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THE INCARNATION:

A STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS II. 5-11.

IF an apology is needed for adding to the numberless attempts to determine the true meaning of St. Paul's words in this celebrated passage, it may be found in the fact that we still meet with the widest diversities of interpretation in the current theology of the day.¹

There is, however, one point on which all are agreed, namely, that the passage is of primary importance in relation to the fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion, the Incarnation of the Son of God.

But even among those who profess to base their interpretations upon a strict examination of the Apostle's language there seems to be as yet no general agreement either as to the meaning of the most important words, or as to the grammatical construction and logical connexion of the

¹ An interesting example of this wide divergence of opinion between able and learned theologians occurs in a review in *The Guardian*, January 1st, 1896, of Canon Gore's *Dissertations on Subjects connected with the Incarnation*, Murray, 1895: "The next step in the argument is the discussion of the famous passage in St. Paul (*Phil.* ii. 5-11). Here Mr. Gore takes 'form' in both cases in its strict technical sense, and in this we cannot but think that he falls into an error, which, if it be an error, is one of a highly misleading kind. 'Form of God' in the sense of 'essence or specific character of God' is a phrase that no Greek philosopher, except, perhaps, the materialists, ever permitted himself to employ, and, as servitude is a mere relation, 'essence of a slave' is a phrase of no meaning. St. Paul must have been using the word 'form' in a loose, popular sense, as we use the word 'nature.' 'Form of a slave' is defined here by the words 'likeness' and 'fashion,' which immediately follow, as the 'emptying' is defined by 'obedience unto death.'

"There is room, no doubt, for much variety of opinion, but the correct exegesis is the strictest, and in any case the wise interpreter will be very shy of erecting a 'Kenosis doctrine' on a phrase the exact limits of which no man can fix with precise accuracy."

passage. There is, in fact, little improvement in these respects since the author of an elaborate and important treatise on the subject declared that "the diversity of opinion prevailing among interpreters in regard to the meaning of the principal passage bearing on the subject of Christ's humiliation—that, namely, in the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians—is enough to fill the student with despair, and to afflict him with intellectual paralysis." ¹

i. *The Context.*

In approaching the interpretation of a passage so full of acknowledged difficulties, it is desirable first to notice briefly its connexion with the preceding context. There the Apostle's purpose is happily too clear to be obscured by any diversity of interpretation. St. Paul has been encouraging his beloved converts at Philippi to "stand fast in one spirit, with one soul, striving for the faith of the Gospel." He entreats them to make his joy in them complete by adding to their faith and courage the crowning graces of humility and self-denying love. He pleads with them by every motive of Christian fellowship, and not least by their personal affection for himself, and their sympathy with his sufferings in behalf of Christ, to "be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." "Let nothing," he says, "be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

These earnest and loving entreaties the Apostle proceeds to enforce, by setting forth our Blessed Lord Himself as the supreme example of humility, self-sacrifice, and love; and he is thus led on to speak of those deepest and holiest

¹ The Rev. Prof. A. B. Bruce, D.D., *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 11.

mysteries of the Christian Faith, the Incarnation of the Son of God, His voluntary self-abasement, His obedience "even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross." In order that this view of the general connexion of the passage may help to guide us to a right interpretation, the point which must especially be borne in mind is, that the Incarnation and human life of our Lord are set before us as the perfect example of the principle enjoined in *v.* 4, "Not looking each to his own things, but each also to the things of others."

ii. *The Subject.*

In passing to the direct interpretation of our passage, we have to notice, first, that there has been much discussion whether Christ, as denoted by the relative pronoun *ὅς*, is regarded only in His life on earth, or also as the Eternal Word, which "was in the beginning with God, and was God."

In answer to this question we might too easily be tempted to argue, as Meyer does, that "*ὅς* denotes the subject of what follows; consequently Christ Jesus, but in the *pre-human state*, in which He the Son of God . . . was with God"; the *human state* being first introduced by the words in *v.* 7, "He emptied Himself."

