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THE SENSE IN WHICH ST. PAUL CALLS  
HIMSELF AN *ECTROMA*.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 8.

“And last of all, as if it were unto the *Ectroma*, he appeared also unto me.”

II.

IN a previous Number, an endeavour was made to investigate the exact import of the term *ectroma* taken literally. Reasons were alleged, which I venture to think an attentive reader will consider satisfactory, for believing that St. Paul in penning the word could allude only to one object;—namely, to that diminutive creature, still-born, which comes away from its mother in a miscarriage.

I crave leave now to resume the discussion of the passage for the purpose of stating, as I then could only very partially do, what it was in reference to himself that we may suppose him to have had in view in thus designating his own personality, and also to explain how it was that he was prompted to interrupt his argument respecting the Resurrection, by the introduction just then of this particular topic.

The remark has already been made,—a remark which, as I apprehend, no one who bears in mind St. Paul’s habitual manner in dealing with the subject will be disposed to dispute—that he cannot be supposed to have intended in this epithet to refer either to the dignity of *his* apostolical status as compared with that of other apostles, or to the manner in which, compared with them, he had himself discharged his apostolical office.

Next, I would add as a consideration of no small interest, that the strong feeling of personal moral insignificance which the Apostle here sums up in this burning word *ectroma*, was not merely in part, not merely even in very large proportion, founded upon the consciousness of what

he had been before his conversion: it was the result of this consciousness exclusively. He says as much in the words, "because I persecuted the church of God." This is the exact truth. We have reason on all hands to feel assured that the self-humiliation expressed was in no degree whatever the result of any sense of inconsistency or shortcoming in the spirit or the outward action of his life since he had been "in Christ."

This may seem at first sight a startling observation, and even a paradox. In the biographies of pious Christians, especially of those who have made a habit of recording their feelings and judgments relative to their own spiritual history, we have been accustomed to find even a considerable space occupied by penitent confessions of frequently occurring failure and inconsistency, and by acknowledgments of painful defects in the posture of their spirits towards God and the Redeemer, or towards their fellowmen. Particularly has this been the case when the saint was anticipating a speedy departure from this life. Moreover, both our private consciousness respecting ourselves, and the sense too often forced upon us of blots and deficiencies marking the characters of such pious men as we have known the most closely, point in the same direction: they prepare us to *expect* such penitent confessions as only too befitting even in the case of the most devoted workers for Christ. Nevertheless, any one who will be at the pains to look through the writings of St. Paul with an eye to this particular point, taking note also of such utterances of his as are recorded in the Acts, will find himself face to face with the remarkable phenomenon that, while the Apostle has very frequent occasion to refer to himself and to his manner of behaviour both as a Christian believer and as an Apostle, we never, not even once, meet with any such penitent acknowledgments of inconsistency or deficiency as have now been spoken of. Instead of reading any such

acknowledgments of a penitential character, we have to note the frequent occurrence of passages in which the writer confidently, without any reservation, and at times with great solemnity, asseverates his unfailing integrity, the stainless purity of his motives, the sanctity and charity of his behaviour in all the relations of life; and, in especial, the single-hearted, entire, wholly self-sacrificing devotion with which he served the Saviour of the World in promoting the well-being of men and especially of the Church;—passages, too, from time to time, in which he holds up his own tenor of conduct as a meet example for his fellow-believers to imitate.

One form of qualification alone is to be discerned, relieving what at first sight has the appearance of absolute self-commendation; a qualification which in effect transmutes and transfigures its entire character: there is evermore present a constant and palpably most genuine and single-minded reference to the grace of Christ, as the only source, but an unfailing and all-sufficient source, of whatever virtue or goodness or spiritual victory he claims to have himself achieved. Throughout, in one form or other, this refrain is to be heard: “By the grace of God I am what I am.”<sup>1</sup>

The only instance which I have been able to find of the Apostle’s confessing an error in conduct is that related by

<sup>1</sup> In illustration of these remarks, I venture to refer the reader to the following passages arranged according to the order of time in which they were probably written.

