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the Acts. He does the same for the Pauline Epistles, all of which he declares to be genuine except the Pastorals—though even of these he admits portions.

In the Gospel of St. Mark the last twelve verses are generally held not to be genuine. They were not probably composed specially for this place, but seem rather to be a fragment from some other writing roughly fitted on to the end of Mark, and are about as old as the first third of the second century. Why Mark's Gospel has come down to us incomplete is not yet solved. Mark may have been hindered from completing it, or a page of the autograph itself may have been lost. It remains a mystery.

The authorship of the Fourth Gospel is more discussed now, and this question is bound up with that of the first Epistle and the Apocalypse. The author of the first Epistle was almost certainly the author of the Gospel. The question of the Gospel really dates from the Tübingen school. The genuineness of the work is inconceivable from their standpoint: they stand or fall with the denial of its apostolic origin. It is the crown of all the mediating attempts of the second century, in their opinion, and further, the author of the anti-Pauline Apocalypse cannot possibly be the author of this anti-Jewish Gospel. But the discovery of the 'Commentary of Ephraem Syrus' on Tatian's 'Diatessaron' has helped to refute them, and they have been finally driven back from their position. Critics are gradually coming nearer the Johannine authorship, but there is still much variance. Some deny altogether the Johannine authorship, others as decidedly assert it, and some think it was derived from John. Against it are alleged the differences between it and the Synoptics, and its special character as written by an unlearned Galilean fisherman. What most critics stumble at is, as Weizsäcker says, John's 'regarding his whole former experience as a life with the incarnate Logos of God.' Probably if the author was not John he had access to an independent tradition. This is confirmed by the hints in the Synoptists that the ministry was not exclusively Galilean. The question is a good deal mixed up with that of the Apocalypse. Are the Apocalypse and the Gospel both by John? Or, if only one, which one? Further, is the Apocalypse of composite authorship or not? And how has it reached its present form? These are some of the questions asked, and critics are now engaged on them, but there are no certain results yet. Pfleiderer, unlike Baur, who by admitting the Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse, drew from it his strongest argument against that of the Gospel, thought the Apocalypse was anti-Pauline, but that it was impossible to deny the Johannine origin of the Gospel, on account of its Christology, without on the same ground denying that of the Apocalypse. The Apocalypse presents the unusual spectacle of being put by the critics at an earlier date than has been claimed for it.

Some Exegetical Studies.

By the Rev. James Wells, D.D., Glasgow.

The Sacred Art of Contemplation.

My last paper invited attention to the four great word-pictures for 'beholding' in the New Testament Greek. These are *κατοπτρίζεσθαι*, to behold in a mirror (2 Co 3^{18}), *ἐποπτεύειν*, to behold as the initiated behold the greatest mysteries (2 P 1^{16}, cf. 1 P 2^{12}), *θεᾶσθαι* and *θεωρεῖν*, to behold as men do in the theatres or at the public games (Jn 1^{14} and 17^{24}). The first of these four words intimates the possibility of contemplation, and the other three reveal its chief features. I am now to *postilize* concerning devout contemplation. Four conditions of it are suggested by these four passages.

1. *Clearness.*—We need a double clearness of the eye and of the object; we behold with face unveiled, and the object beheld lies in brilliant sunshine. Three words of the same family as the above-mentioned quaternion may help us in our study. The whole gospel is an apocalypse, a revelation. The word *ἀποκαλύπτειν* is simple

enough: it is to draw back a veil, and so to disclose what was wrapped round or veiled. When a statue is unveiled, a cord is drawn, the veil falls down, and the chiseled marble stands forth in clearest sunshine. A kindred word is ἐπιφαίνειν. The grace of God, the *philanthropy* of God has appeared, ἐπεφάνη (Tit 2^{11} 3^{4}). We use the same word when we speak of the Epiphany of Christ: His appearing in complete glory. Homer often tells how god or goddess appeared in the cloudless sky above the plains of Troy to rescue a favourite hero. He then used a peculiar adjective—ἐναργής. It expresses both the brilliancy of the form and the distinctness of the outline of the god. Much more than that is suggested by the Epiphany of Christ, and therefore by the revelation of grace through Christ. Φανεροῦσθαι is the third word in this exegetical trinity. 'God was manifested (ἐφανερώθη) in the flesh' (1 Ti 3^{16}). Here, again, we have the same idea of clearness. Add the hundreds of references to truth as light, and remember the utter brightness of light in the East, and the startling definiteness (startling, at least, to a Westlander) which 'yon glaring sun' gives to objects. Further, the initiated was supposed to get a thorough vision of the highest truths of his religion. It is believed that object-lessons were employed, such as the grain dying in the earth, and then springing up to new life. The spectator at the theatre, the amphitheatre, the stadium, and the arena had an unhindered view of all that took place. They were at *spectacles*, which, as the word itself intimates, were nothing except in so far as they were perfectly seen.

Scriptural contemplation therefore implies definiteness and clearness. He mocks me who bids me behold any object at midnight or in a blinding fog. We have not here to do with shifting scenes in cloudland, with a mirage of dreams and illusions, or with some hopeless conundrum in theology. Contemplation is not possible to those who believe that the objects of it are covered with chilling mists. Ours is especially a religion of historical facts,—indeed, all truth is fact in its last analysis,—and fully to realize these facts and adjust ourselves to them is the aim of devout contemplation. True, it must imply a certain kind of mysticism, and a great deal of it. For we apprehend what we cannot comprehend; we know that certain facts are, though we cannot fully know what and why they are. Everything in this region, as the old divines used to say, goes off into the unknown. We are encircled by ineffable and illimitable mysteries, and should therefore be withal very humble and reverent. We have a little circle of light with an unexplored circumference of mystery. A sanctified imagination may, if it will, make excursions into the dim regions around, provided that it never severs its connexion with its sun-illumined starting-point. True mysticism is the companion of a firm faith in the historical Christ. Faith offers it a firm support, and it enlarges and ennobles faith.

