying to God. He only rested when night came upon him. The earth was his couch. With a sword which he carried with him he cut down a quantity of wood from the trees, and built a fortification with it around his ass, to guard it from the wild beasts with which the forest abounded, whilst he himself, having called upon the Lord and signed the cross upon his brow in token that he resigned himself wholly to Him, lay peacefully down to sleep. Once a troop of wild Slavonians, who were bathing in the Fulda, met him, and naked as they were, presented a terrific spectacle, receiving him with a shout of derision. Their interpreter asked him whither he was going. He replied calmly, "Deeper into the wilderness;" and the hand of God guarded him. The Slavonians suffered him to go quietly onwards. At last he reached the goal of his difficult and dangerous journey, and found a place with which Boniface was quite satisfied. There, in the year 744, was erected the Abbey of Fulda, from which the clearing of the forest commenced, and in which the most eminent doctors of the German Church were afterwards trained. Charlemagne employed Sturm especially to preach the Gospel amongst the wild Saxons, who, often

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conquered, were as often rebelling against the Frankish domination, and the Church, which was forced on them with it, and hated by them on that account. But preachers of the Gospel, in the train of armies, could hardly find true access to the hearts of men. Sturm excited the rage of the heathen against himself, and the Abbey of Fulda was often the object of their devastations.



On the day before his death, Sturm assembled all his people together and said to them: “Ye know my endeavour, how until this day I have laboured and carefully provided for your welfare and peace, that this convent after my death may remain faithful to the will of Christ, and that ye may be able here to serve the Lord in love unfeigned. Persevere, then, all the days of your lives, in the course you have begun. Pray for me to the Highest, and forgive me, if I have done any evil amongst you, or wronged any man. I forgive you all from my heart, all your reproaches against me; also Lall who was ever against me.” He meant Lall, Archbishop of Mainz, who had been engaged in many hot conflicts with Abbot Sturm, and had not behaved towards him in the spirit of Christian love, although there may have been much right and wrong on both sides.

When, on the next day, the signs of approaching death began to show themselves in him, the monks begged him to be their intercessor with the Lord, to whom he was going. He replied: “Show yourselves worthy, and be such in your lives, that I may justly pray for you, and then I will do what you desire.”



ALCUIN ON TRUE MISSIONARY LABOURS.

THE cause of the first failure of the mission amongst the Saxons, may serve as a lesson and a warning to all times. It was this: that they sought to introduce from without what can only be effected from within; that worldly aims were blended with the diffusion of Christianity; that men did not follow the example of the Apostle Paul, who, in preaching the Gospel, allowed the Jews to remain Jews, and the Greeks, Greeks, and knew how to become to the Jews as a Jew, and to the Greeks as a Greek. The pious and wise Abbot Alcuin, directed the attention of Charlemagne to these defects and mistakes. He writes to the emperor: "Seek for the new nation preachers of upright conduct, who are well taught in the faith, who follow the example of the Apostles in preaching the Gospel; in the beginning, feeding their hearers with the milk of the faith, that is, with comfortable doctrines. (1 Cor. iii, 1, 2.) The teacher of the world sought thus to show, according to the inspiration of the indwelling Christ, that the yet tender faith of recently converted tribes should, as infancy with milk, be nourished with gentle commands, lest the still feeble heart, and terrified by the sterner commands, should reject the food already received." Alcuin was able to recognise, in the mode in which Christ trained the Apostles and fitted them for their office, as He Himself describes it, the model of all training and educating of nations and individuals in all succeeding centuries. He refers to the fact, that when Christ was asked why his disciples did not fast, he replied: "No man putteth new wine into old bottles, lest the bottles burst, and the new wine be spilled, and the bottles perish." "You may gather hence," he adds, "whether or no it is wise to impose on these savage tribes, in the commencement of their faith, the yoke of tithes, (the ecclesiastical impost, so hateful to the free Saxons;) whether the Apostles, taught by the Lord Christ himself, and sent forth to preach by him, ever demanded tithes, or ordered them to be demanded." It should also be well attended to, that the office of preaching and the sacrament of baptism be used in the right way, lest the outward baptism of the body become useless, because not preceded by the knowledge of the faith in the reasoning soul. The Lord himself commands (Matt. xxviii, 19) that teaching should precede baptism. At due times the doctrines of the Gospel should frequently be repeated, until the man grow to perfect manhood, —until he become a worthy temple of the Holy Ghost, and a perfect child of God in works of mercy, as our Father which is in heaven is perfect." In the same strain he writes to Arno, Bishop of Salzburg, to whom Charlemagne had committed the conversion of the Avari: "What avails baptism without faith? since the Apostle says, Without faith it is impossible to please God. It is on this account that the unhappy nation of the Saxons has so often abused the sacrament of baptism, because the foundation of faith was not laid in the heart. But this also we ought to acknowledge, that faith, as Saint Augustine says, is a thing of free will, not of constraint. How can a man be compelled to believe what he does not believe? Men may indeed be forced to the font but not to the faith. Man, endowed as he is with reason, must be instructed and led on by many teachings before he can perceive the truth of the faith.

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And especially must we seek the grace of the Almighty God on his behalf; for powerless is the tongue of the teacher, if divine grace does not penetrate the heart of the hearer, as the Truth himself saith, 'No man can come unto Me except the Father, who hath sent Me, draw him;' and in another place, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me;' and of the Holy Spirit, 'Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' For what the priest, in a visible way, does for the body by the baptism of water, the Holy Ghost does in an invisible way, through faith, for the soul. There are, in baptism, three visible and three invisible things. The visible: the priest, the body, and the water; the invisible: the spirit, the soul, and faith. These three visible things avail nothing by their outward operation, if the three invisible things do not work within. The priest washes the body with water; the Holy Ghost justifies the soul by faith." After saying something similar to the letter quoted above, and quoting the words of Christ ([Matt. ix, 17](#)) to the same effect, he adds: "What else are the old bottles than those who are hardened in the delusions of heathenism? If, in the commencement of the preaching of the new faith, the sterner commandments are laid upon them, they fly off, and fall back into their old unbelief. The soul already long strengthened by faith, is far more capable of all good works, than one but just introduced into the new doctrine. The confession of Peter, after he had been filled with the new wine of the Spirit, before the emperor Nero in the imperial palace, is another thing to his answer to the maid in the house of Caiaphas. *This* Peter is an instance of human weakness—*that*, of the power of God. Christ reminded him of his high calling after His resurrection, in that he required from him a threefold confession of his love, and desired him to feed the sheep which He had purchased with His own blood; so that the good shepherd should acknowledge that suppliants should not always be chastised with harsh admonitions, but often their improvement sought through affectionate persuasions."

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To Meganfried, an imperial Privy Counsellor, Alcuin wrote: "We read in the Acts of the Apostles, that Paul and Barnabas journeyed to Jerusalem, to James and the other Apostles, in order to consult how best the Gospel could be preached to the . heathen. And they resolved unanimously, that nothing of a legal yoke should be laid upon them. The Apostle of the Gentiles even glories in living by the work of his hands. This he did, that he might entirely remove from preachers of the Gospel all opportunities of selfish profit, so that only those who were inflamed with the love of Christ, might proclaim the Word of God, as He himself prescribes to his disciples: 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' If the gentle yoke and light burden of Christ were preached to the stiff-necked Saxon tribes, with the same zeal with which tithes and severe penalties for the pettiest offences are laid on them, they would probably not have contended so fiercely against baptism. May there arise at length teachers of the faith, moulded after the model of the Apostles,—preachers, not robbers; may they rely on the grace of Him who says, 'Take no scrip, neither shoes.'" ([Luke x, 5.](#)) So also he writes to Archbishop Arno: "Be a preacher of godliness, not a tithe collector. The tithes have

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well-nigh ruined the faith of the Saxons. Why must a yoke be laid on these rude tribes, which neither we nor our brethren have been able to bear? Thus we trust that the souls of believers will be saved by faith in Christ.”



LINDGER AND WILLEHAD.

WE will mention here two men, who, in their labours amongst the Saxons, were able to keep themselves from the errors pointed out by Alcuin, and were models of true missionaries. Amongst these is Lindger. He sprang from the tribe of the Frieslanders, and the germ of Christianity was early implanted in his soul. His grandfather was an eminent man amongst his people; his name was Wursing, with the surname of Ado. Ado, even whilst yet a heathen, belonged to those of whom the Apostle Paul says, that “those who having not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, are a law unto themselves”— those who, although no further revelation be vouchsafed them, yet recognise in their conscience the voice of God. He took up the cause of the fatherless and widow, and was a just judge. But by his zeal against all injustice, he drew on himself the enmity of Radbod, the heathen king of the Frieslanders, and was compelled to take refuge in the neighbouring Frankish empire. He afterwards became a zealous Christian, and supported the above-mentioned Willibrord, who was called Archbishop of Utrecht, in his labours amongst his countrymen.

Lindger was a grandson of this pious man. Even as a child, tokens of his future destiny were observed in him. As soon as he could speak and walk, he used to collect bits of leather and bark, and make them into little books. When he could find a black juice, he would try to write with it, imitating grown-up people. And when he was asked what he had been doing, he would reply, he had been writing or reading. And when he was asked, “Who then has taught thee that?” he would reply, “God has taught it me.” Thus he very early showed a great eagerness for knowledge, and himself begged his parents to intrust him to some man of God to be instructed. They placed him with that Abbot Gregory whom we have spoken of before. His love of learning subsequently led him to York, to visit the most famous teacher of his times, Abbot Alcuin. Enriched with knowledge and books, he returned to his native land, and was all the more esteemed in consequence by his old teacher, Abbot Gregory. After his death, Lindger laboured amidst many dangers and difficulties for the conversion of the Frieslanders and Saxons. He first founded a Christian Church on an island consecrated to the heathen god, Fosite, which then received the name of Helgoland, (Holy Land.) After the conquest of the Saxons, Munster became the permanent seat of his labours, and he was consecrated its bishop. His missionary zeal compelled him to seek a new sphere of activity, beset with greater dangers. He wished to go to the wild Normans, who were then the great terror of the Christian nations, and amongst whom he could rely on no support; but Charlemagne would not suffer him to leave his present sphere. Even during the sickness which came on him in the year 809, not long before his death, he vanquished his bodily weakness, in order not to interrupt his spiritual labours. On the Sunday before the night of his death, he preached twice in two different churches of his diocese; in the morning, in the church of Cösfeld, at three o’clock in the afternoon in the church at Billerbeck. He died in the midst of his scholars gathered around his bed, on the night of the 26th March, 809. .

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The second of these genuine missionaries, was Willehad, of Northumberland. The rumours of what other missionaries were doing amongst the Frieslanders and Saxons, incited him to follow their example. He laboured first in the regions where Boniface had found the martyr's death. Many were baptized by him, many of the people of rank intrusted their children to him to be educated. When, however, he entered on what is now the district of Groningen, where idolatry then prevailed, the fury of the heathen people was so excited by his activity, that they were about to murder him. But, according to the counsel of one of the more moderate, the gods were first to be consulted by lot. And since even superstition must subserve the will of God, the guidance of the Almighty so ordained it, that the lot fell for his preservation, and he was suffered to depart untouched. He then repaired to the district of Drenthe. His preaching had already found an opening there, when one of his followers, led by an indiscreet zeal, hastened to destroy the idol-temples, instead of first banishing the idols from men's hearts by the power of Christ. This excited the rage of the heathen. They threw themselves on the missionaries, and Willehad was covered with blows. One of the furious crowd struck him with a sword to kill him; but the blows only fell on the clasp with which a box of relics, which according to the custom of the times he carried about with him, was fastened around his neck—so he remained unhurt. The superstition of the age, instead of seeing in this the ever-present power of Him who has numbered all the hairs of our head, without whom not a sparrow can fall to the ground, and who can employ any means to bring about His holy purposes, imagined it to be a proof of the guardian power of relics. Even the heathen were moved by it to desist from their assault on Willehad, whom they believed protected by a higher power. When Charlemagne heard of Willehad's unflinching zeal in preaching the Gospel, he summoned him to himself, and appointed him his sphere of labour in the district where the diocese of Bremen was afterwards formed. He was first to labour as a priest among the Frieslanders and Saxons, and to perform all that belonged to the pastoral office, until a bishopric could be founded. His successful exertions were subsequently interrupted by another insurrection of the heathen tribes. He believed himself called on to fulfil the command of his Lord, ([Matt x, 23,](#)) and not to throw away his life in vain. In order to preserve his life longer to preach the Gospel, he availed himself of an opportunity which was offered him of flight. He afterwards found a quiet place of refuge in the abbey founded by Willebrord at Afternach, (Epternach,) and there a gathering-place was formed for his followers, scattered by persecution and by war. There he passed two years, occupied in instructing, reading the Bible, and multiplying copies of it.

At length, after the restoration of quiet amongst the vanquished Saxons, the conquerors were able to found the bishopric of Bremen, which Charlemagne had projected, and it was bestowed on Willehad. On one of his visitations, which the recent erection of his diocese obliged to be frequent, when in 789 he arrived at Bloxem on the Weser, not far from Vegesack, he was seized with a raging fever, which threatened a speedy death. His scholars stood

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mourning around his bed. One of them, who was in the especial confidence of the bishop, expressed with tears the grief they all should feel if their spiritual father should be taken from them, and their anxiety for the orphan churches, scarcely yet gained over to Christianity. "O, venerable father!" he said, "desert not so soon those whom you have so recently won to the Lord. Leave not the churches and the clergy, who have been gathered by your zeal, orphaned behind, lest the still feeble flock be exposed to the assaults of the wolves. Withdraw not your presence from us your poor scholars, lest we wander about as sheep having no shepherd." Deeply touched, Willehad replied: "My son, O wish not that I should longer be withheld from looking on my Lord; constrain me not longer to abide in this wearisome earthly life. I desire not longer to live here, and I fear not to die. I will only pray my God, whom I have ever loved with my whole heart, whom I have served with my whole soul, that He, in his grace, will give me such a reward for my labours as shall please Him. But the sheep which He committed to me, I confide to Him to keep; for if I have been able to do anything good, I have done it by His power alone. His grace, of whose mercies the whole earth is full, will not fail you."