1 Thess. i. 5, 6; ii. 3–11, 19, 20; iii. 8–12; 2 Thess. iii. 7–9; Gal. ii. 19, 20; vi. 14; 1 Cor. iv. 4, 9–17; ix. 15–27; x. 33; xi. 1; xv. 10, 31; 2 Cor. i. 12; ii. 15–17; iii. 5, 6; iv. 1, 2, 5, 7–11, 16; v. 9, 13–15, 18; vi. 3–10; x. 3; xi. 7, 23–29; xii. 9, 10, 14, 15; Rom. i. 5; v. 1–5, 11; vii. and viii. [so far as these two chapters may be regarded as founded on the Apostle’s own experience, previous and subsequent respectively to the time of his becoming a believer in Christ]; xiv. 7–9; xv. 14–21, 29; Eph. iii. 1, 2, 7–12; Col. i. 23–29; ii. 1, 5; Phil. i. 7, 8, 17–26, 30; ii. 20–22; iii. 3–14, 17, 20; iv. 9, 11–13; 1 Tim. i. 12–15; ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 3, 7–12; ii. 8–13; iii. 10, 11; iv. 6–8, 16–18; Tit. iii. 3, 4. Also the following in the Acts: chap. xx. 18–35; xxii. 3–5, 19, 20; xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16; xxvi. 4–23; xxvii. 23–24.

St. Luke in Acts xxiii. 5, where we read that he apologized for the manner in which he had rebuked Ananias the High Priest. St. Paul frankly acknowledged that the tone of his rebuke was unbecoming;—unbecoming, however, he evidently considered, not absolutely in itself, but only upon the consideration of whom it was that he was addressing: “I knew not that he was High Priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of a ruler of thy people.” He acknowledged having fallen into an involuntary mistake. This he might do without being blameworthy if, immediately on becoming aware of his error, he retracted his foot.

The Apostle’s confession in Philippians iii. 9-14, that he had not already obtained neither was already made perfect, even when taken with a purely ethical reference, cannot be considered an exception to the foregoing remarks; any more than the statement in Colossians i. 24, that he was eagerly filling up that which was lacking of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh for his Body’s sake. A striving after yet higher spiritual achievement than has hitherto been reached, is one thing; a wailing consciousness of having allowed oneself to displease the Great Master is quite another. Nothing of this latter kind ever escapes the lips of St. Paul, not even when expecting very shortly to give in his account of the things that he had done. We do not, for example, find it when he discourses to his affectionately sympathizing friends at Philippi, “beloved and longed for,” so freely concerning his past life and his presumedly approaching end. Neither again do we find it when, in his very last Epistle that we possess, he breathes forth his tenderest inmost emotions into the ear of Timothy, his very heart’s “child.”

We are bound, however, to take account of the description which in Galatians v. 17 St. Paul gives of the Christian’s spiritual conflict: “The flesh lusteth against the

spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary [*ἀντίκειται*, stand in antagonism] the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would." For we cannot suppose that the Apostle wrote this as a mere spectator of the spiritual experience of his brethren, as if he in his own person were exempt from the antagonism, more or less mutually disabling, between these two adverse principles. Rather, it seems certain from his words, that with him too, as with all his brethren, the besetment of the flesh did really hamper the action of the spirit; and that therefore in his case as in theirs, though certainly not in the same degree as is found in the melancholy experience of most, the thing from time to time *done* fell more or less short of the thing which the *will* had grasped after. Not even in *his* person had the moral malignity inherent in the flesh ceased to exist or been wholly consumed by the fire of the Divine Spirit, intensely as this fire burned within him. On the contrary it is manifest from all his teaching that he knew full well, that for no one human soul was any security to be found, to the very end of life, save in vigilant self-control, and in Divine help to be incessantly drawn down by prayer. Thus, for example, in Ephesians vi. 10-20, he plainly identifies himself as engaged in the like conflict against the evil one with the whole body of the faithful, and as depending upon the like spiritual resources with them for the attainment of victory.