In arguing thus we should assume by anticipation a meaning in what follows which as yet remains to be proved. It is therefore safer and more strictly correct to say with Hofmann, in his Commentary on the Epistle, that "the Apostle, speaking of Him who was known to His readers under the name of Christ Jesus, asserts something which He did when in a state of existence described as *being in the form of God.*"

iii. *ἰπάρχων*: (a) *Pre-existence.*

(a) The meaning given to *ἰπάρχων* in the margin of the Revised Version (Gr., *being originally*) is so generally

recognised among scholars, that we need not dwell upon it, except to point out that this sense is strongly marked in several passages of St. Paul's epistles.

1 Cor. xi. 7: "*For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is (ὑπάρχων) the image and glory of God.*"

Here the word evidently points to what man is by his original creation in the image of God.

2 Cor. viii. 17: "*For indeed he accepted our exhortation; but being himself (ὑπάρχων) very earnest, he went forth unto you of his own accord.*"

Here "himself" is not expressed by a separate word in the Greek, nor does it appear in the Authorised Version, but has been rightly added by the Revisers, to bring out the meaning of ὑπάρχων.

On Galatians ii. 14, "*If thou being a Jew livest as do the Gentiles,*" Bishop Lightfoot remarks that Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων is "very emphatic," "born and bred a Jew." So Meyer, "although a born Jew"; and Howson (*Speaker's Commentary*): "The Greek means more than this ('being'), and denotes that he was 'a Jew by birth,' a Jew to begin with."

It is interesting to observe how forcibly this meaning is brought out in the very ancient *Liturgy of St. James*: καὶ παιδίον γέγονεν ὁ πρὸ αἰώνων ὑπάρχων Θεὸς ἡμῶν.¹

This well-established meaning of ὑπάρχων at once excludes the many attempts which have been made to limit the description, *being in the form of God*, to the time of Christ's sojourn upon earth.

In this latter sense it has been thought, for instance, to refer to the divine majesty and power which Jesus manifested during His ministry, either in His miracles, or generally in His words and works, as when St. John says

¹ Hammond, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, p. 45.

(i. 14): "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

Others have referred "the form of God" to some special manifestation of divine glory, such as occurred at His Baptism¹ and Transfiguration.

Against all such interpretations it is sufficient to reply, that the meaning of *ὑπάρχων*, in its connexion with the following context, clearly implies a state existing prior to the point of time at which our Lord took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

iii. *ὑπάρχων*: (b) Continued Existence.

This brings us to a second question, which, though not less essential to the right interpretation of *ὑπάρχων ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ* in its relation to the context, has been either altogether overlooked or misunderstood even by the best scholars and interpreters.

Thus Bishop Lightfoot, to whom every student of this epistle is so deeply indebted, and who is usually so extremely accurate, writes as follows:² "Before attempting to discover what is implied by *μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, it will be necessary to clear the way by disposing of a preliminary question. Does the expression *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων* refer to the pre-incarnate or to the incarnate Christ?"

This statement of the question is evidently incomplete, and in fact misleading. It assumes that the clause must refer *exclusively* either to Christ's pre-existent state or to His incarnate state: it thus excludes the obvious and most important alternative, that it *may apply to both*.

In the present tendency of theological speculation concerning *the fulness of the Godhead* in the Incarnate Christ,

¹ Dr. Resch, *Texte u. Untersuchungen*, Band v., Heft 4, ΑΓΡΑΦΑ, pp. 367 ff., argues from the language of the ancient Syriac Baptismal Office of Severus that "the form of God" refers to the glorification of Christ in the waters of Jordan.

² *Philippians*, Ed. 1891, p. 131.

and the opposite doctrine of *Kenotism*, it is much to be regretted that the third alternative was not taken into consideration by so eminent an interpreter of St. Paul as the late Bishop of Durham. The omission appears to have arisen from an idea that *ὑπάρχων* must "be referred to a *point of time* prior to the Incarnation."

