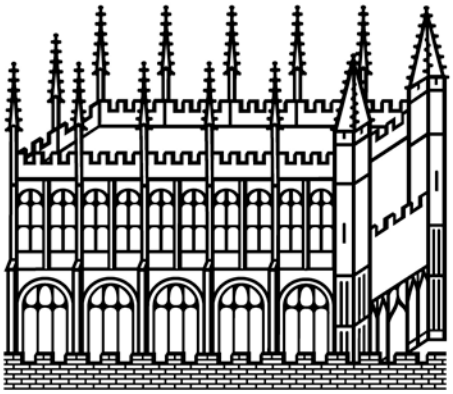


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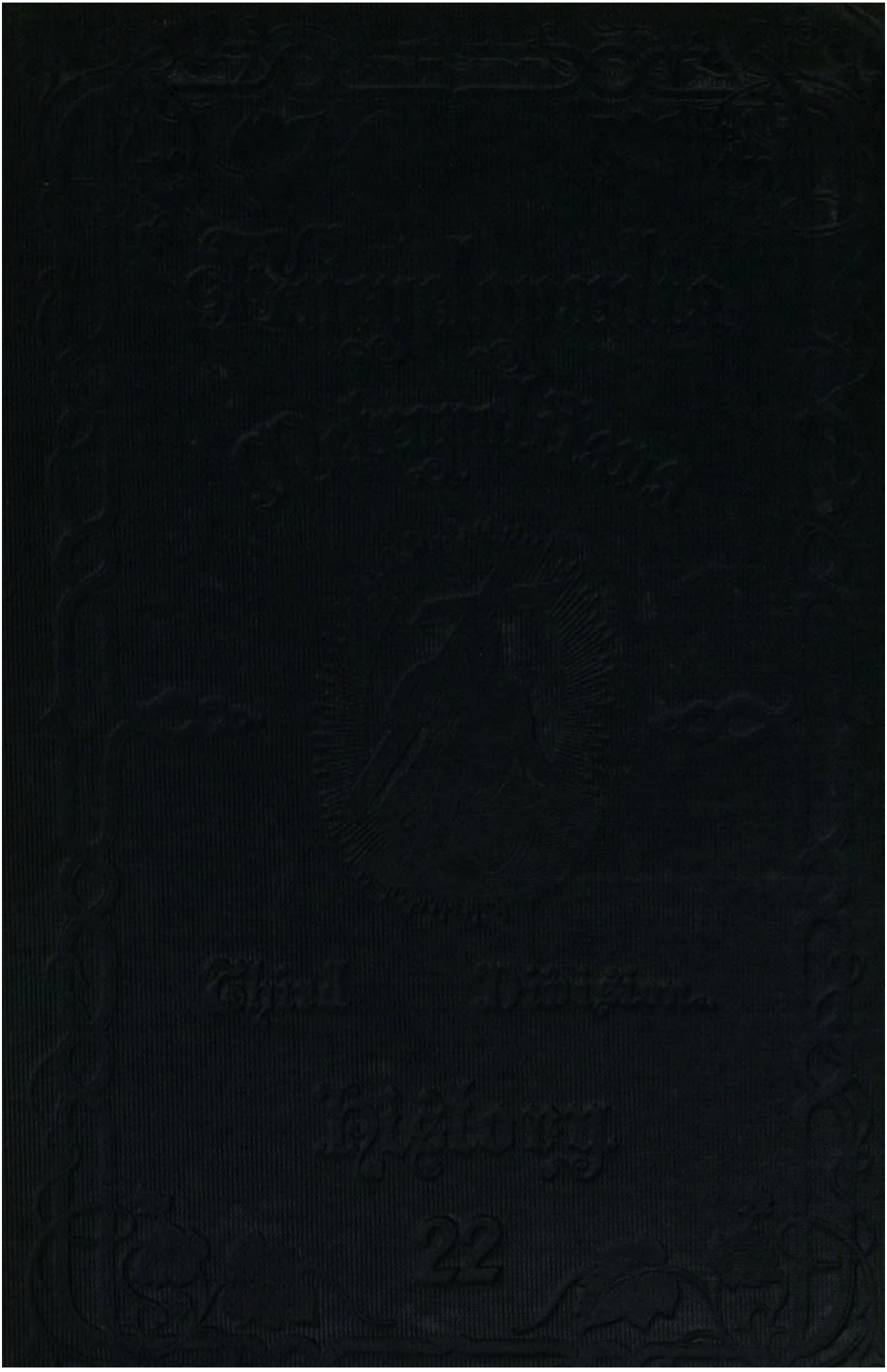
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HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

OBSERVATIONS PRELIMINARY TO THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES.

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Importance of Church History during the second and third centuries.

THERE is no portion of Ecclesiastical History more important than that which extends from the termination of the First to the commencement of the Fourth century. It was during this interval that the Church, no longer directed by the Apostles, and not as yet established by civil authority, may be said to have sustained the most severe part of its conflict against the principles, the interests, and the passions, supported by the wealth, the power, and the learning of the Gentile world.

Leading points of inquiry.

The spectacle which it presents is on all sides fitted to arrest our attention. On the one hand, the situation of the primitive Christians, their habits, their exertions, their sufferings; the nature and extent of their literature, and the influence of early associations and opinions; the origin and progress of heresies, and the silent inroads of internal corruption: on the other hand, the aspect of ancient polytheism, the causes and circumstances of its opposition, the force of popular prejudice, the effects of philosophic scepticism; the structure of the Roman government, its line of policy with regard to religion, and its efforts to overcome a strange impediment which suddenly crossed and embarrassed its movements: such are the prominent points which, even on a cursory view, cannot fail to awaken the interest of the historical inquirer.

Sources of information.

But it is a subject of deep regret that the loss of necessary materials precludes the possibility of developing these points with the fulness and precision which their magnitude requires. Beset by various difficulties, the early Christians had little leisure to consign to writing the results of their experience. Their works were but few, and of those few some are much impaired, others wholly lost. The most important ecclesiastical historian, after the sacred writers, is Eusebius, who wrote in the beginning of the fourth century. He declares at the very outset of his narrative[1] that he was entering on "a desert

Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, its value and its defects.

[1] Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. 1.

Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius.

and untrodden road." The scattered documents which he collected are compared to distant lights, that serve but to disclose the track which the investigator might with safety pursue. And it is fortunate that Eusebius undertook the task, before even this faint glimmering had died away. Without his assistance we should have remained in a great measure in ignorance, not only of many events which occurred in the remote ages of the church, but of writers from whose treatises, then extant, he derived his information. As he is nearly our first, so is he almost our only guide. Where his work ends, the histories of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret begin.[1] Their researches are, therefore, confined to later periods, when the state and manners of the Christians had undergone a considerable change. This neglect of the primitive times may, perhaps, have arisen from a feeling of veneration for the talents, and of confidence in the fidelity, of Eusebius. Yet, valuable as his collections must unquestionably be deemed, it is to be lamented that, while topics of inferior moment are largely detailed, many subjects, which deserve more ample notice, are but meagrely treated; and that to a want of ease and elegance in his style, he should sometimes have added a want of exactness in his account of facts, and of acuteness in his estimate of evidence. The instances of inaccuracy, which the skill and diligence of modern critics have detected, naturally induce a suspicion that there may still lurk misstatements, which, from the scantiness of remaining records, we are unable to discover. But there is one circumstance which, though some, perhaps, may consider it a defect, we are inclined to reckon as one of his merits.—His history is for the most part a series of extracts.[2] He proposed to himself little more than to glean and bind together such passages as would form a sequence of ecclesiastical memoirs. This method, it is true, is jejune and tedious. It is necessarily marked by inequality of language, and awkwardness of manner. But the benefit drawn from it by the modern examiner fully compensates for such disadvantages. As the fragments of each author are distinct, the credit due to his different relations varies in proportion to the degree of assent which his different authorities deserve. Except where he is obliged to translate, the sentiments of the original writers borrow no new colouring by passing into his narrative. And this advantage is the greater, as it would otherwise have been no longer in our power to ascertain if their meaning had been faithfully expressed.

With the exception of the historical works of Eusebius, to which may be added a few detached pieces, such as the 'Book of the Deaths of the Persecutors,' ascribed to Lactantius; or succinct treatises, such as the histories of Sulpitius Severus, and Orosius; and lastly, the numerous, but often doubtful and unsatisfactory, 'Acts of Martyrs,'

[1] In the fourteenth century, Nicephorus Callistus composed a new Ecclesiastical History of the first three centuries; but his work, though not inelegantly written, is too replete with fables to be entitled to consideration.

[2] Du Pin, Nouvelle Biblioth. des Auteurs Eccles. tom. ii. p. 3.

our knowledge of the second and third centuries must be chiefly drawn from indirect sources. Of these by far the most useful are the 'Apologies,' presented to the Roman rulers by eminent Christians, with a view to set forth the superiority of their religion, and to deprecate the cruelties of their opponents. There are great advantages peculiar to this class of productions. For instance, the Apologists are obliged to advert to the objections and the calumnies of their enemies; they enable us, therefore, to discover the views of the opposite party, and thus lay open the causes to which the difficulties which attended their efforts are to be ascribed. They are, moreover, led to give some description of their habits and discipline, a subject which contemporary writers are most qualified to treat, but most liable to omit. At the same time, such works are exposed to certain inconveniences. The reader is apt to regard them but as profiles, if we may so express ourselves, which, however correctly they may represent the side-face, convey but an inadequate idea of the entire contour and expression. Apologists, it is usually thought, are naturally disposed rather to select such circumstances as are calculated to produce a favourable impression, than to enlarge on the abuses which may have crept into the society to which they belong. They may be honest advocates, but they are still advocates. A defence commonly bears this resemblance to a panegyric—all that is mentioned in it may be true, but all that is true may not be mentioned. Such are the anticipations with which apologetic works in general are opened. But the *Christian* Apologists assume a tone as open and manly, as devoid of subterfuges and sophisms, as full of earnestness and piety as any unprejudiced examiner can expect. Indeed, they sometimes state the arguments, however subtle, the reports, however revolting, of their adversaries, and that too in the very hour of danger, with far more minuteness, and far more force, than are usually found in controversial writings, even when published in times of security. That their manner is occasionally injudicious, cannot be denied; but this very absence of discretion frequently arises from that simplicity which is a stranger to fraud. A full consciousness of innocence is the pervading feature of their writings. Their greatest fault, in the eyes of the impartial historian, is the precipitancy with which, in some few instances, they appeal to accounts, which, though current, required more cautious examination. It might, indeed, have been supposed that, as they addressed men whose means of information were necessarily great, and whose power was almost unlimited, they would be particularly guarded on all points, from a conviction that an erroneous assertion could be easily discovered, and, if discovered, would, however unimportant it might be, have at least a tendency to aggravate the evils of which they complained. Yet, it must be confessed, they seem not always to have sufficiently sifted reports[1] in their defence of a cause, to the excellence of which they were keenly alive. It is the

The Christian Apologies.

[1] Blondel, Des Sibylles, &c., p. 3. Daillé, du Vrai Usage des Pères, p. 320, &c.

part of a candid writer, to make full allowances for the harassing series of obstacles which often checked investigation in an age when tyranny leaned hard upon the Christians; but it is due to truth, to avail ourselves of the rules of sound criticism in weighing the internal credibility of historical narratives.

Remaining works of the Fathers.

Next in importance to the 'Apologies' addressed to the Roman rulers are, we think, the Defences of the Christian Religion, written in answer to the attacks of the philosophic Gentiles. The remaining works of the Fathers consist mostly of treatises against the Heathens, the Jews, or Heretics; on the various doctrines of the Church, on the different parts of its discipline; moral discourses and commentaries on the Sacred Scriptures. In all these works there is undoubtedly much historical information; but it is scattered in a mass of knowledge so vast, so obscure, and frequently so little connected with the direct studies of the historian, that the task of eliciting and combining every latent fact, and every incidental remark which may cast light on the early ages of Christianity, is more perhaps than can be expected to be performed by any single individual.

Pagan Writers; reasons of their silence or contempt.

The notices of Christianity during the second and third centuries found in Pagan writers are, with a few valuable exceptions, of no considerable importance. Whatever mention of it occurs in the History of Dion Cassius is perhaps to be ascribed to his abridger Xiphilin, who lived as late as the eleventh century. The writers of the 'Augustan History' have afforded us but little additional testimony. Of the eminent philosophers who flourished during that period, Plutarch has been wholly silent on this point; Epictetus, Galen, Marcus Antoninus, and Lucian have left but a few passing sarcasms; and as the direct attacks of Celsus, Hierocles, and Porphyry are lost, the substance of their works can only be gathered from the answers of their Christian opponents. The silence of some, and the contempt of others, are circumstances which ought to excite regret rather than surprise. The progress of infant sects[1] is seldom considered as presenting those materials for brilliant detail and curious investigation which draw the attention of the historian, or disturb the abstractions of the philosopher. It is considered a debasement of their dignity to notice efforts which are expected to fall into the same state of obscurity and insignificance from which they are regarded as having originally sprung. Christianity was esteemed as one of the innumerable varieties of popular delusion, one of the many-coloured garbs with which superstition, ever versatile, clothes its votaries. Raised, in their own imaginations, far above the influence of prejudice and passion, the sages cast a transient glance of pity, but not of inquiry, on a race of supposed enthusiasts, sectaries of a nation for which they entertained unqualified aversion.[2] And this neglect was increased as

[1] See Bishop Watson's Apology for Christianity, p. 129.

[2] The contempt which the Romans entertained against the Jews, and the prevalent ignorance respecting their history, are evident from Cic. pro L. Flacc. sec. 28;

they observed that the early Christians were chiefly of humble origin and of inferior acquirements.[1] Considering for the most part that all disquisitions on the nature and attributes of the Deity[2] were perplexed with doubts and difficulties, not to be unravelled by the utmost subtility of which the human intellect is susceptible, their indignation was wound up to the highest degree, when uneducated men seized with confidence on subjects which had for ages eluded the grasp of philosophy itself.[3] The assent of the multitude far from being courted, was despised by all classes of the learned.[4] An unquenchable pride glared through the veil of their affected humility.[5] This feeling must also have acquired force from the fact, that the scheme of Christianity was presented rather in a popular form, than with systematic nicety.[6] In short, it was long before they could bring their minds to submit to the authority of a religion, which, preaching virtues never urged in the eulogies of poets, and doctrines never heard in the schools of philosophy, opened its arms to receive the weak and ignorant with no less tenderness than the wise and powerful. It is not surprising, therefore, if we find but little mention of Christianity in writers who examined it at first not at all, and afterwards superficially.

Design of the following chapters.

Such are, we think, the principal channels from which the knowledge of the second and third centuries may be drawn. In presenting to our readers the result of our inquiries, it is not our object to give circumstantial descriptions, nor to enter into minute discussions; such a plan would not be consistent with the nature of the present work. For accounts so extensive, the reader, who cannot have recourse to the fountain heads, must consult and compare large and elaborate collections: such as those of the Centuriators of Magdeburgh, of Baronius, Pagi, Tillemont, Fleury, Basnage, and other writers,[7] who have dilated on almost every point connected with the subject. Although a wish to supply deficiencies, where we believe them to exist, may have induced us to dwell upon some particular points, our general desire is rather to trace than to fill up the outline, rather to direct to the sources than to exhaust the information which they contain.

SECTION II.—DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIANITY; ITS EXTENT, MODE, AND CONSEQUENCES.

Of the extensive diffusion of Christianity in the second century, the

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Hor. Sat. lib. i. s. v. s. ix.; Pers. Sat. v.; Tacit. Hist. lib. v.; Martial, lib. iv. ep. 4; lib. ii. ep. 95; Juvenal, Sat. iii. vi. xiv.; Plut. Sympos. &c.

[1] Tertull. Apol. c. xlviii. Arnob. Disput. adv. Gent. lib. i. p. 15, &c.

[2] See the instances collected by Grotius, Proleg. ad Stob. &c.

[3] Min. Fel. c. v.

[4] Senec. Ep. xxix. &c.

[5] Diog. Laert. lib. ii. c. xxxvi. &c.

[6] Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. v. c. i. &c.

[7] Much valuable information may also be found in Mosheim's large work, De Rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum Magnum Commentarii. See likewise J. le Clerc, Historia Ecclesiastica duorum primorum sæculorum è veteribus monumentis deprompta.

Diffusion of Christianity.

repeated declarations of the Fathers, confirmed by historical research, afford unequivocal proof. But the various details of this great moral revolution, the exact periods, modes, instruments, and circumstances of its progress, cannot, in the absence of authentic documents, be developed with accuracy and precision. Although the existence of Christians in the heart of remote and barbarous countries is sufficiently attested, the names of the disciples who first penetrated into those obscure regions, and the successive steps by which they proceeded to conciliate, to enlighten, and to humanise their rude inhabitants, are almost utterly unknown. Instead of distinct and circumstantial description, the reader will find for the most part little but vague assertion[1] in ancient, and bold conjecture in modern writers. Unable to procure correct information, and anxious to admit the truth of statements deemed favourable to their cause, the early Christians seem often to have spoken in a declamatory tone. But their exaggeration arose not from a spirit of deceit. They knew that the successors of the apostles exerted themselves with indefatigable zeal in proclaiming the gospel, and that many had distributed their property to the poor, in order that, unshackled by worldly considerations, they might carry the faith to the most distant nations;[2] they saw, moreover, the work of conversion advancing rapidly under their own eyes, and they heard of its progress in other countries from a diversity of sources; hence they stopped not to investigate the origin and to estimate the probability of reports, which, uncontradicted by surrounding appearances, were to them a theme of exultation in their controversial writings, and of encouragement under their severest misfortunes.

In the Roman Empire.

Tertullian exclaims, "We are but of yesterday, yet we have filled your empire,—your cities, your islands, your castles, your corporate towns, your assemblies, your very camps, your tribes, your companies, your palace, your senate, your forum: your temples alone are left to you."[3] Language, evidently rhetorical, ought not to be examined by the rules of literal interpretation. The Apologist probably meant but to convey the same idea which the historian would have expressed by the simple assertion, that the Christians were extremely numerous in places both far and near, in situations both civil and military. At the same time, it must be allowed by any impartial inquirer, that the expressions of Tertullian, though perhaps too strong, could not have been hazarded in an address to persons who had ample opportunities

[1] *E. g.*, Justin Martyr asserts, "There is no race of men, whether Barbarians or Greeks, or by whatever appellation they may be designated, whether they wander in waggons or dwell in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered up to the Father and Creator of all things, in the name of the crucified Jesus." (Dialog. cum Tryphon, p. 341.) Comp. Iren. adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xi.; Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. ii. p. 50: Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. v. c. xiii.

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. xxxvi.

[3] Apolog. c. xxxvii. Comp. ad Scapul. c. v.; adv. Judæos, c. vii. On the testimony of Tertullian, see Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. ante Const. M. p. 204. Bishop Kaye, Lectures on Tertullian, p. 93.

of discovering the truth, had they not been warranted, to a certain extent at least, by the apparent state of the place in which they were written. A description, inconsistent with the aspect of things, would have defeated the very purpose for which it was made.

The vast and commodious roads which intersected the whole Roman empire; the union of different countries under one government; the consequent spread of civilization, and the partial adoption of the Latin language in every district: these were advantages which facilitated the propagation of the gospel in countries subject to the Cæsars. The absence of these circumstances in remote wilds must be deemed no inconsiderable bar. May we not also reckon among the obstacles to the conversion of the nations of Northern Europe,[1] the influence, not yet perhaps destroyed, of the ancient Bardic system; a system which had inculcated the doctrine of an immortality, corresponding with their habits and wishes, and productive of an enthusiastic devotion far beyond the powers of the Grecian and Roman mythologies to excite?

In Britain, the Christian Church appears to have been small and humble.[2] In Transalpine Gaul, which was converted to the faith at a later period than other countries,[3] the progress of Christianity was comparatively slow; since in the third century there were but a few churches, raised by the devotion of an inconsiderable number of Christians,[4] and under the Emperor Decius it was found necessary to send thither seven missionaries from Rome.[5] In Germany, the early state of Christianity is involved in obscurity: it is probable, however, that the persons who first diffused the knowledge of the gospel in Gaul, were instrumental in extending its blessings to the contiguous countries. But a very different scene presents itself as we turn our view to the regions of the east and of the south. Even beyond the Euphrates, Edessa[6] was the seat of Christians; and from that river to the shores of Asia Minor, throughout the whole country, the voice of Revelation had gone forth. In Pontus and Bithynia, in Greece, Thrace and Macedonia, in Rome, at Carthage, in Egypt, the number of Christians was unquestionably great. In fact, there was probably

In Britain.

[1] It would, we think, be an interesting theme to explain the fact, that the diffusion of Christianity among the tribes of the North was neither so rapid in its progress nor so lasting in its effects as in the more refined portions of the globe, particularly as those circumstances, which Montesquieu (Esprit des Lois, lib. xxv. c. ii. iii.) considers as most favourable to conversion, may be supposed in this case to have existed.

[2] Respecting the application for Christian teachers, which, according to Bede, Lucius, a King of Britain, made to Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, in the reign of M. Antoninus, see the observations of Mosheim (de Reb. Christ. p. 215).

[3] Sulpit. Sever. Hist. Sacr. lib. ii. c. xxxii.

[4] Ruinart. Act. Mart. Sincer. p. 130.

[5] Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. i. c. xxviii.

[6] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. xiii.

no city of much extent in the Roman empire, in which some portion of the population had not been converted to Christianity.[1]

Mode by which Christianity was diffused.

In considering this wide diffusion of Christianity, we are naturally led to inquire into the peculiar means by which it was effected. That it is to be ascribed to the directing Providence which vouchsafed it to man, no sincere believer will deny. But as the instruments employed, and the feelings addressed, were human, it is not inconsistent with a full conviction of Divine superintendence to examine in what manner those instruments acted, and those feelings were affected. With the superficial, the question seems to be resolved by a mere reference, grounded on experience, to the effects of novelty, and to the influence which the hopes and fears of futurity exert on the conduct of man. But, although experience has certainly proved that the love of novelty is not destitute of power, it has also taught us that the force of ancient habits and long-cherished opinions retains a far stronger hold on the mind; though it has shown that even the indistinct hopes and fears connected with the idea of the invisible world, occasionally give a sudden impulse to our actions, it has also assured us, that the desire of present ease, and still more the dread of instant pain, when counterbalanced by no motives of immediate interest or ambition, will operate with a degree of resistance which a fixed belief, and an entire consciousness of rectitude can alone surmount. To attribute, therefore, the rapid diffusion of a religion, essentially hostile to the systems, establishments, customs, manners, and passions of the Gentile world, to the vague and arbitrary action of various irregular humours, is to take at least a very unphilosophical view of the subject.

If we omit the exercise of miraculous powers, the existence of which after the apostolic ages is disputed (chiefly because the Fathers of the second and third centuries speak of it only in general language, an instance being seldom specified, and when specified usually relating to the expulsion of demons,[2] or to the healing of diseases, in which it is commonly admitted there is more room for mistake than in any other class of miracles), we must, doubtless, consider as among the chief causes, which, under the assistance of the Holy Spirit, contributed to the conversion of the heathen, the disgust which paganism, notwithstanding its splendour, must often have left on the reflecting mind; the disrepute into which divination and oracles had fallen; the contrariety and unsatisfactoriness of the systems of philosophy; the zeal, the fortitude, the affection, the hospitality, the general virtues

[1] Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. c. xv.

[2] The expulsion of demons is considered by the Fathers as a great cause of the conversion of the Gentiles. (Tertull. Apol. c. xxiii.; Orig. c. Cels. lib. ii. p. 20; Lactant. lib. v. c. xxvii. &c.) That there was a strong prejudice in the minds of the learned against this kind of demonstration may be inferred from Ulpian, lib. viii. de Tribunal, in Digest. lib. l. tit. xiii. leg. i.; and Marcus Antoninus, Med. p. 1.

of the Christians so peculiar and so remarkable; the union of their well-organized religious community; the unwearied efforts of their preachers; the circulation of Apologies, pious works, and copies of the sacred Scriptures (soon, in all probability, translated into Latin), by which the evidences and the transcendent excellence of revealed religion were gradually discovered and appreciated.

It is unfortunate, however, that the ancient converts have not detailed with more minuteness the accidental circumstances which first arrested their attention, and the progress of their thoughts from increasing respect to final conviction. The unparalleled patience of the Christians under sufferings; the improbability that men addicted to vice should submit to the loss of all that is desirable, and deliver themselves voluntarily to the executioner; such was the first circumstance which awakened the curiosity of the philosophic Justin; such the first reasoning which led him to embrace a religion, of which he himself became subsequently a martyr.[1]

Effects of the conversion of the Gentiles.

But it is not so much the method by which Christianity was spread, nor the numerical state of the early proselytes, which demands our consideration, as the mental effects which conversion produced. The change of conduct, as described by the early Christians, is unparalleled in the history of man: "We," exclaims Justin Martyr, "who formerly rejoiced in licentiousness, now embrace discretion and chastity: we, who resorted to magical arts, now devote ourselves to the unbegotten God, the God of goodness; we, who set our affections upon wealth and possessions, now bring to the common stock all our property, and share it with the indigent; we, who owing to diversity of customs, would not partake of the same hearth with those of a different race, now, since the appearance of Christ, live together, and pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who unjustly hate us, that by leading a life conformed to the excellent precepts of Christianity, they may be filled with the good hope of obtaining the same happiness with ourselves from that God, who is Lord above all things."[2] In an age of libertinism, the Christian was distinguished by purity. Hatred was transformed into love, and the violence of passion subsided into tenderness and peace. The proud became humble. The contemner submitted to contempt. All felt,[3] that the morality of their religion was a fixed and imperative rule, and not like the ethics of philosophy,[4] mere reasoning, often too vague and imperfect to convince, and always too destitute of authority to command. But this reform was vital: it altered not so much the exterior appearance as

[1] Apol. i. c. xii.

[2] Ibid. c. xiv. Comp. Orig. c. Cels. lib. iii.; Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. iii. c. xxvi.

[3] The Christians, as long as they adhered to their religion, though many suffered for the faith, were not charged with specific crimes in the courts of justice. (Tertull. Apol. c. xliv.) So Minucius Felix, De vestro numero carcer exæstuat: Christianus ibi nullus, nisi aut reus suæ Religionis aut profugus, c. xxxv.

[4] Tertull. Apol. c. xlii.

the inward heart. The Christians, in general, appear to have affected no peculiarity in habit or diet, and to have refused no profession which was consistent with their religious creed, and adapted to promote the welfare of society. They frequented the forum and the baths: they were seen in the camp,[1] and at the marts; they followed an agricultural, a mercantile, or a sea-faring life.[2]

That some Christians fell into extremes in their condemnation of innocent pleasures cannot be denied; but the critical time in which they lived, and the deep importance of being free from all that could be construed into impropriety, or which had any tendency to produce evil, are considerations which ought very much to diminish the severity with which their conduct has been viewed.

Remarks on the objection drawn from the admission of persons, formerly criminals, into the Church.

But it has been urged as an objection that, among the early converts, there were persons who had previously been guilty of immoral practices.[3] It ought to be remembered that the number of such persons was comparatively small. The majority were men of regular habits,[4] whose feelings were naturally drawn by a congenial influence towards a religion by which their sentiments of virtue were strengthened, refined, and elevated. But that persons who had fallen into sin, at a period of extreme licentiousness, should have sought forgiveness in the bosom of a Church which, though it emphatically condemned guilt, pointed out repentance, is, we conceive, a circumstance rather redounding to its honour than deserving of reproach. The nature of Paganism was little adapted to instruct, still less to console. The offender, who had once broken through the fence of his first scruples, felt no moral check to arrest him in his descent through the various stages of crime.[5] At the same time he was not exempt from that inscrutable feeling of remorse which, whether it flows from nature, or from a combination of accidental influences, still clings to the heart from which even belief has been banished.[6] The uneasiness which consumed Tiberius,[7] the terrors which disturbed the dreams of Nero,[8] the phantoms of horror which haunted Caracalla,[9] were torments which Paganism could not assuage, and which Scepticism could not reason away. Christianity alone offered the remedy: it is not surprising, therefore, if Christianity was chosen. In fact, a mighty change seemed to have come over the hearts and minds of the Gentiles. Thoughts and feelings which, while the possessors reposed beneath the shade of ancient idolatry, lay shrunk and closed, were warmed and elicited. Strong principles evinced the operation of strong motives. The hopes and fears of futurity—almost as unknown in that age to

[1] On this point, however, the views of different Christians seem to have been different. See Orig. c. Cels. lib. viii. p. 427, and the note of Spencer.

[2] Tertull. Apol. c. xlv.

[3] Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. c. xvi.

[4] Orig. c. Cels. lib. iii. p. 150.

[5] Quis peccandi finem posuit sibi? Juv. Sat. xiii.

[6] Juv. Sat. xiii. &c.

[7] Tacit. Ann. lib. vi. c. vi.

[8] Ibid. lib. xiv.

[9] Dion Cassius, lib. lxxvii.

the uneducated as to the learned[1]—worked upon the Christian with all their force and fulness; and the effects were proportionate to the magnitude and activity of the cause.

It is scarcely necessary to repeat here that the early converts were not men whose minds, suddenly struck and inflamed, had caught but a partial light on some prominent points, without extending their view over the general nature of Christianity; but men who, before their admission into the Church, had remained during a certain period, the length of which seems sometimes to have been considerable,[2] in the degree of catechumens,[3] in order that they might receive a course of gradual instruction on the great moral truths of revealed religion, and give satisfactory proofs of the sincerity of their intentions by the holiness of their lives; and if afterwards they should fall into guilt, a severe, and often a very protracted, penance was required, as a necessary step for the attainment of pardon.[4]

SECTION III.—INFLUENCE OF THE PAGAN RELIGION; CAUSES OF THE OPPOSITION WHICH CHRISTIANITY EXPERIENCED FROM THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT.

Influence of the Polytheistic system.

Notwithstanding this view of the state of Christianity, its history, previous to its civil establishment, is, for the most part, the history of persecutions: it is necessary, therefore, to develop the causes of so remarkable a circumstance.

The Pagan religion, with its rich succession of pageants, had naturally a strong ascendancy over the minds of the unreflecting. Its priests, its temples, its mysteries, its sacrifices, its magnificent processions, calling to their aid the varied powers of music, painting, and sculpture, and awakening the different feelings of awe, pleasure, interest, and triumph, conspired with the force of early habits and recollections, to work a very powerful delusion. Attention was diverted from the poverty of its essence to the sumptuousness of its externals. Its meagre system of ethics, and its cold and gloomy prospects of a dimly-shadowed futurity, were forgotten amid a glow of ritual brilliancy, which was designed to kindle intense enthusiasm.

Greatness of the Romans ascribed to their superior piety.

But these were far from being the only means by which Paganism excited that train of emotions which precluded the free action of temperate inquiry. It was the care of the statesman to implant and cherish the prejudice, which afterwards clung with extreme tenacity to the minds of the populace, that, to their deep respect for the deities of the republic, the unexampled success of the Roman arms was to be attributed. The piety of Romulus and of Numa was believed to have laid the foundations of their greatness. The vast extent of the Roman

[1] Cic. Or. pro Cluent.; de Nat. Deor. lib. ii. c. ii. Juv. Sat. ii. 149, &c.
[2] Orig. c. Cels. lib. iii. p. 142, &c.
[3] Bingham, Antiquit. of the Christ. Church, vol. i.
[4] Tertull. de Pœnit. Cyprian, de Laps. sec. 27.

empire was deemed the recompense of assiduous devotion. "It was," they pompously exclaimed, "by exercising religious discipline in the camp, and by fortifying the city with sacred rites, with vestal virgins, and the various degrees of a numerous priesthood, that they had stretched their dominion beyond the paths of the sun and the limits of the ocean."[1] And, as public prosperity was universally ascribed to the favourable agency of the gods, so were public calamities considered as visitations of their anger. The influence of these opinions was peculiarly active among the Romans, whose attachment to their religion was far greater than that of the other nations of the heathen world. Hence arose that exclusion of foreign rites, which, though practically modified by political necessity, was theoretically a part of their religious system.

Degree of religious toleration which existed under the Roman Government.

It has been the practice of late writers to expatiate in terms of the warmest admiration on the unbounded toleration which characterised the constitution of Rome,[2] yet it is evident from history that this supposed indulgence was far more circumscribed than its panegyrists have asserted. It was positively forbidden by law to honour with private worship any other Deity than such as had been incorporated into the Roman religion by public authority;[3] and this law, though it might have been frequently allowed to slumber, was not abrogated at a very distant period from its original enactment. L. Æmilius Paulus, in his consulship, ordered the temples of Isis and Serapis, gods not legally recognised by the Romans, to be destroyed, and, observing the religious fear which checked the people, he himself seized an axe, and struck the first blow against the portals of the sacred edifice.[4] On several occasions the Senate exerted its power to prevent religious innovations.[5] The Consul Posthumius is represented by Livy as alleging, in a powerful speech, the ancient laws, so often repeated, against worships derived from other countries, and as declaring that

[1] Sic imperium suum ultra Solis vias et ipsius Oceani limites propagavit, dum exercent in armis virtutem religiosam, dum urbem muniunt sacrorum religionibus, castis virginibus, multis honoribus ac nominibus sacerdotum. Min. Felix, c. vi.

[2] Montesquieu, in his Dissertation Sur la Politique des Romains dans la Religion; Voltaire, Dict. Philos. art. Tolerance, Œuvr. tom. xxxviii. p. 404; Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, c. xvi. &c.

[3] Tertull. Apolog. c. v. &c.

[4] Val. Max. lib. i. c. iii. n. 2.

[5] In the year U.C. 326, when, in consequence of a severe drought, individuals had resorted to new rites with a view of appeasing the wrath of Heaven, the Senate enjoined the Ædiles to suffer no other god and no other form of worship than that which had been sanctioned by Roman usage. (Liv. lib. iv.) In U.C. 541, in the height of the second Punic war, the Senate published a strict decree against certain religious innovations which had been introduced. (Liv. lib. xxv.) In U.C. 615 the Prætor, C. Cornelius Hispalus, banished those who attempted to establish the worship of the Sabasian Jupiter (Valer. Max. lib. i. c. iii.); and in U.C. 701, the Temples of Isis and Serapis were again demolished by order of the Senate. (Dion. lib. xl.) These laws may be found more fully detailed in an article, Sur le Respect que les Romains avoient pour la Religion. Histoire de l'Académ. des Inscript. tom. xxxiv. p. 110–125.

nothing, in the opinion of the wisest legislators, was more calculated to dissolve the national religion than the introduction of foreign rites.[1] Dion Cassius has transmitted to us a celebrated oration, in which Mæcenas endeavours to press on Augustus a conviction of the dangers which he conceives would result from the toleration of new religions. And even under Tiberius the Egyptian ceremonies were violently proscribed.

The mistaken opinion of an entire freedom from persecution may have originated in a wrong inference, drawn from the very remarkable fact, that coexistent with intolerant laws against public deviations from the established rites, was an almost unlimited liberty enjoyed by individuals of expressing private sentiments. On the stage, and in the works of professed sceptics, the keenest ridicule against the popular gods was exercised with perfect impunity.[2] The sarcastic attacks of Plautus and Terence, as well as the impious sentiments of Seneca the tragedian, were heard without censure. The philosophic raillery of Cicero and of Lucian was indulged in without danger.[3]

Causes to which the opposition made to Christianity must be ascribed.

The Christian religion had, therefore, to encounter the aversion which the Romans entertained against foreign worship; an aversion, indeed, which the enlargement of their empire had considerably diminished, but which may still be thought not to have been wholly eradicated. But however inclined the ruling powers might have been in other cases to relax their severity, there were several distinctive features in the Christian religion which soon awakened their apprehension. It was the religion, not of any particular nation or city, but of a sect; and that not merely a recent, but a proselyting sect. It admitted no intercommunity of worship; its existence required the destruction of all other systems. It was not, like the religions of polytheism, a new scion, which might be grafted on the general stock. If was not an attempt to fill up an additional niche in the Pantheon. It was an exclusive, uncompromising creed, which not merely did not harmonise with any other, but condemned all others. As it demanded undivided allegiance from its followers, so it did not accept proffered coalition with its opponents. The Christians took no pains to conceal their contempt for the gods and temples and ceremonies of idolatry.

[1] Quoties hoc patrum avorumque ætate negotium est magistratibus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent; sacrificulos vatesque foro, circo, urbe prohiberent; vaticinos libros conquirerent comburerentque, omnem disciplinam sacrificandi præterquam more Romano abolerent? Judicabant enim prudentissimi viri omnis divini humanique juris, nihil æquè dissolvendæ religionis esse, quam ubi non patrio, sed externo ritu sacrificaretur. (Liv. lib. xxxix. c. xvi.)

[2] This was a circumstance which frequently struck the early Christians. Just. Mart. Apol. i. c. iv.: Tertull. Apol. c. xlvi. Quinimo et Deos vestros palam destruunt . . . . laudantibus vobis, &c.

[3] The same licence existed in Ancient Greece: and, by a somewhat similar anomaly, the Church of Rome combined with her former spirit of rigid intolerance the strange permission of exhibiting theatrical pieces, in which the events of Scripture History were represented with irreverent buffoonery.

The purple of the Pagan priesthood, to which the crowd had been taught to look up with reverence, was, in their eyes, mockery.[1] This spirit, though, perhaps, not at first fully perceived, was no sooner felt than resisted.[2] It was imputed to a strange obliquity of intellect or of will. The ruling maxim of Roman administration was, evidently, if foreign worships could not be excluded, at least to consolidate them into one great religious federacy; to allow men the free enjoyment of their opinions, but to unite together those opinions by a common principle of accommodation and reciprocal indulgence. The legislator, who could not bend and mould Christianity into a component part of the polytheistic structure, put it out of the circle of toleration, however capacious, and endeavoured to crush it, before its magnitude was increased; and hence, perhaps, it is that the Christian was often condemned simply on account of his profession, when no criminal acts were proved, or even alleged. The name was a test. The magistrate was probably directed to consider it as such, with a view to prevent the ultimate consequences of a system, of which, in particular instances, it would have been difficult to define the mischief. But the sufferer, who felt unable to explain on what principle so singular a deviation from ordinary practice could be grounded, loudly complained of the palpable injustice of passing sentence on him, in consequence of a mere name, without any judicial inquiry into his character and conduct.[3] Such, at least, seems to us to be the solution of the anomalous mode of treatment which the Christians experienced.

Christians suspected of disaffection.

But, independently of these apprehensions of the effects of the new religion, arising from its essential incompatibility with polytheism, the persons who professed it laboured under suspicions of disaffection to the civil government. They refused to adore the image of the reigning emperor;[4] they refused to offer idolatrous sacrifices for his safety; they refused to swear by the genius of Cæsar, and to join in festivals on the occasion of signal victories. They were sometimes accused of declining to assist in the wars,[5] by which the dangers which encircled the Roman empire were averted. Doubts were consequently awakened, which were not immediately dispelled by their declarations, however

[1] Sacerdotum honores et purpuras despiciunt. (Min. Fel. c. viii.)

[2] See Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. c. xvi. The observation of Voltaire, in accounting for the different treatment which the Jews and the Christians experienced is not without truth. "Les Juifs ne voulaient pas que la statue de Jupiter fût à Jerusalem; mais les Chretiens ne voulaient pas qu'elle fût au Capitole." Dict. Philos. art. Tolerance.

[3] Just. Mart. Apol. i. c. iv.; Tertull. Apol. c. iii.

[4] Tertull. Apol. c. xxxiii. &c.

[5] Tertullian, in his tract De Coronâ, considers it unlawful for a Christian to be a soldier. This was written *after* his secession from the church; but it must be remembered that the Romans seem not to have distinguished the orthodox from the schismatic. The perusal of the conclusion of the Eighth Book of Origen against Celsus would, we think, have alone awakened in a high degree the fears of the Roman rulers.

emphatic, that, although they turned with shuddering from profane rites, yet they cherished fidelity, offered prayers[1] for the lives and prosperity of their appointed governors, paid duly all tributes and taxes, abstained from factious commotions, and promoted charity and affection among the various members of the social body. The accusation made more impression than the defence. It is also probable that the habitual mention of the kingdom of the Messiah may, by a misapprehension of its meaning, have tended to excite distrust.[2]

Nightly meetings.

But nothing was more effectual in rousing the fears of the Roman rulers than the circumstance that men, whose principles were already questioned, should hold frequent nocturnal meetings—meetings which were expressly prohibited by law, and always dreaded as the secret schools of dangerous conspiracies. Thus was it the hard lot of the Christians that they could neither assemble openly, without being exposed to violence, nor privately, without subjecting themselves to suspicion. It was injudicious in them, however, to suffer the alarm to be heightened by adopting the language of unnecessary mystery on the subject of their sacraments.[3]

Calumnies against the Christians.

The feeling of fear or hatred already entertained was considerably increased by the cloud of calumnies in which their conduct was enveloped. Strange reports of disgusting rites were industriously circulated, and credulously believed. The fury of the lower and the distrust of the higher orders were raised by absurd fictions, which represented the Christians as slaying a new-born infant at their initiation; drinking the blood; tearing asunder the limbs; binding themselves to secrecy; and consummating their deeds of horror in the shades of night, by the uncontrolled indulgence of the most depraved passions.[4] In vain did the Christian, who avoided the sight of the sanguinary feats of the amphitheatre, and who observed the apostolic precept of abstaining from blood,[5] express his deepest abhorrence of inventions, which apparently originated in a monstrous perversion of the meaning of the eucharistic commemoration of the death of Christ; in vain did he appeal to the common feelings of mankind, and challenge the minutest investigation of his actions; the progress of falsehood was but slowly repressed, and was attended by many and serious evils. The expressions of affection which the Christians employed were misconstrued.[6] The remembrance of the infamous practices which kindled the indignation of the senate against the Bacchanals, inspired the Roman statesman with a belief that there was no crime so revolting which might not be committed under the cloak of religion.