But though it is true that in every Christian soul in which the Spirit of God has taken up its abode, the old inbred principle of the flesh still continues to subsist, acting in antagonism to the newly-imparted principle of grace, it yet does not follow, as we are perhaps but too ready to assume, that in the result this corrupt element will in each individual case infallibly from time to time so far make good its oppugnancy as to overmaster for awhile the

better principle and evidence its victory in concrete acts of sin. On the contrary, it is quite conceivable that there may be instances, though they are certainly only too rare, in which, from the hour in which the Spirit of God takes supreme possession of the soul, He successfully and without intermission asserts his right to reign, making the believer in very truth so "free from the law of sin and death, that in him the requirement of God's law is fulfilled,"—fulfilled, that is, unceasingly, constantly. Only, the clog of the flesh does no doubt here also so far hinder the perfection of the obedience, that the man after all will prove to have not quite done that which he fain would have done.

There is no reason, for example, for doubting that this magnificent achievement of the Divine grace was seen in the apostle Paul. There is no reason why we should discredit, or call in question, or in any way qualify, that representation of his personal character and life which in the large number of passages above referred to he has himself given or implied. Here, in his own character and life, he was conscious of there being a counterpart to that glowing description of a believer's state which we read in the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. It is *not* necessary to take that description either as an ideal picture of a state which in actual fact is never realized, or as merely a hortatory exhibition of that which his readers are to aspire after, though they may not hope to attain it. Why not rather assume it to be the faithful presentment of that which in Christ the writer was conscious of actually being himself, and of that which *therefore* he knew that any other believer in Christ, through the same grace, both might be and therefore ought to be?

Does it seem hard to imagine such a persistent tension of vigilance and self-control maintained through such a length of years as this estimate of St. Paul's life pre-supposes; maintained amidst trials and conflicts assailing him both

in the Church itself and from the world without, trials so unceasing, so diverse in character, and at times well-nigh overwhelming? I apprehend that it will only appear not unimaginable, not incredible, if, with a steadfast belief in the reality of the Redeemer's unseen agency, we bring into our reckoning that one factor in the case which the Apostle himself recognized as of the supremest importance and necessity, the "*sufficing* grace" and *might* of Christ (2 Cor. xii. 9).

In fact St. Paul has taught us to account of himself as of one whose personality had been well-nigh, so to speak, *absorbed* in the agency upon him and in him of Christ; as of one who had come to be just a living willing organ for the revelation to the Church of what Christ the Redeemer is in Himself, and of what Christ the Redeemer can effect in those who implicitly resign themselves to his disposal. "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." "To me to live is Christ." "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me chief of all might Jesus Christ shew forth all his long-suffering, for an ensample of them who in the time to come should believe on him unto eternal life." In this last passage he intimates, that his case was to be an "ensample," not only in respect to the marvellous patience and forgivingness which had been evinced towards him up to the hour of his being brought into union with Christ, but also in respect to that gracious goodness (*χάρις*) of the Lord which thenceforward so "surpassingly overflowed" upon him, in conjunction with the faith and love which "in Christ Jesus" he was himself enabled to exercise. Through Him that strengthened him, he tells the Philippians, he knew by experience that he possessed the power for every moral success (Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 21; 1 Tim. i. 1-16; Phil. iv. 12).

We have, then, before us a psychological phenomenon of a very remarkable kind. The nobleness and grandeur of



St. Paul's character and his singular goodness are so patent in the history of the Acts, and transpire so vividly in his Epistles, as to be altogether beyond dispute. Answering to the moral image of the Lord Jesus presented to us in the Gospels, we have displayed to us in these other Scriptures the moral image of this particular disciple of Jesus, —an image, we may almost say, unique and alone in the refinement and splendour of its spiritual beauty. Nevertheless, the man whose spirit and whole course of life were such that we may without much exaggeration describe them as seraphic, amid all that he unceasingly thought and felt and did that was heavenly-minded and Christ-like, carried in his bosom unabated even to the very end a genuine persuasion that he was “unspeakably small and insignificant,” a mere “still-born abortion,” a “chief of sinners” (ἐλαχιστότερος πάντων ἁγίων, ἔκτρομα, πρῶτος ἁμαρτωλῶν.)<sup>1</sup> How is this seeming inconsistency to be explained?

