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(3) Sacrifice, again, is fruitful, and ensures power and victory. This victory begins on earth, and is consummated by the resurrection. In prayer the Master was transfigured; so also we, "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image" (2 Cor. iii. 18). We are transfigured by the renewing of our mind (Rom. xii. 2). Of this the resurrection of the body is the complete expression. "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like (conformed) to His glorious body." With true insight the patristic writers saw in the Transfiguration a prophecy of the glory of the saints at the resurrection. Hence, St. Thomas Aquinas termed it the Sacrament of the Second Regeneration.

Sonship, sacrifice, and spiritual power form the glory of the Incarnate Son, and through Him our lives are glorified according to the same pattern. In them is the true glory of life to be found, and because of the unique debt we owe to Him for making this glorification possible, we can pray in the words of the collect for the Feast of the Transfiguration, in the American Prayer Book, "that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may be permitted to behold the King in His beauty, where, with the Father and the Holy Ghost; He liveth and reigneth ever one God world without end. Amen."



The Inspiration of the Church.

BY THE REV. A. E. N. SIMMS, B.D.

IT has been generally believed that the first band of Christians, assembled in the upper room in Jerusalem, set to themselves consciously and deliberately the audacious plan of the evangelization of the whole world. The boldness of these inspired fishermen has been cited in reply to the objection that the idea of effecting a corporate reunion of modern Christendom, entertained by some enthusiasts, is confronted with insuperable difficulties. But this theory reposes upon the a priori belief that Christ

constituted an "Apostolic College," to which He confided His plan of a universal Church, and to which He imparted a knowledge of the methods by which such a plan should be realized. Even if the "forty days" during which He spake the things that pertained to the kingdom is not made responsible for so many later "developments," it is, nevertheless, held by many in reserve to account for the possession of such a scheme as that of the Catholic Church by men whose natural horizon had been so restricted. Besides, it is asserted that the disciples were in possession of "marching orders," which it was impossible for them not to understand, for Christ had said, "Go ye into all the world."

But this theory, which represents Christ enabling men once and for all to understand His scheme, is one which supposes that He guided His first disciples by other means than those by which He still guides His disciples to-day. It introduces the miraculous in such a manner as to render the history of those men's conduct in large part useless for those who have to follow. Indeed, it obscures the study of God's uniform methods, and renders inexplicable the account which we find in the Acts of the Apostles. That account will show which in the case of the early Apostles, as in the case of the Hebrew Prophets, the advance in the knowledge of God and Christ, and in appreciation of His plan and comprehension of His Commandments, was the outcome of fidelity to Christ in the midst of perfectly unforeseen circumstances. Faithfulness in a new and trying situation was rewarded then, as it is now, by an enlarged and fuller vision.

The forty days during which He has been telling the disciples of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God are over, and these exhibit the knowledge with which they start upon their career by asking, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" It is the old popular conception of the kingdom and the Christ in which they were brought up, although they must expect that its character will reflect the character of Jesus. As they learn more of the kingdom, they will learn more of the Christ, and *vice versa*. It was not for *them* to know

the times and the seasons that lay before them any more than it is for us to know the times and seasons that lie before *us*. But we have nearly nineteen centuries of times and seasons to ponder over which they had not. In that which is called the Table of Contents, Acts i. 8, the "uttermost parts of the earth" is out of proportion. Jerusalem and Judæa and Samaria loom far larger in the fishermen's view of the world. They will stay in Jerusalem and the neighbourhood until unforeseen events drive them further. In the meantime they receive, sacramentally, that Spirit—the Spirit of Jesus—which will *guide* them unto all truth, not suddenly impart to them the whole truth. It will guide them, in ways unforeseen, geographically to Rome as the centre of the world, and *parsi passu* spiritually to Christ as the "fullness of the Godhead."