ANSCHAR, APOSTLE OF THE NORTH.

IF we compare Boniface and Anschar with one another, we see again an example of two perfectly, different individualities, which the Spirit has employed as, his instruments. In Boniface, more of the nature of Peter; in Anschar, of John: in Boniface, more fiery, penetrating power; in Anschar, more quiet love. Boniface was more fitted to effect great things outwardly; but to be unwearied in small things, to cherish in secret with persevering love the imperceptible seed, important as the first beginning of a new creation—this was the gift of Anschar.

Anschar seems to have received his first religious impressions in the period of early childhood, through the early influence of a pious mother, whom he lost in his fifth year. When, after her death, his father sent him to school, he fell into the society of some wild boys, and was led away by them, so that those first pious impressions grew dimmer and dimmer. Still, unperceived by him, they lingered in the hidden depths of his soul. In a dream one night, this hidden feeling was called forth from the depths of his soul. “He seemed as if he found himself in a wretched place, covered with filth, from which he could scarcely find any exit. But close beside that place he seemed to see a pleasant path, and on this path a beautiful lady, richly adorned, and with her many other women in white robes, amongst whom was his mother. When he saw her he would have hastened to her, but he could not immediately get out of that filthy place. When the women came nearer, he seemed to hear from the one who stood at their head, richly adorned, who appeared to him to be the Virgin Mary, these words: ‘My son, wilt thou come to thy mother?’ And when he eagerly replied, that he longed to do so, she answered him again: ‘If thou wilt come into our company, thou must keep thyself from all naughtiness, and lead an earnest life.’” After this dream, a remarkable change took place in him, about which his companions could not wonder enough; instead of playing, he busied himself with reading, meditation, and many serious and useful things. Afterwards, when he had become a monk in the Frankish Abbey of Corbie, and devoted himself with his whole soul to the monastic life, he had another dream, in which was mirrored his life hidden with Christ in God. He saw himself translated into the assembly of the blessed. All gazed towards the East, and praised with songs of thanksgiving Him who appeared in the East, and their accordant praises filled the souls of the hearers with unutterable joy. In the East itself was seen a wonderful glow of light—a changeless ray, of surpassing brightness, from which the most glorious colours beamed. All the ranks of the saints who stood joyfully around on all sides, drew their joy from it. “It was such an infinite glow of light,” says Anschar, “that I could see neither beginning nor end of it. And as I looked around on all sides, I could only see its surface, not what dwelt in the inmost depths of this light.

“But I believed that He was there, whom even the angels desire to see; for from Him went forth an unspeakable glory, by which the whole length and breadth of the Church of the saints were illumined. He himself was, as it were, all and all in Himself; He himself surrounded all from without; He himself was inwardly amongst them. He satisfied all their

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wants, and was their guiding soul. He hovered over them from above, guiding them; He was the stay which sustained them from beneath; sun and moon shone not there, neither heaven nor earth was seen. Yet it had no brightness which might have dazzled the eyes of those who looked on it—it gave to the eye nothing but the most refreshing delight. The elders who sat there, seemed to be in Himself; for nothing was corporeal there, but all incorporeal, although the semblance of bodily things was there. It was something unutterable.” When his two guides, Peter and John, had led him to this infinite light, there came to him from the majesty of God, which seemed imaged to him by this immeasurable and inapproachable light, a voice full of indescribable sweetness, and it said: “Go hence; thou shalt return to Me with the crown of martyrdom.” At these words the whole multitude, which praised God on all sides, were silent, and with bowed heads, they worshipped God. But the face of Him from whom this voice came forth Anschar saw not. “After these words,” he says, “I was sad, because I had to go back to the world. But the promise sustained me, that I should yet again return home from thence, so I journeyed back with these my guides. They said nothing to me on my return, as on my coming; but they looked upon me with finch a look of tender love, as that with which a mother looks on her only son. And so I came back into the body. Both in going and coming there was no effort and no pause; we were at once where we would be. And although I have said somewhat of these joys, I confess that my tongue can never utter what my soul feels. And my souk even feels it not as it was; for it seemed to me to be that which the eye hath not see; nor the ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.”

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We have given this vision according to the description of Anschar himself, because it gives us such deep insight into the God-filled life of a simple Christian soul. This vision made a powerful and inextinguishable impression on him.

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He was awakened by it to a new vigour of Christian life,—and henceforth he was animated by the thought that he was to die the precious death of a witness for the faith. Two years later, he had another remarkable dream. He had retired to pray in a chapel into which he was wont frequently to retire for quiet devotion, and when he arose from prayer, a man of a sublime countenance, clothed in Jewish garments, entered the door; his eyes shone as if they were full of light. Anschar at once recognised him as the Lord Christ, and cast himself at his feet. As he lay thus on his face, the vision desired him to rise; and as he then stood reverently before Him and was unable to look in his face, because of the exceeding brightness of the light which beamed from His eyes, the Lord said to him in a gentle voice, “Confess thy sins, that thou mayest be justified.” Anschar replied, “Lord, what can I say to Thee? Thou knowest all things, and nothing is hidden from Thee.” The Lord answered. “I indeed know all things, but I will that men should confess their sins, that they may receive forgive-

ness.” After he had made confession of his sins, and then had knelt down to pray, the Lord said to him, “Fear not—I am He who blotted out thy sins.” With these words he vanished, and Anschar awoke, full of the joyful assurance that his sins were forgiven.

He was subsequently sent with other monks from the Abbey of Corbie to the Abbey of Corvei, which had been planted as a colony from Corbie, for the diffusion of Christianity and Christian culture on the banks of the Weser,—to direct the school there and to preach to the people. Amongst the manifold difficulties with which this monastery had to contend in a wild and destitute district, opportunities were afforded him for the exercise of Christian patience, and this was certainly a good preparation for his calling as a missionary.

When Harold, king of Jutland, who had been baptized at Jugelheim, was returning in the year 826, from a visit to his ally the Emperor Louis the Good, the emperor wished to send a zealous preacher of the Gospel with the returning Danes, for the confirming and strengthening of their own faith and for its further propagation. But it was difficult to find any one, who would not be withheld by the frightful tales of the barbarism of these Northmen, and the cruel character of their idolatry.

Only Wale, Abbot of Corbie, to which Anschar had then returned, declared to the emperor, that he knew a man of fervent zeal for the cause of God, who even longed to die for it. Anschar was summoned, and was instantly ready to travel to Denmark with King Harold. Whilst his abbot was visiting the court, Anschar prepared himself in the solitude of a vineyard, by reading the Scriptures and prayer, for his high vocation. People saw him become even more earnest and abstracted, so that those who could not see into his heart, might have imagined that he dreaded the difficulties and dangers before him and repented of his decision. But with him it merely arose from a sense of the magnitude and difficulty of the calling, which made him serious, because he did not begin the work in the pride of vain human self-reliance, but with fear and trembling, in reliance on God; fully conscious of his own unworthiness and impotence, he confided in the power of God alone, and appearing more quiet and retiring than usual in the eyes of man, he had turned his whole heart to God. When another monk, called Antbert, who wished to join him as a companion in his missionary labours, asked him if he remained steadfast to his purpose, he replied: “When I was asked if I would go amongst the heathen for the name of God, to preach the Gospel, I dared not shrink from such a call. Yea, with all my strength, I desire to go thither, and no man will make me waver in this purpose.”

The most distinguished traits in the character of Anschar are his unwearying patience, his winning love, and his steadfastness of faith when dangers and hinderances opposed him. These his characteristic qualities were tested in many ways, from his first entrance on this vocation. The Danes whom he accompanied on their voyage to their native land, seem to have been at that time still strange to the essence of Christianity. Anschar met with rough treatment at their hands, until, in passing through Cologne, (whence they went down the

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Rhine to Holland, in order to cross thence to Denmark by sea.) Hadelbod, bishop of that city, presented him with a convenient vessel. This induced King Harold to join him, and Anschar succeeded by the power of love in vanquishing the barbarity of the Danes.

King Harold, after this, was banished from his kingdom. Anschar was able to effect nothing more than to buy some native lads, in order to educate them for teachers of their countrymen, and to found a small school in Schleswig,—the first Christian institution in those parts. His companion Antbert was taken from him by an illness which compelled his return to his native land. But those unfavourable circumstances could not make him waver,—a proof how free he was from self; since the more self-love is mingled with zeal flowing from the purest source, the more restless and impatient men are to see the *fruit* of their labours. The purer zeal is from the admixture of self, the more it will carry on the Fork of God, in the consciousness that neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but that it is God who giveth the increase; leaving it to Him to give the increase when and how He will.

In this unfavourable situation, the call came to him to a new sphere of missionary labours in Sweden, and he at once obeyed it, convinced that it was from God. As an ambassador of the Emperor Louis the Good, he went to that country in a merchant-ship, with presents from the Emperor to the King of Sweden. They were captured by pirates and lost everything. It was with difficulty that they could reach the shore and save their lives. Many of Anschar's companions wished to return; but he himself declared that "what should befall him was in the hand of God; but he was resolved not to return until he found out whether it was the will of God that the Gospel should then be preached there."

Subsequently, he himself was surprised by the heathen Normans in Hamburg, the seat of his bishopric; he lost everything, and could hardly save himself. He was compelled to seek a place of refuge on the estates of a pious and noble widow in Holstein. But as soon as he could restore security and quiet to his own diocese, it was immediately his aim once more to extend the sphere of his activity. The most unfavourable prospects, on account of the enmity of Horik, then the reigning sovereign in Denmark, who had taken an active share in those hostile devastations of the diocese of Hamburg, could not restrain him. He knew the almighty power of love, he prayed continually for the conversion and salvation of those who threatened destruction to him and all Christians with fire and sword, that God would not lay to their charge the sins which they committed in their ignorance. He allowed himself to be employed by King Louis of Germany on political embassies to King Horik, he made him presents, by his love he won his heart, and Horik at last placed such reliance on Anschar, that he would only treat with Germany through him. This attachment of the King to his person, he was then able to use, in order to effect something for the Christian Church. He procured from him permission to erect a church in the city of Schleswig, which as a place

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of trade was well fitted for the diffusion of Christianity farther into the country. He also received from this king a letter of recommendation to the Swedish king Olof.

Horik wrote to him, that “he had never in his life seen such a man, and had never found such fidelity in any man, and because he had found such goodness in him, he had allowed him to do what he liked with regard to Christianity in his dominions, and he hoped therefore that King Olof would permit him to preach the Gospel in his kingdom, for he would certainly do nothing but what was just and good.”

When Anschar arrived in Sweden, he found the heathen there in a state of great excitement against the strange religion. His friends advised him only to employ the presents he had brought with him to rescue his life from the impending danger. But Anschar replied: “To rescue my life I will bestow nothing here; for if the Lord has so ordered it, I am prepared to suffer torture here for his name’s sake, and even death.” He invited the King to a feast, gave him presents, and gained his heart, because he knew how to become all things to all men; and afterwards the Lord helped him on the way which His infinite wisdom had appointed.

Anschar experienced in his laborious and perilous life, many remarkable answers to prayer. This became known, and many sick people came from a distance to be cured by his prayers.

But he himself rejected the fame of a worker of miracles, saying, “If I were worthy, *I would ask one miracle of my God, that he would make of me by his grace a holy man.*”

When, after the labours of four-and-thirty years, he was hastening to his dissolution, amidst the sufferings of a painful sickness, he would often say with Job: “Have we received good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil?” After receiving the Holy Supper, he raised his hands to heaven, and prayed, that the grace of God might pardon all who in any way had injured him. Then he frequently repeated the words: “Lord, in thy goodness remember me, for thy mercies’ sake. Be merciful to me, a sinner; for into thy hands I commend my spirit.” And when, gazing towards heaven, he had commended his spirit to the grace of God, he left this world. It was in the year 865.



THE MARTYR ADALBERT IN PRUSSIA.

Adalbert was born of a noble family in Prague, in the year 956. He was educated in Magdeburg, and thence returned to his native land. In the year 983 he was elected bishop of his native city. Much heathen barbarism then prevailed amongst his countrymen; and Adalbert, who could not tolerate a heathen life, as united to an outward confession of Christ, had on this account to endure many a hard conflict. He did not lack glowing zeal and steadfastness; but perhaps he did sometimes fail in discretion and that unwearied patience, which must indeed have been exposed to hard trials amongst these wild tribes, who would submit to no yoke.

He, therefore, more than once excommunicated this flock, who would not follow him as their shepherd, nor give up their lawless ways. He wished to take refuge in a monastic life, and visited the venerable Nilus in Italy—a man who shone as a light in the darkness, whose life and labours we will look at more closely by-and-by. But he was again constrained to return to his wild flock, to be driven from it a second time.

When he took leave of his people for the third time,—impelled by a fervent zeal to labour for the propagation of Christianity,—he repaired to Hungary, where the seed of faith had recently begun to germinate.