I venture to think it is to be explained thus:—St. Paul felt that the first of those two lives which he had led, before and after his conversion, was his very own, the outcome purely of the workings of his own mind; but that the other life was not his own, no product of thinkings, willings, strivings of his, but the result of the working within him of the teachings of Christ and of the actuating life of Christ. Viewed as he was in himself, he was (he considered) “*leaster* than all saints,” nay “first of sinners;” but viewed as he was in Christ, he was not a whit behind any Apostle; he had laboured more abundantly than any one of them all—yet not he “but the grace of God which was with him.” No occasion has he to disparage either the magnitude or the quality of his services.

<sup>1</sup> In 1 Tim. i. 15, we must not lose sight of the tense in the words ὢν πρῶτος εἰμι ἐγώ, not ἦμην ἐγώ. So also in 1 Cor. xv. that τῷ ἐκτρόματι is written with reference to the time when he was writing is evidenced by the following words, ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων κ.τ.λ.

Why should he? In all of this, Christ was to be recognized, not Paul.

Therefore he can speak with the utmost possible frankness and unreserve of himself, of the spirit which animated him and of his achievements, almost as if he were not speaking of himself but of another person; "how holily and righteously and unblameably he behaved," "in holiness and sincerity of God;" that "he was a sweet savour of Christ unto God in them that were being saved and in them that were perishing;" that "as a wise master-builder (when founding the Church of Corinth) he had laid the foundation;" that "no longer he lived but Christ lived in him;" that through the cross of Christ "the world was crucified unto him and he unto the world;" that "to him to live was Christ;" that he "could do all things in Christ that strengthened him." And he can boldly say, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ." In fact, when to the superficial, unspiritual, or cynical reader he the most seems to be beyond measure lauding *himself*, at those very times he is in reality the most empty of self-glorying: he is "glorying only in the Lord."

Further, we can easily understand how it might well come to pass that, with the growing perfection of his spiritual sensibility, there would come not a diminishing but an ever keener perception of the wickedness of his earlier life, and therewith also a deeper and more vivid consciousness of his own personal vileness. Granted that his labours in the cause of Christ transcended those of the rest of the Apostles; yet, for all that, he was in his own view meaner and more to be contemned than any of them could be; not one of *them* had proved himself so "foolish," so "disobedient," so far "gone astray" (Tit. iii. 3), as in the days when he lived under his own guidance and wrought out his own will he had proved himself to be: for "he had persecuted the Church of God!"

With such considerations on our mind, we shall probably be able to enter more fully than we otherwise could do into the general spirit and bearing of this particular passage of his writings. To this let us now apply ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

The clause "as if it were unto the untimely birth," may be conjoined, either (1) with "Last of all," with no comma after "all"; or (2), with "he appeared also unto me," with a comma after "all," but none after "birth."

(1) According to the former construction, St. Paul marks a certain congruity or analogy as subsisting between his being an *ectroma*, and the fact that the appearance made to him was the last which the Risen Christ vouchsafed to any. But it is difficult to understand the point of congruity. (a) *Why* should the circumstance of being the last recipient of such a manifestation bespeak any kind of inferiority? There is no gradation of status observable in the cases of those who previously had been successively thus

<sup>1</sup> One or two observations of verbal criticism of the passage appear to be not superfluous.

"Ἐσχατον appears to be a form of adverb, like *πρῶτον*, *πρότερον*, *ὑστερον*, *δευτερον*, *τρίτον*, comp. 1 Thess. iv. 16; 2 Cor. i. 15; Matt. iv. 2; John iii. 4; Luke xxiii. 22.

The *πάντων* is added just as in Mark xii. 22, where according to the now generally accepted reading we have *ἔσχατον* (*Rec.*, *ἐσχάτη*) *πάντων* *καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἀπέθανεν*. In this passage of St. Mark the *πάντων* seems added to mark the closing up of the statement of the circumstances in reference to which the subsequent question is raised. With much the same effect *πάντων* is added here; it marks the winding up of the enumeration which the Apostle is making of such of our Lord's appearances after his Resurrection as he is now concerned to adduce.

