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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

it aims at moving the admiration of the senses and producing delight, as an artistic performance, in the natural heart of man.

Perhaps I may be stating the case rather too baldly. But I shall hope to have another word to say on the subject in the next month's CHURCHMAN.

(To be continued.)



ART. IV.—HORA PETRINA; OR, ST. PETER'S LIFE AND CHARACTER AS SEEN IN HIS EPISTLES.

THE great value of the branch of Christian evidences opened out by Archdeacon Paley in his "Horæ Paulinæ" will be still generally admitted. The many minute and undesigned coincidences between St. Paul's Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles, as well as between the Epistles themselves, have been exhibited by him in the most masterly and convincing manner. To some minds this line of defence carries more weight than external historical proofs, whilst to all it is most helpful. The question arises whether the same method may not in some measure be applied with advantage to the two Epistles of St. Peter. It is true that they are both catholic, and thus differ in their nature from those addressed by St. Paul to particular Churches or to individuals. On this point Paley remarked: "A person addressing an Epistle to the public at large, or under the form of an Epistle delivering a discourse on some speculative argument, would not, it is probable, meet with an occasion of alluding to the circumstances of his life at all; he might or might not—the chances on either side are nearly equal. This is the situation of the catholic Epistles. Although, therefore, the presence of these allusions and agreements be a valuable accession to the argument by which the authenticity of a letter is maintained, yet the want of this certainly forms no positive objection."

Paley evidently did not much expect to find such allusions and coincidences in these catholic Epistles, although if found he was ready to accept them as additional evidences that they were the compositions of the writers whose names are attached to them, and so indirectly of their inspiration. So far as this is the case with the second Epistle, whose origin was even in early times called in question, even the few points of agreement with the records of the Apostle's life are of no slight moment. The inquiry is thus suggested, What marks of authenticity may be traced in both documents?

If they do exist, the force of the conclusion derived from them will be even stronger than in regard to the Pauline Epistles. At the same time, it should be distinctly understood that our acceptance of these writings as part of the Sacred Canon will not depend upon such subsidiary evidences. The external proofs will still remain as they were. This inner line of defence, be it strong or weak, will merely serve to support and supplement the outworks of the faith. For our present purpose, then, we need not here discuss the well-known testimonies of the Fathers and early writers of the Church, or the decisions of Councils on this subject. As to the first Epistle, very little doubt has been raised about its authorship. Far greater difficulty has been felt about the second. It may suffice for our present purpose to quote the weighty and cautious words in which the late Dean Alford summed up his impartial and reverent examination of both sides of the question: "No difference can be imagined more markedly distinctive than that which separates all these writings" (the catholic Epistles) "from even the earliest and best of the post-Apostolic period. Our Epistle is one of those fruits of the great outpouring of the Spirit on the Apostles, which, not being entrusted to the custody of any one Church or individual, required some considerable time to become generally known; which, when known, were suspected, bearing, as they necessarily did, traces of their late origin and notes of polemical argument; but of which, as Apostolic and inspired writings, there never was, when once they became known, any general doubt; and which, as the Sacred Canon became fixed, acquired, and have since maintained their due and Providential place among the books of the New Testament" (Alford's Greek Testament, Prolegomena on 2 Peter, section iv.).

Canon Cook also, in the "Dictionary of the Bible," whilst arriving at a similar conclusion, impales those who deny the authenticity of this Epistle on the horns of a dilemma. "This Epistle," he forcibly and logically maintains, "must either be dismissed as a deliberate forgery or accepted as the last production of the first among the Apostles of Christ. The Church, which for more than fourteen centuries has received it, has either been imposed upon by what must in that case be regarded as a Satanic device, or derived from it spiritual instruction of the highest importance" (Article on St. Peter). Such is the alternative presented to us. The language is strong, yet hardly too strong. Can anyone study that Epistle with an unprejudiced spirit and a heart capable of appreciating the lofty tone of spirituality which pervades it, and suppose it to be the work of a writer so dishonest as to personify the Apostle? The Divine afflatus which breathes throughout it,

as well as the pure and heavenly doctrine which it inculcates, forbid the thought of his having entered on its composition with a lie in his right hand.

Passing, however, from this thorny argument, we simply propose now to examine both Epistles just as letters transmitted from a hoary antiquity and bearing St. Peter's name, with a view to discovering any traces they may contain of the life and character of the Apostle.