He was very gladly received by the king Geisa, who, influenced by his wife, suffered himself to be baptized; but Adalbert could get little attention to his exhortations from either of them. Meantime, it may have been the impression of his words and conduct which produced so great an effect on the heart of their son, the boy Stephen, who afterwards accomplished so much towards the foundation of the Christian Church in Hungary.

His impatience, however, soon drove him away from Hungary. He resolved to go where no missionary had yet penetrated—to the heathens in Prussia. Duke Boleslad I., of Poland, to whom he applied, gave him a ship, and thirty soldiers for an escort.

So he proceeded to Dantzic, then the frontier town of Prussia, towards Poland. Here he commenced his labours, and succeeded in baptizing many. Then he left that neighbourhood in order to proceed to the opposite shore. Having landed there, he sent back the ship and the men. He wished to commit himself wholly to the protection of his God,—as a messenger of peace, not to come under the guardianship of human might,—and also to avoid anything which might excite suspicion amongst the heathen.

He only retained with him the priest Benedict, and his pupil Gaudentius. They landed at the Frische Haff, and proceeded in a small skiff to an island formed by the Pregel at its mouth. But the inhabitants came with cudgels to drive them away, and one of them gave Adalbert such a violent blow with the rudder, as to knock the Psalter from which he was singing out of his hand, and to throw him on the ground. When he recovered himself, his first words were, “Lord, I thank thee, that thou hast counted me worthy to suffer at least one blow for my crucified Saviour.” On Saturday, they crossed to the opposite bank of the

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Pregel, to the coast of Samland. The owner of the land, whom they found there, led them to his village, and a great crowd of people collected around them. When Adalbert was asked who he was, and with what object he came, after telling them who he was, and whence he came, he declared to them in a gentle tone: "For the sake of your salvation I am come hither, that ye may abandon your deaf and dumb idols, and acknowledge your Creator, beside whom there is no God, that, believing in his name, ye may receive everlasting life, and be made partakers, in an imperishable existence, of heavenly joy." The heathens gnashed their teeth with fury as they heard these words. and striking their staves on the ground, threatened him with their clubs. He might esteem it a great thing, they told him, that he had reached so far unhurt, and that only by a speedy departure he could save his life. They saw that all in that kingdom had one law and one way of life, and that as subject to another and an unknown law, if they did not depart that night, they would be beheaded the next day. They were placed in a ship, were compelled immediately to push off from the coast, and remained five days in a village to which they came. When they awoke on the last day, Gaudentius related to his spiritual father a dream which he had had in the night. "I saw," he said, "in the midst of the altar, a golden chalice half full of wine. No one watched beside it. As I was about to drink of the wine, the minister of the altar forbade me, saying, that he could not permit me nor any other man to do so, for the wine was to be kept for the spiritual refreshment of the bishop on the morrow."

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"My son," observed Adalbert, who believed he saw in this a token of the martyr's crown destined for him, "God bless this vision; yet we may not trust to a dream which may delude us." At daybreak they set forth on their journey, and they went joyfully through thick forests singing and calling on the Lord Christ. Song shortened the way. Towards midday they came to a place cleared for fields. Here Gaudentius celebrated the mass, Adalbert partook of the holy supper; then they sat down on the turf, and refreshed themselves with some of the provisions which they had brought with them. After Adalbert had concluded the meal by repeating a verse from the Bible, and chanting a psalm, he arose, and when he had gone a little way he sat down again. Weary with walking, he and his companions fell into a deep sleep; but they were awakened in a terrible way. It was the raging of a wild band of heathen that aroused them. They were all thrown into chains. Adalbert continued in unruffled peace of soul, and said to his companions: "My brethren, be not troubled; ye know that we suffer this for the name of the Lord, whose might is above all might, whose beauty surpasses all beauty, whose grace is unspeakable. What is there more beautiful than to yield up sweet life for our sweetest Jesus?" Thereupon a priest stepped forth from the furious crowd, and with all his force cast his spear into the breast of the man of God, and then all the rest let loose their fury on him. Dying, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and prayed to the Lord for his own and his persecutors' salvation: this happened on the 23d of April, in the year 997.

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The century of Adalbert was not rich in messengers of the faith. Only when the Church is rich within in the gifts of the Spirit, can the Divine fulness stream forth around; and the water of life, which fertilizes the heathen world, will flow back in blessing to the places from which it sprang. But where spiritual life is lacking, no beneficial influence can issue thence to those without. If the salt have lost its savour, nothing can be salted with it. This holds good as to the tenth century, in which the seeds of Christianity, already sown, were menaced with destruction by the thorns and thistles of sensual barbarism. Men were needed then who would once more arise as missionaries amongst the degenerate natives, who named themselves by the name of Christ, but amongst whom little of his spirit and life were to be found,—*men whose mission should be from within*. Such a man there was in the country where barbarism and superstition and ignorance had gained the firmest hold,—Nilus, the man of God, whom we will therefore introduce here after the men whose mission was from without.



THE MONK NILUS.

Nilus was born at Rossano, in Calabria, in the year 910, of an old Greek family. His pious parents, to whom only one child, a daughter, had been given, besought the Lord that he would give them a son. This prayer was heard, and that son was Nilus. They carried the child to the church, and consecrated him to the service of God. On that account, also, they gave him the name of Nilus, after a venerated monk of the fifth century, distinguished by his spirit of vital Christianity, and to whose example the youth who bore his name subsequently conformed. The seed which his pious parents sowed in his childish heart, had at first the effect of preserving him from the corruptions of the age. But as he lost his parents early, he grew up under the care of his married sister, who was also a pious woman. From his childhood he used to read the biographies of the old venerated monks, Antony, Hilarion, etc.; and thus a spirit of deep, earnest piety was awakened in him, which made him from the first fly the corrupt manners prevalent in the houses of the great, and avoid amulets and magic formularies, as well as other kinds of superstition then in vogue.

When, afterwards, a reaction against the depravity of morals around, drove him into so much the more stern an asceticism, he had many conflicts to undergo with himself, and by these many opportunities were given him of searching into the depths of his own heart. Upon his holiest seasons tempting thoughts would intrude themselves—temptations to spiritual pride, which most naturally mingle with an ascetic striving after sanctification by self-conquest, and temptations to sensuality. Often, whilst he was praying and singing in the church, such thoughts as these would arise within him: “Look towards the altar: perchance thou mayst see an angel there, or a flame of fire, or the Holy Ghost, as many have done before.” And had he given himself up to such thoughts, he might easily have fallen into the most perilous self-deceptions and fanaticism and the Divine life in him, as in many others who could not overcome such temptations, might have been crushed by pride and vanity. The angels of darkness, who know how to clothe themselves as angels of light, would have possessed themselves of his soul, and bound it in their fetters. It was the temptation which his Saviour had passed through before him, to make bread of the stones of the wilderness, to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. The faithful disciple followed his example. Nothing is so fitted to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, as the discretion of humility, the working out our salvation with fear and trembling. This gives the sober mind, which is able to resist all the clamour of self-conceit. The more such temptations to pride pressed on Nilus, the more he humbled himself. He closed his eyes, in order not to see such visions as were promised him, and he contended so with himself in penitence and tears, that drops of sweat fell from him to the ground. Once, when he was occupied with writing, reading, and singing in St. Peter’s church at Rome, and was assailed by such temptations, he cast himself before the altar and said to the Saviour: “Lord, thou knowest that I am weak—have compassion on me, and lighten these conflicts which make me despair

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of my life.” Then, as he fell asleep, this vision came to him. He saw before him Christ hanging on the cross, only separated from him by a very thin white veil. He cried to Him: “Lord, have mercy on me, and bless thy servant.” Then the Lord stretched his right hand over him three times from the cross. Nilus awoke, and was delivered from all his temptations.

In that age, when many of those who opposed the prevailing corruptions sought to be justified by their own works, he felt constrained all the more to yield himself up entirely to the Saviour, and to rely on him alone. The scholar of Nilus who relates this from his life, adds: What much fasting and watching could not accomplish, was effected by this humbling of himself before the Lord, and by the confession of his own impotence.

Nilus was frequently visited by men of all ranks, the noblest both amongst the clergy and the laity, and they used to lay many questions before him. He made use of every such opportunity to direct people’s attention to the one thing needful; to warn them against a false confidence in a mere external Christianity, dead faith, and outward works; and to turn them from fruitless subtleties to that which was necessary for the salvation of their souls. Once, when he saw the archbishop with an imperial privy-councilor, many priests, and government-officers, and several of the congregation coming towards him, he said: “See, they are coming again, to enter into empty and idle talk with me. But, my Lord Jesus Christ, deliver us out of the snares of Satan, and grant us to think, to speak, and to do what is well-pleasing unto thee.” And when he had so prayed, he opened the book which he had in his hand,—a biography of saintly men,—and marked the first passage which pleased him. When his visitors had saluted him and seated themselves, he gave the privy-councillor the book to read where he had marked it, and he read the words in which it was said, “that only one among thousands should be saved.”

When the rest heard that, they were seized with horror, and exclaimed, “God forbid that it should be so; that is not true; whoever said this is a heretic. Thus we should in vain have been baptized; in vain worship the Crucified; in vain partake of the Holy Supper; in vain be called Christians.” As they said these things, and neither the archbishop nor the privy-councillor said anything to them, Nilus observed to them, in a gentle tone: “What, then, if I show you that the ancient fathers—that Chrysostom, Basil, the Evangelists, and the Apostle Paul—say the same? what will you then have to bring against it, since, on account of your evil lives, ye call words spoken by the Holy Ghost lies? But I say to you, my brethren, that all these things which you have mentioned will obtain you no acceptance with God.” And, in order to remind them that their abiding by a religion in which they had been educated, or by a confession for which they had made no sacrifice, or self-denial, was of no value, he added: “What idols, or what heresy have you left, in order to turn to the Lord Christ?” Wishing still further to impress on them that orthodoxy without a life corresponding to the faith could avail nothing, he said: “If one of you were to venture to give himself out to be a heretic, and so were to enter any town, would he not be stoned by every one? Be as-

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sured that your not being heretics will not save you. If you do not reform your lives, and reform them thoroughly, no man can save you from destruction.” As he said these words, all were confounded—they sighed deeply, and said: “Woe to us, sinners; to us, miserable men.” A captain of the imperial guard, named Nicholas, then began to speak, endeavouring to show that the Gospel, after all, was not so very strict: “Why, father, does the Gospel say that ‘Whoever shall give a cup of cold water to a poor man shall by no means lose his reward?’” Nilus replied: “This is said to those who have nothing; that no poor man may be able to make the excuse, ‘I have no wood to warm the water.’ But what will ye do who rob the poor even of the cup of cold water?” Then a man of rank, who had led an unchaste life, and yet would gladly have felt safe in his sins, said: “I would know, holy father, if the wonderful Solomon was saved at last, or not?” Nilus, who penetrated his object, answered: “I would know of *you*, whether you will be saved or lost? for what avails it you or me whether Solomon was lost or saved, since it is said to us, ‘If a man look at a woman, to lust after her, he has already committed adultery,’ and ‘If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.’¹⁰ Yet who can assert of Solomon—of whom it is nowhere said in the Holy Scriptures, as of Manasseh, that he repented of his sins—that he was saved?” Thereupon one of the priests, wishing to turn the conversation, proposed the question, of what kind the tree was, of which Adam ate in Paradise, for which he was condemned? Nilus replied: “A wild apple-tree.” When every one laughed at this, he said to them, “Why do you laugh? such a question merits such an answer. Moses has not further described that tree, and how can we reveal what the Scriptures have hidden? You do not trouble yourselves to inquire how you were created; how you, like Adam, were placed in Paradise; what the command was, or rather, what the commandments were, which you have broken, and on account of which you too have been banished from Paradise—or, more correctly—from the kingdom of God; and how you can be restored to your original honour and glory—and you seek to know the name of a tree, which was a tree like other trees. Although, even if you could know that, you would not know what the root, leaves, and bark of the tree were like; nor whether it were a small or a large tree. And who can describe that which no eye has seen?”

When, on the next day, he was visiting a neighbouring castle, he met a Jew whom he had known from his youth, and who was much esteemed as a physician. The Jew said to him: “I have heard much of thy austerities and abstinences, and, as I know thy constitution, I have often wondered that thou hast not fallen a victim to epilepsy. I will, however, now give thee a remedy, adapted to thy constitution, which shall suffice for every day of thy life,

10 These words have indeed another application in their proper connexion, (1 Cor. iii, 17;) but they may justly be applied to him, who, by a disordered life, desecrates and ruins the temple of God.

and enable thee to fear no sickness.” Nilus replied to this, without troubling himself further to inquire about such an universal remedy:

“One of you, a Hebrew, has said, It is good to trust in the Lord, and to put no confidence in man.’ (Psa. cxviii, 8.) Since we, therefore, rely on our physician, our God and Lord Jesus Christ, we need not thy medicines.”

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It happened that a viceroy, sent from Constantinople, who was placed over all the western provinces of the Greek empire, had excited general discontent by an enterprise which he deemed beneficial, but which had proved burdensome to many. The inhabitants of the district of Rossano suffered themselves, in a moment of irritation, to be led into terrible deeds of violence. They repented afterwards, and knew not what to do, as they had reason to fear a severe revenge from the viceroy. In their desperation, they had already formed the project of still further increasing the evil, by raising a general insurrection against the Greek empire, to which they were subject. Then they turned their eyes to Nilus, and the remembrance of him inspired hope into their souls. They intrusted themselves to his mediation.

