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BARON BUNSEN (1795-1860), PIONEER OF PAN-PROTESTANTISM

“BARON BUNSEN was really one of those persons, more common a century ago than now,” wrote Dean Church, “who belong as much to an adopted country as to that in which they were born and educated.” A German of the Germans, he yet succeeded in making himself at home in England, in appreciating English interests, in assimilating English thought and traditions, and exercising an important influence at a critical time on one extremely important side of English life and opinion. . . . Few foreigners have gained more fairly, by work and by sympathy, the *droit de cité* in England than Bunsen (*Saturday Review*, 2nd May, 1868). This is all the more remarkable when one considers that Bunsen did not belong to the princely German families that were related to the British Royal House; nor had he the advantage of being a native of Hanover, still fairly closely connected with the United Kingdom. He lived at a time when the Prussian War of Independence against Napoleon had rejuvenated the German people, without as yet infecting them with that exaggerated nationalism so evident later in the century. Romanticism had widened eighteenth century cosmopolitanism by unfolding the panorama of mediæval Christendom, a divine society overleaping frontiers of speech and tongue. The Germans were *weltbürgerlich*. “The best, the truest German national feeling also included the cosmopolitan ideal of a supra-national humanity, with the understanding that it is *un-German to be only German*” (Meineke, *Weltbürgertum u. Nationalstaat*, p. 1).

I

Christian Charles Josias Bunsen was born on August 25th, 1795 at Korbach, in the principality of Waldeck. His father was a farmer who had been driven by poverty to a soldier's life.

In spite of financial difficulties, he managed to reach the University of Marburg. At Göttingen he won the prize essay

for 1812 on "The Athenian Law of Inheritance". Jena gave him the Honorary degree of Ph.D. He was fortunate to become tutor to W. B. Astor, the son of a poor German lad who had made a fortune in America. In 1813 he travelled with Astor in South Germany and turned with interest to study the religion, laws and literature of the Teutonic races. This led him further afield to Norse, Hebrew, Arabic and Persian. East and West called for close study and interpretation, with Germany as the middle term, but with the Bible as his source of inspiration (for young Bunsen read his Bible devotionally, as was uncommon among the intelligentsia). At the end of 1815 he went to Berlin, to submit this elaborate scheme of study to Niebuhr the historian. Niebuhr was so impressed that, on his appointment as Prussian Ambassador to the Papal Court, he made the young scholar his secretary (1817).

For a quarter of a century Bunsen was the centre of an intellectual and social élite in Rome. Fate had decided that his career should not be entirely bookish. In July, 1817, he married Frances, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Mr. Waddington of Llandover, Monmouthshire. Their home soon became a centre for English residents and travellers. Such different temperaments as Connop Thirlwall, Crabb Robinson and Arnold found a warm welcome. Robinson described Chevalier Bunsen as "a fair, smooth-faced, thickset man, who talks, though he does not look, like a man of talents. He was in the habit of receiving once a week his German friends, and on another day, his English friends. He said—'I consider you both German and English, and shall expect you both days'" (Nov. 25, 1829).

Sir Walter Scott dined with the Bunsens on his last journey. He asked about Goethe's son, who died at Rome in 1830. Bunsen, avoiding the discreditable circumstances, replied, "The son of Goethe had nothing of his father but the name." Bunsen was startled by Sir Walter slowly turning his head towards his emaciated son, with the words—"Why, Charles, that is what people will be saying of you!" (Letter, May 10, 1832).