In the meantime they are in Jerusalem. The burden of Peter's sermon is that Jesus had risen, that he and his companions had seen Him, that if the accomplished fact of the resurrection would be fairly faced it would be found that this Jesus was the Christ of the prophets. A morally purged Israel will be followed by the "restoration of all things." Jesus is the Christ. The term for the present is at its lowest power. If St. Peter (iii. 21) corrects the popular view that the Messiah is to remain on earth, and has so far advanced on the position of i. 6, yet he did not expect a long delay. He calls on them to repent of having crucified Jesus, that the Lord may "send forth the Christ." He seems to think that they will repent speedily when they see what a mistake they made. "And now, brethren, I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Naturally, the Sadducees object to the contradiction of their special tenet, and the rulers refuse to be made responsible for such a crime as the murder of the Messiah. They do not face the fact—do not inquire into it—and so they violate the condition of progress. The guiding Spirit is not with *them*.

During this time there is nothing in the outward lives of the Apostles, nor in the subject of their preaching, nor in their

attitude to Jewish religion in general, which could shock popular prejudice. They were, on the contrary, popular. "And they [the rulers], when they had further threatened them, let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them *because of the people,*" etc. If the people had been hostile, or even indifferent, there would have been no such restraint upon the rulers. The Apostles are "good Jews," with Jewish Messianic ideas and orthodox exclusive Jewish conceptions of the privileges of Israel. The people are willing to listen to them when escaped from prison, are ready to stone the authorities for interfering. The Council, though "cut to the heart" and "minded to slay them," are impotent, and must submit to the prudent counsel of Gamaliel. The burden of the message, as well as the sphere of their operations, is seen in the passage, "And every day, in the Temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ." It was a "faith" to which "multitudes of priests" could subscribe. There was no talk of leaving Jerusalem, of "the uttermost parts of the earth," of a universal mission. They are all very happy and comfortable, have "all things in common," are content to be a sect of the Jews.

The first crisis occurs in vi. 1. There is a squabble over the distribution of alms among some women. It is not a glorious event. The Hellenistic Jewish widows have been slighted in a Church directed exclusively to Hebrew Jews. The Apostles, in settling a practical question in a practical way, have no farther purpose than that of securing a fair administration of the alms. Stephen, the Hellenist appointed to regulate the distribution of relief, discusses in the synagogues of the foreign Jews the religion which he has adopted. Immediately the condition of things changes. Popular prejudice is touched. The Temple and the Law are spoken of as Peter had not ventured to speak of them. "And they stirred up the people." Those who had been ready to stone the authorities for interfering with Peter, are joining the authorities in stoning Stephen. Jesus might be the Christ, if the Christ meant the perpetuation of the Jewish people, but if Jesus was "to destroy this place and change the customs which Moses

delivered unto us," that was quite another matter. Peter had never said this, for Peter had not believed this.

The persecution which followed the death of Stephen was the cause of the first step in a course which ultimately proved to be a carrying out of the Divine design. Judæa and Samaria received the Gospel, and, through Philip, Cæsarea was reached, and thus first the Church touched the great administrative framework of the Roman Empire. This was the work of the forward party, and the Apostles remained in Jerusalem. But more important even than this was the conversion of Saul. It has always been felt that, psychologically considered, this was ultimately due to the testimony and death of Stephen. The integrity of the man made him face a new fact when presented in such a forcible way, and the intellect of the native of Tarsus enabled him to appreciate the new setting of his country's history. His prejudice might have prevented both, but it was precisely this refusal to hold a principle as a prejudice, and this willingness to receive new impressions, even after a struggle, that mark the career of the Apostles, and even the conditions of their inspiration. 'There are some men for whom it is useless to "kick against the pricks," and these are the men whom the Lord has chosen to take His kingdom into all the world. Paul believed that Jesus was the Christ, but it was the Christ according to Stephen, not according to Peter.