As soon as the warm-hearted man, who could not refuse his sympathy even to the guilty, was appealed to by them, he hastened to them. When he arrived, he made use of what had happened, to give them suitable exhortations, and then he advised the citizens no longer to close their gates against the viceroy, whose vengeance they dreaded, but at once to surrender to him. Full of fury, he entered the city; and while the members of the magistracy and the priesthood, as well as all besides, seized with terror, were not able to say a word, Nilus appeared, with the greatest composure, before the governor, and spoke to him with disinterested freedom. His venerable appearance softened the rage of the governor, and he left to him to decide on the punishment to be awarded to the insurgents. Nilus on this said, “Truly, it is a heavy crime that they have committed. If it were the deed of only a few men of influence, the deserved punishment might fall on them alone. But now the whole multitude shares in the guilt. Will you pass sentence of death against the whole of the inhabitants, and make so great a place empty of men?” The viceroy replied: “Nay, we will shed no blood; but we will confiscate their goods to enrich the imperial treasury, that they may thereby be brought to their senses, and may never venture anything of the kind again.” “And what will it profit you,” said Nilus, “if you enrich the imperial treasury, but lose your own soul? How can the Heavenly King forgive you your trespasses, if you, who to-day live and to-morrow are no more, forgive not those who have trespassed against you?” He engaged, as the viceroy thought that he could not grant a pardon without the will of the emperor, himself to write the emperor. And he succeeded in procuring the pardon. After having thus restored order and peace, he returned to the quiet of his cell, which he only left reluctantly, at the call of love, and thanked God that He had given him grace to accomplish such things.

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He was often thus compelled to abandon the quiet holy calm of a life devoted to prayer and contemplation, to descend from his height to the need of men, to protect those who

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were sore oppressed by the might of tyrants who feared not God. In most inclement weather, in heat and in cold, he would, on these accounts, take long journeys alone on foot. Wet to the skin, or with benumbed hands and feet, or burned by the sun, weary, faint with hunger and thirst, would he often arrive at the goal of his journey; but love made all easy to him.

Once a chamberlain, who stood in high honour at Constantinople, came to the neighbouring castle, and expressed his amazement that Nilus did not come, with the other abbots, to pay him his respects. Even the first bishop of the empire, the patriarch, would, he thought, have shown him more respect. But those who knew Nilus better, answered him, that "this old man was no patriarch, yet he feared neither the patriarch nor even the emperor, whom all fear. He lives there on the mountain with a few monks, and needs no assistance from any man." Still more amazed at this account, the chamberlain wrote Nilus a letter, in which he entreated him either not to hide himself when he should come to visit him, or himself to visit the castle to bless him and his. Partly moved by his entreaties, and partly in the hope of obtaining a more favourable hearing when he had to plead with him in behalf of the poor, Nilus accepted the invitation. The chamberlain was filled with reverence when he saw him. He immediately caused a book of the Gospels to be brought, in order to swear upon it, to fulfil whatever he should promise him. But as he began to do this, Nilus pointed out to him what Christ says, in the Sermon on the Mount, about swearing, and said: "Why would you give me reason to mistrust your words, and why, at the commencement of our intercourse, do you begin by transgressing the Word of the Lord? For every one who is easily ready to swear, will be also easily ready to say what is false." The scholar of Nilus says of him: "I am persuaded, that if all who live under the sun, were to come to him to ask suitable counsel of him, he would not fail to give to every one what was most profitable for them; for his counsel was as the counsel of God, full of wisdom, and most salutary. If men followed him, he led them to a glorious issue; if they despised him, peril arose thence to the soul, and hurt to the body; and I could relate many instances of this, were it not that the narrative would never end."

A countryman of Nilus, Philagathos, or John Bishop of Piacenza, who was apt to meddle to his own hurt with political affairs, had entered into an alliance with the Roman usurper Crescentius, and had been made Pope by him after the expulsion of Gregory V. Nilus felt himself constrained to warn him by a letter against the consequences of his ambition. He exhorted him to renounce those worldly honours which he had already enjoyed to satiety, and to retire from the world. In the year 988 Gregory was forcibly restored by the Emperor Otho III., and a barbarous revenge taken on the bishop. After his eyes had been put out and his nose and tongue cut off, he was thrown into prison. When Nilus, who was then eighty-eight years old, heard this in his convent at Gaeta, he hastened to Rome, at a fast-time, when he was ever most unwilling to be disturbed in his devotions and penances, and although he

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was ill. He entreated the Emperor to give the Archbishop to him, that they might thenceforth live together, and together do penance for their sins. The Emperor promised to do so. But when after this the archbishop was again exposed to public shame, Nilus declared to the Pope and the Emperor that they offended not against him but against God, for whose sake they had promised to pardon the wretched man. And as they had shown no mercy to the unfortunate man whom the Heavenly Father had placed in their power, so they had no mercy to expect for their sins from him. The young Emperor, accustomed to be flattered by all, was compelled to hear the voice of truth from the mouth of the poor monk. When the Emperor afterwards asked him what favour he would request of him, he replied, "I request nothing from you but that you will not trifle away the salvation of your soul; for although you are emperor, you must die like another man, appear before the judgment-seat of God and render an account of your good and evil deeds." The Emperor shed tears, laid down his crown, and besought Nilus to bless him.

The prayers of Nilus were frequently besought on behalf of the sick, or of those who suffered from mental diseases, (regarded in those days as possessed by evil spirits,) either by themselves or their relations. But he perceived the snare which threatened him, and rejected the fame of a worker of miracles. Once a man who held a distinguished military appointment, brought his heavily-afflicted son to him for this purpose. Nilus replied to his entreaties: "Believe me, my friend, I have never asked God to give me the gifts of miraculous healing, or the power to cast out evil spirits. May I but attain forgiveness of my own numerous sins, and deliverance from the evil thoughts which disturb me! Do thou rather pray for me, that I may be delivered from *many* evil spirits. For thy son has only *one* evil spirit, and that involuntarily, and perchance this may tend to the salvation of his soul, either as a purification from former sins, or as a preservation against others." When, however, the son was restored to health, and the father wished to thank Nilus for his mediation, he replied: "God has healed thy son; I have done nothing towards it?" The scholar who has described the life of Nilus, and who in those words manifests the spirit of his master, says: "I will not relate great marvels of him, by which the ears of the childish and unbelieving might be astonished, but I will relate his toils and labours, for I know that in such things as these the great Apostle gloried."

Christian communion between those who belonged to the Greek, and those who belonged to the Latin Church, was at that time disturbed by controversies on particular ecclesiastical customs, usages, and doctrines, in which there was a variation. But Nilus was too deeply grounded in the Divine word, not to prize the oneness in Christ higher than all such variations, and the genuine spirit of Christian love raised him above all those divisions. He was regarded with equal veneration by the members of both Churches. Thus the abbot and monks of the famous abbey of Monte Cassino, begged him to celebrate the mass in their church in his native language, in order, as they said, that God might be all in all, (that they might all together honour God in different tongues and forms—that all other differences

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might be subordinate to the unity of the common Divine life.) At first Nilus refused this offer, saying: "How can we, (the Greeks,) who, on account of our sins, have been humbled in all lands, sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" At length, however, he yielded, in the hope of thus promoting Christian fellowship. Divine service being concluded, the differences between the two Churches became the subject of conversation. Amongst these was the fact of the Roman Church ordaining a fast on Saturday, which the Greek did not. Nilus replied to the questions addressed to him on this subject in the words of the Apostle Paul: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest thy brother? Whether, therefore, we eat, or whether we fast, may we do all to the glory of God." Then, after explaining the grounds on which the Greeks were wont not to fast on the Saturday, he added: "But let us abstain from idle discourses, for fasting is no sin; let us say, with the Apostle, (1 Cor. viii, 8:) "Meat commendeth us not to God." If the poor Jews would only worship the Crucified as their Lord, even though they should fast on Sundays, it would not distress me." Thereupon the rest said to him: "Is it no sin to fast on Saturday?" He answered them, "That the outward demeanour availed nothing; but the turning of the heart to God. All which was done for God's sake was good." And he endeavoured to show them how people might differ in outward observances by reason of their different points of view, and yet agree thoroughly in the essentials of the faith.

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Nilus had heard that the lord of Gaeta intended after his death to bring his bones into the city, and lay them there; believing that the relics of the holy man would be a protection to the city. But his humility shrank from the thought, that such veneration as was then paid to the saints should be paid to him; rather let no man know where he was buried. He took leave of his sorrowful scholars and friends, saying to them: "Mourn not, my fathers and brethren, for I go hence to prepare a place and a convent, where I will gather all my brethren and my scattered children together." He probably meant the rest of heaven, in which he trusted once more to meet those whom he loved. Then he got on his horse and took the road to Rome. When he arrived at Frascati, he went into a small convent dedicated to St. Agatha, saying: "This is my resting-place for ever." Many of his friends, and many of the great men of Rome, entreated him to come to the metropolis, if it were only to perform his devotions at the tombs of the two chief Apostles. He answered them: "Whosoever has faith, even as a grain of mustard-seed, can celebrate here also the commemoration of those two Apostles. I came to this insignificant place for no other reason except to die here."

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Gregory, the proprietor of the place where Nilus had retired to, a tyrannical man of harsh temper, was much moved when he heard that a man so venerated had repaired thither. He came to him, fell at his feet, and said: "O thou servant of the most high God, I am indeed not worthy, on account of my many sins, that thou shouldst come under my roof. But since, after the example of thy Master and Lord, thou halt preferred the sinner to

the righteous, see, thou mayst do what thou wilt with my house and castle, and all my possessions, even all that is before thine eyes. If thou desirest anything, only tell me what.” Nilus replied: “The Lord bless thee and thine, thy whole house and all this place. But give to me and mine only a small piece of land from thy territories, that we may find a resting-place there, and pray God for the pardon of our sins and for thy salvation.” Gregory bestirred himself to grant the request of Nilus. Foreseeing that his death was near, he desired those who were with him not to delay his funeral, not to bury him in a church, to place no arch or other ornamental monument over his grave; but if they wished to make some token of the place of his burial, to let it be a seat for wayfarers to rest upon, since he himself had ever lived as a wayfarer. They saw him lie two days stretched on his couch, speechless, and with closed eyes; but they thought, from certain signs, that he was praying. When Gregory heard of his condition, he hastened from his castle with an experienced physician, whom he had with him. He threw himself on Nilus, weeping bitterly, and said: “O father, father! why dost thou leave us so soon?” And kissing his hands, he added: “See, now, thou hinderest me no more from kissing thy hands, as thou wast wont to do, saying, ‘I am no bishop, no priest, no deacon, but only a poor old man; why wilt thou kiss my hands thus?’” Whilst he said these words, he wept so bitterly that all present were moved to tears. They carried Nilus, in whom no signs of death could yet be seen, into the church, knowing that he would have wished to end his days on earth there. Gently he fell asleep, without any one observing a death-struggle in him, an end becoming such a life. It was in the year 1005. He left disciples behind him, who laboured on in his spirit in those times of depravity.



OTHO, BISHOP OF BAMBERG.

As a new Christian revival distinguished the close of the eleventh century, missionaries were then sent forth from the reinvigorated Church. We will sketch a portrait of one of these, to whom Pomerania owes its Christianity. It was Otho, bishop of Bamberg, who had already in his pastoral office distinguished himself by his fidelity and his self-sacrificing love. He gladly imposed abstinences on self, in order to be able to give more to the poor. All that was presented to him by princes and nobles in the neighbourhood, or from a distance, he delighted in applying to this purpose. When once, at a season of feasting, when fish were very dear, a very costly fish was brought to his table, he said to his steward: "God forbid that the miserable Otho alone should eat so much money. Take this costly fish to my Christ, who should be dearer to me than myself. Bear it hence, wherever thou canst find one laid on a bed of sickness. Bread will do for me, a healthy man." Once, a valuable fur robe was presented to him, with the request that he would wear it for the donor's sake. He sent this message back to the donor: "That since this gift was the token of especial love, he would, for his sake who had shown him such love, take care that the gift should be laid up, securely and beyond the reach of harm; where neither moth nor rust could corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal." In which words he played on what our Lord had said about the treasure in heaven. The bishop had an accurate list of all the sick in the town by name, the lame, those who suffered from leprosy or cancer, with a precise description of the nature and duration of each disease. He made use of these notes in order to be able, through his steward, to help all in due time according to their need. He said, therefore, on this occasion, to one of his servants: "Take this beautiful fur, which I value much, and carry it to that lame man who is confined to his bed, whose body is covered with sores." (The sick man whom he named was an object of derision to the whole neighbourhood.)



During a great scarcity, many of the poor people were fed by his love, which shrank from no sacrifice. A man whose heart was so enkindled by the fire of love, was perfectly fitted to bear witness of the Saviour to those who had not heard of him.