George Ticknor, American man of letters, visited Rome in 1818. He found that the only cultivated society in the priest-ridden capital was foreign. Chevalier and Madame Bunsen, instead of encouraging separate coteries, mixed nationalities at *conversazioni* and brought them into touch with

the more intelligent Roman aristocrats and ecclesiastics. Ticknor's second visit in 1836 confirmed his first impressions of the cheerless lives of the Italian nobility, who camped in an upper story or remote corner of vast, gloomy and uncomfortable palaces often without fire, carpets and convenient furniture—"the result of indolent habits and perverted tastes rather than of poverty". By this time Bunsen had succeeded Niebuhr as Ambassador. He was now the father of nine children, "but just as full of learning, activity and kindness as ever". He met Thorwaldsen and other celebrities, also "Dr. Carlyle, brother to the obscure writer to the reviews" (1) Ticknor found that Bunsen's religious interests were as strong as ever. He remembered how he had been honoured on his last visit by being asked to join the company of Germans who assembled to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Luther's burning the Pope's Bull (Oct. 1818). Bunsen read "something between a speech and a sermon" and there were prayers he had translated from the English Prayer Book. "What Bunsen said was fine and touching. At the end, Niebuhr, who always reminded me of the late Dr. Channing, a small man with a great deal of soul in his face, went up to Bunsen, meaning to say some words of thanks. He held out his hands to him, and then he was completely overcome; he fell on his neck and wept aloud and I assure you there were not many dry eyes in the room" (*Life, Letters and Journal of Geo. Ticknor*, London, 1876, Vol. 1, p. 147f). Bunsen remarked afterwards—"To our Roman Catholic countrymen here (among whom are some of our most intimate friends), the thing was very startling and the Italians are angry—which, however, matters not. I hope our grandchildren in 1917 may celebrate the Reformation in a church!"

Overbeck and other expatriated painters who had settled at Rome were Romantics converted from Protestantism by the supposed kinship of Catholicism and Art. This put Bunsen on his mettle and stimulated him to found a "Capitoline Congregation". A succession of ardent young German pastors started with the arrival of Smieder in 1819. He was followed by Richard Rothe (famous later as one of the outstanding theologians of the century), whose experience at Rome made a harmonious transition from pietism to a broader and more mature theology. Bunsen remarked of the next chaplain, Tippelskirch—"He lives entirely in his work and helps me from 7 a.m. till 11 p.m."

The Ambassador certainly needed help, for in addition to his ordinary duties, he set himself intellectual tasks more formidable than most professors could tackle. His more abstract theological and philosophical studies were counterbalanced by a special study of Rome and its topography; Niebuhr kindled this interest, which he carried further into the history of Christian Rome and its monuments. Bunsen and his family witnessed the burning of the finest of the ancient churches, St. Paul's-outside-the-walls, on July 16th, 1823—a conflagration caused by careless workmen and not arrested owing to the laziness and inefficiency of the authorities (see *Memoirs*, by his wife, I. 208*f*). Ruskin was impressed by the Chevalier's research into the Basilica as the most ancient type of Christian church; by experiment he confirmed his theory that the sermon was preached from the centre of the apse, for the voice could be heard clearly all over the building; side pulpits were not found till the ninth century—therefore Protestants were historically as well as logically correct in retaining central pulpits (see *Stones of Venice*, ii. App. 6). This was a living question to Bunsen, for had not Frederick William III of Prussia insisted with characteristic pertinacity since 1815 that the pulpits of new churches must be placed in the traditional mediæval position instead of behind or in front of the altar according to post-Reformation custom? Bunsen was always interested in the practical bearing of historical principles. Thus he obtained permission from “the *Liturgiker* on the throne” to set aside the royal liturgy forced on the Prussian Union of Lutheran and Reformed (1817) in favour of a compilation which he and Rothe had made from the English Prayer Book and other catholic sources. “The Capitoline Liturgy” (1828), printed at the expense of his royal master, was Bunsen's new toy. But it was merely the first step towards a German equivalent for the English Prayer Book, a *geistliches Volksbuch* that would take the place of the innumerable service books that were really pastor's manuals, not in the hands of the people. To Arnold he wrote on Easter Monday, 1828: “My maxim is, no general Church without a Liturgy, and no Liturgy without a Church. The latter is, alas! not yet understood among us.”