[1] Tertull. Apol. c. xxxviii. &c.

[2] Justin Martyr (in Apol. i. c. xi.) acknowledges that it was suspected to mean a kingdom on earth.

[3] On the ancient custom of concealing the nature of the Sacraments, see Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, b. x. c. v.

[4] See the description given in Minucius Felix, c. ix. &c.

[5] The heathen were aware of this fact. Tertull. Apol. c. ix.

[6] Davis, note in Min. Fel. c. ix.

But the obstinacy of the Pagans in receiving reports which they had not investigated, notwithstanding the internal improbability of the pretended facts, notwithstanding the superior means of inquiry which they possessed, notwithstanding the bold challenge of the Apologists to sift thoroughly all charges adduced against their society, is the more unjustifiable, as, on the supposed truth of these reports, extraordinary cruelties were not unfrequently exercised.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE SECOND CENTURY.

A. D. 101 TO 211.

ALTHOUGH we have already briefly adverted to the celebrated letter[1] which Pliny, during his residence as governor in the province of Pontus and Bithynia, addressed to Trajan, a more minute examination, and an illustration of it by a few additional remarks, will, perhaps, be the best method of conveying a clear and connected idea of the policy which directed the conduct of the Roman rulers at the period succeeding the apostolic age. The object of Pliny is to ascertain the nature and extent of inquiry and of punishment, which it was necessary to adopt against the followers of the new religion. He states that he had never been present at their trials, and that he entertained doubts respecting the mode of proceeding, particularly on the following points:—whether difference of age were taken into consideration, or whether the tender and the robust were treated with the same severity; whether pardon were granted on repentance, or a renunciation of Christianity were judged of no avail; whether the mere name of Christian, unconnected with any crime, or the crimes that accompanied the name, were the object of punishment.

A. D. 101.

Review of Pliny's Letter to Trajan.

Its object.

From these questions it appears to us manifest that the Christians were then generally known as a separate body; that judicial proceedings had been instituted against them; that the repeated complaints which the Apologists make of being punished for a name only, are neither unfounded nor extravagant; lastly, that Pliny's design was to suggest to the emperor certain distinctions, calculated to mitigate the rigour which had been exercised indiscriminately against the various members of the rising sect.

Inferences drawn from the questions proposed.

It is still doubtful whether any edict, specifically directed against the Christians, was then in force.[2] The expressions of Tertullian seem to intimate that the laws of Nero, in this particular case, were not

Edicts against the Christians.

[1] Plin. lib. x. Ep. 97. *Vide* Church History, First Division, p. 333.

[2] Mosheim, Lardner, Gibbon, &c. are of opinion that there were no edicts in force against the Christians. Bishop Kaye remarks, that the conclusion is erroneous, if any weight is to be attached to the statements of Tertullian, in his first book ad Nationes, c. vii. Apolog. c. i. v. xxxvii.; ad Scapul. c. iv. (Lectures on Tertullian, p. 115). With respect to the abrogation of Domitian's laws by the Senate, which Mosheim and Lardner mention, and the belief in which rests upon the authority of Suetonius (in Dom. c. xxiii.) and the writer of the Treatise de Mortib. Persecut. c. xxi., it ought to be remembered that Trajan restored Domitian's Rescripts, Epistolis enim Domitiani standum est. (Plin. lib. x. Ep. 66.) (See Gibbon's Index Expurgator. in his Miscell. Works, vol. v. p. 560.)

A. D. 101. abrogated. Nor can the contrary be inferred from the uncertainty of so experienced a lawyer as Pliny, since he himself, in another of his letters, laments his deficiency on some points of legal knowledge.[1] It may, however, be reasonably concluded that these laws, if not formally and entirely annulled, were, in many respects, become of dubious authority, and that the general decrees of the senate against the introduction of new deities, though they enabled harsh or unjust governors to pursue the most vigorous measures, were regarded by milder rulers as attended with considerable difficulty in their meaning and in their application.

Method pursued by Pliny.

In this state of perplexity, Pliny proceeds to describe the method which he had followed towards all who were brought before him on the charge of being Christians. He put the question, Whether they were members of the body to which they were accused of belonging? If they answered in the affirmative, he repeated the question a second and a third time, accompanying it with the threat of capital punishment. Such as still persisted in their confession he looked upon as infatuated, and ordered to be led away to prison or to execution; for

Reasons assigned.

the word employed is susceptible of this ambiguity.[2] "For," he adds, in explanation of the motives which impelled him to the adoption of this course, "I never doubted that, whatever might be the nature of their confession, stubbornness, at least, and inflexible obstinacy, ought to be punished." This sentence, when considered in connection with his previous avowal of want of acquaintance with the trials of the Christians, throws great light on an investigation of the causes of the contempt and opposition which Christianity experienced from the philosopher and the magistrate. Ignorance of the new, and attachment to the old religion, were the main springs which directed the learned and the powerful. The soft feelings of humanity were repressed by a conviction that all attempts to endanger the religious establishment would necessarily shake the stability of those civil institutions with which, by a variety of means, it had long been united. The great maxim of the Roman government, in its external relations, and in its internal policy, was to spare the subject, but to enforce subjection. *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.* The progress, however, of

Consequences of the course adopted.

Christianity seems not to have suffered that check which the severe proceedings of the governor were intended to produce. A more natural circumstance was, probably, the result: informations continually multiplied. In consequence of an anonymous accusation, Pliny examined several persons, who denied the profession of Christianity, and who, as a mark of the sincerity of their assertions, repeated an appeal to the gods, offered supplication with wine and frankincense to

[1] Ep. 14, lib. viii. wherein he consults Aristo, and gives the reasons of his want of sufficient acquaintance with the Jus Senatorium.

[2] Perseverantes duci jussi: that it does not necessarily imply capital punishment is evident from many passages in other writers, *e. g.* Ne mihi in carcere habitandum sit, si Tribunus plebis duci jussisset. Cic. de Lege Agrar. Or. ii. sec. 37.

the image of the emperor, and reviled the name of Christ;[1] "with none of which things," adds the narrator, "as it is reported, can they who are really Christians be induced to comply." These, therefore, were discharged. Others at first confessed themselves Christians, and afterwards recanted. Some, it appears, had renounced the profession three years, some sooner, and others twenty years before; which periods cannot without difficulty be referred to the persecutions under Domitian and Nero.[2] A. D. 101.

The succeeding part of the letter contains the favourable account of the Christians which we have already transcribed.[3] This account, it will be observed, was drawn by Pliny from those who had recanted; men who, in all probability, by revealing any impious tenet, if such had existed in the system, or any vicious habit in the professors, of the religion which they had forsaken, would gladly have found a justification of their apostacy, satisfactory alike to themselves and to their judges, bringing peace to their consciences and security to their persons. An informer, who had any reason to believe that he was tearing the mask from the hypocrite, and dragging the criminal to light, would have consoled himself with the reflection, that he was justly entitled to the character of a public benefactor. Yet, far from finding any discovery of concealed vice, any detection of subtle intrigue, we have a testimony, recorded by an enemy, and derived from unsuspected witnesses, which affords not merely a refutation of the calumnies, by which the character of the first Christians was assailed, but a strong evidence of their piety and rectitude, their unaffected simplicity and affectionate union. Account of the manners of the Christians.

With a view, moreover, to ascertain the truth of this account, Pliny, as we have already observed, deemed it necessary to examine by torture two maid-servants, who are called ministers (perhaps deaconesses): he was unable, however, to discover anything, except, to use his own language, "a wilful and immoderate superstition;" an expression, as may be inferred from the whole tenour of the epistle, only equivalent to "an obstinate deviation from the established rites, a presumptuous attempt to disturb the religious harmony of the heathen world."

In considering the moderation and humanity, by which the general conduct of Pliny was distinguished, it appears difficult to determine Examination by torture.

[1] It is possible that this additional injunction may have been made in consequence of a singular equivocation, which we may perhaps suppose to have been tried before the time of the Valentinians, who argued that they might deny that they were Christians without incurring the penalty denounced in the words of our Saviour, "He who denies *me* before men, him will I deny before my Father." (See Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 153.)

[2] This inquiry was made probably A.D. 104. Domitian perished in the year 96, and Nero in 68 (*i.e.* 36 years before). The persons examined were perhaps confused, and not scrupulously exact in the dates.

[3] Church History, First Division, pp. 291, 334.

A. D. 101. the reason which could induce him to select two females as fit subjects to be tried by the horrors of the rack.[1] It is most obvious to assign this act of cruelty to a desire of extorting their secret with greater facility, from the natural timidity of the weaker sex. We ought, however, to bear in mind, that the Roman laws did not allow any persons to be put to the torture except slaves and female servants, whose evidence, unless by this process, was inadmissible.[2]

It was not, however, his intention to continue these intolerent proceedings. Sensible of the inefficacy of any system of indiscriminate persecution, and anxious, it may be allowed, to yield to the dictates of pity, and to obtain from imperial authority some definite regulation, which might alleviate the sufferings of the Christians, by silencing the clamours of their informers, he suspended all rigorous measures till the reply of Trajan should relieve his perplexity. To impress on the emperor's mind a proper sense of the magnitude of the subject, he assures him that persons of all ranks and ages and of both sexes, were accused, and would still be accused: for the contagion, he adds, of the new superstition had not merely seized cities, but lesser towns, and the open country. The temples had been almost deserted; the sacred ceremonies had suffered a long intermission; and the victims were for some time without purchasers.

State of Christianity in Pontus and Bithynia.

These assertions render it a very probable conjecture that the severity of the governors, and the exasperatiou of the populace, were excited and kept alive by the priests, by the inferior officers of religion, and, in short, by all to whom the splendid solemnities or gorgeous structures, which were consecrated to the maintenance of Polytheism, were a source of pleasure, of emolument, and of distinction. Nor would the representations of the priesthood be received without alarm, even by the philosophic sceptic. Regarding the existing religions as instruments of control, or incentives to exertion, many of the sages of antiquity had no sooner closed their free speculations on the divinity, than they bent before the senseless objects of popular idolatry which they internally ridiculed.[3] Even the followers of Epicurus and of Pyrrho were willing to discharge the sacerdotal

Influence of the priesthood.

[1] Mosheim adds, Presbyteris cum Episcopo aut fugâ dilapsis, exortâ tempestate, aut in occulto latentibus. (De Reb. Chr. p. 232.) The assertion is, we think, unwarranted and unjust.

[2] This was not the case in other countries. Dicendum ..... de institutis Atheniensium, Rhodiorum, doctissimorum hominum, apud quod etiam (id quod acerbissimum est) liberi, civesque torquentur. (Cic. de Part. Orat. c. xxxiv.) Hence, as Gibbon has remarked, the acquiesence of the Provincials encouraged their governors to acquire, and perhaps to usurp, a discretionary power of employing the rack to extort from vagrant and plebeian criminals the confession of their guilt, till they insensibly proceeded to confound the distinctions of rank, and to disregard the privileges of Roman citizens. (See Decline and Fall, &c. c. xvii.) It may be doubted, however, whether so conscientious a governor as Pliny would have deviated from the practice of the state and the rule of civilians.

[3] Orig. c. Cels. lib. v. p. 260.

offices.[1] But the ascendency of the priesthood would be particularly great in the mind of Pliny, who was anxious that reverence should be entertained "for the deities, for ancient glory, even for fables."[2] The glowing imagery of Pagan worship, with its train of varied associations, had taken possession of his ardent fancy. The elegance of his taste lent charms to empty pageantry; and his time was spent in building and in adorning temples. Another remark must force itself on the most incredulous examiner. The letter affords an unquestionable proof of the rapid diffusion of Christianity, throughout the province of Pontus and Bithynia, in the short space of eighty years after the death of its Divine founder. The testimony of Pliny, corroborated as it is by the writings of Lucian,[3] ought to satisfy us that the expressions, in which the Fathers describe the extent of the Church, though doubtless hyperbolical, were not suggested by the remotest wish to invent and deceive.

A. D. 101.

Wide diffusion of Christianity.

Pliny concludes by describing the revival of Pagan rites, in consequence of his administration, and by expressing a confident hope that if pardon were granted on repentance, the new sect would lose a considerable number of its adherents. The answer of Trajan is brief and positive. After declaring his approbation of the course pursued by Pliny, and admitting the impossibility of laying down any one rule calculated for universal application, he directs, that the Christians should not be sought for, but that, if any were brought before the governor, they should be punished. He was careful to add, that such as denied the profession of Christianity, and confirmed their denial by supplications to the gods, notwithstanding any former suspicion, should obtain pardon. Moreover, he observes, that an accusation ought in no instance to be admitted, unless signed by the person who presented it; for the sanction of anonymous informations "would be a disgraceful precedent, unworthy of the age of Trajan." It is in speaking of this rescript that Tertullian has severely reflected on the anomaly of forbidding the adoption of active measures against the Christians, as if innocent, and yet ordering them to be punished as if guilty. "If," he exclaims, "they deserve condemnation, why should they not be sought for? if they deserve not to be sought for, why should they not be acquitted?"[4] But, although Trajan, from the nature of existing laws, and the influence of preconceived opinions, might not consider them as guiltless, he might nevertheless regard them as a race of mistaken men, who, in their relation of citizens, were not likely to endanger the peace and security of society: while,

Reply of Trajan.

Observations of Tertullian on the Edict, examined.

[1] Epict Dissert. lib. ii. c. xx.; Diog. Laert. lib. x. sec. 10, &c.; Encyclopædia, History of Roman Philosophy, article Sext. Empiric. [2] Ep. 21, lib. viii.

[3] Alexander, the false prophet, is represented as complaining—*ἀθέων ἐμπεπλῆσθαι καὶ Χριστιανῶν τὸν Ποντόν.* (Pseudomant. sec. 25.)

[4] O sententiam necessitate confusam! Negat inquirendos, ut innocentes, et mandat puniendos, ut nocentes. Parcit et sævit, dissimulat et animadvertit! Quid temetipsam, Censura, circumvenis? Si damnas, cur non et inquiris? si non inquiris, cur non et absolvis? (Apol. c. ii.)

A. D. 101. on the other hand, all encouragement given to informers, a description of men against whom he had published very severe laws, would necessarily open a wide field for malignity, avarice, cruelty, and all the passions which are nourished by persecution. He considered tacit neglect as less dangerous than rigorous search, but open acquittal as pregnant with the most disastrous consequences to the institutions of the state. Tertullian himself has not reckoned Trajan among the persecutors,[1] and has acknowledged that the effect of this edict was in some degree to frustrate the penal laws, on which the harsh treatment which the Christians experienced from the provincial rulers was generally grounded.

Genuineness of these letters.

We have hitherto detailed and commented upon the contents of these letters on the tacit assumption of their genuineness. As Semler, however, has undertaken to discover in them the traces of imposture, it may be necessary to state briefly on what grounds their authority has been received. The chief points on which we would insist are the following:—these letters are not a single unconnected document, such, for instance, as the 'Acts of Pilate,' which might be easily forged, but they form a part of an extensive correspondence, into which important epistles could not without great difficulty be interpolated; they are found in all manuscripts containing the Tenth Book of Epistles,[2] in which this correspondence is preserved, and some of these manuscripts are of very great antiquity: these letters, moreover, are quoted by Tertullian, at an early period, when fabrication might have been speedily detected, particularly as it appears, from the account of Pliny himself, that his works were widely circulated;[3] the quotation of Tertullian is renewed without the slightest suspicion by Eusebius, by Jerome, by Orosius, and later writers: lastly, these letters bear all the internal characters of truth;—they are not sufficiently favourable for a Christian fabricator, they are too favourable for a Pagan; the style, too, and manner of Pliny are so strikingly preserved, that an editor,[4] who professes to have spent many years in thoroughly examining and illustrating his works, declares that he could perceive nothing in this part of them which was not perfectly in character with the rest; they have been, besides, repeatedly sifted and explained by men who possessed the deepest knowledge of languages and antiquities, yet of these examiners none, till the time of Semler, ever ventured to deny their genuineness.[5] In a word, the

[1] Apol. c. v.

[2] It is but just to add, that suspicions have been entertained, but without sufficient grounds, against the whole of the Tenth Book of Epistles, chiefly because it is found in very few manuscripts.

[3] *E. g.* Bibliopolas Lugduni esse non putabam: ac tanto libentius ex literis tuis cognovi venditari libellos meos, quibus peregrè manere gratiam, quam in urbe collegerint, delector. (Ep. 11, lib. xi.)

[4] Gierig.

[5] They have been examined by Balduinus, in his Commentaries on the Edicts of the Roman Emperors; by J. H. Boehmerus, by Sam. Petitus, and other writers, enumerated by Fabricius in his Biblioth. Lat. tom. ii. p. 415, Ed. Ernest. For

authority of manuscripts, the testimony of succeeding writers, the consent of commentators, the exceeding difficulty of any interpolation, the absence of a sufficient motive for such an interpolation, the style and subject of the whole,[1] must be admitted by the dispassionate examiner, as far overbalancing a few captious objections, such as might be urged against the authenticity of almost any record of antiquity. A. D. 101.

State of Christianity under Trajan.

The operation of Trajan's edict[2] was favourable to the rising Church. Still it is evident that considerable scope was left to arbitrary governors for the exercise of those powers which reduced the Christians to a state of danger and distress. The turbulence and ferocity of the populace, fomented by the artifices of the priesthood, still displayed itself in those seasons of tumultuous festivity, when the strength of a collected multitude was more sensibly felt, and its desires less commonly opposed. Tranquillity, for the most part, came or departed according to the ebb or flow of popular feeling.

Accession of Hadrian.

A. D. 117.

On the accession of Hadrian, a prince whose superstitious addiction to divination and magic,[3] and whose zealous activity in the maintenance of the Pagan ceremonies, may have encouraged the priests to renew their machinations, the Christians were assailed by fresh charges, and harassed with increased violence. The public games became, as usual, scenes of licentiousness inflamed by bigotry. The civil authorities were unable to check the progress of an evil, of which they witnessed the extent and deprecated the consequences. Hence the complaints of Serenius Granianus, the proconsul of Asia, and the consequent edict of the emperor, addressed to his successor, which we have already noticed.[4] Though apparently not free from some ambiguity, it was considered, probably from its real effects, as a powerful protection.

A. D. 126.

His edict.

Hadrian united an inquisitive disposition[5] with an affable address.[6] It is probable, therefore, that this favourable result may have been partly produced by the apologies of Quadratus and Aristides. But however inclined the emperor might be to shield the Christians from insult and injury, we cannot admit that it was his intention to have built a temple to Christ, and to have enrolled him among the gods. No mention of any such design is to be found, where it is most natural

Whether Hadrian designed to consecrate temples to Christ?

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further remarks on these Epistles, see G. J. Vossii in Ep. Plin. de Christian. Comment.; and Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, vol. v. p. 3–86.

[1] The above arguments will be found more fully detailed in Gierig's edition of Pliny the Younger (tom. ii. 498–519).

[2] It is hardly necessary to notice a supposed edict, by which Trajan is said to have put a stop to the persecution in consequence of a letter from Tiberian, governor of the First Palestine, complaining that he was wearied with destroying the Christians, on whom severity had no effect. It is first mentioned by John Malela, a credulous writer of the sixth century, and, though cited by Suidas (v. Τραϊανός), contains undeniable marks of forgery. See Dodwell (in Dissert. Cyprian. Diss. 11, sec. 23, 24).

[3] Dion Cassius, lib. lxiv. Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxv.

[4] Encyclopædia, History of Rome, article Hadrian.

[5] Curiositatum omnium explorator. Tertull. Apol. c. v.

[6] In colloquiis etiam humillimorum civilissimus. Spart. Adrian, c. xx.

A. D. 126. to seek it, in the Christian writers of the second and third centuries. The assertion is founded on the single testimony of Lampridius,[1] from whom we also learn that Hadrian commanded temples without images to be erected in all cities. The origin of the report is thus easily traced; but to suppose that his object was really to introduce Christianity, is to contradict his character as one who exerted as much diligence in supporting the religion of Rome, as he expressed contempt for all foreign worship.[2] In the singular letter which he wrote from Egypt to Servianus, the state of the Christians is described in a tone of raillery.[3] And, as we are expressly informed by Spartian,[4] that he consecrated several temples to himself, it is not improbable that these buildings were designed for the same purpose, and left unfinished in consequence of his death. From the prevalence of the report, however, we may safely draw one conclusion, that Hadrian was not regarded as being hostile to the professors of Christianity.

Effects of the deification of Antinous.

It was particularly during the reign of Hadrian, as Eusebius informs us, that the cause of revealed truth flourished.[5] The deification of Antinous, the temples erected, priests appointed, and victims offered, in honour of a depraved favourite, gave the Christians an opportunity of exposing the origin of the Pagan deities, which seems to have been successfully seized.[6]

Revolt of the Jews under Barcochebas.

But, notwithstanding the measures adopted in their favour, the Christians were still in a precarious and often distressful situation. Their apparent identity with the Jews, who had, not long before, been engaged in a wide and bloody revolt, had exposed them to the retributive excesses of the Roman populace. Their hardships now arose from another quarter, but were accompanied with circumstances of aggravated calamity. The vast numbers, who gathered together under the standard of the daring impostor Barcochebas,[7] spread terror and desolation in every part of Palestine, and assailed with merciless fury the followers of Christ, as enemies alike to the liberty and the religion of their country.[8] The visitation of vengeance fell, indeed, no less rapidly than dreadfully on that infatuated nation, and on the ancient seat of her departed glory;[9] but it came too late to protect numbers, who, amid scenes of slaughter and of torment, amid the cry of rebellion and of blasphemy, unrecorded and unpitied, resigned their lives to preserve the faith which they had conscientiously embraced.

[1] In Vit. Alexand. Sever. c. xliii. The story is rejected by Casaubon.

[2] Sacra Romana diligentissimè curavit; peregrina contempsit. Spart. in Vit. Adrian. c. xxii.

[3] Vopisc. in Vit. Saturnin. p. 245.

[4] In Vit. Adrian.

[5] Euseb. Præp. lib. iv. c. xvii.

[6] See Univ. Hist. vol. xv. p. 169, note.

[7] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. vi. On the revolt of Barcochebas, see Hottinger, Hist. Eccles. p. 68, and Encyclopædia, Hadrian.

[8] Just. Mart. Apol. lib. ii. p. 12.

[9] On the ruins of Jerusalem Hadrian built Ælia Capitolina, from which he excluded the Jews. (Dion. Cassius, lib. lxix.; Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph.; Sulpit. Sever. Hist. Sacr. lib. ii. c. xxxi.)

Thus was it the singularly unhappy situation of the Christians to be deemed dangerous by the Romans, as men disaffected to their government, and by the Jews as men attached to it. A. D. 126.

The era of a new reign was generally the era of a new persecution. The salutary operation of Hadrian's decree ceased, in a great measure, with his life; the restless spirit of calumny revived, and impiety and atheism were the reproaches to which the Christians were exposed, even in the reign of the mild, the amiable, the benevolent Antoninus Pius. It was to deprecate this injustice that Justin Martyr addressed to the Emperor an apology, remarkable for its open and manly language. In consequence, perhaps, of this remonstrance, Antoninus renewed by his sanction the rescript of Hadrian, and restored comparative tranquillity to the Church. Yet even the Imperial Decree was not sufficient to control the force of popular exasperation. An earthquake furnished additional matter for insult and barbarity. For calamities, of whatever nature, and from whatever cause, storms, or blight, or pestilence, or famine, or commotions, or defeats, were ascribed to the disciples of the new worship.[1] "Their enemies," says Tertullian, "call aloud for the blood of the innocent, alleging this vain pretext for their hatred, that they believe the Christians to be the cause of every public misfortune. If the Tiber has overflowed its banks, or the Nile has not overflowed; if heaven has refused its rain; if the earth has quaked; if famine or the plague has spread its ravages, the cry is immediate, 'Away with the Christians to the lion.'"[2]

A. D. 138. Accession of Antoninus Pius.

Public misfortunes ascribed to the influence of Christianity.

In this instance the Emperor is said to have issued an edict, preserved by Justin Martyr[3] and Eusebius,[4] in which he not only prohibits his subjects from resorting to vexatious and oppressive measures, but contrasts the confidence of the Christians with the supineness and indifference of the heathen world. He adds, "if any shall continue to molest the Christians merely on account of their profession, let the accused party be discharged, though confessedly a Christian, and let the informer himself be compelled to undergo the rigour of the law."[5]

Edict of Antoninus Pius.

[1] Arnob. lib. i. in init.

[2] Tertull. Apol. c. xl. In the very beginning of his Apology, Arnobius complains of this unjust accusation, that Christianity excited even the depredations of locusts and of vermin. The object of Cyprian's Tract to Demetrian is to prove that the evils which oppressed the empire were not the effects of Christianity. Indeed, this persuasion continued to increase so strongly, that Augustine undertook his great work De Civitate Dei, and Orosius composed his History, to remove the objections which it raised. For even after the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the state, it was charged, in the language of the defenders of Polytheism, with having chased away the genii of the Roman people (Symm. pro Sacr. Patr. ap. Prudent.), and drawn down the indignation of their forefathers, as they bent from their seats above to contemplate the land of their birth and of their fame (ibid.).

[3] Apol. i. ad fin.

[4] Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xiii. Eusebius quotes it from Melito.

[5] This edict, however (of which the genuineness has been doubted), is ascribed to Marcus Aurelius by Scaliger, Valesius, Huet, Pagi, Grabe, and other learned writers; but it accords better with the character and conduct of Antoninus Pius.

A. D. 161. Accession of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

It was the singular happiness of the Roman Empire, that the virtues of Antoninus Pius were transmitted to a successor, who illustrated by his life, as well as by his writings, the severe precepts of the most rigid sect of ancient philosophy. This happiness, however. was not universally felt. One class of his subjects, either in consequence of new rescripts or of the former penal laws, was still debarred from the benefits of an equitable government, and the enjoyment of general tranquillity; still calumniated, still plundered, still persecuted. Even Marcus Aurelius, the disciple of a school which professed to unite the love of justice with contempt of pain, viewed the sufferings and the fortitude of the Christians without attempting to mitigate the one, or to seek for the other any higher motive than mere obstinacy; an inflexibility which arose not from deliberation and judgment, but which exulted in producing a tragical effect.[1] The impulse of his natural humanity seems, on these occasions, to have been checked by various joint causes, among the chief of which may be reckoned the paralysing influence of the principles of Zeno, and the suggestions of the philosophers, to whom he paid an unbecoming degree of obsequious reverence,[2] while the Christians directed against them the most pointed attacks;[3] to which may be added, his own feelings of contempt for all pretensions to miraculous powers;[4] joined to a regard for the ceremonies of the Roman religion, so excessive as to expose him to the ridicule of his Pagan contemporaries.[5] Crimes, from which the mind revolts with disgust and horror, were repeated without investigation, and a persecution arose, of which the reader may form some idea from the martyrdom of one of its most remarkable victims, Polycarp, which we have already described.

Causes of his opposition to Christianity.

Martyrdoms at Lyons and Vienne.

As an example of the persecutions which raged in the seventeenth year of the reign of M. Aurelius, Eusebius[6] has preserved the account of the Martyrdoms of Lyons and Vienne, written by the churches there established. The situation of the Christians in those days of terror is delineated with minuteness and animation. Debarred from mutual intercourse, excluded from the common rights of society, exposed to mockery, reproach, and outrage, they had no source of solace but the conviction that "the sufferings of the present time are not to

[1] Οἵα ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχὴ ἡ ἕτοιμος, ἐὰν ἤδη ἀπολυθῆναι δέῃ τοῦ σώματος, καὶ ἤτοι σβεσθῆναι, ἢ σκεδασθῆναι ἢ συμμεῖναι; τὸ δὲ ἕτοιμον τοῦτο, ἵνα ἀπὸ ἰδικῆς κρίσεως ἔρχηται, μὴ κατὰ ψιλὴν παράταξιν, ὡς οἱ Χριστιανοὶ, ἀλλὰ λελογισμένως, καὶ σεμνῶς, καὶ ὥστε καὶ ἄλλον πεῖσαι, ἀπραγῴδως. De Reb. Suis. lib. xi. sec. 3.

[2] Jul. Capitol. in M. Aurel. &c. [3] Tatian. Assyr. Orat. c. Græc. &c.

[4] He observes, that he had learnt, after Diognetus, not to believe the reports of workers of wonders and magicians on the subject of incantation, the averting of demons, and such like effects, p. i. ed. Gatak.

[5] *E. g.* the satirical petition: οἱ λευκοὶ βόες Μάρκῳ τῷ Καίσαρι· ἂν σὺ νικήσῃς ἡμεῖς ἀπωλόμεθα. Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxv. c. iv.

[6] Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. i. A part only of the account is preserved; the whole was inserted by Eusebius in his Collection of the Acts of the Martyrs, which is now lost.

be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." The delu- A. D. 161.
sion and fury of the multitude, their crowding together, their cries, their blows, as they dragged the sufferer, as they pillaged his property, as they assaulted him with stones, as they converted his house into his prison—these are scenes which, even on a transient glance, open a view of the calamities which attended the profession of Christianity at that juncture. But, however afflicting, they sink in the shade when compared with the dreadful circumstances which followed. Some Christians shrank from torments, and abandoned their religion. Apostate servants, overcome by the instant fear of punishment, accused the faithful of cannibalism, infanticide, and promiscuous incest; "crimes," exclaim the writers, "which it is not lawful for us to mention, or to think of, or to believe to have ever been committed by human beings." The calumny spread, and was credited; the passions of the people were excited and inflamed: consternation and uncertainty arose among the Christians; confidence was dissolved; the bonds of affinity and friendship, which had hitherto linked them to the Gentile community, were rent; every feeling of compassion was smothered; torments of all kinds were exercised; neither age, nor sex, nor infirmity claimed protection. From morning till evening proceeded the horrid trial, till the executioner himself grew faint and feeble, while his victim, torn and mangled, still cried with renewed strength, "I am a Christian—there is no guilty practice among us."

Pothinus, the bishop of Lyons, though upwards of ninety years of age, was rudely assaulted, and perished in prison, in consequence of the merciless treatment which he experienced.

It is not our intention to give a detail of the torments which are mentioned. Indeed it is difficult to read them without asking whether the ancient Christians were beings of the same texture as ourselves, ruled by the same laws of self-preservation, possessed of the same "senses, affections, passions, fed by the same food, and hurt by the same weapons?"

The whole description is perhaps more affecting than any other Remarks.
narrative in ecclesiastical history. It speaks of men who, though marked by the prints of the lash and the scars of the burning iron, far from glorying in their constancy, extended their affectionate care to their weak and fallen brethren,—of men who, in their own impressive language, "had always loved peace, had always recommended peace, and in peace departed to God." A tone of pious fortitude breathes through it which comes home to the heart. Joseph Scaliger,[1] in whom habits of callous criticism had not dulled the fine edge of sensibility, declares that the perusal of it was wont to transport him beyond himself, to change him as it were into a new being. On the mind of Addison,[2] fraught with an exquisite perception of all that is pure and delicate, and noble in sentiment and expression, it exerted its full powers to charm, to elevate, and to convince. Amid so many legends, in which

[1] Animad. in Euseb. p. 221. [2] See his Evidences of Christianity, sec. 7.

A. D. 161. circumstances, unnatural and distorted, revolt and disquiet the reader, though ever so well disposed to repel captious surmises, it is pleasing to point out some relations, on many parts of which it is impossible to dwell without feeling the influence of religion.

Brief account of the life and death of Peregrinus.

To this reign[1] may be referred the death of Peregrinus, an occurrence which has been depicted by the lively pencil of Lucian.[2] The history of this singular person, succinctly sketched, may serve to throw light on the customs of the ancient Christians. In early youth, if we may credit his hostile biographer, he was guilty of vices which endangered his safety. He is even accused of having murdered his father, in order to obtain more speedily his inheritance; and it is reported, that in consequence of the notoriety of the crime, he was induced to fly his country. In the course of his wanderings, whilst in Palestine, he embraced, or affected to embrace, the Christian religion. The reputation which he acquired in the new sect, who were either ignorant of his former character, or satisfied with his subsequent repentance, is said to have been considerable. He presided in their assemblies, and displayed so much zeal in their cause, that he was seized by their enemies, and cast into prison. Whilst in confinement, he received from the Christians every attention which benevolence could suggest to mitigate the severity of his situation. Widows and orphans came anxiously to pay to him the duties of humanity; the ministers of the Church prevailed on his guards to allow them to spend the nights by his side; and deputies were sent with money to relieve his wants and to administer consolation. Feasts of love, intermingled with converse on sacred subjects, were celebrated in the scene of his trial. And here even the raillery of Lucian affords honourable testimony to the disinterestedness and fortitude which actuated the Christians. They are described as assisting their afflicted friends with incredible promptitude and liberality, and as despising alike riches and sufferings, in the hope of becoming qualified for immortality by perseverance in the laws of their legislator; one of which laws enjoined them to regard all the members of their community as brethren. They had all things, it is added, in common. The governor of Syria, a man of a philosophic turn of mind, observing that Peregrinus was resolved to submit to martyrdom, rather than to renounce the religion he had adopted, refused him the honour which he sought, and set him free. On his release he returned to Parium, his native town, and ceded to the public treasury the property which he had inherited from his father; an action which excited the highest degree of admiration. Although professing Christianity, he wore the cloak and assumed the usual exterior of a Cynic philosopher. In his travels, the Christians continued to supply him with the necessaries of life, till, owing to some breach of discipline which he committed, he forfeited their esteem. Thus discarded, he indulged in all the grossness of the

[1] Respecting the miracle of the thundering legion, see Encyclopædia, M. Aurelius Ant. Phil.

[2] De Morte Peregrini.

school he had last joined, and wandering through different countries, attracted notice by the scurrilities which he vented. But as the novelty of his conduct wore away, the attention which it had excited gradually diminished. He judged it necessary, therefore, to devise some new method of raising himself to celebrity. The expedient which he fixed upon was extraordinary. He publicly proclaimed that he intended to burn himself at the Olympic Games. The report was extensively circulated, and naturally excited unusual interest. The crowd assembled was immense. Vanity proved stronger than fear. Peregrinus cast himself on a lighted pile erected for the purpose; and, in the words of his biographer, "the flames rising on every side, nothing more was seen of him." His death was widely published, and its circumstances were exaggerated. The satirical spirit of Lucian was gratified as he heard a spectator seriously protest, that he had seen prodigies attending this spectacle, which the writer himself (for his love of truth seems not to have stood in the way of his fondness for pleasantry) had invented. A. D. 161.

No general persecution is recorded as having happened in the reign of Commodus.[1] Some particular martyrdoms, however, are mentioned, and of these the most remarkable was that of Apollonius, a man distinguished by his learning and philosophy. It is a singular circumstance, that in this last instance both the accused and the accuser were executed, It has been supposed that this punishment was inflicted on the one in consequence of the law of Trajan, and on the other, in compliance with the edict of Antoninus Pius. It is possible, however, that this double punishment may have arisen from a different cause. The accuser of Apollonius was, as we learn from Jerome,[2] his slave; it may therefore be conjectured, that he was condemned according to the ancient law, renewed by Trajan, by which the slave who informed against his master was to be put to death.[3] It also appears that Apollonius was of senatorian rank; a proof, independent of the testimony of Eusebius, that the Christian religion was now professed by men of wealth and station.[4] Indeed, we are informed by Dion Cassius[5] (unless the passage be one of the additions of Xiphilin), that Marcia, the concubine of Commodus, exerted the influence which she possessed with the emperor, in procuring benefits for the Christians. Thus, without a formal abolition of the penal laws, which were directed against its members, the Church received little injury from the powerful, whose prudence soon taught them to abandon persecution, when their sagacity discovered that it was not the road to imperial

A. D. 181. Reign of Commodus.

A. D. 189. Execution of the accuser and the accused: how explained.

Cause of the tranquillity of the Christians.

[1] Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xxi.

[2] De Vir. Illust. c. xlii.

[3] That slaves, however, frequently accused the Christians, is evident from many passages; *e. g.* Quid? quum domestici eos vobis prodant? omnes à nullis magis prodimur, &c. Tertull. i. ad Nation. c. vii.; Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 139, note.

[4] See the conjectures of M. de Mandajon in the article Sur une Prétendue Loi de Marc. Aurel. en faveur des Chrétiens. (Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscript. tom. xviii. p. 222.)

[5] Lib lxxii. c. iv.

A. D. 189. favour. But it is deeply to be lamented, that though we possess most of the principal facts in Christian history, we are ignorant of numerous slight intermediate occurrences, which, however trivial, when considered singly, afford in the aggregate the best clue towards a discovery of the true motives which actuate the conduct of man. It is now left to conjecture, to mould into a consistent whole a strange mass of unconnected and sometimes discordant materials.

Pertinax and Didius Julianus.

No mention of the Christians occurs during the short reigns of Pertinax and Didius Julianus; these emperors, unable to quell the troubles which immediately surrounded them, had but little inclination to make inquiries into the state of a religious sect.

Accession of Severus

A. D. 193.

The emperor Severus was at first favourably disposed towards the Christians, one of whom, named Proculus, had cured him of a disorder by anointing him with oil, and was in consequence retained in the imperial palace till his death.[1] From a sense of gratitude, he defended several Romans of high rank who had embraced Christianity, and openly checked the fury which the multitude displayed against its followers. Another circumstance may have contributed to produce this fortunate effect: the Christians had wholly abstained from taking part in the civil dissensions raised by Niger in the East and by Albinus in the West.[2]

Circiter.

A. D. 202.

Incensed, however, at the rebellious spirit of the Jews,[3] and, it may be supposed, naturally averse to all deviations from the established creed, he issued an edict, prohibiting his subjects from abjuring their religion in order to embrace the Jewish or the Christian faith. This

His edict.

[1] The words of Tertullian are certainly ambiguous, Ipse etiam Severus, pater Antonini, Christianorum memor fuit. Nam et Proculum Christianum, qui Torpacion cognominabatur, Euhodiæ [Euhodi] Procuratorem, qui *eum* per oleum aliquando curaverat, requisivit, et in palatio suo habuit usque ad mortem ejus. (Ad Scapul. c. iv. p. 87, ed. Rigalt.) Lord Hailes contends, but in our opinion wrongly, that, according to Tertullian, the cure was wrought on Euhodus, and not on Severus. (Inquiry into the Secondary Causes, which Mr. Gibbon has assigned for the Rapid Growth of Christianity, p. 75.) This interpretation had been before adopted by Basnage and Fleury. Dr. Jortin infers from the context that Tertullian considered the cure as miraculous. (Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 4.) Other writers have regarded it as natural, and given instances of the medical uses of oil. S. Petitus has made some learned remarks on the subject; he conjectures that Euhodia was the daughter of Euhodus, a freedman of Severus, who is called by Dion Cassius, Caracalla's τροφεὺς (*i. e.* the person who had the care of his education), and that Proculus was her freedman. (Diatrib. de Jure Princip. Edict. Eccles. quæsit. p. 62.) Bishop Kaye has observed, "It may be doubted whether we ought to infer from this statement that a practice then subsisted in the Church of anointing sick persons with oil, founded on the injunction in the Epistle of St. James. This, however, is certain, that the practice, if it subsisted, was directly opposed to the Romish Sacrament of Extreme Unction; which is administered, not with a view to the recovery of the patient, but when his case is hopeless." (On Tertullian, p. 455.) Besides the authors above mentioned, the reader may consult Fabric. Lux. Evang. p. 232.

[2] Tertull. ad Scapul. c. ii.

[3] Judæos fieri sub gravi pœnâ vetuit. Idem etiam de Christianis sanxit. See Spart. in Vit. Sever. c. xvii.: on which see the contradictory remarks of Mosheim (de Reb. Christ. ante Const. M. p. 456), and Lardner (Testim. vol. iii. p. 12).

edict, though it was, perhaps, only intended to stop the progress of proselytism, proved in its operation destructive to the tranquillity of the Church. The reign of Severus became prolific in circumstances of deep and extensive calamity.[1] In all parts, and particularly in Egypt, persecution assumed its most dreadful forms, and among the victims who endured their sufferings with extraordinary fortitude, the names of Leonides, the father of Origen, of Perpetua and Felicitas, of Marcella and Potamiæna, and of many other martyrs are recorded.[2] It was probably about the commencement of this persecution that Tertullian published his celebrated 'Apology,' addressed to the governors of Proconsular Africa.

A. D. 202.

Persecution.

Apology of Tertullian. Circiter A. D. 204.

It is manifest from this 'Apology,' that the Christians were exposed to peculiar hardships. Their true name was but imperfectly learned, yet this name was used as a test, by which their guilt or innocence was to be determined.[3] They were not allowed to state their conduct in a regular defence, but were asked the simple question, whether they were members of the sect to which they were reported to belong? and, on their confession, they were either immediately condemned, or, by a strange perversion of the usual reasons for the application of the rack, were tortured, not in order to disclose, but in order to retract the truth. The most dreadful crimes were, as formerly, laid to their charge, without any attempt being made to establish them by evidence, or even to show their probability. The reformation of life produced by conversion, was seen, felt, and yet disputed. Virtue in a Christian was no longer deemed virtue. To the accusation of abandoning the worship of the gods, they answered that they were justified in rejecting an idolatry, which invested with divine honours[4] deceased mortals, and contained a disgusting mass of incongruity and pollution. But, as their lives were traduced, so were their doctrines misrepresented. Fictions, which ought hardly to have obtained credit, when the sect was but little spread, were still circulated and believed. The Christians were still often confounded with Jews; and the history of the latter people was still misrepresented. The calumnies respecting the objects of Christian worship were repeated. Thus, ignorance combined with malice, and contempt with hatred, in directing the efforts of obloquy and persecution.