The admission of the Gentiles was the great achievement of apostolic times, and it is interesting to observe how it came about. In the case of the first convert the invitation came from Cornelius, not from St. Peter. The Apostle has to be urged by a special visit, and he is disposed to argue the point. He comes, indeed, to Cornelius, but explains that he would not have come unless specially directed (x. 28). He is surprised to see even such a modified case of God's respect for outsiders, and limits it to the proselytes of the gate (x. 35). He tells Cornelius the main facts, stating that he was charged to proclaim them to the privileged people (x. 36, 42, τῶ λαῶ). The external signs of acceptance precede baptism: "They of the circumcision are

amazed, and as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit." Peter could not help himself, and asks: "Can any man forbid water?" He faces this new fact, and, when called on to explain before his brother Apostles the new and unexpected phenomenon, he exclaims: "Who was I that I could withstand God?" It is a surprise. "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life."

In the meantime the Hellenistic teachers have carried the message to Antioch, and have thus touched more definitely the highway to Rome. They have done this without the knowledge of the Apostles, who, when they hear of it as an accomplished fact, dispatch Barnabas to investigate the matter (xi. 22). Barnabas, on his own initiative, brings Saul from his retirement as being the man best qualified to deal with the new turn affairs have taken. The centre of gravity is moving when Antioch, the capital of Syria, is sending relief to Jerusalem.

The rest of the story in Acts tells how St. Paul transferred the Church from Jerusalem to Rome, and laid it upon the framework of the Empire which was to convey all the treasures of antiquity to modern times. There is not space to enter particularly into the development which even here took place. It is evident, as Sir William Ramsay has pointed out, that Saul started as the subordinate of Barnabas, and their first idea was probably to visit the country of the latter only, Cyprus. They then crossed over to Pamphylia, either to preach there because it was the next natural step after preaching in Cyprus and Cilicia—as Saul had been doubtless doing before Barnabas sought him—or because they meant to proceed direct to Cilicia. If the South Galatian theory is correct, the next actual step was determined by an unforeseen event—namely, Paul's illness (Gal. iv. 13). They proceeded to Antioch, the Roman centre of the province Galatia. Paul had now taken the lead, and he was catching the imperial idea, both as a Roman citizen himself, and from the atmosphere of such a Romanizing centre as Antioch was at that time. It was *here* that he broke away from

the Jews, apparently in a fit of wrath at their refusal to hear him. It was here that the great crisis took place—the result, it may be, not merely of the rejection, but of his relations with Sergius Paulus. At all events, Paul widened his conception of the Christ to meet the new circumstances. The centre of his next circle was Corinth, and that of his last was Rome. As we read the epistles written from that centre after all his experience, we see that “Jesus is Christ” has developed far beyond the meaning which Jews and Apostles had accepted long before in Jerusalem. But this denationalizing of the term had to be defended at the Council of Jerusalem, and again the older teachers, instead of drawing back, faced the new situation as well as their national tendency would admit. In 1 Peter the older Apostle has attained the Pauline plan.

These things are written for our learning. The conditions of inspiration, of farther insight into the Divine Plan, are the same to-day. Theological prejudice may produce zealots perishing with their Jerusalem, but the scientific temper which honestly faces facts is the only mark of an “infallible Church.” It is not of money only that it was written, “they forsook all and followed Him.” To those whose ideal is always in the past—in the stiffened Church of the Middle Ages—we should say that it was not thus, in the Acts, Christ was “lifted up” so that He drew all men unto Him.



Literary Notes.

IT is very interesting to learn that Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co. are going to reissue that very valuable work, the “Dictionary of National Biography.” Of double interest, at least to the intellectual man of the slender purse—and there are many of us who count ourselves as such—is the fact that it is to be brought out at a third of the original cost. Its compass will also be less, inasmuch as it will take up a third of the room of the first issue. All told, there will be twenty-two volumes, published at 21s. net per volume. The type and the size will be exactly the same as in the first issue, while many errors will be corrected which crept into the old volumes, and many of the bibliographies will be revised. Otherwise the text will be the same. Vol. I. of this new issue will appear on the 10th