When the Crown Prince (afterwards Frederick William IV) visited Rome in 1828, Bunsen pleaded with him for the freedom of the Evangelical Church. Erastianism had been the bane of

German Protestantism since the sixteenth century. Detailed and intensive state interference had killed popular interest, which had no overflow into dissent (as in England). The clergy were mere officials, without convictions of apostolic ministry; the sacraments were seldom administered and scantily attended; the divinity professors were free to spread rationalism in the universities.

To invoke the aid of the Crown Prince to crush Erastianism was dangerously like calling on Satan to cast out Satan.

At all events, a personal friendship was founded on common interests and ideals that for some years ran parallel, even if they did not always intersect. Bunsen was mildly Liberal, in contrast to his predecessor, Niebuhr, who was rigidly Conservative. But the Crown Prince was edified by Bunsen's belief that Prussia was the true Germany, the nucleus of the regenerated Germany of the future.

The once obscure student had aims as well as opinions. Bunsen has so often been dismissed as a mere dilettante that it is only fair to state that his specialism was set in the wide context of broad culture and deep, unwearied scholarship, sustained amidst constant distractions in a climate unfavourable to intellectual activity. In his knowledge of Church History, from origins to contemporary conditions, he was well abreast of the best scholarship of his day and at some points ahead of it. His *Book of Hymns and Prayers* (1833, 2nd ed. 1844) involved colossal labour when one realises that it meant burrowing into a corpus of 80,000 German hymns, and extracting the honey from 300 collections in use. His utterances on the use and abuse of liturgies are classically expressed in a letter to Dr. Arnold: "I agree with you as to the necessity of allowing, even in that test of unity, the Liturgy, a certain latitude; not, however, on the ground of expediency, but on the higher ground of Christian wisdom and charity. . . . I claim liberty for extempore prayer, liberty for silent prayer, liberty for abridging the Liturgy. As long as the world stands, there will be people who prefer a Liturgy like yours, others who prefer extempore prayer, others free selection from fixed prayers; but all reasonable men would allow such a form to be best, to be the really catholic, which should unite all, assigning to each mode its fittest place" (Jan. 21, 1834). A century later, this passage was to be quoted with high approval by the editors of a *Book*

of *Common Worship, for use in the Several Communion of the Church of Christ* (New York, 1932). The very title would have gladdened Bunsen's heart.

The Chevalier aimed at a chivalrous attitude between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Feeling the loneliness of being a Protestant at Rome, he could sympathise with German Catholics harassed by the state. Summoned to Berlin in 1837, he insisted on Frederick William III hearing his plea for Catholics in the Prussian army. The King was very impatient, but out of respect for Bunsen's conscience was willing to limit the number of compulsory church parades of Catholics to Protestant churches to three annually. "What has been wrong when done twelve times," replied Bunsen, "is not right when done three times!" He won his point. But he did not succeed in solving the thorny question of mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants in Prussia. He was opposed to the secular spirit of the Prussian law and the fatal facility afforded for divorce. But he was unable to negotiate with the Jesuit successor to the statesmanlike Spiegel, Archbishop of Cologne (d. 1835). There was a deadlock, only ended by Bunsen's resignation (1838). The situation is briefly explained by his son in his article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th ed. (revised in 11th ed.).

II

"Come, let us seek another Capitol elsewhere," said Bunsen in a tone of resignation. But after a short time in Switzerland a new hopeful chapter in his career opened in 1841 with his appointment as Prussian Ambassador to the Court of St. James. His friend the Crown Prince had ascended the throne as Frederick William IV in 1840. The new King resembled the Chevalier in more ways than one. Both were lovers of Art, believers in a regenerated Germany under Prussian leadership, keen Evangelicals yet pathetically optimistic about the value of a Liturgy as a means of creating active Church life. A new pietism became popular in Court circles. Among the aristocracy there was much talk of "rebirth" and "special calls". Even in the army generals conducted Bible classes and prayer meetings. Cynical Berliners thought it all sanctimonious hypocrisy and claimed that in a few years the capital would be as irreligious as it had been before the War of Independence