State of the Christians.

One cause of the hostility of the people arose from the abstinence of the Christians from all tumultuous expressions of joy on occasions of public festivity.[5] Amid the revellings and banquetings of the crowd, when the city was become, in the language of the 'Apologist,' "a public tavern;" when the extravagance of uncontrolled mirth was termed the effusion of a loyal spirit, the Christian, over whom religious

Conduct of the Christians at public festivals.

[1] This is reckoned the fifth persecution by Orosius (lib. vii. c. xvii.), and the sixth by Sulpitius Severus (Hist. Sac. lib. ii. c. xxxii.).

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. i. &c.

[3] They were called Chrestiani, instead of Christiani. (Tertull. Apol. c. iii.)

[4] Tertull. Apol. c. ii. [5] Ibid. c. xxxv. xxxvi. xxxviii. xxxix.

A. D. 204. feelings exerted an undivided influence, retired from scenes of reckless gaiety to the exercise of peaceful devotion; his door-posts were not overshadowed with laurels, his windows were not illuminated with lamps, his tables were not spread with costly viands; but, in temperance and modesty, he followed the purer precepts of his religion, and sought not in the general rejoicings an excuse for luxury and licentiousness.[1] But this conduct was deemed, by some, disaffection to the government, and, by all, a morose rejection of the pleasures which shed a charm over human life.

Opinions of the Christians respecting the origin and nature of Idolatry.

It is impossible, however, to understand distinctly the state of feeling at this period, without giving a brief sketch of the opinion of the Christians on the heathen worship. There was nothing of which the Christians entertained greater horror than idolatry.[2] It was the general notion that, although the heathen deities were men, who during their lives had rendered eminent services to society,[3] the authors and promoters of their worship were demons.[4] These demons,—either corrupt angels,[5] or their progeny,[6] clothed in a texture of the utmost tenuity, traversed the air, wandered over the earth, and employed their subtile powers in deceiving and in tormenting the human race.[7] They first drew man from the knowledge of his Creator, and afterwards tried every device to confirm him in his error. Susceptible of receiving both nourishment and pleasure from the savoury steam of victims, they encouraged sacrifices, and lurked in statues.[8] Capable of transporting themselves with wonderful velocity into the most distant regions, and of entering, by reason of the fineness of their substance, into the most minute and hidden recesses, they acquired a knowledge almost instantaneous of passing events. These events they communicated to the ministers of oracles, who were thus enabled to rival true prophets, by declaring what it was beyond human power to learn, or, at least, to learn so soon.[9] By their assistance children prophecied.[10] To maintain the ceremonies of idolatry, they governed lots, moved the entrails of victims, and directed the flight of birds.[11] They were ever busy in producing evil: they nipped the young bud, and shed blight upon the corn; they raised storms and infected the atmosphere; they filled the mind with violent passions and irregular desires; they worked the illusions of enchantment, and called up the souls of the departed by

[1] Tertull. Apol. c. xxxv.

[2] Tertull. (de Idolol. c. i.) calls it principale crimen generis humani, &c. Cyprian, summum delictum, Ep. 10. Thiers, Traité des Superstitions, lib. ii. c. iii.

[3] Tertull. Apol. c. x. xi. &c.

[4] On this subject see Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. vol. ii. c. xv. p. 127, and Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 214–221.

[5] Min. Fel. c. xxvii. [6] Tertull. Apol. c. xxii. [7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid. Min. Fel. c. xxvii. &c.

[9] Thus Tertullian (in Apol. c. xxii.) explains how Apollo knew that Crœsus was boiling a tortoise with the flesh of a lamb. The story is told in Herodotus, lib. i. c. xlvii.

[10] Tertull. Apol. c. xxiii. [11] Min. Fel. c. xxvii.

necromancy; they infused dreams, and deluded the senses by miracles.[1] A. D. 204. By them the death of Socrates was suggested, in order to destroy every effort of truth.[2] By their invisible lash, the emperors, as the Apologists boldly declared to them, were impelled to persecute the faithful without cause.[3] Yet these demons were subject to the Christians.[4] Tertullian openly challenges his adversaries to bring demoniacs before the tribunals, and affirms, that the spirits which possessed them, when summoned by the exorcist, would confess themselves to be evil demons, and bear witness to the truth of Christianity.[5] Similar appeals are confidently made by other fathers of the Church. Saturn, and Jupiter, and Serapis, and the other gods of paganism, unable to endure the pain, are described as proclaiming their nature.[6] Such were the general sentiments of the early believers. By the constant application of these theories, they felt themselves under no necessity to deny the most absurd pretensions and fables in the ancient mythology.[7] And, by the same system, whenever any similarity existed between the Christian and the heathen ceremonies, it was at once attributed to the wiles of malicious spirits.[8]

The adoption of these opinions concurred with a sense of the Divine prohibitions, and with a view both of the practical evils, and of the rooted force of polytheism, to inspire them with extreme fear of all which might, even by indirect reasoning, be considered as connected with the guilt of idolatry. An abhorrence of it was carefully instilled into the mind of the new convert.[9] Some, as Tertullian, condemned every employment which could tend in any manner to support and promote it. To carve statues, to adorn temples, to teach the ancient mythology, to sell frankincense, or any merchandise used in the heathen worship; to allow themselves to be adjured or blessed by the name of any idol; to receive or pay money on legal days, which were sacred to any heathen god; to hang lamps or garlands at their doors: all these acts, however strong the distinction which really existed between them, were indiscriminately subjected to censure.[10] But it should not be for-

Fear of idolatry.

[1] See Tertull. Apol. c. xxiii. He even adds, that by their means "et capræ et mensæ divinare consueverunt." See also Min. Fel. c. xxvii.; Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. ii. c. xiv. [2] Just. Mart. Apol. i. [3] Ibid. Comp. Tertull. Apol. c. xxvii.

[4] Just. Mart. Dial. c. Tryph.; Tertull. Apol. c. xxiii.; Cyprian, de Idol. Vanit. ad Demetrian.; Orig. c. Cels. lib. i. and lib. vii.; Theoph. ad Autol. lib. ii.; Lactant. lib. iv. c. xxvii. &c. [5] Apol. c. xxiii.

[6] Cyprian, ad Demetrian. Comp. Lactant. lib. iv. c. xxvii. &c.

[7] Thus Tertullian accounts for the tales of the sieve holding water—a ship drawn by a girdle—the black beard of Domitius Ahenobarbus, which turned red at the touch of Castor and Pollux, &c. The philosophic pagans would probably have whispered some remark similar to that which Seneca makes, at an attempt to explain an absurd fiction—Quantò expeditius erat dicere, mendacium et fabula est? (Quæst. Nat. lib. iv. c. vii.)

[8] See, for instance, how Justin Martyr explains the supposed resemblance between baptism and the pagan lustrations, and between the mysteries of Mithra and the Eucharist. (Apol. i.) [9] Orig. c. Cels. lib. iii.

[10] See Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 378, note 289, &c.

A. D. 204. gotten, that this sensitive fear, though sometimes unreasonable, flowed from a deep feeling of conviction and of piety; and that it preserved the Church from that disguised adoption of pagan ceremonies, with which it was afterwards reproached.

Enmity of the populace.

From the effects of these opinions, however, we may derive much of the popular enmity. To gratify it,[1] the magistrates, although it must be confessed they were often anxious, by suggesting evasions, to have an opportunity of releasing the accused,[2] were sometimes willing to sacrifice victims so easily obtained and destroyed as the Christians. Hence they were daily besieged, daily betrayed: often surprised and seized in the very midst of their meetings and assemblies.[3] The punishments were no less various than atrocious: they were cast into exile, or condemned to the mines, or bound to crosses, or torn with nails, or thrown to wild beasts, or beheaded, or consigned to the flames:[4] penalties to which even persons guilty of sacrilege or rebellion were not subjected.[5] But, as if the cup of misery was not yet full, the bitterness of ridicule was infused, and pleasantry was exercised in giving them names derived from the nature of their torments.[6]

Cruelties exercised.

Nor were these severities, which were authorized by the civil magistrate, although unexampled,[7] the only sufferings to which they were exposed; often, in bacchanalian riot, the mob, with a spontaneous motion, assailed them with stones and fire, or violated the quiet of the tomb, tore the corpse from its sacred refuge, and mangled and dispersed the remains of the already disfigured body;[8] an outrage the more painfully felt, as the ancient Christians were most careful, and, in fact, expensive, in preserving and embalming the dead.[9] From these expressions, openly made in a public document, the reader may form some idea of the cruelties exercised against the Christians at this period.

Tertullian's Treatise, De Fugâ.

It was in the persecutions of this reign that many Christians sought safety by flight, or by paying money.[10] Tertullian, who was then a Montanist, wrote his tract 'De Fugâ in Persecutione,'[11] in order to prove that all attempts to avoid martyrdom were weak and impious endeavours to oppose the will and to accuse the justice of the Deity. From this tract, the harsh production of a severe-minded man, it appears that whole churches were in the habit of purchasing, by subscription,

[1] Tertull. Apol. cxlix.
[2] Ibid. c. xxvii. Comp. ad Scapul. c. iv. Scorpiace, c. i.
[3] Tertull. Apol. c. vii. [4] Ibid. c. xii.
[5] Id. ad Scapul. c. iv. Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 157.
[6] Tertull. Apol. c. l.
[7] Tertullian alludes to the almost incredible fact, that a female was committed to the keeper of the public stews. (Apol. sub. fine.)
[8] Tertull. Apol. c. xxxvii.; Mosh. de Reb. Christ. ante Const. M. p. 254.
[9] Tertullian speaks of the quantities of costly spices which the Christians purchased of the Arabian merchants for that purpose. (Apol. c. xlii.)
[10] Pacisceris cum delatore, vel milite, vel furunculo aliquo præside, &c. c. xii.
[11] For an account of the Treatise, De Fugâ in Persecutione, see Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 148.

their tranquillity.[1] Yet the example of Rutilius, who employed this method, but, when seized, submitted to torments and death with Christian fortitude, proves that a sense of religion was not necessarily lost, because a prudential regard to personal security was entertained. But when sums of money were paid to informers and to magistrates, it was not surprising that the number of the former increased, and the vigilance of the latter was redoubled. Avarice was whetted. The rapacious soldier watched their meetings, and his connivance was obtained by bribes; for the Christians considered that this voluntary privation of worldly goods was in itself a pledge of their sincere attachment to the faith which they had embraced. A. D. 204.

Digression on martyrdoms.

It may here, perhaps, be the proper place to make some remarks on the subject of the Christian Martyrdoms in general. The term Martyr,[2] which originally signified "a witness," was applied, not merely to all who had laid down their lives in testimony of their faith, but, with great latitude, to persons who had submitted to exile, imprisonment, or other severities, in defence of their religion; persons who were afterwards more commonly designated by the term Confessors. In consequence of this extension of the name, the list of martyrs has been unduly swelled. Other causes have also contributed to produce the false estimate, which has been sometimes admitted; such as the vanity or injudicious zeal of later monks, and the mistakes arising from the misinterpretation of abbreviations on ancient inscriptions.[3]

The learned Dodwell wrote a dissertation[4] to prove that the number of martyrs who suffered death under the Roman emperors was very limited. Ruinart[5] has maintained that the number was extremely great. An examination of the fathers will lead rather to the former than to the latter opinion.

But it has been justly remarked that the hardships of the Christians are not to be weighed by the exact number who endured capital punishment: they are not even appreciated by calculating the penalties imposed by the magistrates, and the injuries inflicted by the people. Their sufferings arose from a thousand private channels. The husband, without ground of jealousy, divorced his wife, simply because she was a Christian: for the same cause the father disinherited his

[1] Parum denique est, si unus aut alius ita eruitur. Massaliter totæ Ecclesiæ tributum sibi irrogaverunt, &c. c. xiii.

[2] At a time when this application of the term was common, the members of the Church of Lyons, notwithstanding their sufferings, had the humility to refuse it. (Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. ii.)

[3] The History of the Eleven Thousand Virgins is supposed by Sirmond to have arisen from a mistake of this kind. The first reporters having found in manuscript Martyrologies, SS. Ursula et Undecimilla V. M. (*i.e.* Sanctæ Ursula et Undecimilla Virgines Martyres), supposed that Undecimilla, with V. and M. following, was an abridgment of Undecim Millia Virginum Martyrum. (Valesiana, p. 42.)

[4] Dissert. Cyprian, xi.

[5] Præfat. Act. Martyr. Select. et Sincer.

A. D. 204. son, and the master dismissed his slave.[1] The nearest relations scrupled not to bring informations against their kindred.[2] The name of Christian effaced the impression of every virtue calculated to conciliate esteem. "He is a good man, but—he is a Christian."[3] The end of the sentence cancelled the effects produced by the beginning. But as the profession of Christianity entailed on the converts the insults of their enemies, it naturally excited the affection of their brethren. Vengeance on the one side was not more deep than benevolence on the other was warm and active. The pagans themselves, though they questioned the motive, could not but remark the circumstance: "Behold," they exclaimed, "how these Christians love one another!"[4] The hardships of exile and imprisonment were alleviated by the consolations, by the reverence, and by the contributions of the members of the Church.[5] The dungeon was visited by females, who came devoutly to kiss the fetters of the persecuted;[6] and by penitents, who sought through intercession to be readmitted into the Church.[7] If the Christian passed through his trial without suffering death, his character commanded a high degree of deference and respect, which gave him a superior claim to ecclesiastical dignities.[8] If it was his lot to fall, he was told that martyrdom was a second baptism, which both supplied the baptism by water, when this last had not been received, and restored it when lost;[9] that it obtained the pardon of every sin;[10] that the martyr enjoyed the privilege denied to other souls, of entering immediately on the departure of life from the body into the mansions of the blessed.[11] His body was anxiously sought: his bones, deemed more valuable than gold and precious stones,[12] were carefully interred with the faithful, apart from the Gentiles.[13] The anniversary of his death was termed *Natilitium*, being, as it were, the day of his birth into a better world.[14] It was diligently noted[15] and commemorated at his tomb.[16] Such honours were designed as marks of veneration for the dead, and as incentives of gratitude to the living.[17] Nor was this design unattended by the desired circumstances. The martyr regarded the pile which encircled him as his garb of victory, or his chariot of triumph.[18] His bonds were deemed as ornaments, which adorned him, even as the fringed robe becomes a bride.[19] And as in later times, Columbus,[20] from a sense of indignation at ingratitude,

Honours paid to martyrs.

[1] Tertull. Apol. c. iii.
[2] Id. Scorpiace, c. ix. x.
[3] Id. Apol. c. iii.
[4] Ibid. c. xxxix.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Id. ad Uxor. lib. ii. c. iv.
[7] Id. ad Martyr. lib. i. Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 141.
[8] Tertull. adv. Valentinian, c. iv. Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 142.
[9] Tertull. de Patient. c. xiii.; de Baptism, xvi. See Testimonies collected in Bingham, Antiq. book x. c. ii. Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, p. 441.
[10] Tertull. Apol. c. l.
[11] Id. Resurr. Carnis. c. xliii. &c.
[12] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xv.
[13] Cyprian, Ep. 68, sec. 7, 3.
[14] Tertull. de Coron. Milit. c. iii.; Scorpiace, c. xv.
[15] Cyprian, Ep. 37, sec. 2.
[16] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. xi. &c.
[17] Ibid. lib. iv. c. xv.
[18] Tertull. Apol. sub fine.
[19] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 1.
[20] Robertson, Hist. of America, i. 176.

so the Christian anciently, from feelings of exultation at distresses endured in the cause of truth, commanded that the chains which he had worn should be buried in his grave.[1] A. D. 204.

Injudicious language of the fathers.

The ardour evinced by many of the early Christians to obtain the honour of martyrdom,[2] thus strongly set forth, sometimes hurried them into a rash and unwarrantable exposure of their lives. The expressions of the fathers were at times intemperate, though an indulgent allowance ought to be made for the peculiar circumstances of distress under which they were used. When the conduct of the Christians had the greatest influence on the minds of the unconverted, and when their choice lay between apostasy and death, it is not surprising if they eagerly availed themselves of the most powerful exhortations. They might, however, have derived more just views from the conduct of the Apostles, who, notwithstanding their desire to exchange this fleeting life for immortality, never presumed by courting destruction to throw off the duties of patience and resignation. Their own experience also might have taught them, from two circumstances, that the extravagant praises which they lavished on martyrdom were often unjustifiable. In the first place, martyrdoms were not exclusively confined to the orthodox believers. Among those who suffered death at Smyrna one was a priest of the sect of the Marcionites.[3] Several other heretics claim their martyrs.[4] To ascribe their fortitude in every instance to the operation of pride[5] is to judge their conduct with too much harshness. Although a true knowledge of Christianity, and a corresponding observance of the great duties which it requires, may be justly deemed most adapted to prepare and strengthen and support the spirit under pain and affliction, yet it cannot be denied that the consciousness of sincerity, even in the cause of error, will enable the mind to endure persecution with extraordinary firmness. Constancy in maintaining principles is not a criterion of their truth, it is not even a proof that the mode of inquiry which led to their adoption was free from blame; but, unless the tenor of circumstances manifestly points out an evil motive, it is but common charity, in this our state of ignorance, to allow that principles so maintained might be conscientiously

[1] Chrysost. l. de S. Babyl. tom. i. p. 669.

[2] In the Acts of Felicitas and Perpetua, who suffered in the time of Tertullian, it is said that when one Saturus, a Catechumen, was thrown to a leopard, and, at the first bite, covered with blood, the people gave him the testimony of the second baptism, by crying "Salvum lotum, salvum lotum!" (Baptized and saved, baptized and saved!) whence it is inferred that the pagans were not ignorant of the opinion entertained by the Christians.—Bingham, Antiq. book x. c. ii. sec. 20.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xv.

[4] Ibid. lib. v. c. xvi.; lib. vii. c. xii.; De Martyr. Palest. c. x. See particularly Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Marcionites. Cyprian, who follows Tertullian in considering martyrdom as a second and efficacious baptism, excepts heretics and schismatics from its advantages: "Quale delictum est, quod nec baptismo sanguinis potest ablui? Quale crimen est, quod martyrio non potest expiari?"—De Orat. Domin. p. 212, &c.

[5] See the reasons assigned by Tillemont, Mém. tom. ii. part ii. p. 138.

A. D. 204. professed. In the second place, persons even among the orthodox, who had displayed great resolution in the times of persecution, betrayed, when danger was past, the absence of many virtues essential to the character of a genuine Christian.

Voluntary martyrs.

It has been, however, too often ascribed to an excess of mistaken zeal that the Christians came in crowds to the pagan tribunals to offer themselves as martyrs to the cause of the faith which they had embraced. Their conduct may sometimes have originated in a desire of forcing upon the minds of the magistrates the consideration that persecution must be at once extensive and unavailing, since the sufferers were not only numerous but resolute, and punishment was not dreaded but voluntarily encountered. Such self-devotion would, it was expected, appeal to the dictates of common prudence, or the natural sentiments of humanity. During a persecution in Asia the Christians appeared in a body before the proconsul Arrius Antoninus, who, struck with wonder, exclaimed, "Wretched men! if you wish to die, have you not precipices or halters?"[1] There are cases, however, which, it must be confessed, if considered abstractedly from the influencing motives, ought to be regarded rather as criminal than as meritorious.

Effects of martyrdom on the philosophers.

On the philosophic Gentiles the effects produced by the martyrdoms of the Christians were seldom of a nature calculated to leave on the mind conviction of the truth of their religion. Their fortitude was deemed by some "obstinacy,"[2] and was traced by others to the force of "mere habit."[3] The sages, to whom the prospects of a future world were covered with doubts and darkness, were at a loss to conceive how men could submit to pains which were certain, from the fear of punishments, which were deemed uncertain.[4] Since the death of Socrates,[5] to die for the sake of truth formed no part of their creed or of their conduct. Futurity had no hold on their convictions; its influence glimmered perhaps in the shades of study, but was suddenly extinguished by active life; its scenes were treated as ideal creations, which the imagination richly lit up with its warmest colours, but which melted away before present realities.

General effects of the Christian martyrdoms.

But very different were the general results. The blood of martyrs was the seed of the church.[6] We are like grass, exclaimed the Christian father, which grows the more abundantly the oftener it is cut down.[7] The multitude who saw the Christians mangled and torn, yet unsubdued and almost unmoved, naturally concluded that this

[1] Tertull. ad Scapul. c. v. The conduct of these Christians is attributed to intemperate ardour by Mosheim (de Reb. Christ. ante Const. M. p. 235), and by Gibbon (Decline and Fall, c. xvi. vol. ii. p. 234). It is ascribed to a more laudable motive by Lardner (Heathen Testim. vol. ii.), whose interpretation is supported by Bishop Kaye (On Tertull. p. 147).

[2] Marc. Anton. lib. xi. sec. 3; Lactant. lib. v. c. ii.

[3] Epictet. lib. iv. c. vii.; lib. viii. c. xlv.

[4] Min. Fel. c. viii.

[5] See the reasons given by Timon, as quoted by Sextus Empiricus, for the flight of Protagoras; and by Diogenes Laertius (lib. v. c. v.), for that of Aristotle.

[6] Tertull. Apol. c. l.

[7] Ibid.

supernatural fortitude must proceed from Divine assistance,[1] or, at least, that there must be some extraordinary force in the evidence of that religion, which the most exquisite torments could not prevail on its followers to renounce. While criminals, whose frame was most robust, proved by their cries that they were overcome with pain, the very children and females of the faithful are represented as enduring their sufferings without a groan.[2] But while the martyr was silent the spectators were sometimes unable to refrain from tears.[3] The Christians were probably the only persons who, when condemned, returned thanks to their judges,[4] and in the midst of torments wore smiles on their countenances, sang hymns, and rejoiced.[5] It was not surprising, therefore, if martyrdoms were followed by conversions. The 'Acts of the Martyrs' were carefully preserved and read in the ancient church. Eusebius informs us that he made a collection of such 'Acts.'[6] It is much to be regretted that this work is no longer extant. Several works were destroyed in subsequent persecutions, and the remaining Martyrologies are so replete with fables, and so affectedly overspread with rhetorical conceits,[7] that it is impossible to ascertain the degree of credit to which they are respectively entitled. The best are generally such as are brief and simple, and abound not in miracles and extraordinary punishments.

A. D. 204.

Martyrologies.

About the middle of the second century a celebrated controversy arose, which, although it turned entirely on a matter of form, was carried on with a degree of violence and acrimony which would have been unbecoming even on questions of vital importance. At the same time it is right to observe, that much of this intemperance, deeply as it is to be lamented, sprang from a scrupulous attachment to every branch of the Christian system, and an apprehension of the dangers which might grow out of the slightest change in its external regulations.

Disputes respecting Easter between the Asiatic and Western Christians.

The dispute related to the proper days on which the festivals in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ ought to be observed. The churches of Europe and Africa kept the paschal feast on the night preceding the anniversary of the resurrection, which was always on a Sunday, and in defence of this custom they appealed to the authority of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Asiatic Christians held the paschal feast on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish

[1] Lactant. lib. v. c. xiii. [2] Ibid.; Cave, Primit. Christ. p. 198.
[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xv.
[4] Tertull. Apol. c. xlvi.
[5] Magis damnati quàm absoluti gaudemus.—Tertull. ad Scapul. c. i. &c.
[6] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. ix.
[7] It was once the custom in monasteries to propose to the young members, as an exercise, the martyrdom of some saint, to be amplified and embellished with various circumstances and discourses. The most ingenious and plausible were set aside, and being afterwards found among other manuscripts in the libraries of monasteries, were probably often confounded with the true histories of saints. See Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Valerius.

A. D. 204. year, at the same time that the Jews eat the paschal lamb, and celebrated the day of the resurrection precisely *three* days after; and, in support of this practice, they urged the tradition derived from St. Philip and St. John, the apostles. In consequence, however, of their method, two difficulties arose. By this festival they interrupted the solemn fast which the other Christians observed during the whole of the great or passion week. And as the fourteenth of the month fell not on the same day of the week in every year, they were often prevented from celebrating the resurrection on the first day, or Sunday, in conformity with the usage of the majority of Christians. From this difference sprang various disputes. In the reign of Antoninus Pius, Polycarp came to Rome, whereof Anicetus was bishop, to confer with him on the best means of effecting an agreement. The result of their conference was that each still retained his opinion, but both resolved to preserve the bonds of charity unbroken. But the example of moderation which they had set was afterwards but little imitated. At the close of this century councils were held by the bishops in Palestine, Rome, Gaul, and various other places, in which it was unanimously decreed that Easter should be celebrated on a Sunday. Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, after having convened the Asiatic prelates, in consequence of a menacing mandate from Victor, bishop of Rome, wrote, with their concurrence, a spirited epistle in defence of the practice, which they had always followed, and to which they were determined to adhere. Victor, incensed at their opposition, publicly pronounced the brethren of the churches of Asia to be wholly excommunicated. The other bishops, who disapproved of these harsh proceedings, not only used their endeavours to persuade him to adopt a course better calculated to promote peace, unity, and love, but even addressed him in the language of severe censure, a sufficient proof that the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, though it was advancing by no imperceptible steps, was not at that time acknowledged. Irenæus, in particular, strongly recommended the preservation of mutual charity. These exhortations appear to have been efficacious in arresting the progress of imperious measures, and tranquillity was gradually restored. But the difference of method still continued till the period of the Council of Nice, in the fourth century, when the usage of the Asiatic churches was condemned, and it was decreed that Easter should be celebrated on the same day throughout the Christian world.[1]

In this century forged writings were largely circulated and inju-

[1] Considerable confusion has arisen from a want of sufficient attention to the various meanings of the word *pascha*. The Christian writers, posterior to the Council of Nice, use to signify the day on which Christ rose from the dead, and on which the memory of his resurrection is renewed. But the ante-Nicene writers, *e. g.* Tertullian, mean by it not merely the day of the resurrection, but also the day of the crucifixion, and sometimes the whole of passion-week. The true nature of this dispute, which was properly concerning the celebration of the paschal feast, has been explained, with his usual acuteness, by Mosheim (de Reb. Christ. &c. p. 435–448). See also Decreti Nicæni de Paschate Explicatio, Chr.

diciously received by the Christians. The most extensive fabrications which they are charged with having countenanced are the books of the 'Sibylline Oracles.' That the eight books which still remain are replete with fables, so gross as to be almost beneath confutation, can hardly be denied. The design, the style, the nature of the verse, the matter, all are calculated to destroy their credibility. The ancient oracles related to the sacrifices and ceremonies, by which the Romans might appease the anger of the gods; the modern are filled with vehement declamations against polytheism and idolatry; the ancient, as Cicero expressly asserts,[1] were so extremely vague as to be applicable to any time, place, or circumstance; the modern are unequivocally circumstantial; the ancient were paracrostics, that is, the first verse of every article comprehended all the letters in order that began the following verses;[2] the modern present no instance of this kind of acrostic (for even those which are cited in a speech of Constantine, preserved by Eusebius, are differently constructed); lastly, the modern oracles could be written only by a person well versed in the doctrines of Christianity, and the details of the Evangelists; and though the different pieces of the collection may have been composed at different times, there is strong internal evidence that some part was written at a period posterior to the year 169 after Christ.[3] In this collection some of the prophecies cited by Justin Martyr, Theophilus Antiochenus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and other writers, are wanting. These prophecies, however, bear no clear marks of genuineness. It is not our intention to offer the slightest defence of a worthless work; perhaps the only partial argument which has any claim to attention is that, as Augustus sent deputies into various countries to collect Sibylline

A. D. 204. Sibylline oracles. Proofs of their forgery.

G. F. Walchii, in Nov. Commentar. Societ. Reg. Scient. Gottingens. Ann. 1769, tom. i. p. 10–65.

The above account of this dispute is taken from Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xiv.; lib. v. c. xxiv.) See also Epiphan. (Hæres. li.), and particularly Socrates (Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xxii.).

[1] Callidè enim, qui illa composuit, perfecit, ut, quodcumque accidisset, prædictum videretur, hominum et temporum definitione sublatâ. Adhibuit enim latebram obscuritatis, ut iidem versus alias in aliam posse accomodari viderentur.—Cic. de Div. ii. c. liv.

[2] Cic. de Div. ii. c. liv.

[3] The last writer is clearly marked in the fifth and eighth books. He puts into the mouth of the Sibyl a declaration that the Roman empire was to have fifteen kings: the first fourteen are indicated by the numerical value of the first letter of their name in the Greek alphabet. She is made to add, that the fifteenth will be a white-headed man, whose name will be derived from a sea near Rome: the fifteenth is Adrian, so called from the Adriatic Gulf. From him will arise three others, who will rule the empire together at the same time, but at length one will remain sole possessor. These three scions (κλάδοι) are Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, and L. Verus: allusion is made to their adoptions and partnership. M. Aurelius was sole master of the empire on the death of L. Verus, at the beginning of the year 169, and he governed without a colleague till 177, when he took Commodus as his partner on the throne. As there is nothing applicable to this new colleague, it is manifest that the compilation was finished between A. D. 169 and 177. See Fréret, Mém. de l'Académ. xxiii. p. 187–212.

A. D. 204. verses, it is possible that many Jewish prophecies, relative to the Messiah, might be incorporated in the collection. But we wish to guard against the conclusion that the Christians were either eager to promote imposture, or utterly unable to discover it in the works which they examined. That some person, either with settled malignity to discredit a sect which he had abandoned, or with injudicious zeal to promote the interests of a party of persecuted men whose character he revered,[1] should have disgraced himself by inventing these prophecies, is no improbable conjecture; yet they may have been forged by pagans.[2] A belief was generally entertained that the Sibyl had predicted some extraordinary reign, accompanied by the renovation of the Golden Age. The minds of all were, therefore, in some degree prepared for the reception of these oracles. The Christians appear not to have been universally deceived. Some, however, were certainly ready to admit as true what, destitute of the leisure, the means of research and comparison, and the critical acumen which later inquirers have possessed, they could not prove to be false, and they believed to be cogent. They urged, therefore, not the whole mass of prophecies, which is presented to us with all its absurdities concentrated, but scattered parts which were extensively circulated. The pagan philosophers, who were themselves so ignorant of the laws of rigid criticism as to cite as genuine the works fabricated by the later Platonists, under the names of Orpheus, Musæus, Eumolpus, &c., produced no proofs that the Sibylline oracles were forged. Origen challenged Celsus to show that they were a fabrication, and we never hear that the challenge was accepted. The argument was therefore popular and plausible. But progress of time probably convinced the Christians that it was false, or at least doubtful. Eusebius, in his 'Evangelical Preparation,' cites the testimony of the Sibyl only after Josephus, and alleges favourable oracles only when found in Porphyry, the direct enemy of Christianity. Augustine[3] grants that these oracles were exposed to the suspicion of spuriousness, and that it was the part of a writer of sound judgment to confine himself to the testimony of the Jewish prophecies. In fact, after the establishment of Christianity, their credit fell into merited disrepute.[4] If, therefore, the authority of the Christians is to be destroyed because many of them were inclined to

Inferences to be drawn from the above facts.

Causes which prevented the detection of the forgery.

Similar conduct of the pagan philosophers.

[1] Some forgeries were made through mistaken zeal. A priest forged the Acts of St. Paul and Thecla, out of attachment to St. Paul.—Tertull. de Baptism. c. xvii.; Hieron. de Vir. Illust. ix. See other instances in Daillé, du Vrai Usage des Pères, tom. i. c. iii.

[2] Eusebius accuses the pagans of forging the Acts of Pilate (Hist. Eccles. lib. ix. c. v.)

[3] De Civ. Dei. xviii. xlvii.

[4] The above line of argument will be found in the observations of M. Fréret, Sur les Recueils de Prédictions écrites qui portoient les noms de Musée, de Bacis, et de la Sibylle. Mém. de l'Académ. xxiii. p. 187–212. See also J. Alb. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. tom. i.; the able work of Blondel, des Sibylles celebrées tant par l'antiquité Payenne que par les Saints Pères, 1649; and Servat. Gallæus, in Dissertat. de Sibyllis, &c.

lay some stress on the Sibylline oracles, the book of Mercurius Trismegistus and Hystaspes, the epistles between St. Paul and Seneca, and other records, of which they had not the means of demonstrating the spuriousness, the credibility of their pagan contemporaries must also be rejected, and history becomes but uncertainty and confusion. But experience has taught us that men of remarkable acuteness and of unsullied character may be grossly imposed upon by forgeries, and yet be considered as unexceptionable witnesses. In the list of names appended to the certificate of examination, which pronounced the fabrications of Ireland to be the composition of Shakspeare, we may remark the signatures of men whose abilities and integrity were never called in question. The same high character is attached to the defenders of the forgeries of Psalmanazar, of Lauder, and of Chatterton. Muretus deceived Scaliger himself by a pretended copy of ancient Latin verses.[1] So difficult is it to unite to an extensive and accurate knowledge of customs and languages, that fine perception of the delicate shades of style and expression which results from long experience and peculiar tact.

A. D. 204.

Remarks on forged writings, and the diminution of credit which a belief in them should produce.

[1] Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Trabea.

CHAPTER III.

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE THIRD CENTURY.

FROM A. D. 211 TO A. D. 313.

A. D. 211. Caracalla.

WE proceed with the thread of our history. Caracalla, though his nurse was a Christian,[1] cannot be reckoned among those who imbibed the tenets and advanced the progress of the new religion. He is said, indeed, when a youth to have expressed great indignation at a severe punishment inflicted on one of his playfellows on account of the Jewish religion.[2] There is perhaps no reason to suppose that Spartian, who relates the anecdote, confounded the Jewish with the Christian faith; but it is probable that the anger of Caracalla was excited rather by his affection for his friend, than by any feeling of respect for the religion which he professed. It seems, however, certain that during his short reign, and that of Macrinus, the church enjoyed comparative tranquillity.

Whether favourable to the Christians.

Heliogabalus.

Heliogabalus also, though sunk in every vice which can disgrace human nature, was not inclined to molest the Christians. Desirous that the worship of the sun, of which deity he was the priest, should exceed all other worships in its pomp and mysteries, he was more curious to learn the secrets of the various sects than anxious to resort to violence against their persons.[3] And here it may naturally be asked, to what cause are we to ascribe the leniency with which the bad and the severity with which the good emperors often treated the Christians? How is it that the abandoned Heliogabalus is a protector, and the philosophic Aurelius an enemy? The answer is obvious. Princes, who were immersed in the depths of sensuality, were least likely to have turned their attention to the existence of a new and peaceful sect. Their minds were seldom occupied by the consideration of state affairs, and still less by the investigation of facts which were regarded as comparatively of little consequence. The voice of popular clamour was not loud enough to disturb the recesses of the palace. As long as the Christians interfered not with their private pleasures, they were passed over with profound indifference as harmless enthusiasts, except when very peculiar circumstances were supposed to call for a different course. But, on the contrary, the emperors who devoted all their energies to the great interests of the government over which they presided, and who sought to reanimate the spirit of a declining people, regarded Christianity as a dangerous innovation,

Why Christianity was sometimes neglected by the bad and persecuted by the virtuous emperors.

[1] Lacte Christiano educatus. Tertull. ad Scapul. iv.

[2] Spartian, in Vit. Caracall. c. i.

[3] Dicebat præterea, Judæorum et Samaritanorum religiones et Christianam devotionem illuc transferendam, ut omnium culturarum secretum Heliogabali sacerdotium teneret.—Lampr. Vit. Heliog. c. iii.

slowly undermining the religious and with it the civil establishment to which they were passionately attached, and therefore from their principles, however erroneous, they felt themselves bound to repress its increasing progress with the utmost rigour. A. D. 211.

Alexander Severus. Causes of the favour which he showed towards the Christians.

The reign of Alexander Severus was no less auspicious than the two preceding to the Christian cause. This emperor, eminent for many virtues, was particularly distinguished by his filial piety.[1] We may, therefore, in a great measure, attribute the protection which the church enjoyed in his time to the influence of his mother, Julia Mammæa, who evinced a disposition to inquire into the nature, and to show respect to the teachers of the new religion.[2] It seems also probable that Alexander was inclined to the opinion, maintained by many ancient sages,[3] that religious worship, under all its variety of names and modes, was essentially the same in its object and spirit; a bond which, while it united man to his Creator, linked together the multifarious parts of the great social system. We know from Tertullian, that when some of the heathens were convinced from experience that the Christians were not impostors, they still looked upon their religion, not as a divine revelation, but as a kind of philosophy.[4] This supposition offers, at least, a very plausible explanation of the motives which induced him to place in his private chapel, and to reverence with divine honours the images of Abraham, Orpheus, Apollonius Tyanæus, and Christ.[5] It will likewise tend to give weight to the assertion of Lampridius that Alexander entertained a design of erecting a temple to Christ, but abandoned it in consequence of the report of the soothsayers, that if such a measure were carried into execution all men would become Christians, and the other temples would be abandoned.[6] A. D. 222.

Whether he intended to build a temple to Christ.

The emperor might have formed a plan for effecting a kind of harmony between the Christian and the polytheistic systems, while the priests, either from motives of private interest, or from a deeper insight into the exclusive principles of the rising sect, might have urged the danger or the impracticability of the attempt. We pretend not to deny,

[1] Lampr. in Vit. Sever. c. xiv.

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxi.; Hieron. de Vir. Illust. c. liv. On the supposed conversion of Mammæa, see Fred. Spanheim, Diss. de Trad. Antiquiss. Conversionib. Lucii Brit. Regis. Jul. Mammææ, et Philippi Imp. Patris et Filii. Oper. tom. ii. p. 400.

[3] Plotin. Ennead. ii. lib. ix. c. ix.; Themist. in Orat. 7, ad Valent.

[4] Apol. c. xvi. Sed interim incredulitas, dum de bono sectæ hujus obducitur, quod usu jam et de commercio innotuit, non utique divinum negotium existimat, sed magis Philosophiæ genus.

[5] Lampr. in Alex. Sev. c. xxix. Matutinis horis in larario suo (in quo et Divos Principes, sed optimos electos et animas sanctiores, in queis et Apollonium, et quantum scriptor suorum temporum dicit, Christum, Abraham, et Orpheum et hujuscemodi Deos habebat ac majorum effigies) rem divinam faciebat. For "Deos," Salmasius would read "cæteros." Jablonski prefers "alios." That he did not consider persons so honoured as wholly perfect appears from the circumstance that he admitted among them the image of Alexander the Great (c. xxxii.), whose drunkenness and cruelty towards friends he himself condemned (c. xxx.).

[6] Lampr. in Alex. Sev. c. xliii.

A. D. 222. however, that the whole account has much the appearance of a report too easily believed and too hastily recorded. Of the golden rule of Christian ethics,—"Do not to another what thou wouldst not that another should do to thee," he felt an admiration so lively that he not merely repeated it frequently, but caused it to be proclaimed by the crier when any person was punished, and ordered it to be engraved upon his palace and upon his public buildings.[1] That he entertained no evil suspicion of the character of the Christians, but that at the same time he did not consider their peculiar rites as entitled to any marked superiority, may be inferred from the following circumstance: when the victuallers complained that the Christians had seized a spot of ground which had been public, and which they claimed for themselves, he answered, that it was better God should be worshipped in any manner than that the ground should be granted to victuallers.[2]

Arguments against the supposition of his conversion.

This is not the language of an enemy to the Christians, but neither is it that of a person who had embraced Christianity. Indeed, the opinion of those who reckon Alexander among the secret converts,[3] rests on no proof,[4] and is contradicted by the general tenor of his conduct. True it is that he is said to have proposed the scrupulous care of the Christians and Jews[5] in the ordination of their priests, as an example which deserved to be imitated in the appointment of provincial governors; but the very terms in which the comparison is made imply that he considered the former proceeding as far less important than the latter, and, at most, indicate rather respect for the discipline than belief in the tenets of the Christians or the Jews. It is certain, however, that during his lifetime the Christians were sheltered from injury, and enabled to apply themselves to the erection of edifices for the express purposes of public worship. Indeed, the only interruption by which this season of tranquillity was in a slight degree disturbed arose from the severity of the jurisconsults,[6] men strongly attached to the ancient institutions of Rome. Of this class was the celebrated

The Christians build churches.

Hostility of the jurisconsults.

Ulpian.

[1] Lampr. in Alex. Sev. c. li.

[2] Rescripsit, melius esse, ut quomodocumque illic Deus colatur, quàm popinariis dedatur.—Lampr. in Alex. Sev. c. xlix.

[3] P. E. Jablonski endeavoured to prove that Alexander Severus was privately initiated into the mysteries of Christianity by the Gnostics. His main argument is derived from an ancient gem, bearing the monogram of Christ, with this inscription, "Sal. Don. Alex. Fil. Ma. Luce," which he interprets to be "Salus Donata Alexandro Filio Mammææ Luce." "Salvation given to Alexander the son of Mammæa by the Light," *i. e.* of Christ. (Dissertat. de Alexandr. Severo, Imperatore Romano, Christianorum sacris per Gnosticos initiato.) This dissertation was published in the Miscell. Lipsiens. Nov. tom. iv. part i. p. 56–94. It is republished with additions in his Opuscula, tom. iv. pp. 38–79; see on this subject Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. ante Const. Magn. p. 463.

[4] Lampridius says merely, Judæis privilegia reservavit. Christianos esse passus est.