This expression "*point of time*" (the italics are mine) occurs three times on pp. 131, 132; and its use prejudices the interpretation of the whole passage by implying, unconsciously perhaps on the Bishop's part, that "*the form of God*" did not continue during the ministry on earth.

The true force of the participle *ὑπάρχων* is well expressed by Dean Gwynn in his admirable interpretation of the epistle in the *Speaker's Commentary*: "Its tense (Imperfect) contrasted with the following Aorists points to indefinite *continuance* of being."

I hope to show that this meaning is fully confirmed (1) by the nature of the Imperfect tense, (2) by the use of *ὑπάρχων* in the New Testament and especially in the writings of St. Paul, and (3) by the testimony of very early Christian writers.

(1) Jelf, *Greek Grammar*, § 395: "The Imperfect is to time past what the Present is to time present; both express an action yet in course of performance, and not yet completed"; or, we may add, a *state* in course of continuance not yet ended.

Green, *Grammar of New Testament Dialect*, p. 10: "The essential time signified by the PRESENT and IMPERFECT Tenses is that of a continued or habitually repeated action." Compare p. 100: "The Participle conveys 'the idea of essential time belonging to the particular tense from which the participle is derived.'"

(2) (a') This general property of the imperfect participle may be illustrated first by the use of *ᾧν* in the New Testament in combination with an Aorist. John xi. 49:

ἀρχιερεὺς ὧν τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου εἶπεν αὐτοῖς. John xxi. 19: τοσούτων ὄντων οὐκ ἐσχίσθη τὸ δίκτυον.

Would it be reasonable to say that the *states* indicated by the participles ὧν and ὄντων ceased when the action described by the finite verbs occurred?

For other examples see Winer, § xlv. 1, (2), b.

(β') But it will be more satisfactory to observe the use of ὑπάρχων itself. Luke xxiii. 50: Ἰωσήφ βουλευτῆς ὑπάρχων . . . οὗτος προσελθὼν τῷ Πειλάτῳ ἠτήσατο τὸ σῶμα. Acts ii. 30: προφήτης οὖν ὑπάρχων . . . προεδὼν ἐλάλησεν.

Are we to suppose that Joseph of Arimathea ceased to be a "counsellor" as soon as he *begged the body of Jesus*, or David a prophet when he *spoke of the resurrection of Christ*?

(γ') The most complete proof of all is St. Paul's own use of ὑπάρχων. 2 Cor. viii. 17: σπουδαιότερος δὲ ὑπάρχων αὐθαίρετος ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς. . . . xii. 16: ἀλλ' ὑπάρχων πανούργος δόλω ὑμᾶς ἔλαβον.

Did Titus cease to be zealous at the moment of starting to visit the Corinthians?

Or does St. Paul mean, in his ironical statement, that, in the opinion of the Corinthians, he ceased to be crafty as soon as he had once caught them with guile? It is impossible, I think, to find or imagine passages more exactly parallel in grammatical construction to Philippians ii. 6 than these two examples of St. Paul's own use of ὑπάρχων.

Another strictly parallel passage is Romans iv. 19: κατενόησε τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα [ἤδη] νεκρωμένον, ἑκατονταέτης που ὑπάρχων.

In this case it would be manifestly absurd to say that the state indicated by ὑπάρχων ("being about a hundred years old") ceased when Abraham "considered his own body as good as dead."

The only other instances of ὑπάρχων in St. Paul's

writings are 1 Corinthians xi. 7; Galatians i. 14, ii. 14, which are not so exactly parallel to Philippians ii. 6, because in them *ὑπάρχων* is not combined with an Aorist; but in neither of them is there anything to indicate an immediate cessation of the state described by the participial clause.

So far then as the principles of grammatical construction and the writer's usage are concerned, it is unreasonable to assume that Christ ceased to be "*in the form of God,*" when He "*emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant.*"

(3) The true meaning of *ὑπάρχων* is clearly seen in a very early, seemingly the earliest, direct quotation of Philippians ii. 6, in the celebrated letter of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne to their Christian brethren in Asia (Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, v. c. 20).