against Napoleon. Certainly, the mixture of pietism and patriarchal autocracy was distasteful to the middle and working classes, whose ideal was the attainment of a parliament and the breaking-down of rigid class distinctions. The new King soon lost the slight dash of Liberalism he once had. The reactionary Haller was now his political guide. He could see no destiny for Germany beyond his conservative grouping of nobles, burghers and peasants round the Throne, backed by the army and a subservient Evangelical Church. The Revolution of 1848 might have appealed to an idealistic young monarch, but a united Germany fashioned by the Frankfurt Parliament was not to his liking. He refused "to pick the crown out of the gutter", and accepted the reaction that followed the Revolution as a natural turn of the predestined plan of Providence.

In 1842 Bunsen dedicated to his royal master his work on *The Basilicas of Ancient Rome* related to *the Idea & History of Church Architecture*, with engravings by Knapp. This prompted the King to erect the charming Friedenskirche or Church of Peace at Potsdam on the ancient model. But his real ambition was to re-build the Protestant Cathedral of Berlin on Gothic lines, to crown the impressive number of new churches designed and old churches restored in a traditionalist style. Years were lost in plans and counter-plans and it was not till 1891 that a pretentious Baroque cathedral was built by Raschdorff in the reign of Wilhelm II. Bunsen's patron, among other mediævalist projects, attempted to revive the long defunct "Order of the Swan" as a reward for "all who manifest Christianity in life and deed". But Bunsen's enthusiasm evaporated after an emotionally-worded archaic proclamation was killed by ridicule. The King quietly dropped the idea. And Prutz' Aristophanic comedy, "The Political Lying-in Room" dramatically expressed Berlin satire with its chorus—

"Alas that the Order of the Swan
Should have come to naught."

Frederick William's visit to London was more successful (1842). Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, acting on Baron Stockmar's advice, begged him to act as godfather to the Prince of Wales (Edward VII). The King of Prussia accepted the invitation with alacrity; nor was he deterred by the official protest of Oxford University against a Lutheran heretic being

so closely associated with a solemn rite of the Church. He expressed himself delighted with all English institutions, and did not even shun genuflecting in St. Paul's—a ritual alien to German Protestant tradition. In short, the visit passed off with great éclat. The King presented a silver escutcheon to his godchild that well expressed his own ideals and the taste of his age. Treitschke describes the symbolism. "In the centre was a head of Christ; beneath were representations of the two Protestant sacraments; around the margins were shown the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and a picture of the godfather's voyage; the Christian King was represented as a pilgrim wearing hat and coat decked with cockle-shells, on a ship guided by an angel, and driven forward by the puffing and fettered demon of steam; beside the monarch stood Humboldt bearing an olive branch; on the further shore, awaiting the advent of the ship, was St. George, with the Prince Consort and Wellington—a composition which to the Coburg worldling might well seem no less questionable than it must seem to the infidel German man of science. In the radical camp the gift gave occasion for much mockery" (*History of Germany in the 19th century*, Vol. VI, p. 454, Jarrold 1919).

Bunsen was Master of Ceremonies and had the privilege of introducing to His Majesty all the celebrities—among them Julius Hare and Dr. Arnold, the Broad Churchmen, and Thomas Carlyle (no longer "the obscure writer to the reviews", but not yet the biographer of Frederick the Great). Bunsen was certain that Lord Aberdeen, the Premier, was delighted with the new Alliance of Protestant powers, while Metternich was terrified by the new northern combination. But most Germans had no illusions; enlightened Berliners considered that the King and Bunsen had been enmeshed temporarily in the nets of high Tories and Anglicans. The political and economic interests of the two countries did not coincide. In a sense, however, Bunsen dreamed grandiose imperialistic dreams that were not destined to possess Prussia till the next generation, when blood and iron was to bring them within the horizon of practical politics. He would gladly have accepted the offer of the Mexican government to sell California to Frederick William IV (1842). Humboldt dissuaded the King, and the matter was dropped. But Baron Rönne, the Prussian envoy at Washington, wrote to Bunsen, loudly applauding the project: "We must