[5] Dicebatque, grave esse, quum id Christiani et Judæi facerent in prædicandis sacerdotibus, qui ordinandi sunt, non fieri in Provinciarum rectoribus, quibus et fortunæ hominum committerentur et capita.—Lampr. in Alex. Sev. c. xlv.

[6] Baron. Annal. tom. ii. pp. 367, 369.

Ulpian, who is supposed to have published his writings about this period. He is said to have preserved in the seventh book of his 'Treatise on the Duty of a Proconsul' the edicts issued against the Christians by the Roman emperors.[1] None of these edicts, however, are to be found in the 'Pandects,' and we must perhaps impute to injudicious zeal the loss of a collection which would greatly have elucidated the history of Christianity.[2] A. D. 222.

It may justly be regarded as an additional proof of the favour which Alexander evinced towards the Christians, particularly those connected with his household, and of the increasing influence which their body possessed, or were supposed to possess, that Maximinus, his assassin and successor, was urged by fear or resentment, to seize and condemn the bishops, and to publish a decree against the chiefs of the Church, as being the first authors and propagators of Christianity.[3] Maximinus. A. D. 235.

This decree, though directed against the higher members, and, it may be presumed, mostly, if not solely, against those whom the friendship of the late emperor had exposed to the suspicion of disaffection to the new government, may have extended its effects to the inferior ranks of the Christian community. In Cappadocia and Pontus, several earthquakes, the violence of which destroyed whole cities, excited as usual a severe persecution, in which the fury of the people derived encouragement from the harsh and savage character of Serenianus, the Roman governor.[4] This persecution, however, as Firmilian, in a letter to Cyprian, expressly states, was not general, but local. Many who fled from the scene of confusion found safety in the other provinces of the empire. Nature and effects of his decree.

The Church continued to enjoy tranquillity during the reigns of Maximus and Balbinus, of Gordian, and especially of Philip and his son. Maximus and Balbinus, Gordian.

Of Philip, Eusebius has recorded a report, prevalent in his time, from which it has been inferred that he was, if not a professed, at least a secret, convert to Christianity. It was said that the emperor, on the last day of the vigils of Easter, was desirous of partaking with the rest of the congregation in the prayers of the Church, but that the bishop would not suffer him to enter, until he had made confession of the crimes which he had committed, and had placed himself among the penitents.[5] It is added, that he readily complied with this condition, and manifested by his actions a sincere and devout sense of A. D. 244. Philip. Inquiry into his conversion.

[1] Domitius de Officio Proconsulis, libro septimo, rescripta nefaria collegit, ut doceret, quibus pœnis affici oporteret eos, qui se cultores Dei profiterentur.—Lactant. Instit. lib. v. c. xi.

[2] Lardner's Testimon. vol. iii. p. 44; Jortin's Discourses concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 51.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxviii.; Sulpit. Sev. lib. ii. c. xxxii.; Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. xix.

[4] Firmilian, in Epist. ad Cyprian.; Oper. Cyprian, p. 146, ed. Baluz. Conf. Mosh. de Reb. Christ. lib. xc. p. 467.

[5] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxiv.

A. D. 244. the fear of God. Eusebius, who appeals only to common rumour,[1] has not specified the place in which this circumstance occurred, nor the bishop by whom a measure so hazardous was adopted. Chrysostom,[2] however, ascribes a conduct entirely similar to Babylas, bishop of Antioch, but omits the name of the emperor. In addition to this argument in favour of Philip's conversion, it is urged that Eusebius mentions letters written by Origen to Philip, and to his wife Severa, as extant in his time.[3] Without attempting to deny this fact, it is sufficient to remark, that the emperor might correspond with Christians without being himself a member of their society, and that these epistles may have been nothing more than petitions to request protection, or statements relative to the extent and organization of the Church. Indeed, had they contained any assertions or intimations calculated to throw light on the supposed conversion, it is not probable that Eusebius would have been silent on the subject of their contents, and have supported an important circumstance on no higher authority than common fame. The fact, it is true, is repeated by Jerome,[4] and by many writers in succeeding times; but it cannot be too often impressed on the historical examiner, that correspondent testimonies are only valuable when derived from independent sources. The copies of numerous authors are not, or are only in a very slight degree, corroborative evidence. One historian states a report which he has chanced to learn, but has taken no pains to investigate; another, without further examination, though not without some slight alteration, transcribes the account; a third copies this copy, with a few additional alterations; and so on, till vague rumours swell into confirmed facts, or mere surmises into direct declarations, and the real value of the original conjecture can hardly be estimated, disguised as it is under continued accretions of extraneous matter.[5]

Letters from Origen to Philip and his wife considered.

Observations on the evidence of successive writers.

Some arguments, however, are also adduced in contradiction of the

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxiv. Κατέχει λόγος, κ. τ. λ.

[2] Chrysost. de S. Babyla Cont. Julian. et Gent. Oper. tom. i. p. 658.

[3] Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxvi.

[4] De Vir. Illust. c. liv. de Origene.

[5] Another instance will illustrate our meaning. Justin Martyr, in an Apology addressed to the Emperor and Senate, declares that a statue was erected to Simon Magus on the Tiber, with the inscription "Simoni Deo Sancto," to Simon, the Holy God. Now in the Tiberine island has been dug up a statue inscribed "Semoni Sanco (or Sango) Deo, &c.," to Semo Sancus, the God of the Sabines. (Gruter, Inscrip. Antiq. tom. i. p. 96.) Most critics have concluded that the assertion of Justin originated in a mistake; yet is this mistake (if, as there is reason to believe, it be one) repeated by Irenæus, by Tertullian, by Eusebius, by Augustine, &c. Thus one man, who would be very unwilling to deceive others, may deceive himself, and many may afterwards be ready to circulate, on his authority, stories, for the truth of which they would have been scrupulous to stake their own. No new evidence is added, but the old is paraphrased; and it is well if the poverty of history be not gradually disguised by riches drawn from the mint of fiction. Stories, stamped with every mark of spuriousness, have been pertinaciously maintained, because supported in appearance by a train of witnesses, though in reality by a series of copyists.

fact, which are far from being conclusive. Not one of the writers in the Historia Augusta makes mention of the event; but the secrecy alone of Philip's conversion is a satisfactory explanation of their silence. Again, many Christian writers[1] reckon Constantine as the first emperor who embraced Christianity; but they mean, who professed it without disguise. The immoral conduct of Philip is also said to contradict this assertion; but it should be remembered that the question is, whether he believed Christianity to be true, not whether he acted consistently with that belief. Of the same nature is the objection drawn from his celebration of the secular games,[2] with all their pagan solemnities. For, granting that this event took place subsequently to his supposed conversion, an emperor more anxious to gratify the Roman populace than rigorously to conform his conduct to his principles, might easily exhibit games, which in after times were allowed even by the Christian Emperor Honorius. And, with regard to the pagan emblems on his coins and medals, they also occur in those of emperors who had openly renounced the heathen worship; and, moreover, they may have been struck by colonies and municipal towns without the imperial permission. In this manner, as Mosheim[3] has shown, many objections may be eluded. On the whole, we think it not impossible that Philip may have been induced, by a sense of his heavy crimes, and by the persuasions of his wife Severa, to apply for consolation to an order of men, for whom he probably entertained feelings of respect. But the supposition that he had examined the proofs or imbibed the spirit of Christianity is not supported by evidence sufficient to command our assent.

A. D. 244.

Arguments against his conversion.

One point, however, is certain, that if we omit a popular commotion which arose at Alexandria in the latter part of his reign, the Church experienced tranquillity under his government. To which may be added, that by enacting a law calculated to repress those offences against moral purity,[4] which the principles of the Christian religion severely denounce, he virtually co-operated with the efforts of its preachers.

Thus, it appears, that with the exception of the severities of Maximin, which were but brief in duration and partial in extent, the Church was blessed with peace from the death of Severus in the year 211, to that of Philip in 249, a period of 38 years, during which two emperors, Alexander and Philip, were so favourable, that one seemed inclined to incorporate, the other was reported to have embraced, the Christian religion.[5] Such were the phases of imperial favour till it suddenly

State of the Church.

[1] Euseb. in Vit. Constant. Magn. lib. iv. c. lxxiv.

[2] Ibid. Chron. p. 174; Orosius, lib. vii. c. xx. Conf. Capitol. in Gordian. iii. c. xxxiii.; Eutrop. lib. ix. c. iii. &c.

[3] De Reb. Christ. &c. p. 471–476. On this subject see also F. Spanheim's very learned dissertation, de Tradit. Antiquiss. Convers. Lucii, &c. et Philippi Imp. Patris et Filii. Oper. tom. ii. p. 405, and Lardner's Test. vol. iii. p. 62–71. For a list of authors who have written on the same question, see J. A. Fabricii Salut. Lux. Evangel. p. 236.

[4] Aurel. Vict.

[5] Tillemont, Mém. tom. iii. part ii. p. 123.

A. D. 244. darkened. But the soft influence of peace, more fatal than the violence of persecution, insensibly relaxed the nerves of discipline, and introduced the luxuries of a degenerate age into the bosom of the Christian state. The melancholy picture which Cyprian and Origen have drawn of the progress of corruption at this time is perhaps too darkly coloured. Their language may partake in too great a degree of the want of discrimination, which not unfrequently characterises the censures of stern reformers. But it is evident from their continued complaints, that in numerous instances the desire of secular advantages had absorbed all spiritual concerns. The state of Christianity might, on the whole, be sound and vigorous; but morbid humours had corrupted many of its parts, and paralysed much of its influence. Faith is represented as having grown languid; the works of charity had fallen into neglect; the fervour of devotion had been quenched; the simplicity which marked the primitive disciple had been sacrificed on the altar of vanity; insatiable thirst for gain seized men who were devoted to the profession of holiness, and bishops forgot the duties of their sacred charge, and the wants of their poorer brethren, in their anxiety to promote their own private benefit.[1]

Degeneracy of the clergy.

Decius.

During the short period of his reign, Decius displayed many of the virtues which shed a lustre over private life, and evinced a strong desire to restore the declining greatness of the Roman people by a renewal of their ancient discipline, with all the sanctions of a free and powerful censorship. It happened, however, most disastrously for the Christians, that in proportion as an emperor was assiduous in correcting the degeneracy of his subjects by the re-enforcement of primitive customs, he was drawn into hostile measures against any body of men who introduced innovations in religious rites. To this circumstance, therefore, it is natural to ascribe the severe and intolerant edicts[2] by which Decius attempted utterly to extirpate the Christian sect; a sect which was now widely spread; which had erected churches in the various provinces; and already had begun in some places to destroy the altars, temples, and idols of the pagan community.[3] And when

Cause of his enmity to the Christians.

Persecution.

[1] Cyprian, de Laps. Ep. 8. Orig. in Jos. 4, 7, &c. The unguarded intimacy in their manner of living, which subsisted between priests and virgins, brought disgrace on the African Church. Strong assertions of chastity, though they might be true, could not remove suspicions which had been rashly caused; for, however difficult it might be to draw the line between the enthusiastic confidence which encounters temptation in order to resist it, and the artful hypocrisy which seeks the gratification of vice under the cloak of extraordinary virtue, it was thought evident that the taint of, at least, mental impurity could scarcely be avoided. While the truly pious Christians severely inveighed against a practice, scandalous in its tendency, if not in its motives, we know not how far it may have influenced the hostility of the Pagan rulers.—See Cyprian, Ep. 62, ad Pompon.; Dodwell, Dissert. Cyprian. iii.; Bingham, Antiq. vol. ii. p. 328.

[2] The persecution of Decius is called the seventh by Sulpicius Severus (lib. viii. c. xxxii.), Jerome (de Vir. Illust. c. lxii.), Orosius (lib. vii. c. xxi.), and Augustine (de Civ. Dei. lib. xviii. c. lii.).

[3] Greg. Nyssen. Vit. Greg. Thaumat. tom. iii. p. 563.

the reader bears in mind the inflamed state of the people, ever ready to avail themselves of the slightest indication of encouragement on the part of their rulers, he will not be surprised to learn that torments, from which it is impossible not to turn with horror, were exercised against the Christians in all the provinces of the Roman empire. At Alexandria,[1] a whole year before the promulgation of the imperial edict, the multitude, instigated by the arts of a soothsayer and poet, had continued to harass the Christians with unrelenting violence. The young and the old, the strong and the weak, promiscuously, fell victims to the wild cry of religion. But if religion was the ostensible, plunder was often the real spring of these attacks. The houses of the faithful were pillaged; whatever was valuable was retained by the authors of the ruin; and the remaining furniture cast into the streets, gave the whole place the appearance of a captured city.

A. D. 249.

State of the Christians at Alexandria.

A sedition among themselves suspended for a while their enmity against the Christians. But the flame was soon rekindled by the news of the death of Philip and the accession of Decius. The first step which the new emperor took, was to publish a decree of the utmost severity against the Christians, which was sent to all the provincial governors, who were commanded, under heavy threats, to adopt every method, however rigorous, of constraining their subjects to return to the religion of their forefathers. The effect was overwhelming. We are again presented by contemporary writers with those dark and dreadful pictures of terror and agony, which, as they possess no distinctness of outline, no variety of tints, no natural distribution of light and shade, rather shock than interest, rather confuse than inform us. The complicated struggles, the silent pangs of internal emotion, the sacrifice of everything which binds man to life, the sense of estranged love, the bursting of the ties of long friendship and close affection, the loss of worldly reputation—these are passed over almost untouched; while, as it were, the dissecting-room in all its loathsomeness is thrown open. All that can produce the most violent mental revulsion—the sword and fire, wild beasts, talons of steel, the wheel, red-hot iron chairs—every varied torture which the most exquisite cruelty can invent—pass before us in rapid succession, and the sensation is oppressive and sickening. But, turning from scenes at the bare imagination of which the heart dies away, it is deeply interesting to mark the workings of human passions in those days of alarm and distress. Neighbour betrayed neighbour, and friend denounced friend. All feelings were deadened into apathy, or absorbed by selfishness. Some, whose spirit recoiled from the task of dragging their victims before the magistrate, pointed them out with the finger: others less scrupulous sought them in their place of refuge, or pursued them in their flight. The son brought information against his father, and the father against his son, and the brother exposed his brother to the horrors of the rack. Superstition had smothered the voice of nature. All was

Persecution at Pontus.

[1] Dionys. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xli.

A. D. 249. distrust and perplexity, consternation, and a sense of bitter wrong. Families were dissolved, houses were left empty, and the deserts peopled. The prisons could no longer contain the number of the accused, and most of the public buildings were converted into places of confinement. Day after day the work of carnage proceeded: it engrossed all conversation; it chased away all expression of gaiety from public and private assemblies; rank, or the infirmities of old age, or infancy, or the feebleness of the weaker sex, obtained no compassion, no mitigation of rigour.

Such at least is the description, perhaps overcharged, which Gregory Nyssen has given us of the state of Pontus, on the receipt of the imperial edict.[1] In other provinces, the storm appears not to have burst at once in all its fury: exile and incarceration were first tried; and slow torments were employed to supersede, if possible, the necessity of final execution. Nor were the efforts of the persecutors unattended by circumstances deplorable to the Church. In Africa, and especially at Carthage, the threats of the enemy were no sooner heard than the greater number apostatised from the faith. They fell of their own accord, says the afflicted Cyprian,[2] before the violence of persecution had struck them down. Nor were they satisfied with renouncing their religion themselves, but they exhorted their brethren to adopt a similar course. At Alexandria, the same wide defection took place; some, overpowered by fear, presented themselves before the magistrates, and assisted at sacrifices to idols; others were forcibly drawn by their relations. Some, pale and trembling, looked rather as if they were themselves called to be sacrificed than to be sacrificers,[3] and attracted the ridicule of the multitude, as men who had neither courage to meet death, nor to perform the conditions which would insure life. Others ran boldly to the altar, and protested that they had never been followers of Christ. Of some, the perseverance lasted till the doors of the dungeon had closed upon them; and of others, till the feeling of pain had triumphed over resolution. The same weakness was betrayed by Christians in most other countries. Bishops renounced their religion, and their flocks were seduced by their fatal example. The Lapsed was a term applied to all who thus apostatised; but those who were particularly called 'Libellatici,'[4] seem, for the most part, to have avoided giving proofs of their rejection of Christianity—viz., burning incense or offering sacrifices—by purchasing from the magistrates certain certificates, which declared, that the persons named in them had confirmed their adherence to the system of heathen worship. Many, however, endured with fortitude the effects of this dreadful and, as it was then feared, exterminating persecution. Many, from motives of precaution and policy, took refuge in flight; in this number, among

Defection at Alexandria.

The Libellatici.

[1] Greg. Nyssen. Vit. Greg. Thaumat. Conf. Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. Hier. in Vit. Pauli, &c.

[2] De Laps.

[3] Dionys. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xli.

[4] Cyprian, Ep. 14, &c. Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. ante Const. Maj. p. 479.

others, are to be reckoned, Cyprian, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Gregory Thaumaturgus. A. D. 249.

Martyrdoms.

Our limits will not allow us to enter into a detail of particular martyrdoms. In their trials, the Christians exhibited great fortitude. The conduct of the Roman governors was necessarily varied by their peculiar habits and disposition. A strong disinclination to shed blood, if it could be spared consistently with their own erroneous notions, is often manifest. Again and again the judge exhorted the accused man to avoid running wilfully into destruction, and it was not till a variety of attempts had failed, and after much hesitation and reluctance, that he proceeded to put into execution the imperial decree. How long the violence of this persecution continued cannot be accurately determined. It seems, however, to have subsided in a great degree, after having raged about the period of a year. The troubles which distracted the empire probably diverted the Roman rulers from the prosecution of an odious task. Decius himself, if the 'Acts' of Acacius be genuine, occasionally relaxed his severity;[1] for, smiling at the independent spirit of the bishop, he released him from prison. Yet he was vigilant in his attempts to prevent the increase of the Christian hierarchy, and the see of Rome, which had remained vacant nearly one year and a half, was not filled by Cornelius without the apprehension of extreme danger.[2]

Disputes respecting the Lapsed.

As external persecution expired, internal dissensions arose. The Lapsed, anxious to be readmitted into the Church, without the established course of previous penance, obtained Letters of Peace, by which they were declared worthy of being again received without delay. Some of the bishops and presbyters were willing to extend to them the pardon which they sought. Cyprian, however, the bishop of Carthage, unmoved by the authority which supported, and the earnestness which urged their claims, powerfully resisted an indulgence, which he believed to be calculated to loosen the bonds of ecclesiastical discipline. And, notwithstanding the strong opposition which was offered to his efforts, the measures of necessary severity were finally adopted.

Gallus. A. D. 251.

The persecution, which had gradually abated till the death of Decius was renewed by Gallus and Volusianus, his successors. It was chiefly directed against the heads of the Church, some of whom were cast into exile.[3] But, independently of the imperial edicts, the fury of the people was again kindled against the Christians, in consequence of the sufferings arising from the double calamity of a pestilence and a famine.

Tracts of Cyprian.

The Tracts of Cyprian to console his afflicted brethren, and to reprove their incensed enemies, are evidently written under the influence of great emotion, which betrayed his ardent mind from the simple expressions of piety and courage, into the dangerous extremes of enthu-

[1] Tillemont, Mém. tom. iii. part. ii.

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. xxxix.; Cyprian, Ep. 55.

[3] Dionys. Alex. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. i.; Mosh. de Reb. Christ. p. 529.

A. D. 251. siasm and virulence. But it would tend to soften the unwarrantable harshness with which the language of the ancient Christians has been censured in modern days, if we were more careful to connect our examination of their expressions with a just view of their peculiar situation. It cannot surely excite our surprise that, under a complication of calamities, severe and unrelenting—the havoc of a consuming disease on the one hand, and the fierceness of inflamed persecutors on the other—the devout disciple should have imagined, that he perceived in these various evils, the prognostics of the approaching end of created things. All nature seemed to him to give testimony of her hastening dissolution: the winter rain was no longer so copious as to nourish the seed, the summer sun denied its usual heat in maturing the harvest; the temperature of the spring had lost its beauty, and autumn had ceased to abound in fruit; the race of cultivators was diminished, camps were growing empty for want of soldiers, and the sea was not covered, as formerly, with mariners; skill in arts was fast declining; discipline in morals was dying away; decay was stamped on every feature of the material world—its powers were languid and exhausted,[1] and its whole frame proclaimed that the great Day of Judgment was at hand. This, it is true, was the language of exaggeration; but it flowed from a strong faith in the promises of Christianity, and, addressed as it was to bitter enemies, its descriptions must, at least, have carried some appearance of probability from the aspect of circumstances in the country wherein they were made.

Expectation of the Day of Judgment.

Cyprian's Tract to Demetrian.

A feeling of deep injury will explain, but not justify, the vehemence with which Cyprian attacks the private life of Demetrian, a person charged with some office of authority, which he exercised with extreme rigour against the Christians. Intemperate censure was calculated rather to irritate than to convince; it might effect much mischief, it could produce no benefit.

[1] The notion that the frame of the world showed evident marks of being grown old and feeble, impaired and worn out, was maintained by the Epicureans:—

Jamque adeo fracta est ætas, effœtaque Tellus
Vix animalia parva creat, quæ cuncta creavit
Sæcla, deditque ferarum ingentia corpora partu.
* * * * *
Ipsa (Tellus) dedit dulceis fœtus et pabula læta;
Quæ nunc vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore:
Conterimusque boves, et vires agricolarum
Conficimus, ferrum vix arvis suppeditati:
Usque adeo pereunt fœtus, augentque labores.
Jamque caput quassans grandis suspirat arator
Crebrius incassum magnum cecidisse laborem;
Et cum tempora temporibus præsentia confert
Præteritis, laudat fortunas sæpe parentis;
Et crepat, antiquum genus ut, pietate repletum,
Perfacile angustis tolerarit finibus ævum,
Cum minor esset agri multo modus ante viritim;
Nec tenet omnia paulatim tabescere, et ire
Ad scopulum spatio ætatis defessa vetusto.

Lucret. lib. ii. 1149–1171.

It must also be regretted, that the Christians should have so injudiciously resorted to arguments against their adversaries, which were constantly employed against themselves. They presumed to ascribe all public calamities to the displeasure of Divine Providence, which the conduct of the heathen world had drawn down. "You complain," says the Christian advocate, "that these misfortunes take place, because your gods are not worshipped by *us;* but we answer, that they happen because the true God is not worshipped by *you.*" Again, "If your gods are really powerful, let them arise in their defence, let them vindicate their majesty; or what can they do for those who pay them worship, if they cannot avenge themselves upon such as refuse it?" The philosophic pagans would naturally object, that if these events were proofs of the immediate interposition of the Deity against them, it was difficult to account for the fact, that plague and famine fell upon the most pious and eminent Christians, as well as upon their persecutors.[1] And the less enlightened class would continue to ascribe the general misfortunes of an empire, once flourishing, and the peculiar afflictions which oppressed them, to the neglect of their ancient religion.[2] The argument which the Christian, at least the reflecting and devout Christian, derived from the patience and resignation with which he submitted to the will of God, was entitled to more consideration. While the pagans are represented as being loud in their complaints under the pressure of evil, the Christian supported it without murmurs, looking forward, with the beautiful stillness of religious confidence, to the final accomplishment of the Divine word, in the rewards of a future life: and remembering the emphatic language of Scripture, he declared that though the fig-tree should put forth no blossom, and the vine should bear no fruit, though the labour of the olive should fail, and fields should yield no meat, though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stalls, yet would he rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of his salvation.

A. D. 251.

Injudicious arguments of the Christians.

Patience of the Christians under misfortunes.

The early part of the reign of Valerian was, in an eminent degree, auspicious to the Christians. So affectionately disposed towards them was the new emperor, that his household was filled with believers, and compared to a Church of God.[3]

Valerian.

A. D. 253.

[1] See Dionys. Alex. ap. Euseb. lib. vii. c. xxii. The tender solicitude with which the Christians ministered to the wants of the sick, at times when the plague raged, exposed them in a high degree to the contagion. Priests and deacons, and the most devout members of the Church, fell victims to their affectionate zeal. While the pagans fled from their diseased, flung them half dead into the streets, and feared to pay them the rites of sepulture, the Christians embraced the bodies of the saints, closed their eyes, and bore them, with every mark of respect and decency, to the grave. Ibid. Comp. Tertull. Apol. c. xli.

[2] See also Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, pp. 127, 128. Bayle has collected curious instances of this tendency in the party in power, to charge their enemies with misfortunes arising from natural calamities. Dict. Hist. art. Vergerius.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. x.

A. D. 253. Disputes concerning the baptism of heretics.

It is our painful task, however, to pass from external peace to internal disputes. The propriety of rebaptizing such persons as had received baptism from heretics was warmly discussed. No fixed rule had been adopted; but it appears to have been an ancient practice in the European churches, without the repetition of this ordinance, to readmit them on their receiving the imposition of hands, accompanied with prayers. But in Africa, Agrippinus, bishop of Carthage, had enforced, by the authority of a synod, the necessity of renewing the rite; and the same custom had prevailed in Cappadocia, and probably in the other eastern churches. Cyprian was determined to resist any relaxation of discipline, and especially one which had the appearance of recognising the validity of heretical baptism. His sentiments were confirmed by two councils of African bishops, and their decision was transmitted to Stephen, bishop of Rome, who maintained a contrary opinion with unbecoming vehemence and bitterness. Indignant at this opposition, Stephen not merely refused to receive the two bishops who brought to Rome the account of these proceedings, but forbade the members of the church from discharging towards them the common offices of hospitality; and in his letters, after rejecting the decree of the council, called the Cyprian, declared that he would not hold communion with such African and Asiatic bishops, as continued to denounce a practice which the tradition of his church had sanctioned. In consequence, a third council, consisting of eighty-five bishops, was summoned by Cyprian from the three provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania; and the determinations of the two preceding councils were again unanimously confirmed. The issue of the dispute, conducted with great force on one side, and much uncharitableness on the other, is not related; both parties, however, seem to have retained their opinions: but in after times, the majority of the African and Eastern bishops retracted their decrees, and the judgment of Stephen was generally followed.[1]

Persecution.

The state of the Christians, during the entire period previous to the civil establishment of their religion, was sometimes free from the actual exercise of violence, but was ever, in the highest degree, precarious and uncertain. In the reign now under consideration they were doomed to experience a sudden transition from extreme favour to extreme severity. Valerian, a prince of mild and benevolent disposition, had, at first, treated them with more kindness than any of his predecessors, not excepting those who had been suspected of having privately embraced the Christian faith. His sentiments and feelings on this subject soon underwent an extraordinary change, of which it is difficult to ascertain the real cause. The wishes of the powerful are no less variable than violent.[2] By the Christians this

[1] Euseb. lib. vii. c. ii.—vi. viii.—x. Cyprian, Epist. 70, ad Jubaïanum. See Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. ante Const. Maj. p. 533–547.

[2] Regiæ voluntates, plerumque, ut vehementes sunt, sic mobiles, sæpeque ipsæ sibi adversæ. Sallust. Jugurth. Bell.

alienation was attributed to the influence of Macrianus, a man who sought in the mysteries of superstition the means of accomplishing his ambitious projects. He is represented as having contracted enmity against the Christians, in consequence of their opposition to magical rites,[1] and as having advised the emperor to inspect the entrails of new-born infants, and to engage in the performance of strange and barbarous ceremonies.[2] But, without denying that the bigotry of Macrianus may have powerfully affected the plans of Valerian, and contributed to blight the fair prospect which the opening of his reign presented, we ought carefully to remember that the early Christians were too apt to impute motives for which there existed no stronger authority than popular reports; and that they, in fact, had not often the opportunities requisite for a calm investigation of the complicated machinery of court politics. But, whatever circumstances might have conspired to bias the mind of Valerian, the progressive detail of his persecution seems to us, at least, to prove that his object was not to gratify private malice, but to effect an intercommunity of religions, and to facilitate this design by removing the chief rulers of the new sect.

A. D. 253. Causes.

The first attempts of Valerian[3] bear no marks of that barbarity, which distinguished the conduct of those, whose object was not to unite, but to extirpate. The order, address to Aspasius Paternas, proconsul of Africa, was to enforce the observance of the religious ceremonies of the Romans. Hence it is, probably, that Æmilian, governor of Egypt, proposed to Dionysius[4] to worship his own God, together with the gods of paganism. For the great maxim of ancient government was, as we have already observed, whilst it left private judgment free, to require a public expression of adherence to the established system. The imperial letters also prohibited all public assemblies, and, in particular, denied the Christians the enjoyment of those cemeteries or places wherein the martyrs were buried, and to which multitudes were in consequence not unfrequently drawn together.

A. D. 257. First year of Valerian's persecutions.

Nature of Roman policy.

The punishment inflicted on those who refused to comply with the Roman ceremonies was simply exile; and the decree was directed specifically, or rather solely, against the bishops and presbyters. Among these, Cyprian, and Dionysius[5] of Alexandria, were sent into

[1] The persecution by the heathens is frequently ascribed to the opposition which the practice of magic experienced from the Christians. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. xiv. &c.

[2] Dionys. Alex. Ep. ad Herm. ap. Euseb. lib. vii. c. x. Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. p. 548.

[3] This is reckoned the eighth persecution by Sulpicius Severus (lib. ii. c. xxxii), Orosius (lib. vii. c. xxii.), and Augustine (de Civ. Dei, lib. xviii. c. lii.)

[4] See his Letters to a Bishop named Germanus, in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. xi.

[5] Dionysius has given an interesting account of his banishment, first to Cephro, in Libya, and thence, in consequence of the crowds of followers whom he drew

A. D. 257. banishment. A severer sentence awaited those who, in violation of this decree, should continue to hold meetings or to frequent cemeteries. It has been remarked, that one of the best of the Roman emperors refused to incorporate a company even of an inconsiderable number of men, and for purposes too of unquestionable utility.[1] All associations were viewed with distrust and apprehension. The fixed congregations of bodies so large, so united, and so independent, as composed the Christian churches, were probably, beginning to excite, even in a pacific breast, some feelings of alarm. From the tombs of their martyrs, over which they poured their fervent prayers, it was feared that they might return with renewed zeal, or, according to pagan notions, with confirmed obstinacy. Against all such, therefore, as infringed this clause the punishment of death was denounced; and to this clause we must assign the occasional severities which were exercised even on the inferior members of various ranks in the Christian community. Such seems to have been the nature of Valerian's persecution in its first stage. It required the chiefs of the Church to unite their worship with that of the State, under pain of banishment, and it forbade the people from collecting together. Thus the chiefs being banished, and the means of re-electing them precluded, it was expected that Christianity would gradually die away.

Alarm excited by large assemblies of men.

Second year of Valerian's persecution.

Causes of his increased hostility.

The first edict of Valerian appears to have failed of producing the desired effect. The Christians continued to throng to the prisons of their revered teachers, and derived fresh ardour from their example and their discourses. Thus it was of little avail to guard the precincts of the cemeteries with armed bands, if the very scenes of punishment contributed to stimulate rather than to deter, and to increase rather than to diminish, the Christian population. The other orders of the clergy doubtless supplied the absence of the bishops, and the organization of the new body was varied, but not dissolved. The bishops too, though suffering under the actual operation of the imperial edict, and threatened with the heaviest infliction which the violation of its provisions could call down, with unabated, perhaps with too precipitate, zeal, encouraged the assemblages of the people, and pursued the great work of gentile conversion.[2] But, be the cause what it may, it is manifest that the indignation of the emperor was violently raised from the severe rescript which he subsequently addressed to the Senate, and issued to the provincial governors. By this he ordered that

Edict.

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together, to the more distant and desert regions of Mareotis. In whatever spot, however dreary its aspect, or remote its situation, the Christian exile was fixed, thither the solicitude of his brethren induced them, through imminent dangers, to repair. To visit, console, and assist the imprisoned, as well as to inter the martyred, such were the objects which, notwithstanding the prohibitions of the Roman governors, were deemed too important to be neglected on any consideration. (Dionys. Alex. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. xi.)

[1] Plin. Ep. lib. x. ep. 42, 43.

[2] See Dionys. Alex. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. xi.

bishops, presbyters, and deacons should be put to death without delay; that senators and men of rank, and Roman knights should be stripped of their dignity and of their property; and if they still continued to be Christians, should be beheaded; that matrons should be deprived of their goods and banished; that the *Cæsariani* (probably the emperor's household) who either had confessed, or should afterwards confess, should lose their property by confiscation, and should be sent, bound in chains, to work in the manner of slaves, on the emperor's estate.[1] From this decree it may very justly be inferred, that persons of considerable influence professed the Christian religion. It may also be remarked, that no mention is made of the mass of Christians of subordinate rank: and hence, in the accounts still extant of the martyrdoms of that period, the lower orders may be, in general, observed to have been unmolested spectators; except when their own attachment to religion urged them on to participate in the sufferings of its preachers, or when some particular governor exceeded the limits of his powers, or, lastly, when they reduced the magistrate to the necessity of executing the ancient penal laws, which, though suffered to slumber in consequence of later edicts, were, as yet, not formally annulled.

A. D. 257.

Remarks.

Several accounts of the martyrdoms which took place in this persecution still remain; but the authority of many of these documents may reasonably be called in question. The most remarkable persons who fell victims, were Sixtus, the bishop of Rome, Laurentius, a deacon, who was consumed by a slow fire, and Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. Of the last, the prominent part which he bore in the affairs of the Church, requires that we should offer a more particular description. Cyprian, who had returned from exile, was living in his gardens near Carthage, not unprepared for the fate which he was conscious would await him, when he was apprehended by two officers of the proconsul of Africa, Galerius Maximus. These officers placed him in a chariot between themselves, and conveyed him to Sexti, a place about six miles from Carthage, where the proconsul then resided for the recovery of his health. In consequence of some occupation, he was carried back to the house of the chief officer, and the consideration of his case was deferred till the ensuing day. The intelligence was soon widely circulated, and great numbers from all parts of Carthage, thronged together to witness the scene. The excellent character of the bishop, and the beneficence with which he had attended to those who, on a late occasion, had been afflicted by the plague, conspired to insure for him the respect of all ranks: and his present situation, whilst it animated the courage of the faithful, excited the compassion of the unbelieving. The treatment which he experienced from his guard was mild and considerate; his friends were allowed to remain with him as usual, and the crowd passed the whole night in anxious suspense, before the door of the house. In the morning he was led to

Martyrdom of Cyprian.

[1] Cyprian, Ep. 82.

A. D. 257. the *Prætorium*, attended by a vast multitude; and, till the arrival of the proconsul, he waited in a private place and rested himself on a seat, which happened to be covered with linen, that, adds the narrator, "even under the stroke of death he might still enjoy the honours of episcopacy." On the arrival of the proconsul, he delivered, in answer to the interrogatories, his name and office, but resolutely refused to obey the imperial mandate which enjoined sacrifice to the gods. The proconsul exhorted him to consider the consequences of his refusal, and at length having deliberated with his council, pronounced, with reluctance, the sentence of death in terms like the following—"You have lived with a sacrilegious disposition a long time; you have drawn together great numbers into the same impious conspiracy; you have shown yourself an enemy to the Roman gods and their sacred laws, nor have our holy princes been able to recall you to the observance of their ceremonies. Therefore, as you are convicted of being the ring-leader of most nefarious criminals, you shall be made an example to those whom you have associated with yourself in this impious course, and by your blood shall discipline be sanctioned." Having uttered these words he read the decree from a tablet: "It is our pleasure that Thascius Cyprianus be put to death by the sword." Cyprian exclaimed "God be praised!" and the crowd of his brethren tumultuously cried, "Let us, too, be beheaded with him!" and followed in a numerous body. He was led into a wide plain, thick set with trees, on the boughs of which many of the spectators, who filled the spot, had eagerly climbed. The deacons and presbyters were present; and his brethren spread linen on the ground to receive his blood. Cyprian laid aside his cloak, and fell on his knees and prayed; then put off his dalmatic or under garment, and remained in his shirt; and, having ordered five-and-twenty pieces of gold to be given to the executioner, he covered his eyes with his hands, and his head was severed from his body. His corpse was deposited near the spot, to gratify the curiosity of the gentiles; but at night it was removed, with lights and torches, in solemn procession, and interred in the cemetery of Macrobius Candidianus, a procurator.

Sources of the above account.

Thus died Cyprian, the first, it is said, of the numerous bishops of Carthage who suffered martyrdom. The above account is drawn from the 'Proconsular Acts,' which have every appearance of genuineness, and from the 'Life of Cyprian,' written, it must be observed, in a highly rhetorical style, which is far from producing the intended impression, by Pontius, his deacon, who was present in this affecting scene. We have thus largely detailed the circumstances of this martyrdom, because it is calculated to give the reader a correct notion of the proceedings of the Romans and the Christians at this period, and to suggest various reflections on the respect paid to episcopal dignity, and the increasing veneration attending martyrdom, which it is unnecessary that we should point out.

That the persecution of Valerian continued three years and a half

has been deduced from the circumstance, that Dionysius of Alexandria applies to him the passage in the 'Apocalypse:'[1] "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." The capture of Valerian by the Persians was the signal of tranquillity. A. D. 257.

Gallienus, by his rescripts of universal application, permitted the bishops to renew the duties of their offices without molestation, and restored to the Christians the enjoyment of the cemeteries.[2] Yet that the ancient penal laws, against such as refused to comply with the established ceremonies of religion, when formally required, were not repealed, the following instance will serve to prove. In Cæsarea of Palestine, at a moment of deep tranquillity, Marinus, a man distinguished by his wealth and high birth, was on the point of receiving the dignity of centurion, when the next candidate for the vacant place objected to his nomination, on the ground that he was a Christian, and refused to sacrifice to the emperors. The judge, astonished at the accusation, interrogated Marinus on the subject of his religion, and, observing that he confessed himself to be a Christian, allowed him three hours to consider whether he would persist in this profession. On leaving the court, Theotecnus, bishop of the town, having joined him, led him gradually into the church, placed him before the altar, and having pointed out on one hand the sword, which hung at his side, and on the other the gospel, he bade him choose which of the two he preferred. As Marinus unhesitatingly laid his hand on the book, he was briefly exhorted by the bishop to adhere to his choice; and when he left the church, the time of deliberation being elapsed, he was summoned before the tribunal, maintained the faith with renewed alacrity, and was beheaded.[3] Astyrius, a Roman senator of eminence, took on his shoulders the corpse of the martyr, and paid it the last honours.[4] This action appears not to have subjected him to punishment; probably his rank, and the high favour of the emperors which he enjoyed, deterred accusers. Gallienus. A. D. 260. Tranquillity restored. Penal laws not abrogated. Martyrdom of Marinus.

In the eight years during which Gallienus, the two years during which Claudius ruled, and the first four of the reign of Aurelian, the Christians in general were undisturbed. But in the fifth year, Aurelian, either at the impulse of some unknown adviser, or from the influence of his own strongly superstitious feelings, determined to raise a persecution,[5] which was expected to be severe. But the hand of death arrested him, as it were, in the act of subscribing the edicts against the Church; and the effects of his anger were, probably, but little, if at all, experienced. After the murder of Aurelian, the Christians, with a few partial exceptions, continued uninjured nearly to the end of this century. Claudius. Aurelian.

During the first eighteen years of his reign, Diocletian exhibited no

[1] Ch. xiii. ver. 5. [2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. xiii.
[3] Ibid. c. xv. [4] Ibid.
[5] Euseb. lib. vii. c. xxx. Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. vi. &c.

A.D. 284.[1] symptoms of a disposition to disturb the prosperity of his Christian subjects. Religious conviction was gaining fast on the minds of the incredulous, or a more enlarged policy was gradually extending its influence. The reputation of the new sect was considerably raised, and procured for its members not merely protection against violence, but a peculiar exemption from the performance of such duties as were incompatible with their religious tenets. When intrusted with provincial governments, they were released from the usual obligation of assisting at sacrifices to the gods of the emperor. The imperial household were permitted to exercise their religion with the most undisguised freedom. The wife and the daughter of the emperor appear, in some degree, to have imbibed the principles of Christianity. The most marked favour and affection were shown towards the bishops, not merely by private persons, but by the Roman governors; and conversions increased with so much rapidity, that it was found necessary to erect new and spacious churches throughout all the cities of the empire. But it is again the melancholy duty of the ecclesiastical historian to mark, amid the lustre of surrounding prosperity, the shades which fall on the interior of the Christian state. Sloth and negligence, envy and bitter calumny, and a spirit of factious ambition, which pervaded the higher orders of the hierarchy, are among the numerous proofs of degeneracy, which the writings of Eusebius pathetically, but, perhaps, to a certain extent, rhetorically display.[2]

Diocletian.

Diocletian and Maximian, Emperors.

Galerius and Constantius, Cæsars.

Toleration of Christianity.

Degeneracy of the Christians.

The mildness of Diocletian entered not into the character of his harsh and unfeeling associate, Maximianus Herculius. Actuated by deep hostility, which ignorance and superstition had nursed, against the Christian faith, he could easily indulge in cruelty without expressly refusing to acknowledge the general spirit of toleration which then existed. One instance of severity is, however, cited, which can hardly be established by evidence sufficient to command our belief.

Conduct of Maximianus Herculius.

It is pretended that Maximianus Herculius brought from the east a legion, called the Thebean Legion, consisting entirely of Christians, which he intended to employ against the Gauls. On his march, the emperor wished to oblige his army to sacrifice to the gods, or, according to other writers, to persecute the Christians. On the refusal of this legion, he ordered them to be decimated; and, finding that the example of the sufferers produced no impression, he repeated the punishment of decimation, but was unable to enforce obedience. Exasperated at this inflexibility, he caused the whole legion to be massacred. The soldiers relinquished their arms in passive resignation, and presented their necks to the executioners. This event is said to have taken place at Agaunum, at the foot of the Alps, and is still honoured by the Romish church. The famous abbey of St. Maurice is so called after the supposed captain of this legion.