There happened to come to him a certain bishop Bernhard, a man of Spanish origin. This man, who on account of some controversy could not enter on the bishopric to which he had been appointed, felt himself constrained to travel with his chaplain to the Slavonic tribes in Pomerania. There was in him a genuine missionary zeal, not however tempered by the requisite discretion. Accustomed to a severe ascetic life, he appeared barefoot, in a hermit's garb. He deemed it necessary, in order to carry on the missionary work in the spirit of Christ, according to the example of the apostles, literally to observe the directions given them by the Lord. (*Matt. x, 9, 10.*) We see in this that misuse of the Scriptures, by which men of the best intentions are often injured, when the wisdom of the serpent is not united with the simplicity of the dove. It is requisite, in passages such as these, to distinguish between what the Lord prescribes as an universal law for all ages, and What He only says



in reference to particular circumstances determined by the peculiar occasion on which it was spoken. With regard to rules of this latter kind, under different circumstances the Lord would have spoken quite differently, and by a literal observance of such rules, under quite different circumstances, we should be acting entirely contrary to the will of Christ. We should not be doing that which Christ himself would, in such cases, have done or have commanded his disciples to do. We ought therefore to extract the general law from such particular directions, in order duly to observe them according to the mind of Christ. Thus, in this instance, the Spanish bishop entirely misunderstood the meaning of Christ. The apostles, by acting as Christ directed them, were to manifest their confidence in God, whose Word they had gone forth to preach. Wherever they came, they found souls ready to receive them, who, in return for the bread of spiritual life, supplied them with bodily nourishment, ([Luke xxii, 35](#);) and they were to be content with what each according to his means could afford them. Their not providing themselves with necessaries for their journey made it easier for them to travel. But Bernhard was about to commence his missionary labours under totally different auspices. The inhabitants of Pomerania at that time were a happy and prosperous people, richly blessed with natural gifts; amongst whom there were neither poor nor beggars. The only priests they knew appeared in wealth and splendor. Poverty was held amongst them to be something quite unworthy of the priesthood. From the way in which Bernhard came to them, he could seem to them nothing but a beggar—a man, that is to say, whom they would suspect of self-interested motives. He did not understand how it behoves the true missionary to enter into the position and circumstances of those whom he desires to lead to the Gospel, and to become all things to all men. Amongst the Christian nations of those times, in whom the sense of sin was strongly developed by the yoke of the law, one who appeared like Bernhard, as a strict monk, might obtain great veneration. But it was otherwise with the heathen Pomeranians. When St. Paul says of himself, in [Romans vii](#), “I was alive once without the law,” he describes a particular stage of development both with individuals and with nations, in which a man carries sin about with him as something sleeping or dead, in which, as the sense of law, so also the sense of sin has not yet clearly manifested itself, and good and evil, yet undeveloped, lie in the germ beside each other. The man is yet a hidden and unknown being to himself. He has not yet been put to any test which would make him feel the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, the chasm between the requirements of the law and his own lusts. Many good impulses may be perceived in such a state, outbreaks now of the good, then of the evil nature will be seen, and both are mingled together. In such a case a man, following the good inclinations of his heart, may accomplish, as it were instinctively, much that is good:—hospitality, a certain love of family, and of country, and much that makes men amiable may be found in him, as long as natural selfishness is not exposed to any very hard test. But he is yet far from knowing what the nature of the law is, and what the nature of sin. In such a position as this the Pomeranians



then were; and from such a position, the inward conflicts, the state of contrition from which monasticism and the ascetic life arose, must have seemed perfectly incomprehensible, and the life which Bernhard led something altogether inexplicable. He was sure to incur their contempt, and they could only deem him a madman. Nevertheless, they did him no harm, until, by another indiscretion of fanatical zeal, he excited the rage of the ignorant heathen,—namely, by destroying an idol, before anything had occurred to destroy idolatry in their hearts; an act which, thus unprepared, could avail nothing, and could only embitter men's minds. Bernhard was compelled to go on board a ship, and was banished the country. He repaired to Bamberg and sought to gain Bishop Otho for the cause, for which he had been able to accomplish nothing, because he had not set about it in the right way. His example also served to make the bishop on his guard against similar mistakes. He therefore, dearly as he loved everything monastic, divested himself of everything of the kind on his appearance amongst the Pomeranians. He resolved rather to appear in the splendor of his episcopal rank. He not only provided himself in the most abundant way with all that was necessary for the maintenance of himself and his attendants, but he also carried with him costly garments and other things as presents for the people of rank, and also all the requisite ecclesiastical vessels, in order clearly to show that he did not come to gain anything, but rather gave up his own, in order to lead the foreign nation to what he believed highest and best.

In the year 1124, Otho commenced his missionary expedition. After many happy results, but also after having made many vain efforts, and passed through many great perils, he arrived in the metropolis, Stettin. Much depended on the way in which he was received there. Many of the heathen awaited, with eager expectation, the decision of their metropolis, and this seemed at first no favourable one. How frequently has Christianity been most injured by the conduct of those who profess it! What men had seen in Stettin of the condition of the neighbouring Christian nations, which were, indeed, far from being truly Christian, did not tend to produce an advantageous idea of Christianity itself. For the Pomeranians, as we have remarked, were still, as it were, in the condition of a happy childhood, and knew not yet the evils through which it was necessary to pass, in order to attain to manhood. They knew nothing of the evils attending a commencement of good morals and civilization, from which man, who is destined not for an easy life on earth in dull unconsciousness, but for the dominion of the world in the image of God, cannot escape. It was yet strange to them, all the misery of the conscious discord which a man must have experienced in order to learn the ruin of his nature, and the only remedy for it. Thus the men of Stettin were disposed to over-estimate the happiness of their own condition, because they judged the effects of Christianity only according to the appearance which presented itself to a superficial observation, according to that which they perceived in the multitude.

While Otho, whose patience was not to be wearied by the first failure, remained many months in Stettin, he laboured, in the most convincing way, to refute these accusations



against Christianity by the example of his pious life, inspired as it was by the spirit of love. If these heathens had heard of vices as prevalent amongst the Christians, such as attend the transition from barbarism to civilization, and were unknown amongst them, Otho now showed them virtues such as were also quite unknown amongst them,—proofs of that self-sacrificing love which is only found where the Spirit of God overcomes man's natural selfishness. He ransomed many captives with his gold, and after providing them with clothes and victuals, sent them back to their friends. But the most favourable effect was produced by one especial incident, by which the tender heart of the bishop became more generally known, and by which the minds of the young were drawn towards him.

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A rich and distinguished man, in the city, had for his wife a lady who had, in her youth, been carried away captive from a Christian country, and who was secretly a Christian. She had, indeed, ever remained true to her faith, but she had not dared openly to confess it amongst the heathen. So much the more was she rejoiced at the bishop's arrival; still she did not venture openly to express her joy, and to unite with him. It probably did not happen without her influence, however, that both her sons frequently visited the priests, and questioned them concerning the Christian faith. The bishop availed himself of this, gradually to lay before them the principal doctrines of Christianity. They at length declared themselves convinced, and desired to be baptized. After their baptism, they remained eight days with the bishop, in order to spend the first week with him profitably in their white baptismal robes. Meantime, before the time had elapsed, their mother heard of it. Full of joy, she sent to the bishop, saying that she wished to see him and her sons. He awaited her in the open air, seated on the turf, surrounded by his clergy. The sight of her sons, in the white robes of baptism, made so powerful an impression on the mother, who had concealed her faith for so many years, that, overpowered by her feelings, she fell weeping on the ground. The bishop and his clergy, much alarmed, hastened to her, thinking that it was grief at her sons' having apostatized from the religion of their fathers, which had affected her so strongly. But they found it quite another thing, as soon as the lady was restored to consciousness, and could find words to express her feelings. Her first words were: "I praise Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, Thou fountain of all hope and comfort, that I see my sons consecrated by Thy sacraments, enlightened by faith in Thy Divine truth." And, kissing and embracing her sons, she added: "For Thou knowest, my Lord Jesus Christ, that, in the secret of my heart, I have not ceased for many years to commit these to Thy mercy, praying Thee to do that for them which Thou hast done for me." And then she turned to the bishop with these words: "Blessed be your coming to this city; for if ye faint not, ye shall gain a great company here for the Lord. But let not the long waiting weary you. See, I myself, who stand before you here,—I confess, by the help of the Almighty God, encouraged, venerable father, by thy presence, and also relying on the help of these my children, that I am a Christian, which hitherto I did not venture openly to do." And thereupon she related to him her whole history. Deeply

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moved, the bishop thanked. God for the wonderful guidance of His grace, testified his cordial sympathy with the lady, said many words to her to strengthen her faith, and presented her with a costly mantle of fur. When those eight days had elapsed, and the newly baptized had, according to custom, laid aside their white robes, the signs of the new garment of innocence, he presented them with beautiful and costly clothes, and after administering to them the Holy Supper for the first time, sent them back to their friends.

When the destruction of all the monuments of idolatry was finally resolved upon, and this resolution was carried out, many valuable things were discovered, all of which they wished to bestow upon the bishop. But he would receive nothing, saying: "Far be it from us to seek to enrich ourselves through you. All such things, and yet more beautiful, we have already in abundance at home." Yet he was also far from desiring to devote all which had once ministered to the idol-worship, on that account, to destruction. He permitted the people to divide amongst themselves all the treasures that had been gained by the destruction of the idol-temples, after, in conformity with the ecclesiastical usages of the times, he had signed them with the sign of the cross, and sprinkled them with holy water. From Stettin, Otho's labours were extended to other parts of the country; yet he could not succeed in laying an indestructible foundation for the Christian Church. His influence on men's minds had been limited by many things; he had only been able to speak to the people through an interpreter, and the motives which caused the accession of a portion of the people were external and political. Otho was also recalled too soon to his diocese by his official duties, before he could carry on the work, and set it on a firmer basis. The contagion of one-half of the country which adhered to heathenism, necessarily reacted on those in the other half in which the Christian Church had been founded, who were still weak in the faith. Many, in consequence of the abstinences which were laid on them by the strict discipline of the Church, would cast back a longing look to the pleasures of heathen dissipation, and the example of their heathen countrymen would serve to increase this longing. Nevertheless, Otho left in many hearts an incorruptible seed, from which, on the other hand, might proceed a reaction against the reviving power of heathenism. Not seldom, in the history of Missions, may we observe how, after a rapid, and, to the superficial observer, too promising diffusion of Christianity, follows a fresh revival of the power of heathenism, and only after new conflicts, by which the true is sifted from the false, can Christianity rise, reconquering, from her defeat.

Gladly would Otho have come sooner to the aid of the oppressed infant Church; but he was hindered three years, by various misfortunes and official engagements, from following the impulse of his heart, and it was not until the spring of the year 1128 that he was able to return. Travelling by a different route from that which he had taken before, he arrived first at the town of Demmind, whose governor was an old acquaintance of his. Here he met Duke Wratislas, of Pomerania, whose heart he had gained on his first mission. He was returning victorious from a war with some neighbouring Slavonic tribes, laden with booty. Here Otho

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saw sights which deeply pained his affectionate heart. The army of the Duke had carried off many captives, who were to be distributed like the rest of the booty. Amongst these were many of feeble and delicate frames; husbands were threatened, by the lot, with separation from their wives, wives from their husbands, children from their parents. Otho first succeeded in prevailing on the Duke to liberate the feeblest, and not to separate relations from one another. But this was not enough for him; he himself, from his own purse, paid the ransom for many who were still heathens, instructed them in Christianity, baptized them, and so sent them back to their people. It was then decided that the Feast of Pentecost should be chosen for the convening of a diet, in which the consent of the States to the foundation of the Christian Church, in all parts of the country, should be sought.

The city of Usedom, in which, by means of the priests whom Otho left behind him on his first missionary journey, the seed of Christianity had already been sown, was chosen as the seat of this Diet. The Diet was composed partly of those who had always continued heathen, and partly of those who had been previously converted by Otho, but during his absence had again sunk into Paganism. The duke presented the bishop to the assembly; he was a man whose whole appearance was calculated to inspire reverence. He called their attention to the fact, that by the appearing of this man amongst them, the old excuse—that the preachers of this religion were poor despicable people, on whom no reliance could be placed, who only sought to gain a livelihood by these means—was removed. They saw before them one of the first princes of the German empire, who in his own home had an abundance of everything, who possessed much gold and silver and many precious stones; of whom, therefore, there could be no suspicion that he was seeking anything for himself; who, on the contrary, had abandoned a life full of honour and comfort, and spent his own property in order to communicate to them what he deemed the best thing. These words prepared the way in men's hearts for the bishop's discourse. The Feast of Pentecost gave him occasion to speak of the grace and goodness of God, of the forgiveness of sins, of the communication of the Holy Ghost to the redeemed, and of the gifts of the Spirit. His words produced a deep impression—the lapsed testified their repentance, and were readmitted into the Church by the bishop; whilst those who had hitherto remained heathens, were instructed in Christianity and baptized. By a decree of the Diet, the free proclamation of the Gospel was permitted everywhere.