possess a fleet and colonies". Six years later, Bunsen wrote to Baron Stockmar: "It is quite entertaining to see the stiff unbelief of the English in the future of Germany! . . . They consider themselves as still in the ark, and look down from their Mt. Ararat with the Pharisaic satisfaction of 'I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not like one of these'" (July 15, 1848). Frederick William had already turned towards the Near East. The prospects of Christian Missions allured him, and he was not altogether indifferent to political advantages that might accrue. But he was not prepared to take risks.

He had sent Bunsen to London in 1841 as special envoy to negotiate the modest proposal of a joint Anglo-Prussian Bishopric at Jerusalem (the Chevalier was highly flattered because Queen Victoria chose his name out of three candidates submitted). This led to his permanent appointment as Ambassador at the Court of St. James'. Apart from political motives, a plausible case could be made for giving the weak and despised Protestants of Jerusalem a bishop; the Roman Catholics, the Greek Orthodox, the Armenians and the Copts, all had one. Bunsen had no difficulty in persuading Prince Albert of the advantages of a bishop to be appointed alternatively by Prussia and England. Lord Shaftesbury and the Evangelicals, as students of prophecy, saw in the scheme the first step towards the restoration of Israel to the Promised Land, a necessary preliminary to the Second Advent. Historically-minded Churchmen hailed it as the revival of the See of St. James', the mother Church of all Christendom. The Tractarians were divided. To Newman and Keble the scheme implied the amalgamation of a hybrid body, the Lutheran-Reformed Evangelical denomination, with a branch of the true Church, and therefore anathema. Gladstone, Bishop Wilberforce and Manning (an Anglican as yet) thought that good *might* come out of the project. Bunsen took comfort in the Bishop of London's assurance to Gladstone: "My dear Sir, my intention is not to limit and restrict the Church of Christ, but to enlarge it".

E. B. Pusey was personally attracted by Bunsen, his brother Philip's intimate friend, though he was shocked by hearing him profess the priesthood of all believers ("Any good father of a family might consecrate the Eucharist"). Pusey hoped that the Lutherans might be absorbed into the Anglican Church in this way; "The present king of Prussia is at heart

an Episcopalian". Fuller reflection, however, suggested the incongruity of Anglicans associating with persons who had practically only one service in the week, never knelt in church, sat for singing, received Holy Communion standing, and were edified by "pastors" who condescended to receive Episcopal ordination without valuing it; "Scotland was an example of the mistake of offering the Episcopate to a people which had no longing for it". These academic objections, however, had little weight in rejecting a special arrangement that was obviously an exception to ordinary ecclesiastical procedure, and as such allowable. Only a very few communicants were affected and the arrangement could be terminated if it did not work. The Archbishop of Canterbury having been won over and the average Englishman being far nearer Wittenberg and Geneva than Rome in sympathy, the scheme was approved. Whatever claims Prussia might make to be the protector of the Evangelical Confessions, an Anglican, Bishop Alexander, was appointed. In Lord Shaftesbury's Diary, we read: "19th July, 1841. The successor of St. James will embark in October. He is by birth an Israelite; born a Prussian in Breslau; in confession belonging to the Church of England; ripened by hard work in Ireland; Professor of Hebrew and Arabic in England. . . . So the beginning is made, please God, for the restoration of Israel".