Those who had suffered torture in the persecution are thus described :

"They were so zealous in their imitation of Christ, *who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be on an equality with God*,—that though they were (*ὑπάρχοντες*) in such honour, and had borne witness not once nor twice, but many times,—having been brought back to prison from the wild beasts covered with burns and scars and wounds,—yet they neither proclaimed themselves martyrs, nor suffered us to address them by that name."

These men are held up as zealous imitators of Christ's humility in refusing the title which really belonged to them. Had they ceased to be held in honour as martyrs, there could have been no humility in not proclaiming or accepting the title. Only as having been and still being (*ὑπάρχοντες*) in honour could they be said to imitate Christ's humility.

That *ὑπάρχων* was considered by the Greek Fathers to include this idea of continuance, is clear from their constant

interpretation of the passage as proving that Christ was at once both God and Man.

It is enough for the present to quote a passage from S. Chrysostom's Commentary on the Epistle, *Hom.* vi. § 3, by which the full meaning of the word is well illustrated: Διὰ τί μὴ εἶπεν, ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ γενόμενος, ἀλλ', Ὑπάρχων; Ἴσον ἐστὶ τοῦτο τῷ εἰπεῖν, Ἐγὼ εἰμι Ὁ Ὄν.

The omission to notice this meaning of continued existence in *ὑπάρχων* is one of several causes tending to the erroneous view that what Christ laid aside was the *μορφὴ Θεοῦ*.

iv. ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ.

Of the phrase "*form of God*" there are two distinct and opposite interpretations, even among those who agree with what has been shown above, that it describes something which Christ already possessed before His Incarnation.

By some "*the form of God*" is limited to "*the divine appearance*" of which Christ by His Incarnation "*divested Himself,*"¹ "*the former divinely glorious position which He afterwards gave up,*"² "*the glory visible at the throne of God.*"³

In this sense it is said to be "*not essentially different*" from τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ. This latter "*must in substance denote the same thing, namely, the divine habitus of Christ, which is expressed, as to its form of appearance, by ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, and, as to its internal nature, by τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.*"⁴

In this interpretation, which will be fully discussed below, the "*form*" or condition expressed by *μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, however glorious and majestic, is regarded as separable,

¹ Meyer's Commentary (Eng. Trs.), p. 78.

² p. 79.

³ p. 80.

⁴ Meyer, p. 81 fin.

and, at the Incarnation, actually separated from the essential and unchangeable nature of God.

I have referred to Meyer, because he appears to be the ablest supporter of this sense of *μορφῇ Θεοῦ*. He is followed by many modern commentators. Thus Alford¹ speaks of "the act of laying aside the form of God," and says again, "He emptied Himself of the *μορφῇ Θεοῦ*."

Hofmann (*Philippians*, 1875, p. 61),² says that "the conceptions *μορφῇ Θεοῦ* and *μορφῇ δούλου* mutually exclude one another."

Dr. Bruce (*Humiliation of Christ*, p. 28) writes: "This act of self-exinanition involved . . . an exchange, absolute or relative, of the form of God for the form of a servant."

Last, not least, Thomasius (*Christi Person u. Werk*, ii. 415) writes: "He emptied Himself of the *μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, as is shown by the antithesis *μορφῇ δούλου*."

In all such interpretations it is assumed:

(1) That the *μορφῇ Θεοῦ* is something separable from the *οὐσία* or *φύσις*, the *essence* or *nature* of God;

(2) That the *μορφῇ Θεοῦ* is either (a) equivalent to *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ*, (b) or that the latter phrase expresses "the internal nature," and the *μορφῇ* "the form of appearance" of Christ's deity.

I shall endeavour to show that each of these assumptions is erroneous.

(1) That *μορφῇ* is inseparable from *οὐσία* and *φύσις*, which can have no actual existence (*ἐνέργεια*) without *μορφῇ*, but only a potential existence (*δύναμις*); see pp. 171-176.

(2) That *μορφῇ Θεοῦ* and *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ* are (a) not equivalent, but in (b) their proper meanings are directly reversed.