Supposed martyrdom of the Thebean Legion.

[1] The 29th of August, A.D. 284, is the beginning of the era of martyrs, which is still in use among the Copts of Egypt, the Abyssinians, and some other nations of Africa.

[2] Euseb. lib. viii. c. i.

Such is the account, which was once as implicitly received, as it is now generally suspected. It is detailed in a letter, attributed to Eucherius, bishop of Lyons, who professes to have learnt it from certain persons, who declared that they had heard it from Isaac, bishop of Geneva, who, it was supposed, had received it from Theodore, bishop of Octodurum.[1] Of this relation there are two copies; the first was published by Surius, and, among other internal proofs of falsehood, mentions a period posterior to Sigismond, king of Burgundy, who lived, at the lowest computation, sixty-six years later than Eucherius. The second copy, free from this anachronism and other contradictions, was subsequently published by Chifflet, who asserted that it was drawn from a very ancient manuscript in the monastery of Mount Jura. The relation was attacked with great learning and ingenuity by M. J. du Bordieu,[2] who referred it to some monk of the seventh century. A. D. 284. Arguments against its truth.

It must be acknowledged, however, that the history was known in the fifth century. From a homily of Avitus,[3] published by Sirmond, who found it in a manuscript of unquestionable antiquity, it appears that the anniversary of these martyrs was, in his time, celebrated in the church dedicated to them at Agaunum. It is evident, therefore, that these Acts may have been written about the time of Eucherius, though it may, perhaps, be concluded, from the style, that he himself was not the author. Date of the narrative.

The arguments which invalidate the whole narrative are nearly insurmountable. The improbability of a legion which contained six thousand Christians, the improbability that Maximian should have drawn it from the eastern extremity of the empire, to repress a revolt in Gaul; the improbability that, if so strong a measure were requisite, he should, when almost in the very presence of the enemy, destroy a considerable portion of his own army; the improbability that, even under these circumstances, not one soldier should have redeemed his life by an act of obedience to the orders of his commander, that not one should have defended himself with the arms he held, that not one should have escaped in a country, surrounded by woods and mountains, which offered the means of safety; these are circumstances which, unless supported by the unequivocal evidence of competent witnesses, would be alone sufficient to excite distrust, if not total dis- Internal evidence.

[1] If this were true, it would be strange that Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who must often have met Theodore, his suffragan, should make no mention of this event, notwithstanding his veneration for martyrs and relics. (Biblioth. Raison. tom. xxxvi. p. 441.)

[2] His work is entitled Dissertation Critique sur le Martyre de la Legion Thebéene, 1705. The English translation, which appeared in 1696, was made from the author's MS. M. du Bordieu was induced to write his Dissertation by the disgust which he conceived at the honours paid by the Church of Rome to the memory of the Thebean soldiers (c. i.). The martyrdom was maintained by Joseph de L'Isle.

[3] The title of the homily is Dicta in Basilica Sanctorum Agaunensium, in innovatione Monasterii ipsius, vel passione Martyrum.

A. D. 284. belief, in the mind of the inquirer. But, in the present case, they are found in a narrative, which was not published till more than one hundred and fifty years after the pretended event took place. All contemporary writers are silent: the fact is not mentioned nor alluded to by Eusebius, nor by Sulpicius Severus, nor by Orosius, nor by the poet Prudentius, nor by Lactantius; all of whom have written of the martyrdoms which reflected lustre on the name of Christian; and the last, in particular, had resided in Gaul not more than thirty years after the remarkable occurrence which is said to have happened in that country. Omitting the arguments which result from the difficulty of assigning this pretended martyrdom to any local or general persecution, we are inclined to an opinion that the tradition may have originated in some really severe punishment of certain Christians in the Roman army. The Greek martyrologies celebrate one Maurice, a tribune, whom Maximian put to death, together with seventy soldiers, at Apamæa, in Syria, the department over which he presided. It has been conjectured, with great probability, that the supposed Maurice of Agaunum is the same person, and that the Roman relater transferred the scene from the East to Gaul, and enriched the detail with that variety of improbable additions, which frequently attends the progress of tradition.[1]

Silence of all contemporary writers.

Probable origin of the tradition.

Conduct of some Christian soldiers.

We learn from Eusebius, that persecution first began against the Christians who were engaged in a military life.[2] To preserve their faith, many abandoned their profession; others laid down their lives. If the extant accounts of the martyrdoms of that period be genuine, it cannot be denied that the conduct of some Christian soldiers was so public a violation of martial discipline, that it must naturally have been expected that the Roman commanders would visit it with severe proofs of their displeasure. At Tebesta, in Numidia, Maximilian resolutely refused to follow the example of those Christians who consented to serve in the army, and death was the punishment of this disobedience.[3] At Tingi, in Mauritania, Marcellus, a centurion, amid the rejoicings and sacrifices which celebrated the birthday of the emperor, in the presence of the whole legion cast away his arms, his belt, and his vine branch, the badge of his office, and cried aloud, that he was the soldier of Jesus Christ, the eternal King, and that if to sacrifice to the gods were the condition of a military life, he would serve no longer under the imperial banners. He was accordingly seized, and, after having confessed, he was reproached by the judge with having broken his oath, and condemned to be beheaded as a deserter.[4] Similar instances may, possibly, have produced an unfavourable effect on the mind of the emperor. But the first cause of

[1] This conjecture, which seems to have been first suggested by Baronius (Annot. ad diem XXII. Septemb. Martyrologii Romani, p. 375), is supported in a very able dissertation on the subject of the Thebean Legion, which is contained in the Bibliothèque Raisonnée, tom. xxxvi. p. 427–454.

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. iv.

[3] Acta Sincer. p. 299.

[4] Ibid. p. 302.

his enmity may, perhaps, be sought in the machinations of the pagan priests. It is related, that when Diocletian expressed an extreme desire of penetrating into future events, the diviners found that there were none of the ordinary marks in the entrails of the victims, and attributed the want of success, which attended the rites, to certain profane persons who had intruded into their assemblies. The narrator affirms, that some Christians, being present, had made the sign of the cross on their foreheads, and thus expelled the demons.[1] It was, on this occasion, that Diocletian, being incensed, commanded that sacrifices should be observed, not merely by the court, but by the camp; and that those who refused, should be scourged; and soldiers, who would not comply, should be dismissed. And to this extent only did his anger then proceed. From this narration it is manifest that the Aruspices, subtle and intriguing men, contrived to instigate the superstitious emperor against the Christians, whose prosperity they viewed with a jealous and fearful eye, by pretending that their presence destroyed the efficacy of the sacrifices. Various other means were resorted to by the priests, and, perhaps, by the philosophers, to rouse the fears of an emperor, whose unwillingness to sanction persecution could only be overcome by working on his credulity and superstition.

A. D. 284.

Arts of the pagan priesthood.

These wiles, however, might have been unsuccessful, but for the unremitted exertions of Maximianus Galerius: coarse and uneducated, his natural fierceness was easily excited by his mother, a woman of extreme superstition, who had contracted hatred against the Christians, in consequence of their refusal to assist at the sacrifices, which she was in the habit of almost daily performing.[2]

Influence of Maximianus Galerius.

During the whole winter which he spent at Nicomedia, Galerius held secret consultations with Diocletian on the subject of the Christians. The aged emperor, whom caution or lenity had inspired with aversion to the exercise of extraordinary violence, is represented as having pressed on his rash adviser a consideration of the scenes of disturbance and of bloodshed, which would unquestionably attend the measures of coercion that he proposed. Convinced, however, of the dangers which might accrue to the state from an unbounded toleration of a hostile sect, or unwilling to offer an entire opposition to the wishes of his colleague, he suggested, as a sufficient check, that no Christian should be allowed to continue in the court or in the army. Galerius, whose passions predominated over his reason, was dissatisfied with an expedient which presented but a partial remedy to the pretended evil of which he witnessed the continual growth. His remonstrances, at length, were successful, in prevailing on Diocletian to summon an assembly, composed of a few persons, who had acquired eminence in the judicial, or in the military profession. Of these some were already prejudiced against the Christians, and others were too much influenced by their fears, or by the desire of gratifying the powerful, to deny that Galerius was right in deeming the destruc-

[1] Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. x. [2] Ibid.

A. D. 284. tion of Christianity essential to the permanence of the Roman institutions. Yet, even then, the reluctant emperor, distrustful of human counsels, applied for further advice to the oracle of the Milesian Apollo. The oracle, as might naturally be foreseen, confirmed the sentiments of the enemies of Christianity; and the acquiescence of Diocletian, in the adoption of severe proceedings, was at length obtained.[1]

A. D. 303. Destruction of the church of Nicomedia.

The 23rd of February, which was the festival of the god Terminus, was chosen as an appropriate day to begin the task of fixing, as it were, a period to the Christian religion. At the first faint dawn of the morning, the præfect, attended by generals, tribunes, and receivers of the revenue, proceeded to the church of Nicomedia, which stood on an eminence within the view of the imperial palace. The doors were immediately forced open, and an ineffectual search was made for the image of the god whom the Christians worshipped. The sacred scriptures, which were found there, were burnt; and whatever remained was divided as the spoil. While this work of confusion and ruin was busily proceeding, the two princes, who viewed the scene from their palace, debated long whether they should order fire to be set to the church; but apprehensive of the danger, to which this method of destruction would expose the rest of the city, Diocletian resolved that it should be demolished by his guards. They came, accordingly, in array of battle, with axes and mattocks, and rased, in a few hours, that lofty edifice to the ground.[2]

First edict of Diocletian.

On the ensuing day an edict was issued, by which it was decreed that the churches should be demolished to their foundation, and the scriptures committed to the flames; that such as professed Christianity should be considered incapable of holding any honour or office, and should be liable to torture, whatever might be their rank or dignity; that any action might be received against them, but that they, on the other hand, should have no right to sue upon any injury, whether by violence, adultery, or theft, which they themselves experienced.[3] Slaves were also deprived of the hope of liberty;[4] and the shield of the law was withdrawn from every member of the proscribed sect. It appears also to have been then enacted, that no assemblies should be held by the Christians, and that all their places of resort should be confiscated.

Rash conduct and punishment of a Christian.

This most unjust edict was no sooner fixed up in the most public part of the city, than it was torn down by a Christian, who severely reflected on the conduct of the emperors; and accused them of betraying a spirit as narrow and ferocious as that of the unenlightened hordes of Goths and Sarmatians, over whom they boasted of having triumphed. An action so daring could not fail to subject its author, however exalted might be his situation in life, to peremptory punishment. The

[1] Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. x. [2] Ibid. c. xii.

[3] Comp. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. ii., and Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xiii. [4] Τοὺς δὲ ἐν οἰκετιάις . . . . ἐλευθερίας στερῆσθαι.

Christian was immediately seized, and not merely tortured by the ordinary process of the rack, but destroyed by a slow fire, which he endured with a tranquillity of mind, which spread a smile over his features even in the agonies of death. The historian, who acknowledged that his conduct was a deviation from the rules of rectitude, still considered it as having originated in courageous ardour; and, without approving of his dangerous indiscretion, it is difficult not to feel respect for the motive which inspired the extraordinary fortitude that baffled, to the last, the efforts of his tormentors.[1] A. D. 303.

An event soon after occurred, which was productive of the most disastrous results to the Christian inhabitants of Nicomedia. A destructive fire broke out in the palace wherein Galerius and Diocletian resided, and the Christians were accused of having conspired with some of the eunuchs, for the destruction of the two princes. The rack was, as usual, resorted to, but was not attended by any discovery. A fortnight afterwards, the palace was again in flames. The conflagration, indeed, was soon observed and extinguished; but the impression which it left on the mind of Diocletian was implacable resentment against the whole sect, to which the calamity was immediately ascribed. Every kind of torment, which the most ingenious cruelty could invent, was now recklessly employed. Persons of all ages and of both sexes, in great numbers, were burned alive, and their servants cast into the sea; officers, who had conducted the affairs of the palace, were put to death; presbyters and deacons, without legal proof, were condemned and executed; and the city presented an appalling spectacle of ferocity exasperated into madness, and the powers of destruction invested with their deepest horrors. The feelings of humanity were crushed; the internal pleadings of justice were no more heard; the mighty tide of persecution had set in, and, no longer stemmed by prudence, it swept all before it in its progress. The cause of the calamity is still enveloped in uncertainty. One historian has not hesitated to impute it to the artifices of Galerius, who had used every effort to stimulate his more mild, or more fearful associate; and who, in the depth of winter, hastened his departure from Nicomedia, protesting that he was forced to fly from the danger to which he was exposed by desperate incendiaries.[2] But it is manifest that such a plot could only have been known by conjecture, for its necessary secresy must have precluded any other means of information. The Emperor Constantine, who was himself an eye-witness of the fire, attributes it to lightning;[3] and Eusebius acknowledges that he was ignorant of the real cause.[4] Whether, therefore, it arose from accident or from design, it is not for us, in these later ages, with no additional clue to guide our researches, to determine.

Fire in the palace of Nicomedia.

Authors of the fire.

[1] Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xii.; Euseb. lib. viii. c. v.
[2] Lactant. de Mort. Persecut.
[3] Orat. ad Sanctor. Cœtum. c. xxv.
[4] Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. vi.

A. D. 303. Edict of Diocletian.

The edict of Diocletian was published in all the provinces of the empire; but it circulated so slowly, that the Christians in the more remote quarters were visited by this affliction some months later than the brethren who dwelt near the seat of its first promulgation. The magistrates were enjoined, under the heaviest penalties, to seize the sacred books, which were in the hands of the bishops and presbyters, and to consign them publicly to the flames. Hence, though the law seems not intended to affect the lives of the Christians, it proved destructive to many, who resolutely refused to deliver up the holy writings.

Though most were doubtless influenced by the purest and holiest motives—by that strong sense of religious duty which must draw forth the respect even of those who might dissent in their estimate of the course of action pursued—there were not wanting some few, who, it must be confessed, were actuated by very different views: oppressed, it is said, by public debts, or haunted by the consciousness of an habitual neglect of the precepts of Christianity, they rashly imagined that the voluntary sacrifice of their lives, which were to them a burthen, would be an expiation of their former crimes.[1]

Many, however, both of the Church and laity, were willing to obey the imperial decree by delivering up the scriptures, and were, in consequence, branded by the reproachful appellation of traditors.[2] But, notwithstanding the ignominy which attended their conduct, it would surely be a breach of charity to assert, that they meant by this act to express their formal renunciation of the Christian religion.

Second and third edicts.

In consequence of some civil commotions in Armenia and Syria, a new edict was published, commanding that all the presidents of the churches should be seized, and the prisons were soon filled with bishops, presbyters, deacons, readers, and exorcists; insomuch, adds the historian, that no place remained for the custody of condemned criminals. This edict was followed by another, in which it was ordained that they who were imprisoned, should be set at liberty on their consenting to sacrifice, but that they who refused, should be compelled to undergo every variety of torment. And just before the

Fourth edict.

resignation of Diocletian, a fourth edict was issued, not merely directed, as the foregoing, against the heads of the Church, but embracing all ranks of Christians, who had now no alternative but to worship the heathen idols,[3] or to submit to all that could be devised to overpower their feelings and subdue their spirit. The extent of

Galerius and Constantius, Emperors.

the persecution which burst on the Christians, will be best conceived by reviewing their state in the different parts of the Roman empire,[4]

[1] August. Brevicul. Collat. cum Donat. lib. iii. c. xiii.

[2] Optat. Milevit. de Schis. Donat. lib. i. sec. 12, 13.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. xiii.; De Mart. Palest. c. xiii.

[4] See the view of this persecution taken in Dodwell (Dissert. Cyprian. dissert. xi. Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. p. 947, &c.); Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. p. 575, &c.

But our limits will only allow us to sketch with a rapid pencil those scenes which are drawn in deepened colours by contemporary historians. A. D. 303.

Constantius Chlorus, who presided over Gaul, was induced by the natural mildness and benignity of his character, and by the favourable opinion which he entertained of the Christian doctrines, to mitigate severities which he could not prevent. Unwilling to oppose the authority of Diocletian, he complied with it, so far as regarded the demolition of the churches, but he exerted his power to shield the persons of the Christians from violence and injury. And that protection, which he had partially exhibited as Cæsar, he subsequently maintained in all its vigour as Augustus. The tranquillity enjoyed by Gaul under Constantius, and afterwards under Constantine, was probably extended to Britain. But in Spain, which, though it also belonged to the same department, was not so directly under his superintendence, the governor, Datianus, appears in no degree to have relaxed the rigorous conditions of the imperial edicts, and the consequent misery of the Christians is attested by the extant relations of numerous martyrdoms. State of the Christians in the department of Constantius.

In Italy and Africa, where Maximianus, the inveterate enemy of the Christians, whom he regarded as opponents of his ambitious designs, the storm of persecution raged with a fury which seemed destined, as it were, to tear up by the roots and cast down for ever the new establishment. But the shock, though dreadful, was brief. On the resignation of Diocletian, Severus governed these provinces, probably, in a milder manner, when Cæsar, and watched by Constantius, than when Augustus, and influenced by Galerius. The revolt of Maxentius restored tranquillity in these provinces to the Christian Church. Italy and Africa.

In the east, the ambitious Galerius, long impatient of the restraints which a cautious policy had imposed on his impetuous spirit, no sooner obtained the purple than he gave full scope to the measures of the most savage cruelty. His associate, Maximin, lent a willing co-operation in the enormities of this eventful period. In the east.

The heart-sickening details of refined torments, which the historians of the Church have transmitted to us, and which almost stagger belief, cannot be even touched upon without a feeling of mental convulsion. The method of burning by a slow fire, employed by men, whose only fear was lest the violence of their fury should be abridged by the too speedy death of their victim, is alone sufficient to give the reader a transient glance into those spectacles of human agony, which were then so frequent. The victims were chained, and a gentle fire was applied to the soles of their feet, by which the callus was contracted, till at last it fell off from the bones. Torches which had been just lighted and extinguished, while still hot, were pressed against every limb, that no part of their bodies should be free from torture. And during this process of horror, cold water was poured on their faces and in Torments. Burning by slow fire.

A. D. 303. their mouths, lest their throats being quite dried up, they should expire before the full measure of barbarity was exhausted. At length, when their skin was wholly consumed, and the flame had penetrated to their vitals, they were thrown on a funeral pile and burned to ashes, which were ignominiously cast to the winds.[1] One description of this nature is more than enough to give an idea of the punishments adopted. They varied, indeed, in their nature[2] and duration, according to the caprice of the different provincial governors, but they were even marked by circumstances more harrowing than imagination can conceive that cruelty could inflict.

In Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, which the superstitious Maximin administered, the same spirit of vengeance pursued the devoted Christians, who must have shrunk from the trial, had not faith lifted up for them the veil of immortality, and soothed and strengthened their oppressed spirits.

A. D. 311. Edict of Galerius.

The cessation of persecution in the eastern part of the empire was, if not caused, at least accelerated, by a dreadful and loathsome disorder, under the protracted pains of which Galerius issued an edict, permitting the Christians to resume their worship in tranquillity, and expressing his hope, that, in return for this indulgence, they would supplicate the deity, whom they adored, for his health, and for the welfare of themselves and of the state.[3] In this edict he assigns as the motive which engaged him to employ means to compel the Christians to return to the institutions of their ancestors, a desire to correct all things for the benefit of the public, according to the ancient laws and established discipline of the Romans.[4] He adds, that this original design was abandoned, from his observation, that though many had been subjected to danger and torments, many continued still unchanged in their sentiments; though they no longer worshipped the god of the Christians, yet they adored not the gods of Rome.[5] He felt, at last, that persecution may make hypocrites, but not converts. This edict, which was warmly supported by Licinius and Constantine, was productive of much benefit to the Christians. But Maximin,

Persecution renewed by Maximin.

who, after its promulgation, presided over the Asiatic provinces, although at first he had so far acquiesced in its execution, that the Christians, delivered from prison and from the mines, were returning

[1] Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xxi.

[2] One circumstance which took place during some part of the persecution of this period ought not to be omitted. We are informed by Eusebius that a certain small town of Phrygia, of which the whole population, not excepting the magistrates, professed Christianity, and refused to sacrifice, was burned, with its inhabitants, by soldiers sent, doubtless, to enforce the execution of the imperial edicts. (Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. xi.) Lactantius only says, speaking of the provincial magistrates who had put Christians to death, "Alii ad occidendum præcipites extiterunt, sicut unus in Phrygiâ qui universum populum cum ipso pariter conventiculo concremavit." (Inst. Div. lib. v. c. xi.)

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. xvi.; Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xxxiii.

[4] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. xvii.; Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xxxiv.

[5] Ibid.

to their habitations with hymns of praise,[1] soon evinced a determination to re-establish paganism in all its powers. Addresses from Antioch and other cities, which prayed that the Christians might be expelled from their territories, either imposed on him the necessity of gratifying one class of his subjects at the expense of another, or were in fact secretly contrived by the emissaries of the emperor himself, to give the appearance of popular sanction to the measures which he himself premeditated. The fomentor of these artful proceedings was one Theotecnus,[2] a curator at Antioch, who, availing himself of the emperor's addiction to magic and belief in oracles, rekindled the flames of persecution. Every means was now employed to degrade the Christian and to exalt the heathen religion. 'Acts of Pilate,' filled with blasphemy against Christ, were industriously forged, and published in all quarters by imperial authority.[3] Abandoned women were suborned to testify the foulest falsehoods respecting the practice of the Christians.[4] To give force and consistence to the religious system of paganism, he appointed priests in all cities, and over them a chief priest in every province, selected from the most distinguished ranks, and honoured with a military guard. Temples were everywhere erected or repaired. All that brutality can inflict, all that fortitude can endure, was again inflicted and endured. Superstition, now armed with all the energies of power, and guided by all the artifices of policy, seemed fitted to demolish the structure, so long assailed, of the Christian Church.[5] But the overruling arm, which, in its mysterious movements, confounds and destroys the schemes of the children of men, interposed. The death of Maximin,[6] and the accession of Constantine, overthrew one of the worst enemies, and established the strongest protector of the true religion. And, after a persecution of ten years' continuance, which had swept away a very considerable number of the faithful followers of Christ,[7] and which, as inscriptions still attest,[8] was supposed to have extirpated his worship, the memorable decree was passed which acknowledged the inviolable rights of conscience, and the spiritual was subsequently united with the civil establishment.

A. D. 311.

Accession of Constantine.

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. ix. c. i. [2] Ibid. c. ii.
[3] Ibid. c. v. [4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid. lib. viii. c. xiv.; lib. ix. c. ii. &c. Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xxxvi.
[6] He had already relented and published an edict in favour of the Christians. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. ix. c. x.
[7] Gibbon computes it at somewhat less than 2,000. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, c. xvi. *sub fin.*
[8] The two inscriptions found at Clunia in Spain, in Gruter, Inscript. p. 280, num. 3.

CHAPTER IV.

ECCLESIASTICAL WRITERS OF THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES.

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Necessity of biography.

OF many writers it may be confidently asserted that it is impossible to enter into their full meaning and design without an adequate acquaintance with the general circumstances of the time and country in which they flourished. But of some, in particular, it may be added that, in order to form a correct judgment on their works, the reader must previously inquire into the peculiar incidents of their lives; the nature of their education; the tone of their opinions, considered in relation to the prevalent sentiments of their contemporaries; the profession which they followed; the estimation in which they were held; and, lastly, the order in which their writings appeared, and the occasions which respectively called them forth. Without much of this introductory knowledge, the scope of many an argument is unnoticed, the spirit of many an observation unfelt, and the fine thread of allusion, which is often the best clue in unravelling intricacies, insensibly escapes us.

Antecedent points of inquiry.

These remarks are, in an especial degree, applicable to the study of the Christian fathers. Their style and manner are materially influenced by their situations and pursuits, and often vary at different periods of their lives. Origen, in more advanced years, repents of what he had composed in his early days.[1] Tertullian, after his adoption of Montanism, treats many points with feelings unlike those which actuated him before his secession from the Church.

Moreover, in investigating any particular treatise, it is of much consequence to ascertain beforehand, not merely (as must be obvious to the most hasty examiner) whether the author was at the time of its publication esteemed orthodox or schismatic, whether he was a layman or a priest, and whether he wrote at a period of tranquillity or of persecution, but also whether he had received a pagan or a Christian education, and, above all, whether he wrote before the birth, or during the height, or after the extinction, of certain heresies. As inattention to these points has occasionally led to mistakes, it may not be useless to illustrate, as briefly as possible, our reasons for laying down such of these antecedent queries as may not at first sight appear requisite.

[1] Hieron. ad Pammach. et Ocean. Ep. 41 (al. 65).

1. It is necessary to inquire into his early life and pursuits. Many of the fathers were born and bred in paganism, popular and philosophical. The defects of this education were sometimes imperfectly felt, and seldom wholly remedied. The seam of the wound was always visible, and it was liable to reopen. Even resolution was not unfrequently the dupe of habit. Some portion of early error still adhered to the opinions of the convert; just as, in later times, some remains of the spirit of the Church of Rome broke out in the conduct of the Reformers. Bearing this fact in mind, we shall not be apt to lay undue weight on the authority of the fathers, wherever there is reason to suppose that their judgment has been warped by the prejudices and associations of their youth. We shall not be surprised to find vestiges of Platonism in the writings of men who were formerly Platonists, any more than to observe the figures of rhetoric still appearing in the language of such as were formerly rhetoricians.

Effects produced on the writings of the Christian fathers by early pagan education.

2. It is also necessary to mark their age in reference to particular heresies. In examining their opinions on doctrinal questions, not formally made the subject of dispute in their time, it is not just to weigh the casual expressions of the early fathers with so much nicety as the studied sentences and qualified terms of such as lived either during or after the agitation of the controverted points. This equitable rule prevails in the common converse of life. We draw a strong line of distinction between incidental remarks and deliberate judgments. For words dropped at random, or in a lax and unguarded manner, are necessarily deficient in precision, and sometimes applicable to the support of opinions which, if stated to him, the speaker would probably have rejected. We are not, therefore, to be surprised if the ante-Nicene fathers speak of the Trinity in language much less measured and pointed than their successors.[1]

By the state of heresies.

Again, another fact is not to be forgotten. Various terms were used at particular periods in a different acceptation from that in which they are at present understood; such, for instance, are the words pope, mass, confession, and some others.

Variation in the use of terms.

And here we may be allowed, by way of caution, to make a few observations on the *reasoning* of the fathers. Attention must be roused to determine whether their sentiments are delivered dogmati-

Methods of reasoning, style, &c.

[1] Multa latebant in Scripturis, et cum præcisi essent Hæretici, quæstionibus agitaverunt Ecclesiam Dei. Aperta sunt quæ latebant, et intellecta est voluntas Dei. Numquid enim perfectè de Trinitate tractatum est antequam oblatrarent Ariani? Numquid perfectè de Pœnitentiâ tractatum est antequam obsisterent Novatiani?—Sic non perfectè de Baptismate tractatum est, antequam contradicerent foris positi, rebaptizatores.—Nec de Unitate Christi, nisi posteaquam separatio illa urgere cœpit Fratres infirmos. (S. Augustin, Hey's Lectures in Divinity, vol. ii. p. 227.) Antequam in Alexandriâ quasi dæmonium meridianum Arius nasceretur, innocenter quædam et minus cautè locuti sunt, et quæ non possint perversorum hominum calumniam declinare. (Hieron. Apol. adv. Rufin. lib. ii.) Du Pin, Nouv. Bibl. des Aut. Eccles. Preface. Compare Daillé, du Vrai Usage des Pères.

cally or in disputation ;[1] in the former case, they are defined, precise, and unqualified; in the latter, they sometimes, it has been remarked —though the inference has been much too severe and the application much too general—resort to artifices of logic, employed, to speak in their own language "by dispensation;"[2] under the ample shield of which the arguer, in some instances, seems to have thought that he was at liberty, according to the urgency of the occasion, to carry a point beyond the bounds which his own judgment would have set to it, and, as it were, to force his way rather more obliquely than his natural bent and impulse of mind would have directed. For, in dispute, as in war, stratagems, which a straightforward spirit disdains, were tacitly permitted. It is certain that they appear to reason not unfrequently from the concessions of their adversaries; and hence it is probable that their authority is sometimes pleaded in support of arguments on which they laid but little real stress. Thus they often urge the superior antiquity of the Jewish Scriptures to the Grecian writings, not, perhaps, so much because they considered this as in itself a decisive proof of the divinity of the Jewish religion, as because the novelty of their faith, contrasted with the antiquity of paganism, was constantly turned into an objection by their enemies. Another circumstance is also frequently overlooked. What is accepted as *reasoning* was often meant merely as *illustration.* We condemn by the rules of logic what they intended should be measured by the laws of rhetoric. These ornaments are, it is true, sometimes puerile,[3] and generally redundant: they are flowers which, being neither tastefully chosen nor happily assorted, give a kind of quaint and grotesque appearance to the matter which they incumber. But the same judgment might be passed on the strained conceits and absurd embellishments which, insinuating themselves into passages of infinite force, animation, and splendour, often disfigure the writings of our best ancient authors; yet no one on that account would undervalue their opinions, or heap ridicule on their abilities. Before we quit this subject, we are anxious to draw attention to the fact that it is wholly

[1] Simul didicimus plura esse genera dicendi, et inter cætera aliud esse γυμναστικῶς scribere, aliud δογματικῶς. In priori vagam esse disputationem, et adversario respondentem, nunc hæc, nunc illa proponere: argumentari ut libet, aliud loqui, aliud agere, panem, ut dicitur, ostendere, lapidem tenere. In sequenti autem aperta frons, et, ut ita dicam, ingenuitas necessaria est. Aliud est quærere, aliud definire: in altero pugnandum, in altero docendum est. Hieron. Ep. 30 (al. 50), ad Pammach.

[2] Κατ' οἰκονομίαν.

[3] As, for instance, the reasons given by Irenæus why there are only *four gospels* (Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. xi.), and by Tertullian, why there were *twelve apostles* (Adv. Marcion. lib. iv. c. xiii.) In somewhat the same manner, Sir Edward Coke discovered "abundance of mystery" in the "patriarchal and apostolical number" *twelve*, of which the jury is composed. See Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England, book iii. c. xxiii. An amusing instance of ingenious absurdity on "the ancient conceit" of the number *five* may be found in ch. v. of Sir Thomas Browne's Garden of Cyrus, or The Quincunx mystically considered.

improbable that the intention of the fathers should have been to equivocate (however weak their reasoning may occasionally be deemed), when it is considered that they chose rather to lay down their lives than to avail themselves of a mental reservation. Though in polemical discourse they sometimes seem to have adopted a principle neither just in itself nor in unison with their general sentiments, yet in the conduct of life they undoubtedly rejected with contempt the sophism of the heathen poet: "My tongue, but not my mind, has sworn."[1] We are far from wishing to deny or to extenuate their faults as controversialists; but at least their scope and method ought to be distinctly understood before their arguments can be candidly estimated. Injustice has recommended itself to indolence by an attempt to condense the scrutiny of a laborious subject into superficial strictures on extracts and shreds of extracts, on a few sentences torn from their context, and a few scattered reflections invidiously clustered together. While excellencies have been left untouched, the slightest inaccuracies, even when ambiguous, have been tortured into heterodoxy, ignorance, and absurdity.

Value of the fathers as commentators on Scripture.

As commentators upon the sacred Scriptures, the fathers, in general, are not, perhaps, entitled to any very high portion of confidence. For besides that, in professed expositions, they often collect the sentiments of various writers, without specifically stating from what source each interpretation is derived, and in what degree it coincides with their own opinion,[2] they often resort to the most fanciful allegories, and in many instances betray an ignorance of the Hebrew language,[3] which led, as it was calculated to lead, to the most erroneous conclusions. It ought also to be remarked that they frequently quote Scripture (if the present text of their writings be correct) without sufficient accuracy.[4] Indeed, literal exactness appears not to have been scrupulously affected by ancient writers of any party.

Disciplina Arcani.

Another circumstance deserves consideration. Some of the fathers, either from the fear of confiding truths of a higher order to weak minds, or in order to spread an appearance of solemnity and importance over their writings, were at times apt to envelop their meanings in enigmatical obscurity. Clemens Alexandrinus,[5] in particular, pro-

Just. Mart. in Apolog. i. sec. 39.

[2] Hieron. Apol. adv. Rufin. The way in which Jerome professes to have written his Commentaries is not entitled to much praise. After having spoken of Origen, Didymus, Apollinaris, and others, he adds, Legi hæc omnia et in mente meâ plurima coacervans, accito notario, vel mea vel aliena dictavi, nec ordinis nec verborum interdum, nec sensuum memor. Ep. 74 (al. 89), ad Augustin.

[3] *E.g.* The derivation of the word *Jesus* by Irenæus, *Abraham* by Clemens Alexandrinus, *Cephas* by Optatus, &c. See also I. Le Clerc, in Hist. Ecclesiast. Ann. ci.

[4] *E.g.* Justin cites as from Zephaniah what is found in Zechariah. Tertullian alleges as being said to Moses what was said to Samuel.

[5] Strom. lib. i.

fesses to have wrapt his thoughts occasionally in studied confusion. He asserts, too, that on some points he had not ventured to write, scarcely to speak, lest, being misunderstood, he should be found to have put, as it were, a sword into the hand of a child, The sacraments, especially, they treated with the utmost mystery.

Other causes of obscurity.

Independently of this affected mysteriousness, the fathers are obscure sometimes in consequence of their ignorance, and sometimes by reason of their erudition. While one, but inadequately acquainted with the laws of grammar and rhetoric, writes in a troubled and perplexed style, without propriety in the selection of his terms, and without clearness in the arrangement of his sentences, another, on the contrary, deeply versed as well in the philosophy and learning of the Gentile world as in the contents of sacred writ, presents us with a curious mixture of motley fragments, allusions, sentiments, maxims, and illustrations.

But, whatever be the defects of their style, it should be considered that these were generally the defects of the age in which they lived; some, Minucius Felix, for instance, and Lactantius, are, perhaps, superior, in point of language, to their heathen contemporaries; and very few are so inelegant as the writers in the Historia Augusta. If their matter be valuable, it is surely not just to disregard them on account of the manner in which it is conveyed. Who neglects Polybius because his method of writing is coarse and unconnected?

Value of the fathers as historical witnesses.

The character of the fathers, considered as historical witnesses, has been already adverted to.[1] But it may be still necessary briefly to notice the charge of credulity which is urged against them, often with all the force which ridicule can supply, seldom with all the considerations which impartiality would suggest. The charge is, we think, not wholly true. The single circumstance that the impostor Alexander (whose successful artifices have been described by Lucian[2]) despaired of being able to delude the Christians, is sufficient to show that they were not very susceptible of being misled by the repute and dexterity of deceivers.

Considerations on credulity.

That they were too ready, however, to admit accounts of supernatural agency, which have been since regarded as false or exaggerated, cannot be denied. But it should not be forgotten that, whether miracles were still seen, or whether their cessation had taken place so gradually as to escape observation, on either supposition there would be a *tendency* to ascribe unusual phenomena, of which the natural causes were unknown, to the immediate interposition of Divine Providence.

But, independently of their peculiarity of situation, the age in which they lived was, in a high degree, favourable to superstitious impressions. The pagans, even in the philosophic classes, were equally prone with the Christians to credit reports without sufficient inquiry,

[1] Pages 2, 40, 41, and 47, of this volume.

[2] Pseudomant. v. Oper. tom. v. ed. Bipont.

and to resolve any singular occurrence into the operation of some miraculous power. Celsus, Hierocles, and Porphyry attributed extraordinary events to the efficacy of magic; even Julian, as we shall have occasion to show by and by, was "addicted to the whole train of superstitions, omens, presages, prodigies, spectres, dreams, visions, auguries, oracles, magic, theurgic, psychomantic."[1] But who is so little conversant with the annals of mankind as not to have observed how often weakness is interwoven with greatness, how often a strange blindness on some topics will coexist with great discernment on others?[2] Are the writers of the age of Elizabeth and the first James to be rejected because it was an age in which a belief in witchcraft was rooted in the minds, not merely of the vulgar, but of men who will ever be regarded as the lights and ornaments of English literature and philosophy?[3] Would Sully and Henry IV. be deemed incompetent witnesses of ordinary facts, because they were the dupes of random prophecies? Is a sneer raised against the genius of Dryden, because he was a strong believer in judicial astrology, and seems to have consoled himself with the reflection that "Chaucer was an astrologer; as were Virgil, Horace, Persius, and Manilius?"[4]

But if acuteness may be found blended with credulity, much more may honesty. That the intention of not deceiving renders us liable to be deceived, is a remark which Rochefoucault[5] was not the first to make; it is confirmed by continual experience. Credulity arises from a kind of ductility of spirit which is attached not merely to the most shining mental acquirements, but also to the most valuable qualities of the heart. What mind was ever actuated by purer motives and feelings than that of the benign and enlightened Fenelon?[6] yet was it swayed by the reveries of a weak devotee. What writers were ever more powerfully impressed with a sense of the great duties of religion and morality than Pascal and Johnson? yet were they the victims of many a superstitious feeling. To accumulate instances would be easy, but unnecessary. To those who are continually insisting on the credulity of the Christian fathers, in order to annihilate their authority as impartial writers even in matters of common experience, we would recommend attention to the following fact, that the "most virtuous divine of the barbarous ages is the Venerable Bede," and one of the most honest historians of any age is Matthew Paris, "yet their propensity to recount the wonderful exceeds all imagination."[7] This

[1] Bentley's Remarks on a late Discourse on Free-thinking, sec. 43.

[2] See the article Sextus Empiricus, in the History of Philosophy, in this Encyclopædia.

[3] See an article full of curious research on Popular Illusions by Dr. John Ferriar, in the Memoirs of the Philosophical Society of Manchester, vol. iii. p. 53.

[4] Preface to his Fables.

[5] L'intention de ne jamais tromper nous expose à être souvent trompés.—Maximes, 143.

[6] See the observations of Bishop Kaye on Tertullian.

[7] Warburton, on Julian. Introd. p. x.

fact is mentioned by an author who, notwithstanding the extraordinary powers of his genius, and the vast scope of his varied erudition, may himself, perhaps, be added to the list of those great men who have not been wholly free from credulity.[1]

The above reflections will, we hope, in some measure prepare the reader for the tone and manner which the fathers assume. But it ought not to be omitted that some previous difficulty exists in discovering what are their genuine productions.

State of MSS. It is the task of the critic not merely to distinguish real from counterfeit pieces, but also to detect whatever may have been added or omitted, even in authentic works. A slight mistake in one copy becomes, by some awkward or over-ingenious attempt at emendation, a very material one in the text; and if the first transcript be lost, the error may sometimes become incurable. If the writer has chosen an obscure and intricate style, the smallest alteration will inextricably perplex his meaning. But even the characters of the most faithful copyists are changed by the defacing powers of age. If we should suppose the transcriber not to have mistaken the shape of the letters which he saw, or the sound of the words dictated to him; neither to have been led astray by the temptations of conjecture, nor overtaken by moments of carelessness; still the moth and the dust, and the various injuries of time, will render doubtful what, in its original state, was clear and correct. These are accidents which may befal all ancient manuscripts, and therefore are not peculiar to the works of the fathers. To consider them alone as serious objections would indicate a captious and uncritical spirit. But very different and very important are the alterations designedly made in the works of the fathers—made with the positive intention of misrepresenting their opinions—some in ancient and others in later times.[2] It was a pernicious notion of some writers that the end sanctified the means, that falsehood might be called into the aid of truth. Hence they framed, or at least tolerated, relations manifestly spurious and absurd. Documents were shamefully altered; and it is therefore highly necessary to point out the writings, or parts of writings, attributed to the fathers, which, after impartial examination, appear to be supposititious or doubtful.[3]

Interpolations or forgeries.

[1] See his Account of the Prophecies of Arise Evans. Append. to vol. i. of Jortin's Rem. on Eccles. Hist.

[2] On the subject of falsifications, were written a Treatise by Barthol. Germon, De Veter. Hæretic. Ecclesiast. Codic. Corrupt., and one by T. James, Of the Corruption of the Scripture, Councils, and Fathers, by the Prelates, &c. of the Church of Rome, 1688. But it is a subject which requires much care, much acuteness, and, above all, much candour and honesty, and good feeling. A deep sense of the paramount importance of truth is the best preservative against rash accusations and hasty inferences.

[3] Rufinus, for instance, dreadfully mutilated the works which he undertook to translate; and Jerome, at one time his admirer, confesses that in different parts of his own version of Origen he had omitted what was noxious, *i. e.* in other words, what was contrary to his own opinions, or to the notions and views of his contemporaries; and in defence of this method he alleges the examples of other fathers.

Works on ecclesiastical biography.