Bunsen's success in achieving the establishment of the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric of Jerusalem did not imply any widespread rapprochement of Lutherans and Anglicans. Indeed, at close quarters the Church of England appeared far from ideal; its poetry was changed to prose. His son Henry took English orders certainly, but the father realised more and more the gulf that separated Anglicanism and Lutheranism. The official Anglican attitude was very different from that of those chosen souls who were his personal friends—Arnold, Hare and Thirlwall. The Prayer Book was very beautiful when one could make one's own selections: it was a very wooden yoke, used rigidly week by week. The rise of Tractarianism indefinitely postponed the prospect of an enlightened revision visualised by Thirlwall (*Letters*, p. 104). Not only was lifeless formalism persisting: it was being galvanised into semblance of life by Baptismal Regeneration, the Real Presence, and other dogmas of the Oxford School. This gave Dissent a new *raison d'être* and showed that excellent Quakers like the Gurneys of Earham

had some grounds for altogether dispensing with priests and sacraments (*Life of Baroness Bunsen*, by A. J. C. Hare, II. 84ff). Bunsen had read Gladstone's *Church and State* in 1838; he thoroughly approved of this ideal of a Church spiritually free, undefiled by "the unholy police regulations of the secular power". He enjoyed meeting the author (still at this period "the bright hope of the stern, unbending Tories"). But residence in England made him ask himself the questions: "Is this not the ideal rather than the actual? Does it make for unity, rather than uniformity? Do the clergy form the Church? Are 'the Fathers' fetters or wings? Is tradition and church government to be understood in a Judaic sense or not? Is the Church of Scotland only to be supported as a necessary evil. Is she really no Church?" The Gorham Judgment (1850) and other ecclesiastical cases revealed the Church of England as thoroughly Erastian; and had he lived till Disraeli's Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874, not even Bunsen, the anti-Tractarian, would have liked to see clergy prosecuted by the State and even imprisoned for ritual excesses. When he realised the contrary evils of Parliamentary and priestly control, he could not help remembering Sterne's sermon on the text, "Issachar is a strong ass, crouching between two burdens". Allured as usual by distant prospects, he was continually holding up the free constitution of the Episcopal Church in the United States as a model, though he knew of it only through reading books and meeting Americans. He was soon to discover that the sweet reasonableness he had advocated as a solvent of the Episcopalian-Presbyterian feud was not to be found; his psychology is still that of many "reunion-all-round" enthusiasts (cf. *Life*, II, 392).

One September morning in 1841 Bunsen wrote to his wife from the lovely Berkshire home of his friend, Philip Pusey. Philip was "more of a farmer than ever" but delighted none the less in reading with him Demosthenes' *De Corona*—which he knew almost by heart. Bunsen's thoughts that morning, however, were sadly concerned with ecclesiastical controversy. The other day, his fellow-traveller, Spörlein the Protestant pastor of Antwerp, had arrived at Oxford to seek that fuller faith, which he believed the English Church possessed above all other reformed bodies. Newman invited him to breakfast to meet fifteen young men who were eager to discuss his religious

difficulties. The award (uncontradicted) was that "Pastor Spörlein, as a continental Christian, was subject to the Bishop of Antwerp". He objected that by that Bishop he would be excommunicated as a heretic. "Of course; but you will conform to his decision?" "How can I do that," exclaimed Spörlein, "without abjuring my faith?" "But your faith is heresy." "How! do you mean that I am to embrace the errors of Rome and abjure the faith of the Gospel?" "There is no faith but that of the Church." "But my faith is in Christ crucified." "You are mistaken; you are not saved by Christ, but in the Church." Spörlein was thunderstruck; he looked around, asked again, obtained but the same reply—whereupon he burst out with the declaration that "he believed in Christ crucified, by whose merits alone he could be saved. . . ." One after the other dropped away, and Newman remaining with him alone, attempted an explanation which however did not alter the case. I repeated this lamentable story as Spörlein had told it to Hare and myself: and Pusey said it was like telling a man complaining of toothache that the infallible remedy would be cutting off his head. The story made such an impression on Hare . . . he said that if he could preach at Oxford, it should be on the text of Elijah, "If the Lord be God, serve him; but if Baal, then serve him." "Knox for ever!" exclaimed Lord Haddington, when he spoke on the subject. "I say not so—this is the reaction against the one-sidedness of Knox and his followers. But certainly, rather Knox than Papacy in its worst appearance! O! this is heart-rending." Such was Bunsen's opinion.