If we can succeed in establishing these points, I believe that we shall have removed the chief sources of the extra-

¹ Note on v. 8.

² Note on v. 7.

ordinary confusion and uncertainty by which the interpretation of the passage has been obscured.

(1) *μορφή*. The late Bishop Lightfoot, in his admirable essay (*Philippians*, p. 127), has examined the use of the words *μορφή* and *σχῆμα* with a completeness which leaves little or nothing to be desired.

He has shown that while *σχῆμα* "denotes the figure, shape, fashion of a thing," and "altogether suggests the idea of something changeable, fleeting, unsubstantial," on the other hand, *μορφή*, even in its original meaning as applied to things visible, denotes the one *form* which is proper to the thing as such, and cannot change so long as the nature is the same. "The *μορφή* of a definite thing, as such, for instance, of a lion or a tree, is one only, while its *σχῆμα* may change every minute."

In passing to the higher philosophic sense of *μορφή*, Bishop Lightfoot quotes the passages of Plato, *Phædo*, pp. 103E, 104A, as showing that "in Plato's language the *μορφή* is the impress of the 'idea' on the individual, or, in other words, the specific character."

"In Aristotle's system, as he recognises no eternal self-existent archetype distinct from the specific character exhibited in the individual, it follows as a matter of course that with him *εἶδος* and *μορφή* are identical." Now *εἶδος* may be defined as the "universal nature manifesting itself in different individuals."¹ *Μορφή* is therefore the nature or essence, not in the abstract, but as actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual itself exists.

Thus in the passage before us *μορφή Θεοῦ* is the Divine nature actually and inseparably subsisting in the Person of Christ.

This identity of *εἶδος* and *μορφή* may be illustrated by the

¹ Sir A. Grant, *Aristot. Nic. Eth.*, I. vi. 10.

language of Plotinus, *Ennead.*, IV., lib. vii., p. 457A, B: *εἰ μὲν οὐσίαν φήσουσι τὸ εἶδος τοῦτο εἶναι . . . οὐ γὰρ δὴ ἡ ὕλη ἑαυτὴν μορφοῖ.* Cf. Aristot., *De Anima*, I. iii. 26: *δοκεῖ γὰρ ἕκαστον ἴδιον ἔχειν εἶδος καὶ μορφήν.* If any distinction is to be drawn between the two words, *εἶδος* is the abstract, of which *μορφή* is the concrete realisation, or *τὸ ἐν ὕλῃ εἶδος* (Plotinus, 463B).

It is important to remember that this sense of *μορφή* was familiar to the contemporaries of St. Paul, as is proved by the passages quoted by Bishop Lightfoot from Plutarch and Philo Judæus.

The former, in describing Plato's doctrine of the genesis of the soul (*Moral.*, p. 1013c), writes thus: "For this world itself and each of its parts consists of a corporeal and a metaphysical (*νοητῆς*) essence, of which the one supplied the matter and substratum, and the other the form and specific character (*μορφήν καὶ εἶδος*) to the thing produced."

Again, in p. 1022E, where some preceding words have been lost, there remain the following: *κατὰ . . . τὰ αὐτὰ ἔχων ὡς μορφή καὶ εἶδος.*

Philo Judæus (*de Vict. Off.*, otherwise *de Sacrificantibus*, § 13, p. 261M): "That which has been mutilated is robbed of its quality and specific character (*τὴν ποιότητα καὶ τὸ εἶδος*), and is nothing else, properly speaking, than formless matter (*ἄμορφος ὕλη*)."

In the history of our English Bible we may find some reason to believe that the translators of A.D. 1611 consciously used the word "form" in this philosophical sense. Thus Wyclif wrote: "in the fourme of God," and "taking the fourme of a servaunt."

This was altered much for the worse by Tyndale (A.D. 1534) into "the shape of God," and "the shape of a servaunte," and so it remained in Cranmer's Bible (A.D. 1539), and the Geneva (A.D. 1557). But in the Rheims Bible (A.D.