The union of gentleness and firmness was what distinguished bishop Otho. We have seen how he saved the things which had been devoted to idol-worship from destruction, applying them to a better purpose. In other circumstances, however, he acted quite otherwise. Whilst he was labouring in the city of Gietzkow, the people entreated him to spare a new and magnificent temple, which was looked upon as the special ornament of the town. But in vain were large presents offered him with this design. At length they only entreated that the temple might be converted into a Christian church. But the bishop feared, that if this

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were permitted, it might lead to a confusion of heathenism with Christianity. In order to convince the people that it was for their own good he was compelled to resist their will in this instance, he made use of this comparison: "Would you sow grain," he said, "in the midst of thorns and thistles? I trow not. If, therefore, you first root out the thorns and thistles from your fields, in order that the good seed you scatter there may bring forth fruit; so must I cast out from amongst you all which serves as seed for heathenism, but as thorns for my preaching, that your hearts may, from the good seed of the Gospel, bring forth fruit unto everlasting life." And by persevering daily in his remonstrances, he at length overcame the opposition of the people, so that they themselves destroyed both the temple and the idols. But, on the other hand, in order to compensate the people for the loss of their temple, Otho zealously promoted the erection of a magnificent church. And as soon as the choir (holy of holies) and the altar were ready, he appointed a consecration-festival. When, therefore, high and low were gathered together to celebrate it, and after all the arrangements ordered by the Church at such consecrations were completed, he explained to the assembled multitude the symbolic meaning of these things; and made use of these to direct their attention from the outward to the inward, and to warn them against placing their trust in outward things. He endeavoured to make it plain to the people that what was here done externally, had reference to the secret things of the soul—that this must become a temple of the Holy Ghost, Christ dwelling therein by faith. Then he turned to the one amongst the great men of the land, who reigned in that part of Pomerania, Nüzlav, who had been baptized by him at the Diet of Usedom: "Thou," he said to him, "thou, my son, art the true house of God. Thou must consecrate thyself to-day to thy God, thy Almighty Creator, in order that thou, being delivered from all the spirits that have taken possession of thy heart, mayst become a dwelling-place and a possession for Him alone. Therefore, my beloved son, hinder not the completion of this consecration; for it profits nothing that this visible house of God should be outwardly consecrated, if that which this consecration signifies does not also take place in thy heart." Then, as the bishop perceived by the movements of Nüzlav, that he was not untouched by the operations of the Holy Spirit, he added: "In part, my son, thou hast begun to be the house of God. Labour to be so wholly. Already hast thou exchanged idolatry for the faith, and received the grace of baptism. Now must thou adorn thy faith with *works* of piety,—renouncing robbery, murder, oppression, and deceit. It must become the rule of thy life, not to do to others what thou wouldest not that they should do to thee. Set thy captives free; or, if thou wilt not do that, at least set those at liberty who are Christians, and have one common faith with thee." Struggling with himself, Nüzlav said: "It is a hard thing for me, O father, to give freedom to all; for some owe me large sums." Then the bishop replied: "The Word of the Lord tells us to forgive our debtors, that we also may be forgiven. Thus mayest thou obtain absolution for all thy debts from the Lord, if thou absolvest all thy debtors in

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His name.” Then Nüzlav said with deep sighs: “See, in the name of the Lord Jesus, I set them all free, that, according to thy words, this consecration may be completed in me to-day, by the forgiveness of all my sins.” And, calling the servant who had the oversight of the prisoners, be commanded him to set them all free. But he made one exception, of which no one knew anything. This was the son of a Danish nobleman, whom his father, who owed him a very large sum, had left with him as a hostage. He was left under heavy chains in a subterranean dungeon. But by an especial Providence, he also was to be set at liberty.

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All were full of joy at Nüzlav’s conduct. The clergy bestirred themselves to get everything ready for the completion of the solemnity, when a necessary ecclesiastical vessel was missed. Whilst a priest was going about in search of it, he came near a subterranean dungeon, and the captive youth succeeded in attracting his observation. He called him to him, and entreated him to obtain his liberation through the bishop. When the bishop heard this, he was moved with compassion; but he could not venture to ask this favour also from one who had already granted so much. He had recourse to fervent prayer; and when he arose from prayer, he called his priests to him, and desired them to take Nüzlav apart, and, with all modesty, to prefer him this petition. It cost the man much to make this sacrifice also, and to renounce so large a sum. But, after some conflict, he overcame himself. He went weeping to the bishop, and said to him: “Yea, for the name of my Lord Jesus, if he calls for it, I will yield up my body, and all I have, in devout obedience.” The example of this powerful man excited many to follow it; so that every one, according to his degree, sought to prove the genuineness of his conversion by his works, and the sacrifices which he made.

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Bishop Otho would gladly have sacrificed his life for the love of Christ. He longed for the crown of martyrdom, and his fervour may have carried him beyond the bounds of discretion. With longing eyes he looked on the isle of Rügen, situated about two days’ journey off; and an eager desire arose in him to go forth, as a witness for the faith, amongst the warlike inhabitants of that island, who were wholly given to idolatry. But death menaced him there: the people of Rügen had doomed the foe of their gods to death, if he dared to cross their shores. The evident danger could not, however, withhold Bishop Otho. Joyfully would he encounter death for the cause of Christ.

The Duke of Pomerania, and all Otho’s friends, sought to dissuade him from such a step, but in vain; in vain did they represent to him that he ought to preserve his life for further service. He called this weakness of faith, saying that men must seal the Christian faith with works rather than with words. “How,” he said, “can the preachers of the Gospel expect the reward of eternal life, if they shrink from yielding up this present life? And if, in proclaiming the Gospel amongst the heathen, we all should die for the name of Christ, would not our preaching be all the more glorious, because sealed with our blood?” But as his friends endeavoured in all possible ways to prevent his going to Rügen, he looked about for some means of departing unobserved, and they were therefore obliged to watch him narrowly.

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But whilst, by most, Otho's fervent zeal was blamed as not sufficiently discreet, one of his priests, named Ulrich, felt himself constrained to carry out the thought for which Otho himself was ready to offer up his life. Having received the bishop's blessing, he took a boat, and carried with him all things necessary for the celebration of the mass. But he had to contend incessantly with wind and weather, and thrice he had to yield to the violence of the elements; yet, as soon as the fury of the tempest abated, he was again prepared to cross over to the island of Rügen. Thus he endured seven days the conflict with winds and waves, and often found himself in great peril. But as the weather remained constantly unfavourable, and the boat already began to leak, the bishop regarded it as an indication of the Divine will, which must be against the fulfilment of the undertaking; and he himself called back his beloved priest from the shore into his own house, thanking God that He had given him such strength of faith and steadfastness. By the free way in which the conduct of the bishop was now discussed by his clergy, and by the manner in which he bore their blame, we may see the beautiful relation then still preserved between the chief and the subordinates; the independence of the clergy, and the mildness of the bishop. After their common meal, the clergy began, in the presence of the bishop, to jest about Ulrich's expedition. "Who," said they, "would have been guilty of murder if he had perished?" Then another, who had always declared himself strongly against the enterprise, observed, "Who would more justly have borne the guilt of the murder, than he who induced him to throw himself into such danger?" But the bishop, who did not take this amiss, sought to excuse himself from such an accusation. "When," he said, "the Lord sent His disciples as sheep amongst wolves, and they were torn by the wolves, who was guilty of their death? Is the Lord to blame?" Certainly, this is one of those applications of the words of Christ, in which, as in the instance before adduced, due attention was not paid to the context and the object! Christ did not expose his disciples to certain death amongst the "wolves," but recommended them to blend the wisdom of the serpent with the simplicity of the dove, in order to escape the danger with which they were threatened. He did not desire them to sacrifice life without aim and without profit, but to preserve it in and for their high vocation, and only then to sacrifice it when fidelity to their calling required it of them. The right understanding of the teaching which Christ gave the apostles in reference to the labours of their calling, would rather have withheld the pious bishop from obeying the impulses of a fanatical zeal.

There was another occasion, however, on which Otho wisely hazarded all, in order to gain a triumph for the Gospel; for, in this instance, he might well expect a happy issue, if relying on the Lord he shrank from no peril. It was the advancement of the work he had commenced, for which he was obliged to risk his life, trusting to the protection of Him to whose service he had consecrated it. The prosperity of the whole Church in Pomerania depended on the fact whether heathenism or Christianity were victorious in Stettin, the metropolis. The power of heathenism had arisen there afresh. Those priests, who at Otho's first

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coming had suffered themselves to be baptized, had nevertheless continued heathens in heart, and they lost too much by the change of religion to brook it patiently. It was easy for them to find means of influencing the masses of the barbarous people. A pestilence which spread amongst men and cattle, and of which many died, was indicated by them as a sign of the wrath of their gods, and this was readily believed by the bewildered people. They at length succeeded in exciting the multitude so far, that they rose and gathered together to destroy a Christian church. The most terrible accounts were spread abroad in consequence of the fury of the heathen population of Stettin, and of the imminent danger which beset those who ventured to enter the city in the name of Christianity. Bishop Otho was not to be alarmed by these accounts, but his clergy had not the like heroism of faith, and fear kept them back. When Otho found that he could not overcome their opposition by his arguments, he resolved to go thither alone. After having prepared himself by a day's solitude, he stole away in the dark of the evening with his missal and his sacramental chalice. The clergy first learned his departure when they went to call him for the early morning service. Full of shame, and of anxiety for their spiritual father, they hastened after him, constrained him to return with them, and on the next morning they set out with him, and went by sea to Stettin.

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But they knew not how the seed which Otho had scattered there, crushed as it appeared to be, had been germinating and growing in secret. A reaction of Christianity, already deeply implanted in the hearts of many, at length, under various favouring circumstances, led to its final triumph over heathenism. It appears that Christianity had found the readiest welcome amongst the higher and more educated classes. Over these the heathen priests did not possess so much influence; amongst them reviving heathenism found no connecting link. They only dreaded to brave the tumult of the maddened people. But there were some who had been touched by Christianity without having completely renounced heathenism. In them heathenism and Christianity contended with each other, and it depended on many influences which should gain the day. At this very insurrection, which had for its object the destruction of a church, it had happened, that one of the insurgents, when he was about to strike with a hammer, was suddenly seized as if with a fit. His hand was, as it were, paralyzed. He let the hammer fall, and sank from the ladder. He may have belonged to the number of the apostate Christians. The faith which was yet by no means extinguished in his heart may again have asserted its power, thence a struggle have arisen in his soul, and terror seized him, arresting his hand, as he was about to join in the destruction of the temple dedicated to the God of the Christians. Heathenism still reigned perhaps in his soul; he could not renounce the worships of the old gods; but, at the same time, the God whose temple they were about to destroy seemed to him One against whom no human power could contend, as was now evidenced; and he advised that, in order to keep on terms with all the gods, they should erect altars to the national gods beside this church. This was often a bridge which led from heathenism to Christianity, when the heathen began to recognise the God of the Christians

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as a mighty Being *beside* their own gods. By all these favourable circumstances the way was prepared for the renewed labours of Otho in Stettin, and he found there a zealous friend, who in consequence of the experiences of his life had become a bold confessor of Christianity—that Witstock, of the remarkable incidents in whose life we have spoken before.

But Otho knew nothing of all this. Not in reliance on human means, and the co-operation of circumstances, but in reliance on God alone and bowing to His will, he went forth to meet the threatened danger, deeming his life to be a small thing in comparison with the holy cause which he served. He first found a refuge with his attendants in a church outside the city. When this became known amongst the people, an armed multitude collected before this church, led on by the priests. They threatened destruction to the church and death to all within it. Here we see how the power of faith gives true presence of mind—true prudence, in those critical moments on the right use of which the whole future often hangs. Had Otho suffered himself to be terrified, and shown fear, the enraged people would have gone farther with their attack; but they were overpowered by his trustful composure and courage. After committing himself and his people to God in prayer, he went forth in his episcopal robes, in the midst of his clergy, chanting hymns and psalms.

The calmness of the bishop who thus dared to despise the fury of the maddened crowd, and the grandeur of such a sight, awed the multitude. A pause ensued; and this was employed by the wiser among them, or those who were more favourable to Christianity, to quiet men's minds. They told the priests that they should defend their cause, not with violence, but with arguments. Gradually the crowd dispersed. The Saturday following this day, which was Friday, Otho spent in preparing himself by prayer and fasting for the approaching events. Witstock, who, since his wonderful deliverance, had never ceased to bear witness for the Lord, to whom he owed so much, was now yet further strengthened by the arrival of his beloved spiritual father. He led his friends and relations to the bishop, and bade him be of good cheer, and not shrink from the conflict. He assured him of victory, and counselled him what to do.

On the Sunday, Otho caused himself to be led to the market-place by Witstock, in his priestly robes. He ascended the platform from which the heralds and other persons in authority were wont to address the people. When Witstock, by words and gestures, had commanded silence, Otho began to speak. The greater number listened quietly and attentively. But then came forth a tall and handsome priest, a man of powerful frame, and with his strong voice quite drowned the voices of Otho and his interpreter; seeking to inflame the fury of the people against the enemy of their gods, and exhorting them to take this opportunity of revenge. The lances were raised, but no one ventured to undertake anything against a man who stood before them with such calmness of faith. It was the impression of the power of the Divine Presence on the wild crowd, the calm superiority of sober courage to raging passion, to which may also have been added, with a large portion of the assembly,

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the yet unextinguished influence of the Christianity to which they had once yielded themselves. Otho made use of the favourable effect of such an incident on men's hearts, and proceeded with the assembled band of believers to the church beside which the heathen altar had been erected. He consecrated it afresh, and caused the injuries which had been done it to be repaired at his own cost.

On the next day, an assembly of the people was to decide on the course to be adopted in this religious crisis. This lasted from the early morning until midnight. Some arose and related all that had occurred on the previous day to the assembly in the miraculous light in which it represented itself to them, testifying with enthusiasm to the active and self-sacrificing love of the bishop. Amongst these, Witstock held the first place. It was resolved, that Christianity should be recognised, and all which belonged to heathenism be destroyed. That same night, Witstock hastened to inform the bishop of all that had passed. On the next morning, Otho arose early to praise God for all that His grace had done. He then called an assembly of the people, and addressed to them words of exhortation, which made a deep impression. Many apostates desired to be restored to the communion of the faithful. Thus was the victory won for Christianity. Gladly would Otho, fearless of the martyr's death, have extended his labours to the island of Rugen, had he not been recalled by duty to his own diocese in the year 1128.



RAYMOND LULL.