In the last chapter of his *Idylls of the King*, Tennyson describes Arthur's last dim weird battle of the West. It was on the last day of the dying year. A death-white mist slept over land and sea, and chill and confusion came even upon the king. Friend and foe were mere quivering shadows in the mist, and were mistaken by each other. Arthur had still Excalibur, with which he struck his last stroke. He slew his foe, and then, all but slain himself, he fell. That is a true and affecting picture of those whose religion has become a vague mystic poetry, because they have let go their hold of the Christ of the New Testament.

Some religious writers might adopt the confession of Turner, the painter: 'Indistinctness is my forte.'

The ancient prayer of Moses befits us, 'I beseech Thee, *show* me Thy glory.' The saintliest saint is more than a knower, he is a seer; and his bright visions of truth make him what he is. Here is the secret of the lives of the early Christians, 'And we beheld His glory.'

2. *Admiration.* As our four Greek words show, the Christian student is to study sacred truth admiringly; for he is, in this respect, to resemble those who spent the happiest hours of their life in the theatres and at the public shows. The most common word for 'good' in the New Testament is καλὸν. It means the fit and fair, the noble, but specially the beautiful. In the highest region, ethics and æsthetics become one. Divine truth should be both delightful to the heart and glorious to the imagination. Rightly apprehended, it is 'a thing of beauty' and 'a joy for ever.' We are to make one thing of truth, goodness, and beauty. We need not separate truth and beauty as Mrs. Browning does—

> Poets die for beauty, as martyrs for truth.

Nor need we simply confound them as Shelley does when he sings—

> Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty. That is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

We live by admiration, another poet tells us. This admiration has in it, in germ at least, many elements: wonder, surprise, joy, love; and all these reach their perfection and unite, in adoration. This genial and delighted appreciation of Divine truth is one of the chief notes of saintliness. Faith feeds our sense of wonder and gratifies our appetite for the immense. It makes the mind a native of wonderland. Christ is 'the wonderful,' or, more literally, 'the wonder.' 'Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.' 'We can't approach Shakespeare's plays,' says an enthusiast, 'without some prostration of the understanding.' Should anyone, then, approach the burning bush with shoes on? Θεᾶσθαι denotes a wondering, admiring regard, such as the Greeks had in their *θέατρον*; and hence the seven wonders of the world were called *τὰ ἑπτὰ θέαματα*. Admiring wonder begets love and joy. If the sages called the student a philosopher or lover of wisdom, the true exegete may hope for a share of the love of wisdom and the wisdom of love. Successful study is *con amore*. This phrase was invented by the great painters of Italy in the sixteenth century. They believed that their masterpieces were created by an enthusiastic love which roused and increased all their powers. This law applies to all work of the higher order. 'The right question about all ornament,' writes Ruskin, 'is, Was it done with enjoyment; was the artist happy when he did it?'

If a boy comes to love learning, his education is, in a sense, already completed; at least, he may be left to himself after that. Love is the best of all teachers.

Admiration, wonder, love, joy—these lead up to, and are consummated in, adoration.

One sometimes asks why Plato has had such an enormous power over great Christian thinkers both in ancient and modern times. John Howe and Archbishop Leighton, for example, were his avowed disciples, and they often reproduced his favourite ideas and phrases. The whole stream of their discourse is both coloured and *tasted* by the bed of ancient ore over which it runs. The secret of Plato's power lies in the fact that he so adores truth, and exults in its beauty and creative power. His *summum bonum* he called *the true, the beautiful, and the good.* With him, of course, it was only *it*, and not *He*. He teaches that, in order to know the truth, we must love it with a pure and supreme affection. What is called 'platonic love' is very like the love of wisdom commended in the Bible. It is the fullest life of a soul enamoured of universal excellence. It is an inspiration, a passion, a noble madness. Mania is his Greek word for it. It is a ravishing vision of the truth, heightened by mystery; it is 'a fine frenzy,'—reason-on-fire, the intensest devotion of the soul to the truth, its one chosen bride. He tries to kindle a rapturous admiration—the *victrix delectatio*—of the Divine excellence. This soul-mastering generous love is the bond of union between man and the truth, between man and God. He expects all things from this love, which is his one grace and saving principle. With him, the tree of this knowledge is the tree of life. The true adorer of the idea resembles what he realizes, shares what he sees, becomes what he beholds, and so grows in likeness to God. He soars above the vulgar sense-bound throng, and rises to the highest life possible to man. The ideas supply him with a working ideal, which has a prophetic and inspiring power. He only is the true doer who, while toiling wearily in the darksome vale of the actual, ever lifts his eyes with longing to the sunlit summits of the eternal and the ideal.

One thus sees how readily Plato's teaching lends itself to Christian uses. Of all the teachers of heathendom, he rose to the truest conception of the power of devout contemplation. And does not the sage rebuke the saint? When one compares his devotion to the truth with that of the average Christian, one is reminded of the exclamation of the poet—

> In Christian hearts, oh for a pagan zeal.