1582) the word "forme" was restored in both places, and this was adopted in the Authorised Version (A.D. 1611).

It may possibly be asked what reason we have to think that the translators of A.D. 1611 were familiar with the philosophical sense of the word "*form*." On this point we have excellent testimony.

The first edition of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* was published in 1594. In Book I. c. iii. § 4 he speaks of "those forms which give them (things natural) their being"; and he adds in a note: "Form in other creatures is a thing proportionable unto the soul in living creatures. Sensible it is not, nor otherwise discernible than only by effects. According to the diversity of inward forms, things of the world are distinguished unto their kinds."

In 1620 Bacon's *Novum Organon* was published, and in Book II. Aphorism iv. he gives a definition of form remarkably pertinent to our present inquiry. "The form of a nature is such, that given the form the nature infallibly follows. Therefore it is always present, when the nature is present, and universally implies it, and is constantly inherent in it. Again the form is such, that if it be taken away the nature infallibly vanishes. Therefore it is always absent when the nature is absent, and implies its absence, and inheres in nothing else."

In Aphorism ii., speaking of the word *forms*, he says, "a name which I the rather adopt because it has grown into use and become familiar."

Thus it is clear that the philosophical sense of "form" was as familiar to our translators as that of *μορφή* to contemporaries of St. Paul.

If this is the true meaning of *μορφή* when used in its philosophical sense, to say that *μορφή* is separable from *φύσις* and *οὐσία*, and that "they can exist without it," is as manifest an error as to say that the abstract can exist

without any concrete, the universal without any individual, goodness without any good thing, the "nature" or "essence" of God without any God.

But since this error has been countenanced by some very able writers,¹ it may be well to trace it to its source.

Zanchius, a Protestant Professor of Divinity at Strassburg (1553), and at Heidelberg (1568), in his elaborate and learned *Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*, and again in his treatise *De Incarnatione Filii Dei*, adopted from his contemporary Danæus, or Lambert Daneau,² a peculiar definition of *μορφή*, differing from that which is derived, as we have seen, from its use by Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, and Philo Judæus.

Zanchi writes that :

"*Οὐσία* properly signifies the bare essence, which is usually expressed by the definition made up of *genus* and *difference*, by which (according to Aristotle's doctrine) the *τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι* is declared : *e.g.*, the *οὐσία* of man is to be an animal endowed with reason. For this is the proper definition of man, whereby it is declared what he is.

"*Φύσις*, *i.e.* Nature, adds to the mere essence the essential and natural properties, as in man these are the capacity for learning, capacity also for knowledge, immortality (in the soul) risibility, speech, for these we say are natural to man, and his natural properties."

"*Μορφή* adds to the essence and to the essential and natural properties other accidentals, which follow the true nature of the thing, and by which, as it were by lineaments and colours, *οὐσία* and *φύσις* are fashioned and depicted, as in man to have the face turned up towards heaven, from which he is also called *ἄνθρωπος*, and as also the being endowed with such or such a form of body and limbs, etc."

¹ See above, p. 170.

² I have not been able to consult the work of Daneau, which is very rare, and not mentioned in the Bodleian Catalogue.

On these definitions we may remark that *οὐσία*, *φύσις*, and *μορφή* are properly metaphysical terms, not logical; and Zanchi's attempt to find equivalents for them in terms of the Aristotelian Logic involves much error and confusion.

Of the four meanings which Aristotle assigns to *οὐσία* (*Metaph.*, vi. 3. 1), three—the Universal, the Genus, and the Substratum—are mere abstractions. The fourth, *τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι*, which Zanchi, so far rightly, identifies with *οὐσία*, implies individual existence,¹ and is thus identified with *μορφή*.

In Aristotle, says Bishop Lightfoot,² “the form” (which is the aggregate of the qualities) “he calls indifferently *εἶδος* or *μορφή*. He moreover designates it by various synonyms. It is sometimes ‘the abstract conception realised’ (*τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι*), sometimes ‘the essence corresponding to the definition’ (*ἡ οὐσία ἢ κατὰ τὸν λόγον*), sometimes ‘the definition of the essence’ (*ὁ λόγος τῆς οὐσίας*), sometimes ‘the definition’ alone, sometimes ‘the essence’ alone.”