Of such *ancient* authors as have professedly treated of the lives and writings of the fathers, collections have been made by Suffredus Petri, Aubertus Miræus, and, with much diligence and erudition, by J. Albert Fabricius.[1] In this class are reckoned Jerome, of whom we have the useful work 'De Viris Illustribus sive Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum,' Gennadius of Marseilles, Isidore of Seville, Ildefonsus of Toledo, Honorius of Autun, Sigebert of Gemblour, Henry of Ghent, &c.[2] In more modern times, the study of ecclesiastical biography has been promoted by the labours of Trithemius, Possevin, Bellarmine, Labbé, Oudin, Cave, and others. To avoid frequent reference, it may be here necessary to state that the writers whom, in addition to others more particularly mentioned, we have chiefly consulted in the following sketches, are Tillemont, 'Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire Ecclési-

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To this cause we must attribute the shreds of different colour and substance, which are not unfrequently complained of by the perplexed annotator and the disconcerted reader. Interpolations have, it is said, been forced into the writings of Cyprian by the defenders of papacy, who even wished to suppress the Letter of Firmilian, because it was thought injurious to their cause; and whole books were destroyed by fire in consequence of the public decrees of popes and councils. Even at a much earlier period, the Christians declare that heretics had published various works under the assumed names of the apostles and of the principal fathers of the church, in order to give to their own opinions the sanction of authority. The same deplorable practice was followed by interested persons, that they might sell their manuscript at a higher price. Hence we find the most imposing names affixed to works in which those illustrious persons had no participation. Thus the Treatise of Novation on the Trinity is ascribed to Tertullian; the Book of Rufinus on the Symbol of the Apostles to Cyprian. Ignorance has also conspired with the love of gain and of celebrity. For instance, the works of Sextus the Pythagorean are attributed to Sextus the Martyr. Nay, more, authors themselves have sometimes circulated their works, either through ambition or through mistaken zeal, under false but attractive titles. In Jerome's lifetime, a letter was published both in Rome and in Africa, purporting to be written by him, in which he was introduced expressing his regret that he had translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew. This fact we have from Jerome himself; and indeed, if recorded by any other person, it would scarcely have obtained belief. Many of the remarks above made will be found more fully detailed in the celebrated work of Daillé, Du Vrai Usage des Pères, a work abounding in talent and erudition. As the principal design of Daillé is to prove that the fathers could not be taken as judges in the particular controversies which were agitated between the Church of Rome and the Protestants, his treatise is rather a collection of the errors than of the excellencies of the fathers; but still it casts great light on many subjects connected with this portion of ecclesiastical history. So far from meaning that the fathers should not be studied, he recommends that we should read them carefully and impartially, arguing from what we find negatively rather than affirmatively, *i. e.* holding as suspicious articles which are not contained in them; it being hardly credible that men so excellent should have been ignorant of the necessary and principal points of faith: but not immediately receiving as infallible what we meet in them; because, being but men, though saints, they may be sometimes mistaken, either through ignorance or passion, from which they were not entirely exempt, as clearly appears from their extant writings.

[1] J. Greg. Walch. Biblioth. Patristic.

[2] The Bibliotheca of Photius also is highly valuable. It contains extracts from a great number of works now lost.

astique;' Fabricius, 'Biblioth. Græca et Latina;' Lardner, 'Credibility of the Gospel History;' and more especially the learned and candid Du Pin, 'Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques.' Much information may also be derived from Cellier,' 'Histoire Générale des Auteur Sacrés et Ecclésiastiques;' and Lumper, 'Historia Theologico-Critica de Vitâ, Scriptis, atque Doctrinâ Sanctorum Patrum.'

Lost writings.

We have noticed only those writers of whom any works are extant. Catalogues of those whose writings are wholly or nearly lost may be found in the above collections. From fragments still existing, it would appear that we have particularly to lament that the numerous works of Dionysius of Alexandria, who appears to have united great talent with admirable moderation and benevolence, are no longer remaining to us.

ECCLESIASTICAL WRITERS OF THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES.

Second Century.

Greek Writers.	*Latin Writers.*
Justin Martyr.	Tertullian.
Athenagoras.	
Hermias.	
Theophilus.	
Irenæus.	
Clement of Alexandria.	

Third Century.

Hippolytus.	Minucius Felix.
Origen.	Cyprian.
Gregory Thaumaturgus.	
Methodius.	

Instead of dividing the fathers into Greek and Latin, they may be arranged chronologically: in that system, Tertullian succeeds to Clement, Minucius Felix to Tertullian, and Cyprian to Gregory.

SECTION II.

GREEK WRITERS OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

JUSTIN MARTYR.

CIRCITER A.D. 140.

JUSTIN was a native of Flavia Neapolis,[1] the ancient Sichem of Samaria. It is probable that he was born of Gentile parents, and educated in the religion which they professed. In early life he evinced that ardent and disinterested love of truth, which finally conducted him to its attainment. The pretensions of philosophy, which naturally awakened the curiosity of every mind susceptible of reflection, soon drew him to inquire into the peculiar principles of its various schools. In the first place he applied to a Stoic preceptor, whom he abandoned on discovering that a knowledge of the Deity formed no part of the instructions which that sect deemed necessary to be acquired. The Peripatetics next attracted his attention; but the anxiety of the teacher to fix the price of his lessons, appeared to him so inconsistent with the character of a true philosopher, that he resolved to give a different direction to his pursuits. Accordingly he turned his thoughts to the Pythagoreans, but here also he experienced disappointment: a previous acquaintance with music, astronomy, and geometry, was indispensably required; but his eagerness to enter upon the investigation of subjects more closely connected with the end of human existence, led him to consider the time devoted to the study of physical sciences an unnecessary delay. At length he met with a Platonic philosopher, to whose speculations on incorporeal objects he listened with intense enthusiasm. In order to meditate on abstruse reasonings, so congenial to his contemplative disposition, he sequestered himself in the depths of solitude. It was in this retirement that, as he was one day walking at no great distance from the sea-shore, he was followed by an aged man of a comely mien and venerable aspect, who directed him to the study of the sacred writings, and pointed out the necessity of seeking by prayer that divine assistance which opens, as it were, the gates of light to the humble inquirer after truth. The impression left by this conversation was never obliterated. Discarding the profession, though not the garb of philosophy, Justin diligently examined and embraced the Christian religion. Such is the account of his conversion which is found in his 'Dialogue with Trypho the Jew:' it may, perhaps, be doubted whether it was meant to be strictly historical. In his 'Apology' he observes that the circumstance which induced him to inquire into

Justin Martyr. A. D. 140.

Early studies.

Conversion. Circiter. A. D. 133.

[1] Apol. i. init.

Justin Martyr.

the real character of the Christians, was the extraordinary fortitude with which they yielded their lives in defence of their faith; a conduct which was utterly irreconcilable with the hypothesis of imposture.[1]

Apologies.

During the persecution under Antoninus Pius he wrote in Rome his first and larger 'Apology,' which is often, but erroneously, called his second.

The second, which, by an error equally common, is named the first, was not written, according to Eusebius, till the time of Marcus Antoninus.

Of these 'Apologies,' the first gives a detail of the manners, rites, and doctrines of the early Christians. The second, which is less extensive, is a complaint of the treatment of the Christians, and the proceedings of Crescens, a Cynic philosopher, from whose malignity Justin anticipated the sufferings which shortly after entitled him to the name

Martyrdom.

of Martyr, by which he is usually distinguished. The exact time when he was executed is uncertain; it appears to have been between the years 163 and 170. The 'Acts' of his martyrdom, still extant, seem in the main to convey a true narration of his courageous behaviour.

Dialogue with Trypho.

In addition to his 'Apologies,' Justin composed 'A Dialogue with Trypho the Jew.' This work contains various arguments to demonstrate that Jesus was the Messiah. Its genuineness, though commonly admitted, has by some writers been called in question. Although valuable in many parts, it is written without sufficient method, and Trypho is an adversary who allows himself to be overthrown with little resistance.

Treatise on the Monarchy of God.

Of the 'Treatise on Monarchy,' in which, according to Eusebius,[2] Justin demonstrated the unity of the Deity by the authority of the sacred writings, and by the testimony of profane authors, we have probably the second part in the extant piece so entitled. It contains some fragments ascribed to Orpheus, Pythagoras, and the tragic poets, which bear undeniable marks of spuriousness.

Among the works considered doubtful, may be reckoned the 'Oration to the Gentiles,' the 'Exhortation to the Gentiles,' and the 'Epistle to Diognetus.' The 'Epistle to Zena and Serenus' appears to have been written at a later date.

Other works.

The remaining books ascribed to Justin are commonly rejected as spurious. Such are the 'Confutation of certain Aristotelian Opinions;' 'Christian Questions, propounded to the Gentiles,' and 'Gentile Questions, propounded to the Christians;' Book of Answers to 146 Questions to the Orthodox,' a treatise which is stored with much curious matter, but which was doubtless not composed by Justin, since in it are many words, as hypostasis, person, consubstantial, &c., not then in use in the church; many passages contradictory to the genuine works of Justin, and even citations from Irenæus (who is there called a martyr), from Origen, and from the Manicheans; whence it may be concluded that it was the production of some writer of the fifth or

[1] Apol. ii. sec. 12.

[2] Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xiii.

sixth century. To these works may be added the 'Exposition of Faith,' in which the mysteries of the Trinity are mentioned in a style foreign from that of the early ages, and the errors of the Arians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, are distinctly attacked. Justin Martyr.

Several writings of Justin are lost; among others, a 'Treatise against Heresies,' mentioned by Eusebius, Jerome, and Photius.

The works of Justin show a considerable knowledge of the opinions of ancient philosophers, and an extensive acquaintance with the substance of the Holy Scriptures, of the meaning of which, however, he is sometimes but an indifferent interpreter. His style, though neither luminous nor energetic, without ornament and without elegance, is not altogether destitute of a pleasing vivacity, and generally wears an appearance of honesty and earnestness, which is in the highest degree adapted to command respect. His manner of reasoning, however, is often loose and rambling, sometimes fanciful and puerile. On the whole he appears to have been a very pious and sincere, though somewhat enthusiastic and credulous man. Character of his style.

The most complete edition of his works is the following: 'S. Justini Mart. Opera, quæ extant, omnia, &c. Operâ et studio unius ex Monachis Congregationis S. Mauri,' Parisiis, 1742, fol. Reprinted at Venice in 1747. The editor, Prudentius Maranus, has diligently marked the various readings, and added copious notes and dissertations. His opinions, however, received a bias from the Church to which he belonged, and his interpretations are not considered as being always just, or his emendations as often fortunate. Editions of his works.

The 'Apologies' (which were also published by Grabe in 1700, &c.) were edited, together with the 'Dialogue with Trypho,' by Styan Thirlby in 1722. The notes of this splendid work are sometimes ingenious and learned, often petulant and rash. In the dedication, which is remarkable for its Latinity, is a violent attack on Bentley, and other eminent critics. The 'Dialogue with Trypho' was edited by Samuel Jebb, Lond. 1719, 8vo.

ATHENAGORAS.

CIRCITER A.D. 178.

Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, lived about the middle of the second century. No mention of him is found in Eusebius or Jerome; but we learn from a fragment[1] of Philip Sidetes (who flourished at the commencement of the fifth century) that he was at first a heathen, and that his conversion was consequent upon the perusal of the Scriptures, which he had undertaken with the view of writing a work against the Christians. He is also said to have been the first president of the catechetical school of Alexandria, and the master of Clemens Alexandrinus. The source, however, from which this account is derived, prevents us from attaching to it any great degree of credit. Athenagoras. A. D. 178. Conversion.

[1] Published by Dodwell in Append. Dissert. Iren.

Athenagoras. Legatio pro Christianis.

Two works, which evince considerable learning and ability, remain in his name: an 'Apology,' called 'an Embassy,' addressed to M. Aurelius Antoninus and L. Aurelius Commodus, and a 'Treatise on the Resurrection.' They are written in a style which, though embarrassed with parentheses, is Attic and elegant. The exact time when the 'Apology' was written (and, as it has been maintained, presented[1]) is uncertain: some place it as early as the year 168; others deny that it can be placed before the year 177. In this work he refutes the three chief calumnious accusations by which, with reckless falsehood, the Christians were assailed—those of atheism, cannibalism, and infamous crimes committed in their assemblies. In his other treatise he shows, chiefly by reasoning, the possibility of a resurrection.[2]

On the Resurrection.

Editions.

The best edition of the treatises of Athenagoras is that of Dechair, published at Oxford, 1706. They were also translated into English, and published, with two preliminary dissertations,[3] by David Humphreys, of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1714.

HERMIAS.

Hermias.

Usually appended to the works of Justin[4] is a small imperfect tract, entitled Διασυρμὸς τῶν ἔξω φιλοσόφων. It is a satirical piece, written with much neatness, and in a lively tone of agreeable humour, in ridicule of the contradictory opinions of the philosophers on the principles of things, the soul, and God. It was composed, in all probability, before the extinction of paganism, and perhaps about the end of the second century, by Hermias, of whom nothing certain is known. The following pleasing analysis of it is extracted from Dr. Ireland's 'Paganism and Christianity compared.'[5] "He begins with the soul, but is utterly at a loss what to determine concerning it from the definitions of the philosophers; whether it be fire, air, or motion—whether it be intelligence, or nothing but an exhalation. Some describe it as a power derived from the stars; and some call it an additional essence, the result of the four elements compounded. One calls it harmony; one, the blood; one, the breath of man; and another, a monad. These contests concerning the nature of the soul are a sure pledge of differences as to its duration. 'For a moment,' says he, 'I fancy myself immortal; but this illusion is presently dissolved by one who maintains that my soul is as subject to death as my body. Another is determined to preserve its existence during 3,000 years. I pass into

Irrisio Gentilium Philosophorum.

[1] See, however, Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Athenag.

[2] The romance, Du Vrai et parfait Amour, which was published in French, purporting to be a translation from the Greek of Athenagoras, by Martin Fumée, Seigneur de Genillée, is a forgery.

[3] The first dissertation is "concerning the Notions of the Jews about the Resurrection of the Dead;" the second, "on Athenagoras and his Remains." In this last he examines the passages of Athenagoras, concerning "the Trinity, concerning Prophecy or Inspiration, and concerning a Plastic Nature, or Energetic Life of Things."

[4] It is also added to Worth's edition of Tatian.

[5] P. 329, note.

other bodies, and become a beast or a fish; nor is it possible for me to call myself by any determinate name. I am a wolf, a bird, a serpent, a chimæra. I swim, I fly, I creep, I run, I sit still, and am made to partake of all opposite conditions in rotation.' He indulges the same vein of humour in the disputes about God and Nature; and describes the fluctuations of his mind under the successive tuition of a number of pagan masters each teaching him a different lesson. 'Anaxagoras tells me that all things are derived from an intelligent Mind, the cause of order, motion, and beauty. In this I should acquiesce, if Melissus and Parmenides did not object, who contend, both in verse and prose, that the universe is one, self-subsisting, eternal, infinite, immoveable, and unchangeable. Awed, therefore, by this double authority, I begin to drop my attachment to Anaxagoras. Yet neither do I rest with Melissus and Parmenides; for Anaximenes now proves to me that all things are produced from air. I begin, therefore, to lean towards his philosophy; but on a sudden I hear a voice calling to me out of Ætna, and commanding me to believe that the system of the world arose from the collision of love and hatred, by whose operation alone can be satisfactorily explained the existence of things similar and dissimilar, finite and infinite. Thanks to you, Empedocles, and in gratitude for so important a discovery I am ready to follow you, even into the crater of your volcano;' &c. He then passes rapidly through a number of other systems:—the heat and cold of Archelaus; the God, matter, and ideas, of Plato; the active and passive principles of Aristotle; the æther, earth, and time, of Pherecydes; the atoms of Leucippus; the existence and non-existence, the plenum and vacuum, of Democritus; the fire of Heraclitus; and the numbers of Pythagoras. Imitating, too, the well-known sentiment of Anacreon, he declares, that his enumeration is yet imperfect, and that other multitudes of names rush upon him from Libya, &c." Hermias.

THEOPHILUS.

CIRCITER A.D. 181.

Theophilus, according to some writers, a convert from heathenism, or, according to the less probable opinion of others, from Judaism, was bishop of Antioch; and wrote, about the year 181, three books in defence of the Christian faith, addressed to Autolycus, a learned heathen, with whom he was acquainted. In the first book, he treats of the nature and attributes of God, of a future life, and of the resurrection of the body. In the second book, he marks the contradictions of philosophers and poets on the subject of their deities, enlarges on the account of the creation, maintains the antiquity and truth of the Mosaic history (in demonstration of which he has subjoined to the work a chronology of events from the creation to his own time), and endeavours to show that the poets had borrowed some of their relations from the sacred Scriptures. In the third book, he refutes the accusations made against the conduct and doctrines of the Christians. The whole Theophilus. A. D. 181. Ad Autolycum.

Theophilus. is fraught with a variety of learned researches and moral thoughts, and is written in an eloquent, though diffuse, ornamented, and Asiatic style.

Editions. It is placed with Tatian[1] and Hermias at the end of the works of Justin Martyr, in the editions of the Benedictines, &c., and has also been published with notes by Conrad Gesner, in 1546; Fell, in 1684; and by J. C. Wolfius, in 1724, in 8vo.

Supposititious works. Jerome informs us that Theophilus had made a 'Concordance' of the works of the evangelists, and speaks of 'Commentaries' on the Gospel, which were ascribed to him, but corresponded not with his diction and elegance. The four books of 'Commentaries,' or 'Allegorical Scholia on the Four Gospels,' now extant in Latin, under his name, were compiled by a much later writer. Some of his tracts are lost.

IRENÆUS.

CIRCITER A.D. 192.

Irenæus. A. D. 192. The exact time of the birth of Irenæus is not known. By some it has been supposed to have taken place towards the close of the reign of Trajan, or the commencement of that of Hadrian. Dodwell places it as early as the year 97, Massuet as late as 140. Though the name

Education, &c. of his country, and the nature of his education are unknown, it may be inferred, with an appearance of probability from the tenour of his writings and history, that he was an Asiatic Greek, and professed Christianity from early youth. He received instructions from Papias and from Polycarp, both disciples of St. John the Evangelist. Having proceeded to Gaul, he promoted the cause of religion as a priest under Pothinus, the first bishop of the church of Lyons. The zeal with which he was animated inspired respect, and he was selected by the martyrs of Lyons to carry letters respecting the Montanists to Eleutherus, bishop of Rome. After the martyrdom of Pothinus in the year 178, he was elected his successor in the see of Lyons. In this capacity he extended his care to the state of Christianity throughout Gaul, and exerted himself with great activity in reclaiming heretics, the number

Works. of whom was in his time considerable. He wrote in Greek 'Five Books against Heresies.' In the first book he describes, and in the four succeeding he undertakes to refute, the errors of various sects, and particularly the Valentinians. He also composed two 'Letters,' one to Blastus, 'concerning Schism,' and another to Florinus, also a heretic, 'concerning Monarchy,' in which he proved that there is but one God,

Address to his transcriber. and that he is not the author of evil. When Florinus embraced the opinions of the Valentinians, Irenæus composed a work, entitled περὶ ὀγδοάδος, 'of the Ogdoad,' doubtless relating to the octonary number of the æons of the Valentinians. It is from the end of this work that Eusebius[2] has cited a remarkable passage, in which Irenæus adjured

[1] Some account of Tatian will be found in a subsequent chapter, on the Heretics of the Second and Third Centuries.

[2] Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xx.

the transcriber in the name of Christ, and of his glorious advent, in which he will judge the living and the dead, to compare and diligently to correct his transcript according to the manuscript whence it was made, and even to insert the adjuration.[1] He was also the author of a tract, 'concerning Knowledge,' directed against the Gentiles; another addressed to Marcianus, being a demonstration of the apostolical preaching; and 'Dissertations' on different subjects.[2] We have already noticed his conduct on the occasion of the dispute respecting Easter;[3] it was marked by consistency, blended with charity and moderation. He is commonly said to have suffered martyrdom; but the silence of Tertullian and Eusebius renders this point very doubtful. Some passages from the various writings of Irenæus may be found in Eusebius, and in the 'Catenæ' (or short explanations of Scripture, formed from various citations from Christian writers); but the only entire work extant is his treatise 'on Heresies;' and of that, with the exception of part of the first book, and some Greek fragments collected from the works of the fathers, we have but a very barbarous and incorrect, though ancient, Latin translation. Irenæus declares, in the preface, that in consequence of his residence among the Celtæ he had been accustomed to a barbarous dialect, and that his style was simple and unpolished.[4] His manner appears to us (although it is scarcely in our power to form a correct opinion from his present disfigured writings) to have been succinct and clear, but neither elegant nor powerful. Photius complains that he sometimes adulterates the certainty of truth in ecclesiastical doctrines by false reasoning.[5] On the whole, however, he was highly esteemed by the ancient fathers, not only for the excellence of his character, but for the extent of his knowledge. Tertullian, in particular, calls him "a most diligent inquirer into all kinds of doctrines."[6]

Irenæus.

Style.

Among the best editions of Irenæus are those of Grabe (published at Oxford, in 1702, in fol.) and that of Massuet, a Benedictine of the congregation of St. Maur (Paris, in 1710, in folio). As the latter editor is ever anxious to prove that the authority of Ireuæus is not opposed to the discipline and doctrines of the Church of Rome, it may be necessary to join to him the learned work of S. Deyling, entitled 'Irenæus Evangelicæ veritatis Confessor ac testis à Renati Massueti pravis explicationibus vindicatus. Editio altera, auctior et emendatior. Lipsiæ, 1721.' Several fragments of Irenæus were published by C. M. Pfaff, in 1715. For further information, see Dodwell, 'Dissert. in Irenæum.'

Editions.

[1] The same request is made by Rufinus in his Preface to his translation of Origen, de Principiis. Gregory of Tours entreats all priests, by the coming of Christ, and the terrible day of judgment, not to suffer parts only of his works to be copied and parts to be neglected. (Hist. lib. x. sec 19.) His adjurations have been ineffectual in preserving his work from mutilations. (Barthol. Germon, de Veter. Hæret. Eccles. Codic. Corrupt.) [2] Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xxvi.

[3] See p. 40. [4] Lib. i. in Præfat. [5] Cod. 120.

[6] Omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator. Cont. Valent. c. v.

CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS.

CIRCITER A.D. 194.

Clemens Alexandrinus A. D. 194.

Titus Flavius Clemens, a converted philosopher, was a presbyter of Alexandria (which, according to some writers, was his birthplace), and flourished in the time of Severus and Caracalla. A disciple of Pantænus, he was instructed by several other masters, of whom he has mentioned the residence,[1] but not the names: from his account, however, we may remark, that he must have travelled in Greece, in Italy, in the East, and in Egypt. He was appointed master of the catechetical school of Alexandria; in which office, on his retirement during the persecution raised by Severus, he was succeeded by Origen, who, together with Alexander, Bishop of Jerusalem, is reckoned among his disciples. Such are the most important facts to be gleaned from the very meagre records of his life which antiquity has left us.

Style.

Clemens may, perhaps, be esteemed the most profoundly learned of the fathers of the Church. A keen desire of information had prompted him to explore the regions of universal knowledge, to dive into the mysteries of paganism, and to dwell upon the abstruser doctrines of Holy Writ. His works are richly stored and variegated with illustrations and extracts from the poets and philosophers, with whose sentiments he was familiarly acquainted. He lays open the curiosities of history, the secrets of motley superstitions, and the reveries of speculative wanderers, at the same time that he develops the cast of opinions and peculiarities of discipline which distinguished the members of the Christian state.

Works.

The three principal works of Clemens still extant, are his 'Exhortation to the Gentiles,' his 'Pædagogue,' and his 'Stromata;' designed, in all probability, to form a regular series of instructions, in imitation, perhaps, of the three degrees of knowledge required by the ancient mystagogues.[2]

Protrepticon.

His first work, the 'Exhortation to the Gentiles' (προτρεπτικὸς λόγος), is a discourse, intended to convert them from the errors of paganism, of which he traces the origin, and discovers the folly, to the truths of Christianity, of which he delineates the nature, and urges the importance. In the course of this address he shows, with his usual erudition, that many of the philosophers and poets have intimated the unity of the Deity.

Pædagogus.

Having thus endeavoured to root out the prejudices in favour of idolatry, he proceeds in the second work, called the 'Pædagogue' (which is divided into three books), to direct and conduct the convert to the knowledge of the duties of a Christian life. It may be considered, therefore, a system of moral institutes. It is written without sufficient method, and contains many rules of conduct, of which the

[1] Strom. lib. i. p. 274.

[2] The Ἀποκάθαρσις, the Μύησις, and the Ἐπόπτεια. This was remarked by Daniel Heinsius.

overstrained rigour or palpable obscurity has been severely exposed by modern writers. Clemens Alexandrinus

Having by this course attempted to prepare the mind for the reception of more recondite doctrines, Clemens discloses his further views in his larger work, entitled 'Stromata,' or pieces of tapestry, which, when curiously woven, and in divers colours, present no unapt resemblance to writings formed of various subjects strung together without order.[1] Clemens himself compares this work to a thickly-planted mountain, in which trees of different kinds, both fruitful and barren—the cypress, the plane-tree, the laurel, the ivy, the apple-tree, the olive, the fig—lie confusedly grouped together; and this irregularity, he adds, was purposely chosen, that mysteries might be concealed from the uninitiated, and yet not hidden from more advanced disciples, even as the fruit-trees perplexingly intermixed on the mountain would be unobserved by the plunderer, without escaping the notice of the labourer, who might transplant and arrange them in a well-disposed and pleasing scene.[2] In this work (from which, as being the most considerable of his writings, he is sometimes surnamed Stromateus), having undertaken, among other points, to prove that the philosophy of the Hebrews has the strongest claim to antiquity, he subjoins an exact chronology which ends at the death of Commodus; a circumstance which gives us reason to believe that he was writing in the reign of Severus. In the fifth book, which is replete with citations, he speaks of the art of instruction by allegories and symbols; and traces the origin of many of the truths found in the Greek writers to the notions of the barbarians and of the Hebrews. The eighth and last book is an imperfect treatise on logic, bearing no reference to Christianity, and belonging, perhaps, to another work. Instead of it, in some manuscripts in the time of Photius,[3] was a tract, still extant, entitled 'What Rich Man can be saved?' which is mentioned by Eusebius as a distinct production.[4] Stromata.

The 'Stromata,' though written in a style neither clear nor suc-

[1] Cæsellius Vindex, a Latin grammarian, and Plutarch, also wrote Stromata. See the account which Aulus Gellius gives of such works in his Preface to the Noctes Atticæ. It may not be amiss to give the explanation of the learned Casaubon: Solitos veteres stragulam vestem pellibus involvere et loris constringere, etiam Jurisconsulti sunt testes. . . . . Constat autem ex veterum lectione, et stragula superiora, et involucrum istud, quod antiquiores στρωματόδεσμον, recentiores στρωματεῖς vocarunt, variis coloribus distincta ferè fuisse. Inde translatæ eæ dictiones ad res significandas varietate insignes: cujusmodi fuit piscis στρωματεὺς dictus, ob coloris aurei virgas per totum illius corpus perductas, inquit Athenæus, lib. vii. Similiter et viri docti Excerpta sua ex variis auctoribus, aut propria etiam scripta, sed veterum referta testimoniis soliti στρωματόδεσμα vel στρωματεῖς appellare, ut Clemens Alexandrinus, &c. (Animad. in Athen. lib. i. c. vi. p. 4.)

[2] Strom. lib. vii. *sub fin.*

[3] Cod. 111.

[4] Lib. iii. c. xxiii.; lib. vi. c. xiv. This tract was found among the MSS. of the Vatican, in which it was attributed to Origen. It was published in Greek under the name of Clemens, by Combefis, in his Auct. Nov. Bibl. Pat. There is a separate edition of it, with copious notes by C. Segaar.

Clemens Alexandrinus

cinct, and abounding with erroneous assertions, contain a great variety of fragments from the lost works of the ancient poets, which have not yet been collected and amended with the acumen and diligence which a task at once so delicate and so laborious requires.

Hypotyposes.

Besides the above-mentioned works, and many others now lost, Clemens wrote eight books of Institutes, or Sketches, of which Photius has given a most unfavourable judgment. He informs us, that they treated of various passages of the Old and New Testament, which Clemens briefly explained and interpreted; and that though some of his notions were correct, others were grossly erroneous. Among other proofs of this latter assertion, he states, that Clemens maintained the eternity of matter and of ideas; the metempsychosis, and the existence of various worlds before Adam; and the merely apparent incarnation of the Word. He quotes a sentence in which Clemens asserts that it was not the Word of the Father that was incarnate, but a certain virtue of God proceeding from the Word, which, having become intelligence, penetrated into the souls of men. All which assertions he endeavoured to establish by the sacred Scriptures.[1] Dupin supposes that Clemens wrote this work before he had been thoroughly instructed in the Christian religion, whilst he was still attached to the opinions of Plato. It is possible, however, that some corruptions may have been introduced into them by the heretics, who, if we may believe Rufinus, altered the writings of Clemens. It is also possible that this work may have been rather a collection of the opinions of preceding ecclesiastical writers, whether heretics or Catholics, than a statement of his own.[2]

Editions.

The best edition of Clemens Alexandrinus is the splendid one of Archbishop Potter,[3] printed at Oxford in 1715, 2 vols. in folio, Greek and Latin, and reprinted at Venice in 1757, with additions: the reprint is less esteemed. Fabricius published some additional fragments at the end of the second volume of his edition of the works of Hippolytus. For further particulars, see Le Clerc, 'Bibl. Univ.' tom. x. p. 175; Jortin's 'Remarks on Eccl. Hist.' vol. ii. p. 126, &c. N. Le Nourry, 'Dissertationes Tres de omnibus Clementis Alexandrini Operibus,' &c.

[1] To this work we may, perhaps, refer the extracts of Theodotus still extant; the extracts from the Prophets published by Combefis; and the Adumbrations on some of the Catholic Epistles, still remaining in Latin.

[2] R. Simon, Hist. Crit. des Comment. de Nouv. Test. c. ii.

[3] Mosheim observes, Potterus, vir egregius, Græcarumque literarum peritissimus, insigniter de Clemente meruit. Multis enim locis feliciter medicinam attulit: multos ex veterum libris apte illustravit. Sed non licuit per morbum oculorum et gravissima negotia summo viro facere omnia, quæ potuisset. Igitur Latina interpretatio multis laborat adhuc maculis, multæque Clementis sententiæ luce et perspicuitate carent. Difficillimum sæpe est, sensus Clementis retrusos non rarò et dogmatibus parum cognitis nixos, assequi; nec minus difficile sæpenumero, nexum et ordinem cogitationum ejus perspicere. (De Reb. Christ. ante Const. p. 323.)

SECTION III.

GREEK WRITERS OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

HIPPOLYTUS.

CIRCITER A.D. 220.

BUT little is recorded of the life of Hippolytus.[1] It appears that he was a disciple of Irenæus,[2] and that he lived in the reign of Alexander Severus. He is called by ancient authors both bishop and martyr;[3] but the seat of his bishopric,[4] and the time and place of his martyrdom, are not certainly known. In the year 1551 there was found not far from the church of St. Lawrence, near Rome, a marble statue, representing, it is supposed, Hippolytus seated on a chair; on the sides of which was a paschal cycle, for sixteen years, beginning from the first year of Alexander Severus, A.D. 222. There was also on it a catalogue of the writings of Hippolytus. The statue was placed in the Vatican; and the paschal cycle, which is the most ancient remaining, was published by Scaliger,[5] by Gruter,[6] and by Bucherius.[7] Several other works of Hippolytus are mentioned by Eusebius and Jerome, but they are either lost or unpublished.[8] Various treatises have appeared under this name, which deserve not to be considered as genuine.[9] His manner of writing is said by Photius to have been

Hippolytus. A. D. 220.

Paschal cycle.

[1] Some confusion has arisen from the circumstance that several persons in ecclesiastical history bore the name of Hippolytus.

[2] Phot. Cod. 121.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xx.; Hier. in Matth.

[4] Hier. de Vir. Illustrib. c. lxi. Gelasius (in the work ascribed to him, De Duabus Naturus in Christo) seems to call him Metropolitan of the Arabians. Le Moyne imagines that Hippolytus was Bishop of Portus Romanus, now Aden, in Arabia Felix. By others it was supposed that he was called *Portuensis* from *Portus Romanus*, near Ostia, in Italy. Heumann contends that his title *Episcopus* arose from a civil and not an ecclesiastical office. See a variety of conjectures in the note of Harles on Fabric. Bib. Gr. tom. vii. p. 184.

[5] See his De Emend. Temp. p. 721.

[6] Thes. Inscript. p. 140.

[7] De Cyclo Victorii et aliis Cyclis Paschalibus. Fabricius refers the reader to the dissertations of Fr. Blanchinus, De Calendar, et Cycl. Cæsaris, ac de Paschal. Canone S. Hippolyti, &c.

[8] Mabillon says that he saw at Rome an ancient MS. containing the books of the four greater prophets, and a short commentary of Hippolytus on the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. (Iter Italicum, pp. 94, 95.)

[9] Perhaps some doubt may exist respecting some tracts, particularly the Demonstration concerning Christ and Antichrist, published by Marquardus Gudius, and inserted by Combefis in his Supplement to the Bibliotheca Patrum. Casimir Oudin considers as genuine the fragment of the book Against the Greeks and Against Plato, &c., and the fragments preserved by Theodoret. The pieces Of the Twelve Apostles, and Of the Seventy or Seventy-two Disciples, were written by Hippolytus Thebanus in the tenth or eleventh century, or by some other late writer. (Lardner, Cred. vol. ii. p. 408.)

Hippolytus. plain, serious, and concise; but not distinguished by the purity of Attic style. His remarks, like those of early commentators, were not always exact; but men who lay the foundations of any science ought to receive commendation for what they have elucidated, not censure for what they have omitted.[1] See S. Hippolyti 'Episc. et Mart. Opera, non antea collecta,' &c. . . . . curante I. Alb. Fabricio, Hamb. 1716, folio, with a second volume published in 1718. It is a valuable edition.

ORIGEN.

CIRCITER A.D. 230.

Origen. A. D. 185. Education.

Origen, who was called Adamantius, was born in Egypt, about the year 185, the sixth of the reign of Commodus. From early youth he was trained by the pious assiduity of his parents in the knowledge of the Christian religion. The study of the sacred Scriptures, of which it was his daily task to commit to memory certain portions, preceded the cultivation of profane literature. His mind, naturally quick and active, was carried beyond a bare acquaintance with the obvious sense of the passages, on which it was employed, into an investigation of their more abstruse and mysterious meaning. His father, whom he embarrassed by proposing difficulties which he was unable to explain,[2] admonished him to rest satisfied with the simple interpretation of scriptural expressions, without pursuing inquiries beyond the compass of his youthful intellect; yet, in his heart, he rejoiced and offered thanks to God, who had blessed him with such a son. Oftentimes, adds the historian, he would, it is said, uncover the breast of his child, whilst he slept, and embrace it with respect as the shrine of the Holy Spirit. His education was also directed by Clemens Alexandrinus, and by the philosopher Ammonius.[3] From their instructions, aided by the propensity which he already evinced, to dive into obscure and intricate questions, we may, doubtless, derive that habit of indulging in allegory, for which he was afterwards noted. His knowledge, at whatever period of his life it was acquired, was vast and various. He was familiar with the opinions of the different philosophic schools, and of the various sects of heretics. He had learned rhetoric and the dialectics, and was not unacquainted with the mathematical and physical sciences. His skill, moreover, in Hebrew, unusual in his age and country,[4] was deemed by the ancients considerable, though modern critics have formed a less favourable judgment.

Acquirements.

A. D. 202. Conduct during the persecution.

Origen was seventeen years of age, when, in consequence of the persecution of the Christians by Severus, Egypt witnessed the sufferings of many martyrs, and, among others, of his father Leonides. On this trying occasion he displayed a violent desire to seal by his blood the sincerity of his faith. His mother endeavoured to deter him by

[1] Phot. Cod. 121 and 202. [2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. ii.

[3] There was another Origen among the disciples of Ammonius.

[4] Contra ætatis gentisque suæ naturam. Hieron. de Vir. Illust. c. liv. Ep. 22 (al. 25).

entreaties from a rash exposure of his life. Finding, however, that the imprisonment of his father had redoubled his impatient zeal, she was forced to prevent him from leaving the house, by concealing his apparel. Thus confined, he could only write a letter of exhortation to his father, in terms like the following: "Remain firm, O my father, and let not your affection for us influence you to change your sentiments." After the execution of Leonides, his property was confiscated, and Origen was left with his mother and six brothers in extreme indigence. In this state he was relieved by a wealthy matron of Alexandria, who received him into her house.[1] Origen.

He continued to attend with so much application and ardour to the study of profane learning which he had commenced, that he was soon enabled to derive a competency by teaching grammar. As at this time, in consequence of the persecution, there was no person at Alexandria to instruct the catechumens, some pagans applied to him, notwithstanding his youth, for instruction in the Christian religion. In this employment his zeal and charity were conspicuous. The tenderness with which he followed the martyrs to their prisons, to the public courts, to the place of execution, and the affection with which he embraced them, repeatedly exposed him to the outrages of his enemies, insomuch that he was often driven to change his lodgings in order to elude their pursuit: from the same causes he obtained, at the same time, a rapid increase of pupils and of converts. Appointed by Demetrius, the bishop, to direct the catechetical school, and anxious to avail himself of this opportunity of promoting the cause of religion, he discontinued his lectures on grammar, sold, to avoid being burthensome, his books on human learning, and contented himself with four obols a day, which were allowed him by the purchaser. He then adopted a system of rigid abstinence; he fasted and worked during the day, and spent the greater part of the night in the study of the sacred Scriptures; sleeping but little, and that little on the bare ground. Chosen catechist.

His exemplary conduct excited the warmest admiration. Many persons were most anxious to expend a portion of their fortune in ministering to his wants, but no consideration could induce him to relax his extraordinary severity. It is a singular circumstance, that notwithstanding his propensity to seek an allegorical sense, he should have founded his austere practice on a too little interpretation of Scripture. Thus he explained and observed, according to the exact letter, the injunction of our Saviour to provide but one coat, to have no shoes, and to take no thought of the morrow. And having taken a similar view of the text which speaks of "some who had made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake,"[2] he gave a proof alike of sincere faith and love of purity, as of youthful ardour Severe mode of living.

[1] Here he was obliged to bear the company of a celebrated heretic, whom numbers, even of the orthodox, attracted by his eloquence, came to hear. Origen, however, scrupulously avoided being present with him at prayers, so great was the horror which he felt for false doctrine.

[2] Matt. xix. 12.

Origen. and want of discretion. His conduct, in this instance, though it might be at first praised by such as were struck with astonishment, was subsequently condemned by rational Christians. Origen himself joined in disapproving of it, when mature reflection had convinced him that it flowed from a false principle and might lead to dangerous consequences. It is but just, however, to add, that the motive which had influenced him to commit this act of excess was the desire that, as females were among his pupils, all suspicion and calumny might be removed.

Effects of his instructions. But, whatever, might be his faults as an expounder of Scripture, the disinterested and affectionate fervour which he exhibited was attended by the most happy effects. Even philosophic pagans, undismayed by the violence of the persecution, which, under the government of Aquila, then fell upon the Christians, came to rank themselves among his disciples. The zeal which he felt, he imparted: several of his pupils closed their lives by martyrdom.

His increasing fame soon multiplied the number of his hearers to so great a degree, that he was obliged to intrust to his friend Heraclas the task of instructing the new converts; reserving to himself the tuition of such as had arrived at a superior measure of knowledge. It was about this period, in the reign of Caracalla, that he visited, for a short time, the ancient church in Rome.

Account of the Hexapla and Tetrapla. His application to study continued indefatigable, and he compiled his famous 'Hexapla' and 'Tetrapla.' In his 'Hexapla,' by the side of the Hebrew text, written two ways, in Hebrew and in Greek characters, he arranged in columns the translation of Aquila, that of Symmachus, that of the LXX., and that of Theodotion; with two other versions, the authors of which were unknown, together with a seventh of the Psalms only. The 'Tetrapla' contained only the first four of the versions.

Travels of Origen. Origen left Alexandria on different occasions. At one time he went into Arabia, at the request of the governor: at another he retired, in consequence of a war, into Palestine. In this latter journey, having stopped at Cæsarea, he was desired by the bishops of the province to expound the Scriptures in the Church, and to instruct the people in their presence, though he was not as yet a member of the priesthood. Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, complained of a step which he represented as an infringement of the rules of the Church; Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus, bishop ef Cæsarea, replied that it had been customary to permit laymen, when duly qualified, to preach before the people, and supported their assertions by enumerating some precedents. Origen, however, being recalled by Demetrius, returned
A. D. 218. to his former occupation. He was afterwards obliged to interrupt it at the solicitation of Mammæa, mother of Alexander Severus, who, anxious to be instructed by a person whose reputation was so widely spread, caused him to visit Antioch, where she was then remaining with her nephew the Emperor Heliogabalus. Having stayed there

Origen.

but a short time, during which he explained to her the truths of the Christian religion, he resumed his residence at Alexandria, and commenced various commentaries on the sacred writings, chiefly at the desire and by the assistance of Ambrose, whom he had converted to the orthodox faith from the heresy of Valentinus. The industry of Origen, in the prosecution of this immense task, is almost incredible. The night scarcely brought relaxation after the labours of the day. It is said, that, in addition to other works which engaged his attention, he commented upon the whole of Scripture.[1]

In the year 228, being obliged to proceed to Achaia, on account of some ecclesiastical affairs,[2] probably the confutation of heretics,[3] he passed through Palestine, and was ordained priest by the bishops of that province.[4] This ordination was to Origen the source of a violent persecution. Demetrius, his diocesan, incensed at a step which he considered as an unauthorized interference with his duties; and actuated, it appears, by feelings of jealousy, forgot his former praises, and reproached Origen with the indiscreet act which he had committed in his youth.[5]

A. D. 231.

On his return to Alexandria, where he continued with his usual ardour his studious pursuits, he felt the effects of the hostility which had been excited against him. Envy never pardons. It was ordained by a council that he should not be permitted to teach, nor even to reside in that city; but, nevertheless, he should retain his dignity of priest.[6] Hence it may, perhaps, be inferred that his doctrine, as well as his ordination, had exposed him to censure. Certain it is, that to his real errors the malignant activity of fabricators had added many inventions[7] calculated to strengthen, if not to implant, unfavourable prejudices. Thus banished from Alexandria, he left the office of catechist to Heraclas, and retired again to Cæsarea, where he was again received with every mark of respect and affection by Alexander and Theoctistus, who intrusted to his care the public exposition of the Scripture.[8] Demetrius, however, dissatisfied with the first condemnation against Origen, accused him before some bishops of Egypt; and, with their concurrence, deprived him of his priesthood, and put him out of the communion of the Church. This sentence of deposition

He is deposed and excommunicated.