WE conclude these Memoirs from the history of Missions in the Middle Ages with the portrait of an extraordinary man, who was awakened to the higher life in a very remarkable way,—a man of a rare variety of high qualities and intellectual endowments, all illumined by the glow of holy love,—Raymond Lull. We see, by his example, how much that is great may remain slumbering in a man, until he is brought, by the breaking-in of a sunbeam from above on his heart, to a consciousness of himself, and thus to energetic action. Manifold talents are required for the missionary work, which must be inspired by the Holy Ghost; every one cannot effect everything under all circumstances. The greatest things are, indeed, accomplished by the power of the simple Gospel,—by the manifestation of the Spirit, and the power which accompanies those essential truths in the hearts of men. But amongst nations possessed of scientific culture, in which the previous civilization is found in the service of a religion hostile to Christianity, a science which renders homage to the Cross and to the spirit of the Gospel, may become an important means of transition to Christianity. The example of Paul proves this, as well as many examples in the first centuries. And in this relation, Raymond Lull is worthy of mention, a man of high intellect, who called the attention of his contemporaries to this union of science with religion, who in all his deep thinking had for his object to find some means of leading the reason to the obedience of faith. For the Missions of our own time also, his words may well be taken to heart.

Raymond Lull was born on the island of Majorca, in the year 1236. Until his thirtieth year he led an entirely wordly life at the court of the king of the Balearic Isles, without any higher aims. Even after his marriage, he continued to indulge his passions in disregard of the marriage tie. His poems were inspired by sensual love. He himself, in his work on the contemplation of God, thus bewails the loss of the first half of his life; “As, O Lord, we first see the trees bring forth leaves and twigs, and then flowers, and after the flowers fruits, a sign is hereby given to us that we should first display the tokens of a good life, and, then good works: as we see the flowers follow the leaves, and afterwards the fruit succeed the flower, so also the results which flow from our good deeds should be seen. If those trees are beautiful and good which bring forth leaves, branches, flowers, and fruits, how much better and more beautiful are men when they perform works of love, praising their Lord, their Maker and their God. Trees and plants obey the law of their destiny in that which they do,—step by step bringing forth leaves, and flowers, and fruits; but with us it is not so, but we do the opposite, for we see daily that men do in their youth what they should do in old age, and in old age what they should have done in youth. I see, O Lord, that the trees bring forth, every year, flowers and fruits, by which men are cheered and nourished; but with me, a sinner, it has not been so. For during thirty years I brought no fruit to the world, yea rather injured my neighbours and my friends. If, therefore, the tree, unendowed with reason, bears more fruit than I have borne, well may I be ashamed, and acknowledge my great guilt. To

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Thee, O Lord my God, I thy servant offer many thanks, in that I perceive a wide difference between the deeds of my youth and those of my declining age. For as then all my works consisted in sin and the partaking of sin, so now, I trust that, through Thy grace, all my works, my thoughts, and my wishes will tend to Thy glory.” But the emotions of Christian piety, which influenced his age and his nation, had also by education been imparted to him, and although overwhelmed by sensuality, had not yet lost all power over him. In this, as in so many other instances, is seen the great blessing of those pious influences on the growing child, which, even in a life hurried away by sensual desires and passions, will in the end spring forth again. It was so with Raymond Lull. From these influences arose a sense of contrast to all which had formerly animated his life. One night, when he was lying on his bed composing a love-song, the image of the crucified Christ came before his eyes and made so strong an impression on him that he could proceed no further with his love-song. Still, he would not give up, and began afresh, but yet again that Form came before him with fresh power, until he was at length compelled to desist from the completion of the song. Day and night that Form floated before his eyes, and he could not free himself from the impression. For considering the manifold ways which Divine grace pursues with the souls of men in order to save them,—we must indeed acknowledge, that although the power of the Divine over the heart is ever the same, yet the manner in which men become conscious of this impression is determined by individual intellect and temperament, as also the mode of conversion, whether more gradual, or resulting from a great and sudden convulsion. With Raymond Lull, a man of a poetic mind, in whom imagination was predominant, in whom the power of the Divine manifested itself in opposition to the hitherto ruling power of sensual passion, the Divine power of the impression which the image of Christ had made on his heart, displayed itself in visions. He recognised in these an admonition to fly from the world and consecrate himself wholly to the service of Christ. But now the question arose within him: “How can I turn from my hitherto impure life to so holy a vocation?” By night even this thought allowed him no rest. Then he said to himself: “Christ is so gentle, patient, and compassionate. He calls all sinners to him, he will not then cast me out, notwithstanding my sins.”

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Thus he became assured that it was God’s will that he should leave the world and devote himself with his whole heart to the service of Christ.

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Resolved, therefore, to consecrate himself wholly to the service of Christ, he began to take counsel with himself as to the best mode of doing this,—and he attained the firm conviction that there could be no work more acceptable to the Lord Christ than to sacrifice his life in the proclamation of the Gospel, and hence his thoughts were especially directed to the Saracens, whom the Crusaders had vainly endeavoured to subject to the power of the sword. But then the thought occurred to him how could he, an unlearned layman, be capable of such a work. Whilst he was filled with deep grief on this account, the idea seized him of

writing a book which should tend to manifest the truth in opposition to all the errors of infidels. He believed this to be a Divine call, (and this was of importance as regarded the direction which his deep meditations thenceforth took,) to show the harmony between the revealed truths of the faith and what is founded in the nature of the human mind.

The heavenly power of love by which he was now penetrated, also gave a new impulse to his thoughts. Yet he questioned himself further, even if he should succeed in writing such a book, what use would it be to the Saracens, who understood no language but Arabic? Thus, the plan developed itself in him of applying to the Pope and the Christian princes to found schools in the convents, for instruction in Arabic and other languages spoken amongst the infidels. Philological science was to minister to the work of grace. If such institutions were founded, Raymond Lull thought, missionaries might go forth from them to every region. This was the commencement of missionary colleges, in which instruction should be given in various languages. The next day he repaired to a neighbouring church, and besought the Lord with many tears, that He who had breathed this thought into his soul, would enable him to complete this work in defence of Christianity, to effect the institution of these missionary and philological colleges, and at last to sacrifice his life for the cause of the Lord. This happened in the beginning of July; but the higher life in Raymond Lull had yet many storms to pass through, ere it could become a steadfast thing. Old habits were still too powerful with him, and thus it happened that during three months he occupied himself no further with the thought, which had possessed him so strongly. Then came the fourth of October, the festival of St. Francis d'Assisi, and he heard a bishop, in the Franciscan church at Majorca, preach on St. Francis's renunciation of the world. This re-awakened what had been slumbering in his soul. He resolved immediately to follow St. Francis's example; he sold his possessions, only retaining what was requisite for the maintenance of his wife and children, devoted himself unreservedly to the Lord Christ, and left his home with the determination of never returning to it. He first visited many churches, in which he called on God to bless the execution of the projects which possessed him with such power. He then wished to proceed to Paris, in order, by studying at the university there, to obtain the requisite scientific information for the execution of his plans. But he was withheld from carrying out this plan, by the influence of his relations and friends. He therefore remained in Majorca, and commenced his studies there. He purchased a Saracen slave, from whom he learned Arabic. The defence of Christian truths was the great object of his researches. If, he thought, he could succeed in controverting the objections of the Mohammedan doctors against Christianity, whilst they could not controvert the arguments which he brought forward in its favour, they would be constrained to come over to Christianity; a process of reasoning in which he certainly relied too much on the power of his arguments. The promotion of missions was the first thing with him; the acquisition of languages was to minister to that. He succeeded so far with James, king of Majorca and Minorca, that in the year 1275 an

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Abbey was founded on the first of these islands, in which thirteen Franciscans were constantly to be instructed in Arabic, in order to be able to labour as missionaries amongst the Saracens. In the year 1286, he repaired to Rome, in order to gain over Pope Honorius IV. to his project, that similar missionary colleges might be instituted in every country; but he found that Pope no longer alive, and the Papal throne vacant. Even when he made a second journey to Rome with the same object, he did not succeed in attaining it. How earnest his desire was that schools should be founded amongst the monks, for the promotion of missions, is shown in these words, in which he laments that amidst so much pious zeal so little was done for the conversion of the infidels: "I see," he says, in his work on the contemplation of God, "pious monks, Franciscans, Dominicans, and others, daily distressing themselves on account of our failures and sins; seeking, day and night by their preaching, to withdraw us from our sins, to lead us to what is good, and to produce love amongst us. I see monks fix their abode in desolate and desert places, in order not to be seduced by the sins which prevail amongst us; and I see them plough and till the ground, in order to maintain themselves and the poor; I see them rise at midnight to sing Thy praises, O Lord. I see hermits fly all the vanities of this world, retire to mountains and uninhabited places, eat herbs, abandon all the pleasures of this world, and pass all their life in loving and praising Thee, O Lord, in praying to Thee, and in the contemplation of Thy goodness and holiness. I see monks and nuns renounce this world, in order to be made partakers of glory in the next; and although they endure many sufferings and toils in their bodies, yet they thus escape much anguish and want, which we men of the world endure in our souls, because we are of the world, and love the world. Yet, whithersoever look, and wherever I search, I find scarcely one, who, from love to Thee, O Lord, is ready to meet the martyr's death, as Thou halt done from love to us. It seems to me, that it would be reasonable that monks should learn various languages, that they might go forth, and from love to Thee offer up their lives: since in these days we see many monks of holy life and great wisdom. I pray Thee, Lord, let me also see, in my time, that they found institutions wherein to learn divers languages, in order to be able to preach to the heathen. O Lord of glory, when will that blessed day arrive, when I shall see that thy holy monks are so inflamed with zeal to praise Thee, that they go forth into foreign lands in order to bear witness to Thy Holy Trinity, Thy blessed Incarnation, and Thy bitter Passion? That were a glorious day, a day on which the fervour of piety would return, with which the holy Apostles went to death for their Lord Jesus Christ."

As Raymond Lull was not able to institute, as he wished, an association for this holy enterprise, he felt himself constrained to go forth alone amongst the infidels, and in the year 1287 he sailed to Genoa, in order to cross thence to Northern Africa. As people had heard so much of the remarkable change that had taken place in him, of his fervent zeal for the conversion of the infidels, and of his new, and according to his idea, so promising method of conversion, his project excited high expectations. But he had yet many a severe conflict

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to pass through; the natural man asserted his power in him. The same imagination which was filled with enrapturing images of the holy cause which inspired him, in which the glory of his inward life was mirrored, could also be set in motion by the natural man, and reflect images of another kind; the terror of the natural heart could also be mirrored in it. Thus it would operate in various ways on Raymond Lull, according as it was in the service of the higher or the lower power. Already was the ship which was to convey him ready for departure, already were his books packed up in it, when his fervid imagination pictured to him so strongly the fate which awaited him amongst the Mohammedans—whether a torturing death, or a lifelong captivity—that he could not prevail on himself to go on board the ship. But when she had sailed, fierce torments of conscience seized him, that he had been so unfaithful to the holy purposes which God had awakened in him, and had given so great a scandal to the believers in Genoa. A severe illness was the consequence of this inward strife. Whilst he had thus much to suffer both in body and soul, he heard that a ship had arrived in the harbour, which was on the point of sailing for Tunis. Although he seemed to be nearer death than life, he caused himself to be carried on board with his books. But as his friends deemed it impossible that he could bear the voyage in such a state, full of anxiety they sent and fetched him back. His health, however; was not to be restored by any bodily care, for the root of the disease lay in his soul. When therefore, some time after this, he heard of another ship bound for Tunis, nothing could prevent him from being carried on board. And when the ship had set sail, he soon felt himself delivered from the burden which weighed on his conscience; for he found himself in his element—he was fulfilling the vocation which he was assured of being from God. With health of soul he was also restored to health of body. He who narrates these incidents in Raymond Lull's life, expresses himself thus: "That health of conscience which under this beclouding of his soul he believed himself to have lost, he suddenly recovered, rejoicing in the Lord on account of this merciful illumination of the Holy Ghost, together with the restoration of his suffering body." To the amazement of all his fellow-voyagers, in a few days he found himself as well and strong as he had ever been in his life.

When, at the close of the year 1291, or at the beginning of the year 1292, he arrived at Tunis, he assembled the Mohammedan doctors, and declared to them that he was come in order to institute a comparison between Christianity, with which he was thoroughly acquainted, and which he had excellent arguments to defend, and Mohammedanism. If he found the arguments in favour of Mohammedanism the stronger, he would become a convert to it. A great number of Mohammedan doctors assembled, hoping to succeed in converting him to Mohammedanism; and he disputed with them. But one of the Saracen doctors, who was full of fanaticism, directed the attention of the king to the danger which threatened the Mohammedan faith from the proselyting zeal of Raymond, and procured an edict of death against him. He was thrown into prison and already sentenced to death, when one of the

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Saracen doctors themselves, who was more unprejudiced and wise than the rest, interceded for him. He commended the spirit of Raymond, and said, that as they should admire the zeal of a Mohammedan who ventured amongst the Christians to convert them to the true faith, so also they could not refrain from honouring in the Christian a similar zeal for the diffusion of the religion which he believed to be true. These representations caused Raymond's sentence to be softened from death to banishment. When he left the prison he had much ill-treatment to suffer from the fanatical people. He was then conveyed to the Genoese ship in which he came, and which was again on the point of departure; and it was signified to him at the same time, that if he was seen again in the territory of Tunis, he would be stoned to death. But as he hoped by continuing his labours to convert many of the Saracen doctors with whom he had disputed, and as his desire for the salvation of their souls was so strong, he could not make up his mind to see this hope so soon frustrated. Gladly would he have sacrificed his life at this price. He suffered the ship to which they had conveyed him; to set sail, proceeded to another, and watched for an opportunity of returning thence unobserved to Tunis. In the month of September, 1292, whilst he was thus lying in the bay of Tunis, he had composure of mind enough to labour at a scientific book. After having waited there three months in vain, he at length departed in the ship and repaired to Naples. There he lingered many years, delivering lectures on his original system of philosophy, until the pious hermit, Peter of Murrhone,—who had become Pope, under the name of Celestin V.,—revived his hope of at length accomplishing what he had so long desired—the promotion of missionary enterprise. But Celestin's reign was too brief, and his successor, Boniface VIII., was too indifferent to the interests of religion, for this hope to be realized.