In neither passage does *πάντων* recite the group of *persons* that the writer has in his view. In grammatical analysis, the adverb *ἔσχατον* may be resolved back into a neuter adjective agreeing with the cognate verbal noun suggested by the principal verb of the sentence, *ἀπέθανεν* or *ὤφθη*. As if it were, "The last appearing of all, he appeared to me."

Ὅσπερ occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, though *ὥσει* does frequently (*e.g.*, Matt. iii. 16; Acts ii. 3; Luke i. 56; ix. 14; xxii. 41; etc.); neither is it found in the Septuagint. Canon Evans (*Speaker's Commentary* in *h. l.*) gives a probable analysis of the phrase in explaining it as = ὥσπερ εἰ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ἐωρᾶτο (or, ἐμελλεν ὀφθῆναι).

honoured. (β) The term *ectroma* does not of itself suggest any notion of *lateness* of birth; on the contrary, it would fit in rather with the opposite notion of being born *before* the due time. No commentary that I have seen gives any satisfactory or even tolerable explanation of the supposed analogy.<sup>1</sup>

(2) If we adopt the second way of constructing the sentence, the clause, "as if it were to the untimely birth," suggests the difference, which is in fact most conspicuous in the history as given in the Gospels and Acts, between the manner of our Lord's appearance to Saul and the manner of his appearance on all the occasions which the Apostle has immediately before referred to. In these last, the Risen Christ had shewn Himself in the condescending guise of a fellow-man, with no external circumstance of personal awfulness, but conversing with his disciples as "his brethren," on very nearly the like terms of parity with them in outward corporeal condition as when He had formerly conversed with them before his Passion. To Saul the persecutor, He disclosed Himself in the aspect of the glorified Messiah whose Divine dignity was being outraged by this feeble creature's antagonism; and the awful splendour which from his suddenly manifested Presence blazed forth, not alone on Saul's bodily eye, but also, in all that it implied, upon his mental sight as well, sufficed in one moment to crush down into the dust the self-righteous, misconceiving, carnal blasphemer, and forced him through his inmost soul to feel that in relation to the

<sup>1</sup> Meyer observes: "er spricht das starke Gefühl seiner Unwürdigkeit aus indem er sagt, er sei gleichsam (ὡσπερ) τὸ ἔκτρωμα, der unzeitige Fœtus." According to this view, the sentence would run as follows: "Last of all, to one who was as it were the abortion, he appeared also to me." But surely this is inadmissible: the position of ὡσπερ makes it clearly felt, that it is not inserted to qualify the term ἔκτρωματι, but to mark a congruity or correspondence between τῷ ἔκτρωματι and something else stated in the sentence. De Wette, again, cannot be justified in *combining* the two senses, as he does by his rendering, "als gleichsam der Fehlgeburt," "as to the abortion as it were."

true service of God he had up to that hour, when compared with those who had known and followed the Lord Jesus, but whom he had been persecuting, been no better than an unperfected fetus, cast forth from its mother's womb still-born might seem to be amongst grown men in the full activities of life.

This was the light in which Christ Himself regarded him,—as is indicated by the subjective tinge of meaning, attaching, as Canon Evans has observed, to *ὡσπερ* contrasted with *ὡσπερ* or *ὡς*; and the profound sense that his character hitherto had really been of this description, was not only borne in upon Saul's consciousness with overwhelming force, but also, as we have seen above, abode with him to the very end of his life. In fact, the more vividly he realized by blessed experience the soul's divine life in Christ, by so much would he the more vividly apprehend the darkness and miserable abjectness of that former condition of his when spiritually "dead through his trespasses" (Eph. ii. 5).

Assuming, then, the interpretation now given of the bearing upon the sentence of this intermediate clause, let us proceed to review the tenor and spirit of the whole passage.