1. As we have already remarked, in Epistles addressed to the whole Catholic Church, and not to any particular branch of it or to any individual member, we should not have expected many indications of this kind—perhaps not any. Still, there are epochs in everyone's life, and especially in that of an aged and experienced Christian, and one inspired by God, as was St. Peter, which leave deep, indelible marks on the memory, and are so strongly engraven on his whole mind and character as to become parts of his inner self. Such events would almost unconsciously rise to his thoughts and suggest his words, when he was addressing others on the deep things of God. So it may well have been with so impressionable and highly sensitive a spirit as the Apostle's. There were certain incidents in his diversified career which he could never have forgotten, and which even now, in the presence of his Saviour, he probably looks back upon with ever-deepening gratitude and untiring interest. Such a landmark in his life would be that memorable conversation with the Lord, when he made his bold confession of his belief in His Divine Sonship. Surely Christ's words, "I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (St. Matt. xvi. 18), could never have been effaced from his heart. The distinction thus conferred upon him of being one and the chief of the foundation-stones of the New Jerusalem would naturally and without any conscious effort suggest itself when he would exhort his brethren to live consistently with their holy profession. Whether he understood his Master to refer to Himself or to His Apostle as the Rock, he applies the image to both Christ and His believing people, and addresses the latter as living stones coming to Him as the "living-stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious," and as by virtue of their union with Him being "built up a spiritual house."

In connection with this, how remarkable also are St. Peter's words at the beginning of his first Epistle, where he writes of "Him, whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory"! Those to whom St. Peter wrote had not seen Christ in the flesh; but he had done so,

and been an eye-witness of His grace and glory. In the latter words he might almost seem to have in view the Master's gentle reproof of the doubting Apostle, "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed" (St. John xx. 29). St. Peter had been present on that occasion, had himself beheld the scars on His wounded hands and side, and heard the invitation to his fellow-Apostle to make sensible proof of the Lord's identity. Very natural, therefore, and undesigned would be such a mode of expression. With this, too, correspond his references to Christ's Resurrection as the foundation of the believer's living hope (1 Peter i. 3, 21; iii. 18, 21). He had himself, on the first Easter morning, run with St. John in eager haste to the sepulchre, and, having alone entered its gloomy recesses, found it empty. In the company of the other Apostles he had afterwards seen and conversed with the living Saviour, and thus had received sensible proofs of the great fact of His Resurrection, and could, as did St. John, speak and write of what he had seen and heard. Nowhere in the writings of the Apostles is the expression of hope founded upon that fact so vivid and decided; and when we call to mind the Apostle's past experience, we can better understand how he, who had been with his risen Lord on several occasions, and had afterwards gazed at His fading glory as He ascended from Mount Olivet, could write of "the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (1 Peter iii. 21, 22).

There are in the first Epistle other incidental remarks which may have naturally been suggested by words he had heard spoken by his Lord. In one place he writes, "Fear God, honour the king." The first of these two precepts may seem to have been the echo of Christ's words addressed to the Apostles and to him as their Coryphæus after their ordination, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell" (St. Matt. x. 28). As to the second, then a most difficult counsel, "Honour the king," may not the Apostle have had before his mind's eye the discussion between the Master and the Pharisees and Herodians concerning the tribute money, and His inimitable answer, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." So, too, when he wrote in a spirit of such calm confidence to his brethren of 'casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you' (1 Peter v. 7), this was not language natural to one who had always been so impulsive, impetuous and impatient; but he

must have learned it in the school of Christ, and may have had especially in view the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, and the precept linked to the promise in the words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Once more, the reference to Christ as the "Lamb without blemish and without spot," with whose precious blood sinners have been redeemed, can scarcely fail to have had its origin in the Baptist's words spoken to two of His disciples, when, beholding Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God." One of those disciples was Andrew, who first findeth his own brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. On the same occasion the Baptist also said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." But there were other incidents in St. Peter's life of even a more impressive character, to which the allusions are even more obvious, though equally casual and undesigned. In this category we cannot of course include the appeal which he makes in so direct a manner in his second Epistle to the scene of the Transfiguration. Still, it is deeply important for our purpose, as bearing on the authorship of that Epistle, for we cannot for a moment suppose the writer of a letter breathing such a lofty Christian tone to have posed as an eye-witness of that event if he had not been such. The vision of Christ's majesty must have had a very powerful effect on this devoted disciple. Even at the time when he was with Him in the holy mount, he was so entranced by all he saw and heard that in a burst of enthusiasm he thoughtlessly and rashly exclaimed: "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if Thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles: one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." All too quickly that momentary gleam of heavenly glory faded from his view, but its memory could never have passed away. Under the Holy Spirit's further teaching its mystic meaning would be afterwards revealed to his soul. Nothing, therefore, could be more natural than that, long years after the event, writing in his advanced age, he should regard it as one of the most convincing testimonies he could adduce of the Divinity of his Lord. Accordingly he writes: "We did not follow cunningly devised paths when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but we were eye-witnesses of His majesty" (2 Peter i. 16, 17, R.V.).