Every one of these designations shows that *οὐσία*, as defined by Zanchi, is included in the ‘form’ (*μορφή*) and inseparable from it.

Φύσις is not a logical term, and its definition by Zanchi, as “adding to the mere essence the essential and natural properties,” is entirely arbitrary, and inconsistent with the use of the word by Aristotle.

In *Metaph.*, iv. 1. 3, he classes it as a first principle (*ἀρχή*) with thought, and will, and essence, and the final cause; and in iv. 4. 8 he says that “nature properly so called is the essence of things which have their efficient cause in themselves, by reason of what they are.”³

¹ Sir A. Grant, *Ethics of Aristot.*, I., p. 502.

² *Philippians*, p. 126.

³ Cf. Sir A. Grant, *Eth. Nic.*, ii. 1. 2, n 3.

In iv. 4. 6 he says that natural productions, "though their substratum (or material) already exists, are not yet said to be in possession of their φύσις, unless they have their εἶδος and their μορφή." This is entirely inconsistent with Zanchi's definition, in which μορφή is no part of φύσις.

In the definition of μορφή itself Zanchi contradicts first Aristotle and then himself.

For first he limits the "form" to "accidents," which are in fact no part of the "form," since they are not of the essence,¹ but belong to the individual only.

Zanchi then concludes his account of μορφή by directly contradicting all that he has just before said.

"Thus μορφή," he adds, "embraces in itself both φύσις and οὐσία; and is nothing else than the essence itself clothed with all its properties."

This conclusion is in itself so true, that we can only wonder how the author could arrive at it through the preceding mass of confusion and errors.

For the interpretation of "*the form of God*" it is sufficient to say that (1) it includes the whole nature and essence of Deity, and is inseparable from them, since they could have no actual existence without it; and (2) that it does not include in itself anything "accidental" or separable, such as particular modes of manifestation, or conditions of glory and majesty, which may at one time be attached to the "form," at another separated from it. (3) The Son of God could not possibly divest Himself of "the form of God" at His Incarnation without thereby ceasing to be God: so that in all interpretations which assume that "the form of God" was laid aside when "the form of a servant" was assumed, it is, in fact, however unintentionally and unconsciously, denied that Jesus Christ during His life on earth was really and truly God.

¹ Arist., *Metaph.*, iv. 30. 4: ὅσα ὑπάρχει ἐκάστῳ καθ' αὐτὸ μὴ ἐν τῇ οὐσίᾳ ὄντα.

Of what then did He empty Himself at His Incarnation? The answer is contained in the next clause, the consideration of which must, however, be reserved for a future number of THE EXPOSITOR.

E. H. GIFFORD.

THE CULTUS OF FATHER ABRAHAM.

THAT any such cultus was ever developed among the Jews in the way of external observances is without proof, and is in itself improbable. No disposition seems to have existed among them to pay any excessive honours to the departed heroes of their race. They did, indeed, build the tombs of the prophets in our Lord's time—and that, no doubt, on the (real or reputed) sites of their decease or martyrdom. But there is no evidence that they went further. It is not even known that they resorted to these tombs for purposes of prayer, as the present inhabitants of the land (whether Moslem or Christian) habitually do. The sternness of the Old Testament monotheism and the horror of anything which savoured of heathenism no doubt suppressed any outward manifestations. But for all that, I believe there was a very real cultus of Father Abraham in the popular Judaism of our Lord's time. Men had learned to put their trust in Father Abraham for religious protection, relying for his good offices upon their relationship to him, and relying for the efficacy of those good offices upon his relationship to God. *They* were his children, identified with him as his seed both by parental affection and by God's sure word of promise. *He* was the Friend of God, whose intercession could not but command a gracious answer. That it was really so, we have (as it seems to me) sufficiently clear evidence in the Gospels.

It is not necessary to dwell upon such passages as