III

There is no doubt that Bunsen was personally popular among all classes in England. His opinion and his books were treated with respect, and he had only a certain amount of Anglican jealousy to surmount. For instance, his wife referring to the controversial appointment of Hampden the Broad Churchman to the See of Hereford, remarks: "There are some who attribute it to my husband's influence! The fact being that he is as much unknown to us, as a man *can* be, who has been brought before the public". Closer contact with England made him less sympathetic with Frederick William IV's visionary schemes of the restoration of Episcopacy in Prussia. He knew

that when it came to the point he would never make the sacrifices inevitable if "Apostolic Succession" was to be secured from Canterbury. Had not the King continued to declare in public: "I acknowledge every Church which places the authority of Scripture above the creeds, and in the power of Scripture elevates justification by faith alone as the sacred standard".

Bunsen's resignation in 1854 was mainly on political grounds. He had advised the King to make the best of the Revolution of 1848 by canalising into loyalty the rising enthusiasm for a united Germany. He had deprecated the humiliation of Prussia and its subjection to reactionary Austria. He had urged the desirability of Prussia stepping in on the side of Britain and France during the Crimean War, which would have forced Russia to make peace. His advice had been rejected all along the line. He retired to the estate of Charlottenberg near Heidelberg. His public life was practically at an end. He refused to stand for a seat in the Lower House of the Prussian diet, but his *Zeichen der Zeit* (1855) did much to revive the Liberal movement which had languished since the failure of the Revolution of 1848. At the special request of the Regent (afterwards the Kaiser Wilhelm I) he took his place in the Prussian Upper House in 1858 as Baron von Bunsen.

He did not let the grass grow under his feet during his retirement. He continued to produce the books that he had long aimed at completing. Some of these suffered from the defect that specialisation was now being carried to an extent unthought of in his youth. It was no longer possible for a busy man to be an authority in more than one field. Hence, the weakness of *Egypt's Place in Universal History* and his *Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History as applied to Languages and Religion* (2 vols. 1854). *God in History* was an attempt to prove that "the progress of mankind marches parallel to the conception of God formed within each nation by the highest exponents of its thought". His studies in Roman civilisation were a good preparation for writing *Hippolytus and his Age: Doctrine and Practice at Rome under Commodus and Severus*¹ (1852). His old friend, George Ticknor, now Professor of Spanish at Harvard,

¹ At a time when Patristic study was mainly pursued by men obsessed by Tractarian dogmas, it was good to find so convinced a Protestant doing research in this field "I have read Newman's 'Arians'", exclaimed Bunsen. "Oh heaven! What a book!"

thought much of it "curious"; the maxims, high German, and often hardly intelligible; the Latin excursus on old Liturgies, most learned and irrelevant, etc. (Letter to Sir Edmund Head, Frederickton, New Brunswick, Dec. 20, 1852). His English works are still to be found in the upper shelves of libraries—his *Constitution of the Future Church*, his *Correspondence with Gladstone*—and, of more lasting worth, his *Prayers* (edited by Catherine Winkworth). It is of interest to note that he translated into German, with an Introduction, John Caird's famous sermon, "Religion in Common Life"; the 4th edition was issued for the Saxon "Society for the Spread of Christian Popular Writings" (10,000 copies).