This bold avowal of his matured faith stamps this document as St. Peter's own composition, though the language is not in the least unconscious or unpremeditated. At the same time, it is very noticeable that he uses, as in the most spontaneous manner, two familiar and peculiar words closely identified

with that occasion. He speaks of his own body as his tabernacle (*σκήνώμα*), in which Christ dwelt spiritually, and of his death as his "decease," or exodus (*ἐξοδος*), the very terms employed by St. Luke in his account of the event.

Another reminiscence may be traced, in a less palpable form, and yet all the more significantly, in his use in a special sense of the word "visitation" (*ἐπισκοπή*). He is urging his brethren to conduct themselves with such propriety that their heathen and Jewish neighbours might have nothing to say against them, but "by their good works, which they should behold, might glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter ii. 12). If by this he meant the day of grace—that time of precious opportunity when God visits men's souls by His quickening Spirit—is not the phrase just what would occur to one of those disciples who were with their Master on the Mount of Olives, and witnessed the overflowing of His compassion when He wept over the guilty city, and yet pronounced its doom, because it "knew not the time of its *visitation*."

We pass on to another example of our argument still more striking. Of the many events recorded in the Gospels, few could have more contributed to the Apostle's spiritual education than the scene in the upper room at the Last Supper. One who had with his own eyes beheld the Lord of Glory laying aside His outer garments, and, girt as a slave, washing His disciples' feet, could never have forgotten that act of profound humility. Moreover, Simon Peter was so prominent on that occasion by his indignant refusal to receive that service from his Saviour, and by receiving the reply, which threw such deep meaning into the whole occurrence, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." It is therefore not surprising that he who would exhort others to the difficult virtue of practical humility should adopt the very image that the scene would suggest, and write, "Gird yourselves with humility," as a slave would gird on his apron for work. Thus he forcibly re-echoes the closing words of Jesus, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

But there was yet an occurrence which must have had even a larger share in moulding St. Peter's character, and given its colour and complexion to all his after-life. That was his interview with his risen Lord by the lake, and His gracious renewal of His Apostolic commission. Weighed down under a sense of his guilt in thrice denying Him, and even after the mention of his own name in the message from the sepulchre, still apprehensive lest he should be finally dismissed from his office, he finds himself once more in the Master's presence. Thrice is his heart probed by the searching test, "Lovest

thou Me?" At last, grieved because Jesus had said to him the third time, "Lovest thou Me?" with evident reference to his threefold denial, deeply moved, from a bursting heart he replied, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Then it was that, under that most expressive figure, so often employed by our Lord, He recalled him to His service, bidding him feed and tend His lambs and His sheep. In no more fitting terms, therefore, could the restored Apostle in later days hand on that commission to his younger brethren in the ministry, and also describe the Lord's relationship to His Church. "Feed the flock of God which is among you"—this is his parting charge. "And when the Chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away"—this is the cheering prospect on which he delights to dwell. So, too, at the close of the second chapter, he writes, "Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Peter ii. 25).

Thus we find not a few of the events of St. Peter's chequered career interwoven with the texture of thought and language in these Epistles. Probably a closer scrutiny might discover other similar traces. All of them, with the exception of the Transfiguration, are evidently, as regards the writer himself, quite casual and undesigned. Thus their character constitutes their value as evidences. They do not court observation, but lie hidden beneath the surface, like the lower strata of the earth's crust, awaiting excavation. The results of past experience, they were buried very deeply in the Apostle's heart, and find expression when he is least intending it, and as the Holy Spirit directing his pen suggested them, as the fittest exponents of the truth. Hence arises their importance as subsidiary proofs of the authenticity and, in a measure, of the inspiration of these documents.