[1] Epiph. Hæres. lxiv. c. iii. &c. So indefatigable was Origen, that Jerome (Ep. 29) calls him Chalcenterus (χαλκέντερος), an epithet applied to Didymus the Grammarian, who wrote 3,500 books. Erasm. Adag.

[2] Euseb. lib. vi. c. iii.

[3] Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. xxxiv. &c.

[4] Euseb. lib. vi. c. xxiii.

[5] Euseb. lib. vi. c. viii. &c. See, however, the manner in which Mosheim has explained the dispute between Origen and Demetrius. De Reb. Christ. p. 680.

[6] Phot. Cod. 113.

[7] Pamphil. Ap. pr. Orig.; Ap. Hier. Op. tom. iv. p. 196. Origen complains that the account of a dispute which he had held with a certain heretic had been in many parts falsified.

[8] Epiphanius pretends that Origen left Alexandria in consequence of the reproaches which he incurred by offering incense to idols to avoid being the victim of the brutality of his enemies. See this improbable story in Adv. Hær. lxii. c. ii.

Origen. and excommunication was transmitted to the different bishops, and obtained the assent of all except those of Palestine, Phœnicia, Arabia, and Achaia, who were intimately acquainted with Origen, and showed themselves determined not to withdraw their protection. The complaints of Origen, if we may judge even from the citations of his enemies, were marked by dignified moderation. The death of Demetrius took place soon after this event; he was succeeded by Heraclas; on his election, the chair of catechist was occupied by Dionysius, both former disciples of Origen. From these promotions, we may, perhaps, conclude, that the virulence of persecution was diminished, yet the judgment against him appears not to have been revoked.

A. D. 235. During the persecution of Maximin, when Ambrose was exposed to its violence, Origen wrote to him a zealous exhortation to martyrdom, in which he represents the possession of large property, and the ties of a wife and children, as circumstances which ought rather to animate than to deter the sufferer, inasmuch as they enhance the merit of his sacrifice. Yet even Origen is said to have concealed himself at this crisis.

A. D. 238. When peace was re-established, Origen continued his exertions at Cæsarea, and, during his travels in the cause of revealed truth, by his knowledge and powers of persuasion he induced Beryllus, bishop of Bostra, in Arabia, who had fallen into heresy respecting the incarnation, to return to the Catholic faith; and he reclaimed from their error some Arabians, who taught that the soul died with the body, and resumed life at the resurrection.[1]

Though above sixty years of age, and employed almost daily in delivering discourses, often extemporaneous, he wrote many 'Epistles;'[2] and, among others, one to the Emperor Philip and one to Severa, several 'Commentaries,' and his eight books against Celsus.[3]

A. D. 250. In the persecution of Decius, Origen, whose reputation had marked him out as an object on which severity should be exercised, endured a series of cruelties, which served but to display his constancy and courage. He detailed in letters, now unfortunately lost, but which are represented as breathing a spirit of piety and consolation, how he was confined in prison, and loaded with chains; how, for the space of several days, his feet were violently stretched in stocks; and how his enemies threatened to burn him alive, and subjected him to torments designed to overcome his patience without causing his death.[4] The crown of martyrdom, for which he panted, he never obtained. About this time the death of his friend Ambrose left him in indigence.

A. D. 253. At length, under the Emperor Gallus, and in his sixty-ninth year.[5]

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxvii. [2] Ibid. lib. vi. c. xxxvi.
[3] Ibid. [4] Ibid. lib. vi. c. xxxix.
[5] Ibid. lib. vii. c. i. Eusebius, who was a great admirer of Origen, has detailed his life in the sixth book of his History most amply; there is no ecclesiastical writer of whom more is known.

after having devoted his days to the explanation of the Scripture, the conversion of the Gentiles, and the instruction of the converted; after having, under all circumstances, confessed his belief in Christ, and assisted such as suffered from the same confession, this no less learned than pious, humble, and unassuming man, resigned a life of continued labour and of unabated zeal, repaid by persecution, alike from his fellow-christians and from the pagans. Driven from his country, stripped of his sacred offices, excommunicated from the Church, then thrown into a dungeon, racked by torture, and doomed to drag his aged frame and dislocated limbs in pain and poverty, "till the weary wheels of life at length stood still;"—surely he presents a picture on which it is impossible to dwell without very mournful feelings. Nor is the impression diminished on finding that, notwithstanding the fervour of his piety, the modesty of his language, and the purity of his morals, his memory has been branded, his name anathematized, and his salvation denied.[1]

Origen. Death.

The works of Origen were extremely numerous. Some assert that he wrote six thousand volumes;[2] but if this be correct, the expression must be applied to small tracts and other detached pieces, in which sense every homily, or letter, may be esteemed a volume.

Works of Origen.

If we possessed a collection of his writings mentioned by ecclesiastical authors, we should, in all probability, derive considerable knowledge on the subject of the doctrines and discipline of the ancient Church.[3] But the greater part is lost, and in those which remain in the Latin version of Rufinus, so many additions and retrenchments have been confessedly made, that it is difficult, or rather impossible, to ascertain what portion was composed by Origen, and what portion was inserted by his translator.[4] Allusions to Latin words, expressions unknown to the ante-Nicene fathers, mention of practices not introduced into the Church at the period at which the original work was written—such are the evident interpolations which perplex and mislead the investigator. The translations of Jerome also were, it is said,

Their state. Rufinus.

[1] See the account of the disputes, &c. on this subject in Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Origène.

[2] Hier. in Rufin.; Epiph. Hær. lxiv.

[3] Pour Origène, contemporain de S. Cyprien, et qui seul, si nous l'avions entier, nous donneroit peut-être sur ce que nous cherchons plus de lumière et de satisfaction que tous les autres, il ne nous reste que fort peu de choses, et la pluspart encore misérablement déchirées et changées, les excellens et presque innombrables labeurs de ce grand et admirable esprit n'ayant pu se garantir de l'outrage du temps; ni de l'envie et haine des hommes qui les ont encore pirement traités que tant de siècles et d'années qui ont coulé depuis lui jusques à nous. (Daillé, du Vrai Usage des Pères, lib. i. c. i.)

[4] Rufinus himself, in his translation of the Commentaries on the Romans, acknowledges that he had supplied deficiencies: Ce qu'il témoigne lui avoir couté beaucoup, sans qu'on lui en ait beaucoup d'obligation: car la pluspart des personnes souhaiteroient fort qu'il se fut épargné ce travail, et qu'il ne nous donnât pas la peine de lire ces pensées quand nous cherchons celles d'Origène. (Tillem. Mém. tom. iii. p. 223.)

Origen. disfigured by unwarrantable alterations. The version, still extant, of the Commentaries on Matthew, which, according to Huet, may have been made in the time of Cassiodorus, is both barbarous and incorrect; whole pages are added or retrenched.

Style. The style of Origen is divested of rhetorical embellishments and quaint conceits, and is considered rather plain and perspicuous, than lofty and measured. It is often succinct, and generally appropriate. The mind of the writer appears to be stored with varied researches, which he draws forth, and combines with ease and dexterity; but not to have been gifted with rich, original, inventive powers. As a disputant, though sometimes weak and puerile, he is occasionally acute, ingenious, and eloquent.

Commentaries. His works on the sacred Scripture are divided by Jerome into three classes:—'Scholia,' or brief explanations of difficult passages; 'Homilies,' or discourses addressed to the people; 'Volumes,' or larger commentaries. Of these, the contents of most, and the titles of some, have perished. From information found in various writers, catalogues have been made by Du Pin, Fabricius, and others, to whom the reader is referred for details, which it falls not within the plan of our work to offer.

Eight books against Celsus. The treatise against Celsus, written, according to some, in the year 246, though according to others, not before 249, is still extant in the original Greek. As it is one of Origen's latest, so is it considered his best production. The style is polished with greater care, and the remarks display erudition.[1]

Celsus. Origen informs us that there were two philosophers named Celsus, both Epicureans; one lived under Nero, the other under Hadrian and the succeeding emperors. This last is the person, whose work, entitled λόγος ἀληθὴς, he undertook, at the instigation of Ambrose, to refute.[2] Yet from the objections of Celsus, as noticed by Origen, it is difficult to believe that he could have followed the tenets of Epicurus; it would appear more probable that he belonged to the later Platonic or Alexandrine school.[3]

Editions and translations. This work was brought from Constantinople by a person sent purposely by Pope Nicholas V., who offered an ample reward to any one who should translate it into Latin. But on his death, the task was not undertaken till Theodore Gaza induced Christopher Persona, prior of the convent of St. Balbina, to publish a version.[4] It was better translated by Gelenius in the sixteenth century. It was afterwards published in Greek and Latin by David Hæschelius; and in 1658 it

[1] Huet. Origen, &c.

[2] Orig. c. Cels. lib. i. and iv. It was probably the latter Celsus to whom Lucian dedicated his Pseudomantis. M. Aurelius was then dead.

[3] This opinion is maintained by Mosheim, in his Preface to the German version of this treatise.

[4] See the extract from Simon's Lettres Choisies in Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Persona.

was edited with great correctness, and learned notes, by W. Spencer, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Origen.

In 1700 appeared a French translation, with notes and conjectures, by Mr. Bouhereau.

No part of the writings of Origen has exposed him to greater censure than his treatise Περὶ ἀρχῶν. The Greek text is no longer found: the translation of Rufinus alone is extant. The licenses taken by Rufinus (who confesses that he altered or omitted several passages,[1] pretending that none of the works of Origen had been more corrupted by the heretics) were severely attacked by Jerome,[2] who himself published a version, which has not reached our time. It is no longer in our power, therefore, by distinguishing the author from the translator, to discover the exact nature and extent of the errors of which Origen has been accused. It is from this work that his adversaries have chiefly drawn the proofs of their charges, and that heretics have brought arguments in support of their opinions. It cannot be denied that it is obscure and perplexed; and that the philosophy of Plato is more apparent in it than the authority of the Church.[3] Besides the works of which we have spoken, Origen wrote ten books of 'Stromata,' in imitation of Clemens Alexandrinus, of which he compared the opinions of the heathen philosophers with the doctrines of Christianity, and confirmed the Scripture maxims by Plato, Aristotle, Numenius, and Cornutus;[4] two books, and also two dialogues, on the 'Resurrection;'[5] a great number of epistles and other works, which are lost. The Treatise to Africanus respecting the History of Susanna, which he defends; the Exhortation to Martyrdom, written during the persecution of Maximin; the book on the interpretation of the Hebrew names and measures contained in Scripture, and the book on Prayer, are still preserved.

Treatise de Principiis, written before A. D. 231.

Stromata, written between A. D. 222 and 231.

Other works.

Among the works of Origen it is usual to insert the 'Philocalia,' which is a collection of extracts from his writings, on various questions relating to the sacred Scriptures, made by Gregory Nazianzen[6] and Basil the Great. It was published with annotations by Tarinus in 1619; and is subjoined, with a few additional notes, to Spencer's edition of the Treatise against Celsus.

Several works are ascribed to Origen, which bear every mark of

Suppositious works.

[1] In Prolog. Huet. Origen. Fragments of this treatise are found in the Philocalia, and in the letter of the Emperor Justinian on the errors of Origen, v. Concil. edit. Labbei, tom. v. &c. For a brief account of its contents see Phot. Cod. viii.

[2] Cont. Rufin. i. p. 135.

[3] Tillemont, Mém. tom. iii. part iii. p. 255; Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. lib. vii. pp. 230, 233.

[4] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxiv.; Hieron. Ep. 84; Origen, in Johan. p. 237. In the tenth book he explained the Epistle to the Galatians, and passages of the Prophet Daniel. Jerome looks upon this work as one of those which contained the greatest number of errors, particularly on the Resurrection, on which account no one ventured to translate it. Ep. lxi. c. viii.: lxv. c. ii.

[5] Hier. in Rufin. lib. ii.

[6] Naz. Ep. 88.

Origen.

being supposititious: such are the two Commentaries on Job, and that on St. Mark; the ten Homilies on different passages of the gospel, collected by Merlinus; Scholia upon the Lord's prayer, and upon the Hymns of the Virgin, of Zachary, and of Simeon, which were more probably written by Peter of Laodicea; the Book on the Celibacy of the Clergy; that against Artemas and the Theodotians; that on Penance and Sighs; and others. To this list may probably be added (though mentioned as genuine in the 'Philocalia') the Dialogue against Marcion, in which Origen is introduced defending the doctrines of the Church: it appears from internal evidence not to have been written before the time of Constantine.[1] James Gronovius endeavoured to prove, that the 'Philosophumena,' giving an account of the opinions of the different Greek schools, which is inserted in the tenth volume of his 'Thes. Antiq. Græc.' was written by Origen; but he was refuted by J. C. Wolf.

Entire works of Origen.

Of Origen's entire works, we have a complete edition in four volumes in folio. It was commenced by Charles de la Rue, a Benedictine of the congregation of St. Maur, and on his death continued by his nephew, Charles Vincent de la Rue,[2] who published the last volume at Paris in 1759. It is published by F. Oberthür, without commentary, at Würtzbourg, in 15 vols. 8vo. The Greek fragments of Origen upon the Scriptures were published, with a Latin translation and notes, by Huet, who added to the work the celebrated Prolegomena, under the title of 'Origeniana,'[3] in which the life and opinions of Origen are largely detailed and learnedly discussed. Montfaucon gave an edition, in 2 vols. folio, of the remains of Origen's 'Hexapla,' which have been also published at Leipsic in 1768-70, in 2 vols. 8vo., by Bahrdt.[4]

Huet's Origeniana.

Apology of Pamphilus.

Pamphilus, a presbyter of Cæsarea, in Palestine, who suffered martyrdom during the persecution of Maximin, in the year 309, laboured to collect the works of ancient writers, and particularly of Origen, the greater part of whose writings he transcribed. When in confinement he composed, with his friend Eusebius, (who is also surnamed Pam-

[1] Huet, Origen. p. 276. The genuineness is, however, defended by Wetstein. Tillemont conjectures that it may be ascribed to one Adamantius, who lived about the year 330. (Mém. tom. iii. part. iii.) The authors of the Philocalia remark that a passage cited by Eusebius (De Præp. Evang. lib. vii. xxii.) from a treatise of a Christian writer called Maximus, περὶ ὕλης, occurs in the same words in this dialogue. Fabr. Biblioth. Græc. tom. vii. p. 226.

[2] Charles de la Rue, born in 1684, was a pupil of Montfaucon: his nephew, Vincent de la Rue, assisted him in the preparation of this celebrated edition.

[3] Of the progress of this work the reader will find an account in the Memoirs of the Life of Huet, written by himself, which have been translated into English by Dr. John Aikin.

[4] A list of works on Origen may be found in Fabr. Biblioth. Græc. tom. vii., and in J. G. Walch, Biblioth. Patristic, p. 273. See also L. W. Brüggemann's View of the English Editions, Translations, and Illustrations of the Ancient Greek and Latin Authors.

philus,[1] on account of his attachment to him, and who wrote a 'Life of Pamphilus,' which is almost wholly lost,) five books in defence of Origen. To these Eusebius added a sixth after his death. Of this 'Apology' the first Book, translated by Mufinus, is usually found among the works of Origen and of Jerome. The other books, with the exception of a few fragments, have perished. Jerome maintained, in his Apology against Rufinus, that Pamphilus had written no part of this 'Apology.'[2] This opinion, though defended by some writers, is refuted by Tillemont, Huet, Bull, and De la Rue, which last has admirably edited the 'Apology.' Origen.

GREGORY THAUMATURGUS.

CIRCITER A.D. 243.

Gregory, called also Theodorus, and afterwards surnamed Thaumaturgus, on account of the number of miracles which he is said to have worked during his life and after his death, was born at Neocæsarea, a city of Pontus, and descended from a family, illustrious for its nobility and wealth, but addicted to the pagan worship. On the death of his father, Gregory, then fourteen years of age, though hitherto educated in superstition, was touched with a feeling of respect for the Christian religion. His mother was anxious that he should apply himself to rhetoric, with a view of embracing the profession of the law. His sister being obliged to accompany her husband to Palestine, Gregory, and his brother Athenodorus, availed themselves of this opportunity of proceeding to Berytus, where there was a celebrated school of jurisprudence. In their journey they visited Cæsarea, where Origen, who had retired to that city in consequence of the measures of Demetrius, succeeded by force of reasoning happily blended with the most bland, engaging, and affectionate manner, in drawing them first to the study of philosophy, and thence by insensible steps, to the knowledge and profession of the Christian faith. After having spent five years with Origen, Gregory, desirous of expressing his gratitude for the advantages which he had derived from his precepts, and his regret at parting from a guide whose tenderness had inspired the fondest attachment, pronounced before a numerous assembly, among whom was the subject of his panegyric, a very eloquent discourse, which is still extant, and which has been considered one of the most finished pieces of antiquity. Domestic affairs occasioned his return home: they appear not, however, to have retained any hold on his affections, if it be true that he abandoned his house, lands, and possessions, in order that, disengaged from earthly ties, he might attend in solitude to his spiritual concerns. From this state of retirement he was reluctantly drawn by Phædimus, bishop of Amasea, who consecrated him bishop of Neocæsarea, although it is said, there were at that time but seventeen Christians in the city. Conversions, however, were soon numerous in consequence of his zealous exertions;

Gregory Thaumaturgus. A. D. 243.

Education.

His Panegyrical Oration.

[1] Socrat. lib. iii. c. vii.; Phot. Cod. 13.

[2] Adv. Rufin. lib. ii.

Gregory Thaumaturgus.

and, if his biographers[1] deserve credit, by the effect of his various miracles. But the accounts of his life, excepting such as are derived from his own works, seem to us, in many parts, too destitute of probability to deserve being repeated. It appears that he was sought after, but not found, during the persecution of Decius; and that he was present with Athenodorus at the Council at Antioch, held against Paul of Samosata.[2] Rufinus calls him a martyr; but as this title is not given to him either by Basil or by Gregory Nyssen, it is probably used in a lax sense. His death can scarcely be placed before the year 270, under Aurelian.

Works.

Besides the 'Panegyric on Origen,' Gregory wrote a 'Paraphrase on Ecclesiastes' (which is still extant, and wrongly attributed, in some ancient manuscripts, to Gregory Nazianzen). We have also his 'Canonical Epistle,' which is addressed to a bishop of Pontus, after the Goths had desolated Asia under Gallienus; and prescribes the degrees of penance, which ought to be required of such persons as had been guilty of offences, particularly of an idolatrous nature, during that period. The 'Creed' (which it is pretended that Gregory received from St. John the Evangelist) is, though interpolated, perhaps a genuine production; but the 'Exposition of Faith,' which is ascribed to him, is doubtless different from that mentioned by Basil, and composed by a later, though an ancient writer. The four 'Sermons,' and the 'Treatise on the Soul,' addressed to Tatian, which were published among the works of Gregory, are reckoned by Du Pin as supposititious pieces.

Editions.

The works of Gregory Thaumaturgus were edited by Gerhard Vossius in 1604, in 4to. The 'Panegyric,' was separately published by Hæschelius, with short notes at the end of his edition of Origen's 'Treaties against Celsus.' See also SS. Patrum Gregorii Thaumaturgi, Macarii Ægyptii et Basilii Seleuciensis Opera Græco-Latina. Paris, 1622, in folio.

METHODIUS.

CIRCITER A.D. 290.

Methodius. A. D. 290.

Methodius, bishop of Olympus,[3] or Patara,[4] in Lycia, and afterwards of Tyre, in Palestine, suffered martyrdom at Chalcis, in Syria, during the Persecution of Diocletian, perhaps about the year 311.[5]

[1] Particularly Gregory Nyssen, in his Oration on the Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus. His account is full of wonders, which are faithfully copied by Tillemont, Mem. tom. iv. part ii. p. 685. He asserts, among other absurdities, that Gregory Thaumaturgus received a creed (which the reader may find extracted in Fabr. Biblioth. Græc. tom. vii. p. 253) from St. John the Evangelist in a vision. Scultetus calls this oration Somnium Somniorum. (Medull. Theol. Patr. p. 888.) Comp. Van Dale, Præf. Diss. de Oracul. and Dodwell, Dissert. Cyprian, iv. sec. 10. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. xxviii. &c.

[2] See Suidas, in voc. Γρηγόριος. Kuster reads Aurelian instead of Julian, on the authority of MSS.

[3] Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. lxxxiii.

[4] Suidas, in Lex. in voc. Μεθόδιος.

[5] Jerome adds, that others place his martyrdom in the Persecution of Decius

We have still remaining his 'Banquet of Virgins,' a singular dialogue in praise of virginity. A female, named Gregorium, is introduced relating to her friend Eubulus, (which is said to have been the surname of Methodius,) the discourses made in an assembly of ten Virgins, each of whom (as she feigns) Arete, in whose gardens they met, had requested to speak on the subject of Virginity. The first of these launches forth into excessive praises of its excellency, of which Christ came to set an example; the second, to prevent a dangerous inference, argues that Christ meant not utterly to abolish marriage, which is a permitted, though an imperfect state; the third enters into a description of the mystical union of Christ with the Church, as with a spouse, asserting that the words "increase and multiply" were fulfilled by the increasing greatness of the Christian state; the fourth enlarges on the efficacy of baptism in restoring Paradise, and conferring immortality; the fifth gives counsel for the preservation of this virtue; the sixth maintains that it ought to be attended with good works; the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth Virgins successively lavish their encomiums, and explain, in a very allegorical manner, passages of Scripture to support their opinions.

Methodius. Symposium Decem Virginum.

This Dialogue was published with notes, and a Latin version by Leo Allatius, in 1656; by Peter Possinus in 1657, in folio; and inserted by Combefis in his last supplement to the 'Bibliotheca Patrum.'

Editions.

Fabricius published it with notes at the end of the second volume of the works of Hippolytus, Hamburgh, 1718. The extant fragments of his works were collected and published with the works of Amphilochius, &c., by Combefis, Paris, 1644, in folio.

Besides this piece, Methodius wrote a large work against Porphyry; a 'Dialogue on the Resurrection,' to refute the opinion of Origen[1]—that men were not to be raised again in the flesh—of which Epiphanius has cited a large fragment;[2] another 'Treatise against Origen,' concerning the Pythoness; a 'Dialogue between a Catholic and a Valentinian, on Free Will and the Origin of Evil;' 'Commentaries on Genesis and the Canticles,' all mentioned by Jerome, besides a 'Treatise of Created Things,' cited by Photius;[3] and a 'Sermon on the Martyrs.' The sermon entitled 'Simeon and Anna,' and that on 'Palm Sunday,' appear to have been either written by, or to have received touches from, some later hand.

Methodius is sometimes acute and sometimes solid, but generally turgid and verbose, fond of far-fetched thoughts and fanciful comparisons.

Style.

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and Valerian. In this they are followed by Suidas. Du Pin refers it to the year 302 or 303. It was, perhaps, as Saxius thinks, between the years 300 and 305. (Onomast. i. p. 390.)

[1] It was, perhaps, in consequence of his attack on Origen that Methodius is not mentioned by Eusebius.

[2] Hær. lxiv. See also Phot. Cod. 234.

[3] Cod. 235.

SECTION IV.

LATIN WRITERS OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

TERTULLIAN.

Tertullian. QUINTUS Septimius Florens Tertullianus, the most ancient of the Latin ecclesiastical writers whose works still remain, was a native of Carthage,[1] and flourished during the reigns of Severus and Caracalla.[2]

Life. The son of a proconsular centurion,[3] he appears from his writings to have been at first a heathen, or at least to have entertained but little respect for some articles of the Christian faith.[4] He was afterwards a Presbyter,[5] and officiated, in all probability, either in Rome or in Carthage. It was certain that he was married; a circumstance which militates against the supposition of the celibacy of the ancient priesthood.[6] After having remained in the Church till he had reached the middle age of life, he separated from it and adopted the opinions of Montanus. This change appears to have arisen from the austerity of his character, to which the harsh and rigorous principles of the new sect were peculiarly adapted, and from the vehemence of his temper,[7] which the envy and ill-treatment of the Roman clergy[8] may, perhaps, have contributed to exasperate. Whatever may have occasioned this alienation, there is no reason to believe that it was ever removed. His life (of which the above meagre summary contains almost the only particulars of importance not wholly uncertain) is said to have been extended to decrepit old age;[9] but the time and manner of his death are unknown.

Writings. The writings of Tertullian, as far as they tend to illustrate the history of Christianity during the second and third centuries, have been analyzed and examined with admirable precision and candour by the present learned bishop of Lincoln, in a course of lectures delivered before the University of Cambridge.[10] In noticing a work, to which

[1] Hieron. de Vir. Illust. c. liii. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

[4] Hæc et nos risimus aliquando; de vestris fuimus. (Apolog. c. xviii.) Pœnitentiam, hoc genus hominum quod et ipsi retro fuimus, cæci sine Domini, lumine, naturâ tenus norunt. (De Pœnitent. c. i. &c.) He may, however, possibly allude rather to the general state of the Gentiles when unconverted than to his own private case. [5] Hieron. de Vir. Illust. c. liii.

[6] On this subject, see Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, b. iv. c. v.

[7] Miserrimus ego semper æger caloribus impatientiæ. De Patient. c. i.

[8] Jerome attributes Tertullian's adoption of Montanism to this last cause. De Vir. Illust. c. liii. [9] Hieron. de Vir. Illust. c. liii.

[10] The Ecclesiastical History of the Second and Third Centuries, illustrated from the Writings of Tertullian, 2nd edit. For the sake of brevity, we have generally quoted it under the title of Bishop Kaye on Tertullian.

we have had such frequent occasion to refer, we may be allowed to express our conviction, that, if the volumes of the remaining fathers were investigated with similar undivided attention to the distinct testimony of each particular writer, with similar diffidence of drawing inferences from ambiguous expressions or doubtful narratives, and with similar rejection of that spirit of system and hypothesis which has so often converted the very resources of erudition into instruments for the multiplication of error—it would then be a far easier task than it is at present to frame an ecclesiastical history, which, exempt from the opposite extremes of credulity and captiousness, might be calculated to guide, correct, and promote the studies of the theological student. Tertullian.

Considerable difficulty has attended all attempts not merely to assign the particular dates of Tertullian's works,[1] but even to discover which were written before and which after his adoption of Montanism. The imperfection of the methods which have been pursued is pointed out by Bishop Kaye, who considers the following classification as one in adhering to which we shall perhaps "not deviate very widely from the truth." Classification of Tertullian's writings.

Works probably written while Tertullian was yet a member of the Church:—'De Pœnitentiâ,' 'De Oratione,' 'De Baptismo;' the two books 'Ad Uxorem,' 'Ad Martyras,' 'De Patientiâ,' 'Adversus Judæos,' 'De Præscriptione Hæreticorum.'

Works certainly written after he became a Montanist:—'First Book against Marcion,' 'Second Book against Marcion,' 'De Animâ,' 'Third Book against Marcion,' 'Fourth Book against Marcion,' 'De Carne Christi,' 'De Resurrectione Carnis,' 'Fifth Book against Marcion,' 'Adversus Praxeam,' 'In Scorpiacum,' 'De Coronâ Militis;' 'De Virginibus Velandis,' 'De Exhortatione Castitatis,' 'De Fuga in Persecutione,' 'De Monogamiâ,' 'De Jejuniis,' 'De Pudicitiâ.'

Works probably written after he became a Montanist:—'Adversus Valentinianos,' 'Ad Scapulam,' 'De Spectaculis,' 'De Idololatriâ;' the two Books 'De Cultu Fœminarum.'

Works respecting which nothing certain can be pronounced:—the 'Apology,' the two Books 'Ad Nationes;' the tract 'De Testimonio Animæ,' 'De Pallio,' 'Adversus Hermogenem.'

Of Tertullian's works against the Valentinians, against Marcion, against Praxeas, and against Hermogenes, the reader will find some notice in a subsequent paper on the heretics of the second and third centuries. Of the 'Apology' we have given a slight sketch at p. 31, and of the tract 'De Fugâ' at p. 34, of this volume. The subjects of the rest may be thus very succinctly known.

[1] See P. Allix, Dissert. de Tertulliani Vit. et Script.; Mosheim, Comment. Chronologico-Hist. de Ætate Apologetic. Tertull. &c. See also the list of treatises relating to Tertullian in J. G. Walch. Biblioth. Patristic. p. 29. For an account of Dr. Neander's German work, Antignosticus Geist des Tertullianus, &c. see the Preface to the second edition of Bishop Kaye on Tertullian.

Tertullian. Subjects of his different treatises.

'De Pœnitentiâ' shows the necessity of penitence, and gives a description of the public confession of guilt, called Exomologesis.

'De Oratione,' chiefly an explanation of the Lord's Prayer, contains also some account of the ceremonies commonly used by the Christians during prayer; and touches on the innovations resembling the gentile practices already introduced.

'De Baptismo' was written to establish the necessity of baptism, in refutation of the opinion of a female, named Quintilla, who maintained that faith alone is sufficient for salvation. In this tract Tertullian speaks strongly of the efficacy of baptism in procuring the remission of sins and the descent of the Holy Ghost, and connects it with regeneration: he also discusses many questions relating to this rite.[1]

'Ad Uxorem.' In the first book he exhorts his wife, if she should survive him, not to marry again; in the second, he advises her, if she should wish to marry again, to take a Christian husband.

'Ad Martyras' contains consolations to the Christians who were suffering on account of their religion, and a warning against indulging in disputes whilst they were in prison.

'De Patientiâ;' a forcible exhortation to the exercise of patience.

'Adversus Judæos,' to prove that the Mosaic law was of a temporary nature, and that the Messiah was foretold by the prophets.

'De Præscriptione Hæreticorum.' In this tract Tertullian wishes to show, that the doctrine of the heretics ought not to be admitted, by reason of its novelty; that it is not necessary to enter into a dispute with them on passages of the Scriptures, inasmuch as they neither received the Scriptures entirely, nor interpreted them in a uniform manner; but that the pure faith was to be sought in churches which were founded by the apostles, and which could produce a regular succession of bishops from their time.[2]

'De Animâ;' on the nature and qualities of the soul. It is in this tract that, among other erroneous notions, is found the argument, that the soul is a corporeal substance formed with the body.

'In Scorpiacum,' (meant to be a remedy for the poison of heretics, as it were of scorpions,) directed against the Gnostics, is on the necessity and excellence of martyrdom.

'De Coronâ;' a justification of the conduct of a Christian soldier, who refused to place on his head the chaplet usually worn when the emperors distributed largesses to the army.

'De Virginibus Velandis;' to show that virgins should be veiled in churches.

[1] See Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 427.

[2] Præscriptio, a law term, is an exception, made before the merits of a cause are discussed, showing in limine that the plaintiff ought not to be heard. On the reasons which induced Tertullian to except against all arguments urged by heretics out of Scripture, and to appeal to apostolic tradition, see the remarks of Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 291, and in the Addenda, p. 584, where some observations on the reasoning of Tertullian in this tract, by the learned translator of Schleiermacher's Essay on St. Luke are examined.

'De Exhortatione Castitatis,' and 'De Monogamiâ,' represent second marriages as, in fact, adultery. Tertullian.

'De Jejuniis;' in praise of the extreme fasts of the Montanists.

'De Pudicitiâ;' to show that the church has not power to remit the sins of fornication and adultery, or to readmit into its communion, even after penance, such as had once fallen into these crimes after baptism.

'Ad Scapulam.' An Address to Scapula, governor of Africa, exhorting him to discontinue the severities which he exercised against the Christians.

'De Spectaculis;' to show that a Christian cannot, without incurring the guilt of idolatry, be present at public games or spectacles, which were instituted in honour of the heathen deities. After having shown their effects on the minds of such as were present, he undertakes to evince that all the circumstances of those sights, such as the attire of the actors, &c., were suggested by Satan, in order to deceive men by their similarity to the Christian ceremonies; or to draw them, even unconsciously, into a violation of the Christian precepts. He concludes with a well-known passage, which, though too severely stigmatised and invidiously mutilated by Gibbon,[1] is certainly marked by declamatory virulence.

'De Idololatriâ;' an attempt to show in how many different ways idolatry might be committed.[2]

'De Cultu Fœminarum;' against ostentation in the dress of females.

'Ad Nationes;' in two books, of which the latter is imperfect; a defence of the Christian religion, written with more care but less vehemence than the 'Apology.'

'De Testimonio Animæ;' to prove that the soul bears a natural testimony to the existence of one God and to a future life.

'De Pallio;' composed in order to vindicate himself from the taunts thrown out against him by the Carthaginians, in consequence of his quitting the Roman toga for the pallium, or mantle worn by the Greeks and by philosophers. This singular piece of learned extravagance and obscurity is selected by Mallebranche to support the severe censures which he passes on the style and character of Tertullian.[3] It was separately edited by Salmasius, in 8vo, 1656.

Several works of Tertullian are lost: several supposititious pieces pass under his name. In the latter class may be reckoned some poems ascribed to him, deficient in metre and destitute of merit. We may also, perhaps, add a small 'Catalogue of Heresies' subjoined to the book 'De Præscriptione,' and not found in the Codex of Agobard, the most ancient manuscript of Tertullian's writings. The book concerning the Trinity (a subject, however, on which he appears to have written) is certainly not genuine, and perhaps belongs to Novatian. The Treatise 'On Jewish Meats,' is also the production of a different though ancient author. Supposititious works.

[1] Decline and Fall, &c. c. xvi.

[2] See page 33.

[3] De la Recherche de la Vérité, lib. ii. c. iii.

Tertullian. Style and character.

The language of Tertullian is harsh, uncouth, inflated, and obscure. His Latinity, of which the expressions are often affectedly drawn from the works of the older writers,[1] and often borrowed from the technicalities of jurisprudence, in which he is said to have been skilled,[2] is full of unnatural and barbarous constructions; yet it cannot be denied that bursts of great force and vivacity occasionally flash through his dark and distorted sentences. His spirit, austere and yet fiery, was reflected in a style at once rough and vigorous. His diction has been compared by Balsac[3] to the brilliancy of ebony. There is an impetuosity, a vehemence, and an acrimony in his manner, which combine to astonish, to stun, and sometimes to disgust. His acquirements were varied and copious, not select or well digested. His understanding was acute rather than comprehensive; and his method of reasoning is often rather ingenious than solid. His fancy predominated over his judgment, and his zeal often clouded his intellect. He possessed, too, a satirical spirit, which occasionally adds poignancy to his remarks. Above all, he felt a certain fondness for enthusiastic exaggeration, which, while it led him to neglect the milder tones of simplicity and the softer touches of delicacy, hurried him into the pursuit of quaint conceits, smart retorts, and wild hyperboles. Hence the subtleties which overcast his thoughts, the constant allusions and the new or newly-applied expressions which distinguish his style.

St. Cyprian, it is reported, never passed a day without reading some part of Tertullian's works; and used to say, when he called for the book, "Give me my master."[4] Indeed, though he has not cited him, or adopted his manner of writing, he has imitated him in the choice of some of his subjects, and borrowed many of his thoughts.

The chief editors of Tertullian are Rhenanus, Pamelius, La Cerda, and the learned Rigaltius (Rigault), whose candid remarks gave offence to persons of the Roman communion, to which he belonged. The edition of Rigault, published in Paris in 1664, in folio, is excellent. Semler gave a new edition (1769–1773), in five volumes 8vo, to which a sixth volume was added by Schüzius in 1776. The edition of Oberthur appeared in 1780 and 1781, in two volumes. The best edition of the 'Apology' is that of Havercamp (Leyden, 1718, 8vo). It has been translated into English (together with the 'Apologies' of Justyn Martyr, Minucius Felix, &c.) by W. Reeves. For further information on the different editions and translations of Tertullian, see Lumper, 'Histor. Theol. Crit. de Vit., &c., Sanct. Patrum,' tom. vi. p. 745.

[1] Ruhnken. Præf. ad Schelleri Lexicon. See Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 67.

[2] He is not, however, to be confounded with another Tertullian, who was a Jurisconsult. See Fabr. Biblioth. Latin. tom. iii. p. 347.

[3] In a letter to Rigault.

[4] Hieron. de Vir. Illust. c. liii.

SECTION V.

LATIN WRITERS OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

MINUCIUS FELIX.

CIRCITER A.D. 210.

Minucius Felix. A. D. 210.

MINUCIUS FELIX is supposed to have lived about the beginning of the third century. Jerome, in his catalogue of ecclesiastical writers, places him between Tertullian and Cyprian;[1] of these fathers the former furnished Minucius with many thoughts, the latter borrowed from him many passages. Nothing certain is known respecting his country: it has been conjectured, however, that he was an African. That he followed the legal profession appears not only from the testimony of Lactantius[2] and Jerome,[3] but from the opening of his dialogue in defence of the Christian religion.[4] This dialogue, on which his fame rests, is entitled 'Octavius,' the name given to the Christian advocate, who is introduced as answering the objections of the heathen disputer, called Cæcilius,[5] Minucius himself being arbitrator. It opens with a free and vehement attack, in which, on the one hand, the condition and attainments of the Christians are bitterly reviled, the doctrines of their religion (such as a particular Providence, the resurrection, &c.) ridiculed, and the most absurd calumnies repeated; while, on the other hand, the uncertainty of human knowledge, the superior wisdom of adhering to ancient opinions, and the consequent prosperity of the Romans, are insisted upon. This attack is followed by a spirited reply, in which the folly of heathen fables is severely exposed; the proofs of the existence, providence, and attributes of the Deity set forth; the circumstances of the rise of Roman greatness laid open: some of the doctrines of the Christians defended, and the charge against their manners refuted; and their purity, fortitude, and other virtues, warmly praised. The heathen adversary then acknowledges himself vanquished and converted.

[1] De Vir. Illust. c. lviii. But, in Ep. 30 (al. 50), where perhaps chronological order is not strictly observed, he places Minucius after Cyprian, in which he is followed by Balduin, who thinks Minucius flourished after the middle of the third century (Dissert. c. ii.). Baronius places him near the end of the reign of Severus, A.D. 212; Cave, in the year 220, in his Hist. Lit. (part i. p. 66), but in the year 207 in his Chronological Table of the three first Ages of the Christian Church. On this subject may be consulted Tillemont, Mém. tom. iii. p. 1, Notes sur Minuc. Felix.

[2] Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. v. c. i.

[3] De Vir. Illust. c. lviii. Ep. 83 (al. 84).

[4] Octav. c. ii.

[5] Cæcilius has also the name of Natalis, Octavius of Januarius, and Minucius Felix of Marcus.

Minucius Felix.

Tract, De Fato vel Contra Mathematicos.

Jerome informs us that in his time there was a work concerning destiny, ascribed to Minucius Felix; but though it was the production of an eloquent writer, its style corresponded not with that of the 'Octavius;'[1] it was perhaps attributed to him in consequence of a promise which occurs in that dialogue that he would treat more largely on that subject.[2]

Editions.

The 'Octavius' was for a long time considered as the eighth book of Arnobius. This error had been observed by Hadrian Junius,[3] and was fully shown by the celebrated jurisconsult Balduinus (Baudouin), who published the work separately in 1560, and prefixed a learned dissertation on its author and its contents. Several editions since that time have appeared; among which may be reckoned those of Wowerius, of Elmenhorstius, of Heraldus, and of Rigaltius. All the notes of these commentators were reprinted in the variorum edition in 1672. The dissertation of Balduinus, the entire observations of Rigaltius, and a selection from the notes of other writers, together with his own judicious remarks and corrections, were published by J. Davis, Master of Queen's College, Cambridge. There is also a good edition by James Gronovius, 1709.

Style, &c.

'Octavius' is a work which, though not remarkable for extraordinary research or powerful ability, is written in a very lively varied, elegant, and agreeable manner. The arguments on both sides are set forth with grace and force, and illustrated with learning and intelligence. In the tone of flowing declamation and of poignant raillery which pervades it, the style of a lawyer is perhaps obvious; but it is calculated rather to stimulate the attention, than to warp the judgment, of the reader. Minucius Felix was evidently versed in the writings of Cicero, which have imparted a superior degree of ease, correctness, and polish to his diction.

CYPRIAN.

CIRCITER A.D. 248.

Cyprian.

A. D. 248.

Life, &c.

Thascius Cæcilius[4] Cyprianus, a native of Africa, and probably of Carthage, was converted to Christianity, according to Pearson,[5] in the year 246. Previously to that period he taught rhetoric with great applause,[6] and appears to have lived in a state of affluence and splendour.

Ad Donatum.

De Vanitate Idolorum.

Of his feelings after having received baptism he has given a description in a florid letter, addressed to Donatus; shortly after which it is probable that he wrote his treatise 'On the Vanity of Idols,' in which he shows the unity of God, the absurdity of paganism, and the truth of the mission of Jesus Christ—the two first points treated in the same manner as they are by Minucius Felix, the latter

[1] De Vir. Illust. c. lviii. [2] Octav. c. xxxvi. [3] Anim. lib. vi. c. i.

[4] So called from a presbyter named Cæcilius, by whom he was converted. Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. lxvii. [5] Ann. Cyprian, p. 6.