Bunsen's last public appearance was at a meeting of the World's Evangelical Alliance in Berlin, September 1857. It was at the special request of Frederick William IV, who still considered himself the patron of world Protestantism—had not his Reformed ancestors welcomed the exiled Huguenots? Bunsen was now in indifferent health, but he and Krummacher the royal chaplain made the gathering one of the most successful, in spite of the opposition of High Church Lutherans. W. B. Robertson of Irvine, a Scottish delegate, said he could never forget the Garrison Kirche, filled with 3,000 eager hearers, listening intently to the ablest speakers from all over the Protestant world. Most picturesque was a great open-air reception on the green sward of the New Palace in Potsdam, with its associations of Frederick the Great and Voltaire. There were Germans, Swiss, English and Scots, Frenchmen, Hungarians and Americans. Many of these Bunsen presented to the King, who was greeted with the warmest enthusiasm. After a number of short, stirring addresses, there was a cry of *Lebe hoch!*—then sudden silence—the Germans had formed a circle, and as the King entered the portal of his palace they burst forth with *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*. The King could not conceal his emotion; "God be thanked for this blessed day! I thank you from my heart, dear Bunsen—God reward you!" On the way back to Berlin, many of the one thousand delegates shook hands warmly with Bunsen and congratulated him; not a few hoped to see him in London again. It was a personal triumph for Bunsen—pioneer of Pan-Protestantism. Early next morning, writing home, he concluded: "I must go to the meeting—full as my eyes are with tears. *Deo soli gloria*".

This was Bunsen's swan song. His health failed soon after and he died on November 28th, 1860. He was buried at Bonn, with an inscription that illustrated his life-long study of the Bible, on which he spent his last years re-translating:

“LET US WALK IN THE LIGHT OF THE ETERNAL” (Isaiah ii. 5).

One of the last requests he made of his wife on a deeply-moving death-bed was that she should compile his *Memoirs*. Two volumes, amounting to over 1,200 pages, were published by Longmans in 1868. This prolix biography would be useful as a storehouse of materials for a concise Life, added to further extracts from the German translation which throw light on the political events in which he played so important a part. L. von Ranke in 1873 published the Correspondence of Bunsen and Frederick William IV. The *Life and Letters of Frances Baroness Bunsen* were written by Augustus Hare and reached a third edition by 1882.

Dean Church's review of Baron von Bunsen's *Memoirs* was reprinted in his *Occasional Papers* (vol. II, Macmillan, 1897). “We do not pretend to think Bunsen the great and consummate man that, naturally enough, he appeared to his friends. . . . We doubt whether he fully understood his age. . . . (His) undue confidence implies considerable defects of intellect and character. He wanted the patient, cautious, judicial self-distrust which his studies eminently demanded, and of which he might have seen some examples in England. . . . He ‘darkened counsel’ as much as any of the theological sciolists whom he denounced. . . . He was hardly successful in his ambition to be a 19th century Luther. ‘The Church of the Future’ still awaits its interpreter, to make good its pretensions to throw the ignorant and mistaken Church of the Past into the shade.”

Much of this criticism holds good after forty years. But Dean Church, as the historian of the Oxford Movement, was somewhat limited by his theological position and his insular Anglicanism. In these days of international instability we realise that oecumenical Christianity is not a dream but a practical necessity. And we are grateful to one who endeavoured to guide Prussian policy along lines, which, if followed, might have modified the subsequent history of Germany for the better.

His whole life testified against Sir Henry Wotton's definition of an Ambassador as "an honest man sent to lie abroad for the commonwealth". He stood for a Christian conception of diplomacy. And no man has taken such pains to understand the ideals and customs of another country. He had "too many irons in the fire". But in these days of increasing specialism it is refreshing to find the humanist ideal of all-round culture pursued with such unfailing zest to the end of a busy life. The life of research and the life of action surely gain by inter-action. His honest and unsparing toil, his quickness and freshness of thought were inspired by a genuine Christian faith, that found expression in the details of everyday life as well as in ambitious projects. We may criticise the man for an enthusiasm often too sanguine and for a judgment often lacking in balance. But when all is said and done, Christian von Bunsen was a fine Christian.

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