While stating certain points of the historical evidence for the fact of Christ's resurrection, it comes in the Apostle's way, and is indeed unavoidable, that he should refer to himself too as able to bear valid testimony thereto. That he considered himself a competent witness, as truly so as any of the other Apostles, is shewn, as by other things, so in particular by the stress which he laid upon this experience of his in his speech before Festus and Agrippa as reported in Acts xxvi. For in reviewing the line of thought pursued in that address, we perceive that its one great topic is the Resurrection;—the hope, the Apostle says, of Israel; in itself not incredible; promised by God through Moses and the Prophets: the realization of this hope

depending, as he shews, on the Resurrection and consequent agency of the Messiah. In the course of his speech he introduces a full narrative of his own conversion; and his motive for narrating it was this;—because the circumstances attending it made it palpably evident that up to a certain hour he had himself been bitterly hostile to belief in Jesus as Messiah or as risen from the dead, but that at that hour he was overpoweringly convinced of these truths by himself beholding Jesus, not only living, but clothed with ineffable majesty, and by himself hearing words addressed to him as by one who was both Lord and Christ.

He cites no other eye-witnesses in arguing before Agrippa, as he does here in writing to the Corinthians, to prove that Christ was risen: so far as this branch of evidence is concerned, he is content in addressing the king to rest his proof upon what he had himself seen and heard. This shews how completely he felt assured, that he in his own person was both a competent and a fully sufficient witness to the fact. Further, he stated to Agrippa, that at the time of his conversion Christ expressly signified to him that his very purpose in appearing to him was thereby to constitute him a “witness,” able, as is plainly meant, to testify of Him to the world on the very ground of his having then *seen* Him (Acts xxvi. 16).

It was a further consideration, making it incumbent upon St. Paul when writing to the Corinthians on this subject to expressly adduce the fact of his having himself seen the Risen Christ, that the very reality of his own apostolical status, which some at Corinth were disposed to gainsay, depended upon it. He was no Apostle at all if he had not himself seen the Lord (1 Cor. ix. 1). If he had here refrained from citing this experience of his, he might have given occasion to those who were but too eager to find occasion for calling in question his parity with Cephas or even with James “the Lord’s brother.”

And yet in approaching this item of the historical proof substantiating Christ's resurrection, the close connection in which the particular manifestation of the Risen Lord now to be referred to stood with the foolish and impious course of conduct in the midst of which he was then arrested, comes upon his mind with a passionate access of shame and remorse. That Jesus should shew Himself alive after his Passion to the Eleven and to other believers who had previously loved and followed Him, and that they should receive from Him the ennobling commission which authorized them to bear witness to their Risen Lord, was one thing: *they* might boldly bear their testimony and feel no shame. But that a man who at the time when Christ disclosed Himself to him was fanatically blaspheming his name and persecuting those beloved followers of his whose names he has just before been reciting,—that *he* should put himself forward by *their* side to assume this supremely honourable function of witnessing as an Apostle of Christ to his Resurrection,—and this too on the precise ground of a manifestation of Himself made to rebuke and arrest that guilty career of his,—this the writer might well feel would be but too likely to strike some at least of his readers as no better than a piece of effrontery, bespeaking a most strange unmindfulness of the complexion of his own previous life. "It was proper enough" (such critics might say) "that he should marshal forth the testimony of those venerable men, Cephas, and the other Apostles, and James, and of the Five Hundred Brethren in Galilee; but for himself! just here surely it were meetest for him to maintain the attitude of a penitent self-conscious reticence."

But this might not be! The function of bearing witness had been assigned him by Christ Himself. This was what he was set to do; and this he *must* do. He cannot at his peril forbear from proclaiming the glory of the Risen

Jesus, though in the same breath he must proclaim his own unspeakable worthlessness.

This inward conflict of emotion is discernible in the very manner in which he approaches the subject. He approaches it, as it were, with a delaying reluctant step, which, in a certain degree, reminds us of the manner, in which in the beginning of the eleventh chapter of his second Epistle to the Corinthians he seems with so much effort to constrain his visibly reluctant spirit to "become," as he phrases it afterwards, "a fool in glorying" of his apostolic greatness.