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During his sojourn in Rome with that object, in the year 1296, Raymond Lull composed a book which was also connected with his interest in missions, in which he sought to state the fundamental truths of Christianity in an incontrovertible manner. If he esteemed his arguments too highly, it was the strength of his faith which caused him to rely on them so confidently. We cannot but sincerely admire the firmness of his conviction that there must be no dissension in the soul of man—that the truth, which was the highest thing for him, must correspond to all the wants of his spirit, and be in harmony with his reason and his heart. He says at the close of this book, “We have composed this treatise that believing and devout Christians may perceive that, whereas the doctrines of no other sect can be proved true by its adherents, and none can reasonably assail the Christian faith, the Christian faith on the contrary can not only be defended against all its foes, but proved to demonstration. Thus inspired by a fervent zeal for the faith, and convinced that nothing can stand against the truth which is stronger than all things, may they seek by the force of argument, and by the help and strength of God, to lead back the infidels to the way of truth, so that the glorious name of the Lord Jesus, which is yet unknown in most countries and amongst most nations, may be manifested and may obtain universal homage. This method of converting the infidels

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is easier than all others. For it must seem hard to them to abandon their faith for an unknown religion; but who will not feel himself constrained to exchange falsehood for truth, the self-contradictory for the self-evident?" And finally he adds, "Wherefore we humbly pray the pope and the cardinals to adopt this method; for of all the schemes for the conversion of the infidels and the re-conquest of the promised land, this which is most according to love is the easiest and the quickest,— as much mightier than other ways and methods, as spiritual weapons are stronger than carnal." "This treatise," he writes, "was completed at Rome in the year 1296, on the eve of the Feast of John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord Jesus Christ. May he intercede with our Lord, that as he himself was the herald of the light, and pointed to Him who is the true light, and as in his time grace had its beginning, so it may please the Lord Jesus Christ to diffuse new light over the world, that -unbelievers may walk in the brightness of this light, and be converted and go confidently forth with us to meet Him, the same Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and praise forever and ever."

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As he was thus hindered from attaining his object in Rome, he laboured through a series of years wherever occasion called him. He sought to convince the Saracens and Jews on the island of Majorca by his arguments. He went to the island of Cyprus and thence to Armenia, endeavouring to restore the various divided parties of the Oriental Church to orthodoxy. He undertook all these things alone, only accompanied by one attendant, without being able to gain the support he desired from the powerful and influential. In the intervals of his journeys, he delivered lectures on his system at the French and Italian universities, and wrote books.

Either in the year 1806 or 1307 he again sailed for North Africa, and proceeded to the city of Buggia, which was then the metropolis of a Mohammedan kingdom. He came boldly forward, and declared in Arabic that Christianity was the only true religion, and that Mohammedanism was false. This he was ready to prove to any one. A great multitude of people gathered around him, and he addressed exhortations to the assembly. Many were already raising their hands to stone him, when the Mufti, hearing of it, rescued him from the crowd, and caused him to be brought before him. He asked him how he could have acted so madly as publicly to stand forth against the doctrine of Mohammed; and if he did not know that according to the laws of the land he deserved to die. Raymond replied, "A true servant of Christ, who has himself experienced the truth of the faith, can fear no peril of death, if he may only lead souls to salvation." Thereupon they entered into a disputation on the relation of both religions to each other. Raymond testified with confidence for his faith. It was at length decided, according to his proposition, that both parties should write a book in defence of their respective religions, and that it should then be shown who won the victory by the arguments which each brought forward. Raymond composed such a book, and sent it to the Mufti, in order that he and the other wise men might test the book and reply to it. In a few days an edict was issued, banishing Raymond from the country, and he was immediately

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conveyed by the Saracens to a ship which was bound for Genoa. Not far from Pisa this ship was wrecked, part of the voyagers perished in the waves, and the rest were stripped of everything. Raymond rescued himself, losing all his books and property. At Pisa, he wrote down from memory what he had stated in his book in defence of Christianity. He sent this to the pope and the cardinals, and at its close once more lamented the lack of zeal for the conversion of the infidels. "The Saracens," he says, "write books against Christianity. I myself saw one when I lay in prison; they bring many arguments together to convert Christians to Mohammedanism. And as the minds of those Christians are not sufficiently grounded in knowledge to be able to discover the nullity of these arguments, the Saracens succeed by means of such arguments, with the promise of riches and wives, in converting many Christians to their law. The Christians do not trouble themselves about this, and will offer no assistance to those Mohammedans who become Christians; and thus it happens, that where one Mohammedan becomes a Christian, ten Christians and more become Mohammedans. Those in authority would do well to consider what the end of it will be. God is not to be constrained or mocked."

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And after speaking of the great peril which threatened Christendom from the infidels, he makes some propositions for defence. One was, that four or five convents should be founded in perpetuity, in which monks and learned secular priests who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the glory of God might learn the languages of the infidels, and then go forth into the whole world, as Christ had commanded, and preach the Gospel. The second proposition referred to the union of the various religious orders of knighthood into one, for the recovery of the lands wrested from Christendom by the infidels; with a further scheme how best to effect this. In the year 1308, in the month of April, he completed this book in the Dominican monastery, at Pisa. That which he had so often recommended in the book just quoted, he at length accomplished at the Council of Vienne, in the year 1311; when a decree was issued by the pope for the institution of colleges for the Oriental languages, requiring that at the Universities of Paris, Oxford, and Salamanca, as well as in all cities where the Papal court was represented, professorial chairs should be founded for Arabic, Hebrew, and Chaldee, in order to promote the conversion of the Jews and Saracens. As regards the other proposition, Raymond became even more convinced that the infidels were not to be overcome by the swords of Christians, but to be won by the force of truth; that Christians must not bring death amongst the heathen, but rather be ready to sacrifice their own lives in order to lead them to salvation. He says in his work "On the Contemplation of God," in which he reviews the various classes of Christendom and exposes their failings, "I see many knights cross the sea to the Promised Land, imagining that they can subdue it by force of arms: but it ends in their all being swept away without attaining their object. Wherefore it appears to me that the Holy Land is to be won in no other way than that, O Lord Christ, by which thou and thy Apostles did win it—by love and prayer, by the shedding of their tears

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and their blood. Since the Holy Sepulchre and the Promised Land can better be recovered by preaching than by force of arms, let pious spiritual heroes go forth, filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May they go thither to bear witness to thy sufferings before the infidels, and from love to Thee to pour out the last drop of their blood, as Thou didst do from love to them. So many knights and noble princes have journeyed to that land across the sea to conquer it, that if this method pleased thee, Lord, they would surely have wrested it from the Saracens long ago. The pious should therefore perceive that Thou dost daily wait to see them do from love to Thee what Thou hast done from love to them. And they may be certain that if they expose themselves to the martyr's death from love to Thee, Thou wilt prosper them in all that they shall undertake in this world to Thy praise." And in another passage in this book, he says, "Because Christians and Saracens are involved in a spiritual war on account of the faith, a carnal warfare is the consequence; whence many are wounded, taken captive, or slain, which would not happen, if there were no such war; whosoever therefore, O Lord, desires to establish peace between Christians and Saracens—whosoever desires that the great evils which result from this war should cease, must first put an end to the bodily conflict, that this outward peace may be a preparation for spiritual peace. And when the spiritual strife shall end, then will peace and concord reign amongst them, in that they will be of one faith. For because, O Lord, the Christians have no outward peace with the Saracens, they do not venture to dispute with them concerning the faith; but could they do this, they might, by the force of truth and the grace of the Holy Spirit, lead them to the way of truth. O Heavenly Father, Father of all ages! When Thou didst send thy Son into the world, causing Him to appear in our human nature, He and His disciples were outwardly at peace with the Jews and Pharisees; for they took no man captive, they put none to death, they constrained none of the unbelievers to follow them by bodily force. As therefore thou, O Lord, and thy disciples, did not fight with carnal weapons, although assailed with such, it is surely reasonable that Christians should ever remember this and ever seek to maintain outward peace with the Saracens in order to glorify thee, who vanquishing the flesh didst bring spiritual peace into the world. But since the fervour and devotion which there was in elder times in Apostles and holy men is well-nigh extinguished in us and in the whole world, and love and piety have grown cold, therefore is it that Christians rather spend their strength in carnal than in spiritual warfare, and from the dread of bodily strife will not go forth to seek spiritual peace as ye did seek it with tears and sighs, pouring out your blood and enduring a bitter death for the glory of God." "O Thou true light," he says, "Light of all lights, since Thy grace has blessed Christians beyond infidels in giving them the true faith, they are in duty bound to carry forth the true faith amongst the infidels. But because we, O Lord, are occupied with vain things, and forget our bounden duty to love, and help, and guide the infidels, so that through our fault they remain in the darkness of unbelief; on this account, O Lord, will they complain to thee at the day of judgment of this, our wrong to them—that we preach not to

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them, neither instruct them, that they may abandon their error. And they who have nothing wherewith to excuse themselves against this, shall incur damnation. If, O Lord,” he adds, “those churches which are built of wood, and stone, and earth, are beautiful, because they contain many beautiful pictures,—far more beautiful would be that holy Church which consists of the spirits of just men, if there were those in it who, knowing various languages, would go forth through all lands to lead the heathen to glorify Thee.” “Blessed,” he says, “are all those who, from love to Thee, O Lord, give alms of their goods; they help others with that which thou hast given them, and happy may he esteem himself whom thou dost help. But far more blessed are they, who offer up themselves amongst the heathen, and in proclaiming the way of truth become martyrs. Mightier help wilt Thou bestow on them.”

He is constantly lamenting, that men should seek the Lord in outward things and endeavour to glorify Him by them alone, and He points from the outward to the inward. “He who will find thee, O Lord,” he says, “needs not to abandon his country, his friends, and his kindred, for he may find thee close at hand, and win thee in his own home.” “We see,” he says, “how pilgrims go to seek Thee in distant lands, and Thou meanwhile art so near, that whosoever will may find Thee in his own chamber. Why, therefore, are many so ignorant that they go to seek Thee in distant lands, and yet carry the devil with them, in that they are laden with sins? The things which a man would find he must seek diligently, and seek in the place where they may be found. If, therefore, the pilgrims would find Thee, they must seek Thee diligently, and seek Thee not in beautiful images and pictures in the churches, but in the hearts of holy men, in which Thou dwellest day and night. If thy Image on the Cross is fair to see, far fairer is thine image in holy men who love thy truth; for the form of such an one is more akin to thy humanity than the images of the Cross.” “Often,” he says, “have I sought thee on the Cross, and my bodily eyes could not find thee there, although they found there thine Image and the likeness of thy death. And when I could not find thee with my bodily eyes, I sought thee with the eyes ‘of my soul; and whilst my soul thought of thee she found thee; and when I found thee, my heart began at once to glow with love, my eyes overflowed with tears, and my mouth could only speak thy praise.” This fervour of love left him no rest, until summoning his last strength he had sacrificed his life in the proclamation of the Gospel: “As the needle,” he says, “naturally turns to the north when it is touched by the magnet,—so must Thy servant turn whithersoever he may praise, and magnify, and serve his God and Lord; willing, nay longing, from love to Him, to endure bitter pain and heavy trials here in this world.” “Men who die of old age,” he says, “die from lack of natural heat, and, therefore, would Thy servant, if it pleases thee, not die such a death, but die from the fervour of love, since Thou didst die thus. Often have I trembled with cold and terror,—but when will that day and hour come when my body shall tremble from the warm glow of love and longing to die for my Saviour?”

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We will, in conclusion, collect some short axioms in which the deep fervent spirit of this man expresses itself,—words which contain in them a whole world, and into which we must ever dive more deeply in order rightly to understand them, and thus shall discover more and more in them. “He who loves not, lives not; he who lives by the Life cannot die.” “He who gives his friend love gives him more than gold. He who gives not, lives not. He who gives love, gives what he gives to himself.” “All gold is not to be compared with one sigh of holy desire. The more a man desires, the more he lives. To be destitute of desire is to die. Long and thou wilt live. He is not poor who desires; he lives sadly who lives without desire.” “A holy hermit stands higher in the sight of God than a king upon his throne. Elevate thy understanding and thou wilt elevate thy love—heaven is not so high as the love of a holy man. The more thou labourest to soar on high, the more thou wilt soar.” He perceived that man has in his own being the key to all things. “He who will search and understand the mysteries of other men’s hearts,” he says, “must first look into himself and his own nature. For as a mirror shows in itself the likeness of another object, so does a man comprehend the mysteries which he seeks to know in others, by comprehending his own nature.”

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On the 14th of August, 1314, he once more sailed over to Africa. He repaired to Buggia, and at first laboured there in secret amongst the little band, whom, during his last sojourn there, he had gained over to Christianity. He sought to strengthen their faith, and to lead them on in Christian knowledge. He might have continued to labour on a while in quietness; but he could not resist his longing for the martyr’s death. He came forward publicly with the declaration that he was the same man who had formerly been banished from the country. He exhorted the people with menaces of the Divine vengeance, to abandon Mohammedanism. The Saracens fell furiously upon him, and after much ill usage he was dragged out of the city and stoned by order of the king. According to one account, some merchants from Majorca obtained permission to remove the body of their countryman from the heap of stones under which it was buried, and carried it home to their native country. According to another narrative, they found some remains of life still existing in him, and succeeded in rekindling the dying embers; but he died on the ship within sight of his native land. This was on the 13th of June, in the year 1315.

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THE END.

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