2. But we may carry our argument a step further and conclude. Are there, it may be asked, any indications of the inspired penman's *character* as well as of his history? A biographer generally considers his portrait incomplete without a selection of letters. A man's idiosyncrasies are almost certain to betray themselves, favourably or unfavourably, in his correspondence. We may fairly expect this to be so even in inspired Epistles. That it is so with the writings of St. Paul and St. John, all will readily admit; but we maintain that the same holds true of those of St. Peter. Now his character stands out in vivid relief on the pages of the Gospels. Its features are familiar to every thoughtful student. His open-hearted, sailor-like frankness; his impetuous energy; his boldness, too often degenerating into

rashness and self-confidence; and, above all, his warm, generous, faithful heart, which clung so closely to his beloved Master, are the traits of character that strike us on every occasion. Are not these the very characteristics of his writings? Wonderfully chastened, elevated, and sanctified by Divine grace as well as by ripe experience, is he not in all essential respects the same Simon Peter? He has, indeed, learned much of his own helplessness and unworthiness in the school of Christ. He has been taught by sad, repeated failures to distrust himself, and to lean only upon his Saviour. He has often proved the value and the power of prayer and his need of constant watchfulness. So his great aim throughout his ministry is to fulfil his Lord's command, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Knowing well in his own case the insufficiency of human nature and the strength and subtlety of the tempter, he offers frequent exhortations to believers to "be sober," to "be vigilant," to "resist the devil," and to "grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." Very beautifully, too, does his ever-deepening attachment to Jesus shine out in every line of these letters. "To you which believe is the preciousness." His Blood is precious. He is "the precious Corner-stone." His "promises are precious and exceeding great." The faith which sees Him, though invisible, and embraces the promises, is equally precious (2 Peter i. 1, 4). The trials also that refine and strengthen that faith are more precious than of gold that perisheth. How eloquently, too, does he dwell upon the purity of Christ's life, the perfection and freeness of His sacrifice, as well as the certainty of His Resurrection and Ascension! Some have, indeed, traced in all this a close resemblance to the writings of St. Paul, his "beloved brother" (2 Peter iii. 15). That St. Peter had seen them and was familiar with them would seem certain, and a certain Pauline colouring may thus have been imparted to his style. Yet, after all, it may be rather a family likeness, and chiefly the effect in both writers of attachment and admiration for the Saviour Himself. However this may be, may we not also discover in both of St. Peter's Epistles traces of that natural impetuosity and boldness which in his early life often spoke so rashly and unwisely, and led to his grievous fall, now toned down and moderated by the grace of God? It was this very disposition which in the second Epistle was used to warn in trumpet tones the future ages of the Church of the dangers which should arise from false teachers within the fold, as well as from scoffing unbelievers outside the pale. Lastly, who can fail to be struck by the longing anticipation of the Lord's return and of His glorious kingdom which pervades both Epistles? As faith is

the leading tone of St. Paul's writings, and love of St. John's, so is hope the grace which shines most brightly in St. Peter's. As it has been well said, "He who in loving impatience cast himself into the sea to meet the Lord is also the man who most earnestly testifies to the hope of His return." How consistent is this with the spirit of him who, when his Master spoke of His cross and its attendant sufferings, rashly ventured to rebuke Him; and on the other hand, when he beheld His glory, as rashly proposed to make three tabernacles, in the vain hope that that glory might then be fully revealed and remain on earth.

These, then, are some of the marks which silently testify that to St. Peter's own hands we owe, under God, these most precious parts of the Church's inheritance, and thus also reflect some additional light on the truth of the whole of the Sacred Canon.

W. BURNET.



ART. V.—THE MEANING OF THE WORD "CATHOLIC."

"**E**MPTY talk is on the increase in the world," wrote the author of "Letters from Hell." "Vanity of speech! To be sure, the world would never do without its talk, but the superabundance is alarming; a new deluge threatens; the spirit is lost in hollow words. The world used to be more simple, I am sure, in olden times; straightforward statements used to be current much more than they are now. Invention in all spheres is on the increase—the invention of pretences remarkably so. One feels inclined to call out despairingly, as Hamlet did, 'Words, words, words!' I am sure words are the dominant power nowadays in so-called intellectual pursuits; it is not the informing spirit, but the phrase, which is puffed and offered for sale."

The remark is very true at all times. And the older the world grows, so much the more liable we are to the temptation of taking for granted the words that pass for current coin, and of indolently accepting all the mass of incoherent meanings which have been attached to them in their wayward pilgrimage through the innumerable mass of human minds.

The word about which I wish to write in this paper is in its true meaning one of the grandest and most beautiful that can be presented to the intelligence of man—I mean the word "Catholic." In its perverted sense, it has been used so as to become one of the most mischievous and poisonous which ever darkened glorious and eternal truths. "Among the sources of those innumerable calamities," wrote Bishop Horne,