"*And last of all*"]—Thus he begins; making felt the lapse of a perhaps considerable interval of time since those former appearances of Christ previously mentioned:—possibly also suggesting not merely an interval in point of time, but even here, in this initial clause, a distinction in the manner of the Manifestation. If this last notion of the words be thought to be reading too much between the lines, at all events the next clause, if what has been advanced above respecting its bearing be just, indicates this thought.

"*As if he were appearing to one a still-born miscarriage and no man*" ]—Here we have a direct, though no doubt veiled, reference to the difference of the manner of Christ's manifestation of Himself to him as compared with former manifestations of Himself to disciples.

Further, we observe that it is before he states the fact which he has to adduce that he introduces this characterisation of himself as being an *ectroma*,—certainly a term expressing the most intense feeling of self-inanition that can be imagined. The position in the sentence in which this clause is placed bespeaks an extreme eagerness to humble himself down to the very lowest level, which he quite genuinely feels to be his own proper level, before he declares the honour, which he has no option not to tell, had nevertheless been put upon him.



Shall we say that he inserts this self-emptying designation of himself for the purpose of disarming detractors, ready to charge him with unseemly self-obtrusion, by himself anticipating the utterance of the utmost that they could possibly say? It would admirably serve such a purpose, supposing it to have been a *purpose* consciously entertained. But is it necessary to assume that there was such a purpose? Instead of suspecting any such rhetorical artifice, should we not in all candour say that it is mainly, if not rather solely, the simple natural outcome of a deep-seated habitual feeling of remorseful shame which, at the definite recalling to view of *that* Appearance of the Risen Jesus, at once wells up in his bosom, and must find vent?

“*He appeared also to me.*”]—He too can testify to Christ’s being alive again after his death. Indeed, most poignant, most heart-piercing, however in another point of view exalting, must be for him the recollection of that fate-fraught hour. For had he not then had to feel how awful, nay, how *terrific*, Christ’s revealed Presence *when displeased* can be? how effectual to instantaneously “scorch and shrivel” as with flaming fire a soul surprised by Him in a course of sin? Such had been St. Paul’s experience then. He had found himself suddenly lying as it were dead before Christ, in that all-manifesting light which revealed himself to himself; all his self-praise, all his self-vaunted eminence in righteousness, all his superiority in religious knowledge, all his power to do great things for God, at once gone, annihilated, consumed; shewn to his own self to have been up to that hour no better spiritually than, so to speak, a mere half-formed creature unborn, and in this hour born in death.

It was an unspeakably bitter terrible experience; as nearly approaching to that of a soul actually passing out of life in its sins, to encounter face to face an avenging God and “be utterly consumed with terrors,” as perhaps can possibly be imagined as having been ever gone through on

this side of the grave. "As to a still-born miscarriage he appeared to me;"—just such had been in that hour the sensation of St. Paul's own soul.

An experience like this was not only one whose occurrence could never have been forgotten by the Apostle, but must also have stamped the sensations attending it upon his memory with so sharply-cut a distinctness as could never be obliterated. I apprehend that this is what he means when he writes to the Corinthians, that he "*knew the terror of the Lord*;" for it is of the Lord Jesus that he there speaks (2 Cor. v. 11).

Thenceforward, through the new life which Christ's infinite loving-kindness imparted to him, and in the animating power of grateful love to Him as his Redeemer, it became (as he says in that same pathetic passage of personal history) his one eager aim so to comport himself in his service that, when that other hour should arrive in which he should find himself manifested before the judgment seat to receive his final award, he might be found well-pleasing unto Him;—not, again, and not *then*, to hear from the lips of that All-Holy One words of remonstrance and rebuke, but to receive back at his hands the good things which through his grace alone he should be found to have done in the body.

E. HUXTABLE.

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THE REVISED VERSION OF THE NEW  
TESTAMENT.

ON CERTAIN DIFFICULT AND IMPORTANT PASSAGES.

IN my former papers I expressed a confident belief that the Revised Version is a much more correct reproduction in English of the sense intended by the writers of the New Testament than that given in the Authorised Version. In