[6] Lactant. Div. Inst. lib. v. c. i.; Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. lxvii. &c.

Cyprian.

as it is by Tertullian. The first proof which he gave of the sincerity of the change which his opinions and habits had experienced was a voluntary distribution of his property among the poor.[1] He was appointed presbyter, and afterwards rose to the dignity of bishop of Carthage, which was conferred on him by the universal suffrage and pressing wishes of the people. While the persecution of Decius raged, he took shelter in retirement; when it had subsided, he applied himself to remedy the relaxed state of discipline which it had occasioned. His conduct during the disastrous pestilence which afflicted Carthage affords a noble example of piety and judgment, united with the keenest sensibility. When the streets were strewed with the carcasses of the dead, and the living fled with selfish fear, abandoning their nearest and dearest friends, Cyprian assembled the Christians, and strongly, as well as successfully, inculcated the great duties of that humanity which, like the beneficence of the Father of the Universe, embraces within its circle not merely persons of the same persuasion, but the gentile and the persecutor. In the reign of Valerian, when Paternus was proconsul of Africa, he was banished to Curubis, from whence he was recalled as soon as Galerius Maximus succeeded to the proconsulate. His return was followed by his martyrdom.

The last scenes of his life,[2] as well as the part which he took during the disputes concerning the 'Lapsed,'[3] and the re-baptizing of heretics,[4] have been already described. The line of conduct which he adopted with regard to Novatus will be touched upon in a succeeding paper.

Our accounts of Cyprian are chiefly derived from his 'Life,' written by his deacon, Pontius (which we have before mentioned),[5] the 'Acts of his Martyrdom,' and various passages in his works.

Cyprian appears, it must be acknowledged, to have been extremely anxious to enforce the importance of ecclesiastical authority. Much allowance ought, however, to be made for his peculiar situation, surrounded by men, of whom some wished to relax, others to carry to an unnecessary pitch of rigour the discipline of the Church; some to derogate from the episcopal dignity, and others to give undue influence to the Church of Rome. It is much to his honour that he always maintained the independence of the different sees, and that he applauded in strong terms the custom of giving to the people their share in the election of bishops. Discountenancing secret measures, he referred all matters of consequence to his clergy and congregation.

Life by Le Clerc.

A life of Cyprian has been written by Le Clerc,[6] in a manner very different from that in which ecclesiastical memoirs are usually drawn up. Of the observations which it contains, some are acute, some judicious, some, we think, ill-tempered.

Style.

The style of Cyprian is oratorical. It contains scarcely any

[1] Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. lxvii.
[2] See page 60.
[3] See page 53.
[4] See page 56.
[5] See page 60.
[6] Biblioth. Univ. tom. xii.

Cyprian. allusions to philosophy. Though familiar with the works of Tertullian, his taste led him to avoid the perplexed and uncouth style of that writer, and he is generally clear, flowing, and unembarrassed.

Genuine works. The correspondence of Cyprian consists of eighty-one letters, comprising epistles addressed to him (of which an analysis may be found in Du Pin). They cast great light on the history, both internal and external, of the Church, particularly in Africa.

The book on the 'Discipline and Dress of Virgins,' is chiefly an exhortation to avoid the ornamental attire and other corruptions of the age. He speaks of virginity as being the state nearest to martyrdom —as removing from its possessor the curse pronounced against the first woman—as raising her to an equality with the angels.

The treatise respecting 'The Lapsed,' and that on 'The Unity of the Church,' were written after the persecution of Decius.

The treatise on 'The Lapsed' was directed, with expressions of deep censure, against those persons of the party of Felicissimus who were desirous of extending reconciliation, on easy terms, to such as had fallen away. Cyprian observes, that martyrs cannot give absolution of sins, which is a power belonging to the Church alone. He relates certain stories of apostates, whom he represents as having been punished from heaven for attempting to receive the Eucharist.

The treatise on 'The Unity of the Church' contains severe reflections on schism and heresy.

In the book 'On the Lord's Prayer' may be found many general remarks on prayer.

For an account of the tract to Demetrian, see ante, page 54.

The 'Book of Mortality' was composed in consequence of the pestilence which raged in the reign of Gallus.

The 'Exhortation to Martyrdom,' written during the persecution of Gallus, is a collection of texts from Scripture, calculated to animate the Christians to submit with courage to the sufferings which attended the profession of their religion.

The treatise on 'Good Works and Alms' was written probably in A. D. 254, when Cyprian collected considerable sums to redeem some Christians captured by barbarians.

The book 'On the Advantages of Patience,' written in consequence of the disputes respecting the baptism of heretics, was sent, in the beginning of the year 256, with a letter, to Jubaianus. That 'On Emulation and Envy' ('De Zelo et Livore') appeared some time afterwards.

The work of 'Testimonies to Quirinus,' against the Jews, contains a variety of scriptural passages: the first book treats of the temporary nature of the Jewish law; the second, of the mission of Christ; the third, of the moral precepts of revealed religion.[1]

[1] Rivet considered the genuineness of this tract doubtful (Crit. Sacr. lib. ii. c. xv.) Baluzius, who examined various manuscripts, admits that it has been interpolated (Not. ad Cyprian. p. 596). In the opinion of Lardner "there can be no doubt but

Among the books which have been wrongly ascribed to Cyprian are the following: 'De Spectaculis,' 'De Bono Pudicitiæ,' 'De Laude Martyrii,' 'Ad Novatianum Hæreticum,' 'De Baptismo Hæreticorum,' 'De Aleatoribus,' 'De Montibus Sinâ et Sion,' 'Adversus Judæos,' 'De Singularitate Clericorum,' &c. Cyprian.

The works of Cyprian were translated into English, not without care and elegance, by Nathaniel Marshall, in 1727; and into French, with notes, by Lombert, in 1672. Editions, &c.

The most complete editions are that of Bishop Fell, published at Oxford in 1682 (this contains the 'Annales Cyprianici' of Pearson, to which are added the 'Dissertationes Cyprianicæ' of Dodwell), and that begun by Baluzius and finished by Dom. Prudent. Maran, 1726, in folio. This splendid edition was reprinted at Venice, in 1758.

St. Cyprian published a work with this title; but it seems that the books of Testimonies which we now have, or at least some part of them, are liable to objections that have not been fully cleared up." (Credibil. &c. part ii. c. xliv.)

CHAPTER V.

HERESIES OF THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES.

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Importance and difficulty of the subject.

To the philosophic inquirer into the principles of human nature, there is no portion of history which appears, at first sight, better calculated to extend his knowledge than that detail of mental disorders which an account of ancient heresy presents. And, indeed, an accurate sketch of the rise and progress of erroneous opinions would throw considerable light on the operations of our faculties. But such a sketch, even under the most favourable circumstances, would be a task of no ordinary difficulty. Few have the patience, and fewer still the ability, to examine in all its bearings, and to deliver in all its force, the reasoning of the author whose speculations they undertake to explain. Even when not influenced by prejudices, an ingenious expositor will be always apt to blend his own sentiments with the theories of others, and insensibly to substitute a brilliant hypothesis for a tedious copy. Hence it is that, even in modern times, under the existing wide diffusion of literature, we can hardly expect to discover with exactness the system of one writer from the representations of another. And this observation is true, if extended to authors whose character forbids the suspicion of wilful deceit, and to subjects of a mere abstract nature, not involving any personal interest, and not appealing to any particular passion. A recent metaphysician, of distinguished talents, after having forcibly shown, by numerous instances of misconception, the necessity of consulting the opinions of authors in their *own works*, makes the following remarks, which will find an echo in the language of every man who has calmly applied himself to the investigation of truth:—"From my own experience, I can most truly assure you that there is scarcely an instance in which, on examining the works of those authors whom it is the custom more to cite than to read, I have found the view which I had received of them to be faithful. There is usually something more or something less which modifies the general result; some mere conjecture, represented as an absolute affirmation, or some limited affirmation, extended to analogous cases which it was not meant to comprehend. And by the various additions or subtractions thus made, in passing from mind to mind, so much of the spirit of the original doctrine is lost, that it may, in some cases, be considered as having made a fortunate escape, if it be not at last represented as directly *opposite* to what it is. It is like those engraved portraits of the eminent men of former ages—the copies of mere copies—from which every new artist, in the succession, has *taken* something, or to which he has *added* something, till not a lineament remains the same. If we are truly desirous of a faithful

likeness, we must have recourse once more to the original painting."[1] But no such means of verification remain for us in our researches into the tenets of the ancient heretics. Their works have been destroyed by time, by accident, or by injudicious zeal. The fathers (however honest their motive, and however pure their intentions) have handed down to us a picture, drawn sometimes by inflamed, sometimes by ill-informed, adversaries; and who can pretend to trace where the resemblance lurks amid darkened and distorted features? Devoted to the cause of Christianity, with an ardour to which the present state of society offers no parallel, and alarmed not merely at the dangerous doctrines, but sometimes, perhaps, at the disgraceful conduct of the various sects, the orthodox Christians were too ready to admit reports without patient and cautious investigation; hence they occasionally impute sentiments not held, and draw (a fault of most controversial writers) consequences which, however logically deducible from certain principles, were not contemplated by the persons who maintained those principles. The excellence of the end in view sometimes, we think, prevented them from examining the nature of the means by which they hoped to attain it. Without the remotest design of delivering what was positively false, they appear to us not sufficiently anxious to ascertain what was exactly true. In fact, their object was not to give a luminous view of the sources and windings of error, but to draw a hasty outline of its hideousness, and to deter the faithful from advancing a step into its impious circle. Thus systems which, in their first state, were obscure and perplexed, are now become almost hopelessly unintelligible. Conjecture alone can now pretend to delineate the original structure of the strange labyrinth of early heresy; conjecture alone can discover the relation of scattered and disjointed parts, and fill up the chasms of a mighty wreck. These expressions, the result of dispassionate examination, are not, however, applicable to every particular relation of every particular heresy, but to the general state of the inquiry. They are offered as an excuse for the very unsatisfactory analysis which we now present.

Reason that the greater number of early heresies arose from philosophy.

So large a portion of error is to be ascribed to the intermixture of philosophical principles with the peculiar tenets of Christianity, that Tertullian has not scrupled to call philosophers the patriarchs of heretics. The fact is, perhaps, not difficult to explain. There exists in the human mind an unquenchable desire of knowledge; a desire almost uniformly strong in all states and gradations of society, though its immediate objects and channels, susceptible as they are of infinite variety, will differ according to our different ages, capacities, and acquirements. The same desire which draws the early efforts of the savage towards civilized life, urges on his more enlightened neighbour to speculations of a higher order and more extensive range.[2] The feeling is implanted by Nature; the direction is determined by cir-

[1] Dr. Thomas Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind, vol. ii. p. 46.

[2] See Pluquet, Diction. des Hérésies; Discours Préliminaire.

cumstances. When revealed religion first disclosed its truths to mankind, this desire of knowledge received a different bias, but lost nothing of its inherent activity. Announced with extraordinary zeal, by men whose manners were simple as their morals were pure; recorded in works bearing the most incontrovertible marks of honesty and truth; supported, too, by a long chain of striking evidences; and adapted, moreover, to the wants and feelings of mankind, Christianity gradually produced conviction even on the philosophic classes. Thus the effect of this new belief may for a time have been to calm the disquietude of thought, to suspend the restlessness of curiosity. But the elements of agitation still existed, and were soon again excited. The spirit of inquiry no longer turned itself towards the discovery of general facts, but towards an investigation of all their possible bearings, consequences, and modifications. The Christian duties were received; the Christian doctrines were admitted; but then arose the attempt to explain these duties in all their branches and relations, and to accommodate these doctrines to our present faculties and preconceptions. The passions still worked; the imagination still wandered. The mind of the philosopher, which had at first grasped with avidity (if we may so express ourselves) the new system, and remained fixed in momentary tranquillity on its recent acquisition, soon broke from this unaccustomed state of rest. Questions which had long exercised its powers, and which are, perhaps, insoluble in this our present circumscribed sphere of existence, insensibly suggested themselves again. Explanations were sought in Christianity, and not found. The great mystery, for instance, of the existence of evil in the works of perfect goodness, was thought still covered with obscurity. The philosopher, therefore, without rejecting his last-acquired belief, returned back to his old opinions, and endeavoured to explain the facts which were revealed on principles which he had long before embraced; and from this alliance of philosophical works with Christian dogmas sprang most of the heresies of the second and third centuries.

Treatises on heresies.

We shall endeavour, under each separate heresy, to point out the principal works in which it is more particularly examined. The chief ancient treatises on heresies in *general* are those of Irenæus, of Philaster, of Epiphanius, of Augustine, and of Theodoret; to which may be added the short catalogue of heresies affixed to Tertullian's 'De Præscriptione,' and the anonymous work entitled 'Prædestinatus' (which was first published by Sirmond, in 1643). At a later period, the subject was treated by Joannes Damascenus, and several other writers.[1] In modern times, it has exercised the learning of Ittigius, Langius, Lardner, Pluquet, and many others; but notwithstanding the high merits of some writers on particular sects, as, for instance, the masterly production of Beausobre on Manicheism, we know not of any *general* work which gives a full and luminous view of the history of heresies, their causes, origin, connexion, and extent.

[1] J. G. Walch, Biblioth. Theolog. tom. iii. c. vii. sec. 10.

SECTION II.

HERETICS OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

NAZARENES.	CARPOCRATES.
EBIONITES.	VALENTINUS (different Sects of Valentinians).
ELXAI.	OPHITES.
SATURNINUS.	PRAXEAS (Patripassians).
BARDESANES.	THEODOTUS and ARTEMON.
TATIAN.	HERMOGENES.
CERDO.	MONTANUS.
MARCION.	
BASILIDES.	

NAZARENES AND EBIONITES.

Sects arising from attachment to the Mosaic law.

Early Jewish Christians.

THOUGH the heresies of the second and third centuries arose chiefly from an attempt to combine the dogmas of philosophy with the tenets of the Christian religion, there were two sects which sprang from an attachment to the Mosaic law, as far as we can trace, under the following circumstances. Till the time of Hadrian, the Jewish converts of Palestine, of whom a great number had retired to the small town of Pella, beyond the Jordan,[1] still cherished the hope that the glory of their ancient capital would be restored; and still adhered, for the most part at least, to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law.[2] When, however, that emperor had raised Ælia Capitolina on the ruins of Jerusalem, and excluded the professors of the Jewish faith from entering its precincts, the Christians seem to have divided themselves into two classes. One class rejected those usages, the necessity of which they felt could not be maintained consistently with a true knowledge of Christianity, and the observance of which served to identify them with the Jews in the opinion of the Romans; and, as a pledge of their sincerity, they elected Marcus, who was a gentile, as their bishop. Another, but far less numerous class, continued to unite a belief in the chief doctrines of the Christian religion with the maintenance of those practices in which they had been educated. These last, in process of time, if not at first, were divided into two sects, the

[1] Epiph. de Mensuris et Ponderib. c. xv.; Oper. tom. ii. p. 171, ed. Petav.

[2] Et quia Christiani ex Judæis potissimum putabantur (namque tum Hierosolymæ non nisi ex circumcisione habebat Ecclesia sacerdotem) militum cohortem custodias in perpetuum agitare jussit, quæ Judæos omnes Hierosolymæ aditu arceret. Quod quidem Christianæ fidei proficiebat: quia tum pænè omnes Christum Deum sub legis observatione credebant. Nimirum id Domino ordinante dispositum, ut legis servitus à libertate Fidei atque Ecclesiæ tolleretur. Ita tum primum Marcus ex gentibus apud Hierosolymam Episcopus fuit. Sulp. Sever. Hist. Sacr. lib. ii. c. xxxi. See the manner in which Mosheim has explained this passage (De Reb. Christian. ante Const. p. 325).

Nazarenes and the Ebionites,—a division which appears not to have been accurately observed by ancient writers.[1]

Nazarenes. The Nazarenes, a name which in the primitive times seems to have been commonly applied by the Jews to all Christians,[2] were not generally considered as being, strictly speaking, heretics.[3] They appear to have believed that Christ was born of a virgin, and partook, at least in some measure, of the Divine nature.[4] They maintained that the Mosaic ordinances were to be observed by the Jews, without pretending that they were obligatory on other nations.[5] They did not attach any importance to the additional ceremonies of the Pharisees, or the interpreters of the law.[6]

Ebionites. The Ebionites, who are supposed by many to have received this appellation from one Ebion,[7] and by others, with more probability, from their *poverty*, proceeded much further than the Nazarenes, and were accordingly regarded as decidedly hostile to genuine Christianity. They looked upon Christ as a prophet, but denied his miraculous conception, affirming that he was born like other men, according to the common course of nature.[8] They deemed the practice of the Mosaic rites not merely necessary to themselves, but essential to all who hoped for sal-

[1] Hence, perhaps, the different accounts of some writers; *e.g.* Origen informs us that the Ebionites were divided into two classes; some asserting, others denying, the miraculous conception of Christ. (Cont. Cels. lib. v.) Compare Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. xxvii.; Theodoret, Fabul. Hæret. lib. ii. c. i. &c.

[2] Epiph. Hær. xix. and xxix. See, however, Mangey's Remarks upon Nazaren. pp. 9, 53.

[3] Epiphanius, however, who has written on the subject (Hær. xxix.), ranks them among heretics; but his account is very confused and unsatisfactory. The state of feeling in the second and third ages towards those who, though they believed in Christianity, still observed the Mosaic law, but did not force the observance of it on others, may be learned from Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho.

[4] Ναζωραῖοι· οἱ Χριστὸν ὁμολογοῦσιν Ιησοῦν υἱὸν Θεοῦ· πάντα δὲ κατα νόμον πολιτευόμενοι. (J. Damascen. de Hæres. sec. 29.) On which see the note of Mich. Le Quien, and also his Seventh Dissertation prefixed to the work.

[5] See, however, Augustin in Faust. lib. xix. c. xviii.

[6] Hieron. in c. viii.: Esaiæ, v. 9, &c.

[7] So Tertullian (c. Marcion. lib. iv. c. iii. &c.), and many other writers. Compare, however, Orig. c. Cels. lib. ii.; Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. xxvii. &c. "I do not know," says Mangey, "any fact of antiquity better proved than that there was once such a person (as Ebion), and that he gave name to this sect." (Rem. upon Nazar. p. 56.) But the Ebionites themselves, who surely ought to have been acquainted with the subject, asserted that they were so called from their *poverty*: αὐτοὶ δὲ δῆθεν σεμνύνονται, ἑαυτοὺς φάσκοντες πτωχοὺς, διὰ τὸ, φασὶν, ἐν χρόνοις τῶν Ἀποστόλων πῶλεῖν τὰ αὐτῶν ὑπάρχοντα, καὶ τιθέναι παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῶν Ἀποστόλων, καὶ εἰς πτωχείαν καὶ ἀποταξίαν, μετειληλυθέναι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καλεῖσθαι ὑπὸ πάντων φασὶ πτωχοί. (Epiph. Hær. xxx. c. xvii.) Simon says it may well be that those writers who have thought that there was a man called Ebion, author of this sect, had better grounds on which to establish the fact than a certain Spanish historian (Illescas, lib. vi. de la Hist. Pontif.) who invented a man called Hugo, a sacramentarian arch-heretic, from whom the heretics of France have been named *Hugonots*. (Hist. Crit. du Nouv. Test. part i. c. viii.)

[8] Epiph. Hær. p. 30, where he describes at some length the practices of the Ebionites. See also Iren. lib. iii. c. xxiv.; Tertull. De Virgin. Veland. c. vi.; De Præscrip. Hæret. c. xxxiii. &c.

vation; and, consequently, they rejected the authority of St. Paul, which militated against their conclusions. They seem also to have admitted the superstitious customs and traditions of the Jewish doctors. Yet they are also said to have rejected the prophets with abhorrence, and though they retained the Pentateuch, to have entertained for it but little veneration.[1] Ebionites.

Both these sects had their own gospel; that of the Nazarenes,[2] sometimes called the 'Gospel of the Twelve Apostles,' sometimes the 'Gospel of the Hebrews,' has been considered by some writers of eminence as being the original Hebrew of St. Matthew, with various additions derived from tradition. That of the Ebionites is represented as having been more corrupted.[3] Gospel of the Nazarenes and Ebionites.

The Ebionites, moreover, are said to have forged several books under the names of St. John the apostle, St. James, St. Matthew, and other disciples;[4] they also used the 'Voyages of St. Peter,' by St. Clement, but disfigured by alterations and falsities.[5]

[1] Epiph. Hæres. 30 and 13. Simon thinks that the Ebionites, who received no other than the five books of Moses, were descended from some Samaritans who embraced Christianity in imitation of the Nazarenes. (Hist. Crit. du Nouv. Test. part i. c. viii.)

[2] Ἔχουσι δὲ τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον Εὐαγγέλιον πληρέστατον Ἑβραϊστί· παρ' αὐτοῖς γὰρ σαφῶς τοῦτο, καθὼς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐγράφη Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν ἔτι σώζεται· οὐκ οἶδα δὲ, εἰ καὶ τὰς γενεαλογίας τὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ ἄχρι Χριστοῦ περιεῖλον. (Hæres. xxix. sec. 9.) Casaubon would read οὐ πληρέστατον, an alteration not supported by MSS. (Exercit. xvi. ad Ann. Baronii, sec. 115.) In Evangelio, quo utuntur Nazareni et Ebionitæ, quod nuper in Græcum de Hebræo sermone transtulimus, et quod vocatur à plerisque Matthæi authenticum, &c. (Hier. in Matth. c. xii.) Conf. Id. Adv. Pelag. lib. iii.; De Viris Illustrib. sec. 3, &c. Simon, who has treated the subject with much learning, considers the Gospel of the Nazarenes as the original Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, written for the early Christians of Palestine; containing, however, some additions which were inserted by the Nazarenes, but which are not to be rejected as falsehoods. (Hist. Crit. du Nouv. Test. part i. c. vii.) Grabe considers it not as being the Gospel of St. Matthew interpolated, but as being composed by Jewish converts some time before our present gospels were written. He supposes that the Nazarenes and Ebionites afterwards affixed to it the name of St. Matthew in order to facilitate its reception. (Spicileg. Patr.) Mill also thinks that it was written at Jerusalem before the Gospel of St. Matthew; but is of opinion that, even in its first state, it contained many errors. (Proleg. in Nov. Test). Whitby (as well as Le Clerc) looked upon it as the Gospel of St. Matthew translated from Greek into Hebrew, with additions drawn from tradition. (Pref. Discourse to the Four Gospels, p. 46.) Jones, who has diligently collected the opinions of others, also regards it as an early translation of the Greek Gospel of St. Matthew into Hebrew, with the addition of many fabulous relations and erroneous doctrines, composed in the name of the Twelve Apostles by some convert Jews, to favour their notions of mixing Judaism and Christianity together. (Method of Settling the Canonical Authority of the New Test. part ii. c. xxxi.) See also Fabr. Cod. Apocryph. N. T. tom. i.

[3] Ἐν τῷ παρ' αὐτοῖς εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ Ματθαῖον ὀνομαζομένῳ οὐχ ὅλῳ δὲ πληρεστάτῳ ἀλλὰ νενοθευμένῳ καὶ ἠκρωτηριασμένῳ. κ. τ. λ. (Epiph. Hær. xxx. sec 13.) The Gospel of the Ebionites appears to have been different from that of the Nazarenes only inasmuch as it was more corrupted by mutilations and additions; for instance, they omitted the first two chapters of St. Matthew (Epiph. Hær. xxx. sec. 13), which the Nazarenes appear to have retained.

[4] Epiph. Hæres. xxx. sec. 22.

[5] Ibid. sec. 15.

Ebionites.

For further information on the subject of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, see Le Clerc, 'Hist. Eccles.,' An. 72; Ittigius, 'Dissert. de Hæres.,' sec. 1, c. 6; Le Quien, 'Dissert. Damascenicæ,' diss. 7; 'De Christianis Nazarenis, et eorum Fide, necnon de Ebionitis;' Mangey's 'Remarks upon Toland's Nazarenus;' Mosheim, 'Meditationes de Ebione in Observat. Sacr.,' p. 233; W. Wilson's 'Illustrations of the Method of Explaining the New Testament by the Early Opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ,' &c.

Elcesaitæ.

ELXAI—ELCESAITÆ OR HELCESAITÆ.

Sect arising from an intermixture of Judaism and Philosophy with Christianity.

The Elcesaitæ were followers of Elxai (sometimes called Elxæus and sometimes Elcesai), who lived in the time of Trajan.[1] Educated in the Jewish faith, acquainted with the Christian religion, and conversant with the notions of the oriental philosophy, Elxai seems to have attempted a combination of parts gleaned from these various doctrines, and to have grafted the whole on the tenets of an ancient sect of Ossenians (supposed by Scaliger[2] to have been the same as the Essenians), into which he had gained admission. Such, at least, is the impression left on our minds by an examination of the details of Epiphanius, who professes to have seen one of the works of that heresiarch.

Attached to Jewish notions, the Elcesaitæ turned towards Jerusalem in their prayers, kept the sabbath, practised circumcision, and observed other ceremonies; but retaining little, if any, entire part of the Old Testament, they expressed detestation of sacrifices, which they maintained had never been offered by the ancient patriarchs.[3] Though they believed in the existence of one unbegotten and Supreme Being[4] (whom they thought to honour by frequent purifications), they contended, that external compliance with idolatrous rites was irreprehensible, as long as the inward mind remained uninfluenced. They regarded it, therefore, as the part of an intelligent man, on trying occasions, to renounce his faith in words, provided he preserved it in his heart.[5]

It has been doubted whether the Elcesaitæ ought to be reckoned among the Christian or the pagan sects; and Epiphanius[6] acknowledges his uncertainty on that point. They spoke, indeed, of Christ as of a great king, representing him as clothed in a human but invisible form, of stupendous dimensions;[7] but it is not clear whether they applied

[1] Epiph. Hæres. xix. c. i. Eusebius places the rise of this sect much later. (Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxviii.) See Tillem. Mém. Art. Les Elcesaites; Lardner's Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. xxii., which chapter, after the end of the third section, was added by the editor, J. Hogg.

[2] Not. in Euseb. Chron. p. 37. See, however, Barnage, Annal. Eccl. tom i.

[3] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. iii.

[4] Theodoret, Hæret. Fab. lib. ii. c. vii.

[5] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. iii.

[6] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. iii. Theodoret gives a singular account of their belief. Among other docrines, he says that they taught two Christs, one above and one below; and that they believed Jesus to transmigrate into other bodies, and every time to appear differently. (Hær. Fab. lib. ii. c. vii.) Compare Epiph. Hær. xxx. c. iii.

[7] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. iv.

the title to our Lord or to some expected Messiah.[1] Since, however, as we learn from Origen,[2] they retained various passages of the New Testament[3] (though they rejected the whole of St. Paul's epistles[4]), it must, we think, be concluded, that they had partially admitted the Christian religion. Elcesaitæ.

Elxai (whom they regarded as a newly-revealed power, and to whose race they showed the most abject devotion,[5]) had composed a work, which they imagined to have fallen from heaven.[6]

The other tenets of the Elcesaitæ seem to be mostly of philosophic origin. They are said to have been addicted to astrology and magic.[7] They set a high value on water, esteeming it, as it were, a divinity, and as the fountain of life.[8] Elxai is represented as having taught them to swear by salt and water, and the earth, and bread, and heaven, and the air, and the wind. And sometimes, it is added, he spoke of seven other witnesses, namely, heaven, water, spirits, holy angels of prayer, oil, salt, and the earth.[9] Of continence he expressed great aversion, obliging his disciples to marry.[10]

This sect is said by Eusebius[11] to have become extinct almost as soon as it appeared; but followers of it lived in the time of Epiphanius. In Peræa, beyond the Dead Sea,[12] they were also called Sampsæans, a name of which the origin is doubtful. It is derived by Barnage from Sampsa in Arabia; but by Scaliger and Le Clerc, who have the autho-

[1] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. v.

[2] See an extract from Origen's Homily on the Eighty-second Psalm in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxviii.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxviii.; Epiph. Hær. xix. c. ii.

[4] Hist. Eccles. Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. ii. c. vii.

[5] Epiph. Hær. liii. c. i. Elxai appears to have much influenced the Ebionites. (Epiph. Hær. xix. c. v. &c.)

[6] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. i.; Orig. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxviii. Compare Theodoret, Hæret. Fab. lib. ii. c. vii. On similar impostures see Jortin's Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 249. The reader cannot fail, we think, to observe many circumstances of similarity in the conduct of Elxai and of Mahomet.

[7] Theodoret, Hær. Fab. lib. ii. c. vii.

[8] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. ii. Fire he considered as of an opposite nature to water. Epiphanius introduces him as using the following strange expressions: Τέκνα πορεύεσθε μὴ πρὸς τὸ εἶδος τοῦ πυρὸς, ὅτι πλανᾶσθε, πλανὴ γὰρ ἐστι τὸ τοιοῦτον· ὁρᾷς γὰρ, φησὶν, αὐτὸ ἐγγυτάτω, καὶ ἐστὶν ἀπὸ πόῤῥωθεν· μὴ πορεύεσθε πρὸς τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ, πορεύεσθε δὲ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τὴν φωνὴν τοῦ ὕδατος. (Ibid. c. ii.) His object seems to have been to withdraw his disciples from sacrifices to the observance of purifications. But how can any system be framed from the disconnected fragments which are left to us?

[9] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. i. M. J. Matter thus attempts to explain the theory of Elxai: L'esprit, les anges de la prière, l'huile et le sel, appartiennent à un ordre de choses spirituel, *l'esprit* ou le pneuma est un don du plérôme; les anges mettent l'homme en rapport avec le plérôme, en y portant ses prières; l'huile et le sel sont les emblèmes de la communication du pneuma. Quant au génies du *ciel*, de *l'eau*, et de la *terre*, ils appartiennent à un tout autre ordre de choses: ce sont des puissances cosmogoniques. (Hist. Crit. du Gnosticisme, tom. ii. p. 328, Paris, 1828.)

[10] Epiph. Hær. xix. c. i.

[11] Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxviii.

[12] Hær. liii. c. i.; Id. in Anac. c. vii.

Elcesaitæ. rity of Epiphanius in their favour, from a Hebrew word signifying the sun.

Classification of the Gnostics.

The *Gnostics* may be divided into three schools; that of Syria, that of Asia Minor, and that of Egypt.[1] The chiefs of the Syrian school were Saturninus and Bardesanes.

Gnostics of Syria.

SYRIAN GNOSTICS.

Saturninus.

SATURNINUS.

Saturninus, or Saturnilus, of Antioch, published his opinions in Syria about the beginning of the second century, but appears not to have acquired any considerable note.

System of Saturninus.

According to his system, there is one Supreme Deity—the unknown Father—who created angels, archangels, principalities, and powers. Seven angels formed the world and all which is therein.[2] The Supreme Deity descended in a visible shape to survey his work. The angels, smitten with admiration of his luminous image,[3] which had suddenly vanished as they attempted to seize it, made it their model and created man. But man, thus fashioned, was endued, at most, with mere animal existence. He panted and crawled as the worm upon the earth.[4] God, moved with compassion for his image, inspired it with the spark of life—a reasonable soul[5]—which, on death, returns to the heavenly source whence it emanated. Man arose and stood erect. But the government of the world was left to the seven angels, one of whom gave laws to the Jews, and was regarded as their God. All of them attemped to establish their worship in preference to that of the Supreme Deity. Satan, by which he perhaps meant the evil principle

[1] The Gnostics have been divided into *Judaizing* sects, *Anti-Judaizing* sects, and *Eclectic* sects. The inconvenience of this division is pointed out by M. J. Matter (Hist. Crit. du Gnosticisme, tom. i. p. 244).

[2] The school of Saturninus maintained that the creation of the world is attributed in Genesis to the Seven Angels under the plural Elohim, whereas the breath of life is communicated to man by Jehovah Elohim. Many of their ideas are also to be traced to Philo. D'après Philon, ce qui distingue l'homme de l'animal, c'est l'intelligence, πνεῦμα, et l'esprit, νοῦς; ce que l'homme a de commun avec l'animal, c'est l'âme vitale, ψυχὴ ζωτικὴ, ou le principe animant son organization corporelle, ψυχὴ ἄλογος. Ce qui forme la nature de l'esprit, c'est le pneuma de Dieu. C'est là ce que Dieu, Jéhovah, a donné à l'homme, en chargeant les puissances inférieures de faire le reste. Philon expliquait, par cette circonstance, le pluriel employé dans la Genèse, lorsqu'elle rapporte la résolution du Créateur relativement à la formation de l'homme. (Matter, Hist. du Gnosticisme, tom i. p. 281.)

[3] Desursum à summâ potestate lucidâ imagine apparente, &c. (Iren. Adv. Hæres. lib. i. c. xxiv.) .... κατὰ τὴν μορφὴν τῆς ἄνωθεν παραχυψάσης φωνῆς .... (Epiph. Hær. xxiii. c. i.) Instead of φωνῆς, it ought perhaps to be φωτεινῆς εἰκόνος. See Dionys. Pætav. Animad. ad Epiphan. tom. ii. p. 40.

[4] Cum factus esset, et non potuisset erigi plasma propter imbecillitatem Angelorum, sed quasi vermiculus scarizaret, &c. (Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxiv.) See also Epiph. Hær. xxiii. c. i.

[5] Epiph. Hær. xxiii. c. i. See, however, Le Quien, Annot. in J. Damascen. p. 81.

which rules over matter, jealous that any but himself should have made animated bodies, and that God should have imparted to them a virtuous soul, made another race of men, to whom he gave an evil soul.[1] Hence the difference between the good and the bad among mankind. God, displeased at the defection of the seven angels, and at the mixture introduced by the evil principle, sent his Son Jesus Christ as a Saviour —unbegotten, incorporeal, and without figure, in appearance only in a human shape—who, bringing men to the knowledge of the Father, should destroy both the empire of the rebellious angels and the power of the ruler of matter. Saturninus.

Such appears to have been, in the main, the theory of Saturninus. Maintaining that one of the seven angels was the king of the Jews, he rejected the Old Testament. Maintaining also the evil nature of matter, he asserted that the body of Christ was not real, and he denied the resurrection of the human body; hence he recommended that the flesh should be mortified in every man, and hence his disciples abstained from marriage and from animal food.[2] Consequence of the above opinions.

BARDESANES. Bardesanes.

Bardesanes, a man highly celebrated for his eloquence, ingenuity, and extensive learning,[3] was a Syrian,[4] born at Edessa, and flourished in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

Apollonius, a favourite of L. Verus, having attempted to draw him by threats into a renunciation of the Christian faith, he replied, with admirable firmness, that "he feared not death, from which he could not escape, though he should comply with the emperor's desire." He is said to have afterwards fallen into the Valentinian heresy, which he subsequently recanted, but without being able entirely to disengage himself from the false notions which he had once adopted.

The errors of Bardesanes arose chiefly from an attempt to explain the origin of evil. Admitting a Supreme Being pure, happy, beneficent, and wholly exempt from imperfection, he thought it absurd to trace evil to his agency. He sought, therefore, a distinct cause, which he considered to be Satan. To avoid the objection that this was merely removing the difficulty one step, he described Satan not as the *creature* but as the *enemy* of the Supreme Deity. Satan, however, System.

[1] Such is the theory which Mosheim, with more ingenuity than certainty, has attempted to elicit from the perplexed account of Irenæus. (De Reb. Christian. p. 337.) It is extremely difficult to discover what were really the notions of Saturninus on the creation of man and the origin of evil. Irenæus says that Saturninus was the first who taught that there are two kinds of men made by the angels, one good and the other bad; the demons, he adds, assisted the worst.

[2] The above account is chiefly drawn from Irenæus, Adv. Hæres. lib. i. c. xxiv., Epiph. Hær. xxiii., and Theodoret, Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. iii.

[3] Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. xxiii. Bardesanes, cujus etiam philosophi admirantur ingenium. Id. in Os. c. xii. &c.

[4] He is sometimes called Babylonian, whence it has been thought that there were two persons named Bardesanes. See, however, Lardner's Credib. part ii. c. xxviii. sec. 12, and Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. i.

Bardesanes. had no other divine attribute than that of self-existence;[1] for Bardesanes did not consider that attribute as involving any other.[2] He had no further part in the government of the world than as much as is necessary for the solution of the existence of evil. In the system of Bardesanes, the good principle is alone omnipotent, infinite, containing all things, the Judge of the world. The evil principle is confined to the earth; for our Saviour declares, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven;"[3] his perverse nature is wholly insusceptible of amendment.

The Supreme Being created the world[4] and its inhabitants. The human soul, then formed, after His image, pure and innocent, was not clothed with flesh, but with a subtile and ethereal body, conformable to its nature; an ancient opinion, which appears to have been of Jewish origin. This soul, however, being afterwards seduced into transgression of the Divine law by the artifices of the Prince of Darkness, was driven from Paradise, and imprisoned in a gross and carnal body; such, according to Bardesanes, being the meaning of the "coats of skins"[5] with which God clothed Adam and Eve after the fall, and such the "body of this death"[6] from which the apostle longed to be delivered.[7]

Thus was man degraded. Corruptions and disorders, the work of the evil principle, were permitted to afflict the moral world. Hence the internal conflict in the human breast between reason and passion. On this theory, then, the union of the soul with the present body is the cause of evil. The flesh is represented as being the sepulchre in which the soul is buried.[8]

In order to teach men how to subject this depraved body, of which they are forced like captives to drag the chains through this period of existence, came Christ, clothed not in gross flesh, the penalty of sin, but in an ethereal frame, similar to that in which the angels, when sent on missions by the Deity, had appeared on earth, and conversed with man.[9]

[1] Ἐγὼ τὸν Διάβολον αὐτοφυῆ λογίζομαι, καὶ αὐτογέννητον, are the expressions of the Bardesanist in Orig. Dial. c. Marc. Yet he represents God as alone immortal. Probably, therefore, Bardesanes thought that Satan was the production of matter, which he regarded as eternal, and that he would perish on the dissolution of his component particles. See Beaus. Hist. de Manich.

[2] The Bardesanist (in Orig. Dial. c. Marc.) protests against the assertion that he held more than one God.

[3] St. Luke, x. 18.

[4] It ought to be remarked, that in this respect Bardesanes differed from other Gnostics.

[5] Genesis, iii. 21. Compare Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii. p. 466, &c.

[6] Epistle to the Romans, vii. 24.

[7] Orig. Dial. c. Marc.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ἐγὼ φημὶ, ὅτι ὥσπερ οἱ Ἄγγελοι τῷ Ἀβραὰμ ὤφθησαν, καὶ ἔφαγον καὶ ἔπιον καὶ ὡμίλησαν, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστός. Words of the Bardesanist (Orig. Dial. c. Marc.) In answer to the objection drawn from St. John's Gospel (i. 14), "the Word was made flesh," he pretends that *flesh* in that passage was used in the sense of *body*, σῶμα καὶ σάρξ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐστί. (Ibid.) Christ came into the world through the Virgin Mary, without having been formed in any respect of the substance of Mary, Διὰ Μαρίας ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκ Μαρίας. (Ibid.)

Abstinence, fasts, meditation—these enable us to break the bonds of the maleficent power, the passions, which enslave the soul—these, therefore, he considered it as the duty of his followers to observe. Bardesanes.

Such as attended to the preaching of Christ, would, after the dissolution of this "tenement of clay," rise to the seat of happiness, invested with a certain subtile, celestial, and incorruptible body;[1] that body which, according to the interpretation of the Bardesanists, St. Paul calls "the temple of the Holy Ghost."[2]

In defence of this notion, they particularly insisted on the declaration of the apostle, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."[3]

Bardesanes appears not to have rejected any part of Scripture, though he admitted some apocryphal books.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the system of Bardesanes offers no solution of the great mystery which it was intended to remove. The difficulty will always return. If the maleficent principle is beyond God's control, God is not the Omnipotent Ruler of the Universe; if he is under God's control, then God has permitted the existence of evil. Remarks.

Again, the soul, according to this system, though created pure, was seduced by the evil spirit. But the soul must have been by nature, at least, *susceptible* of being seduced into sin. Why was it not created without this susceptibility?

Besides, the hypothesis of Bardesanes is not merely unsatisfactory with regard to *moral* evil, but not even applicable to the subject of *physical* evil.

In examining the opinions of those heretics, who supposed the body of Christ not to have been real flesh, one important remark will naturally suggest itself—the history of the crucifixion must have been considered as resting on unquestionable evidence, otherwise it would have been much easier to have denied the fact than to have attempted the difficult task of explaining it away on the strange hypothesis of false appearances, which fascinated the senses of the spectators.[4]

Besides writing treatises upon the persecution which the Christians in Syria experienced, Bardesanes composed many works in Syriac, which were translated into Greek by some of his numerous disciples; of these are particularly mentioned one against Marcion and other heresiarchs; and another, an excellent 'Dialogue' (said to have been dedicated to the Emperor Antoninus) 'on Destiny.' From this last work Eusebius has cited[5] an elegant and learned fragment, in which Bardesanes undertakes to prove that man is not conducted by instinct and necessity, as the brute creation, but by reason and liberty. He Works.

[1] Orig. Dial. c. Marc. He appealed to the expression of St. Paul (1 Corinth. xv. 37), "Thou sowest not that body that shall be."

[2] 1 Corinth. vi. 15. [3] Ibid. xv. 50.

[4] See Pluquet, Dict. des Heres. art. Bardesane, and Bergier, Dict. de Théolog. art. Bardesanistes. [5] Præpar. Evangel. lib. vi. c. x.

Bardesanes. shows that although all men are of the same nature, yet there are innumerable diversities of laws, religions, customs, and manners, sometimes in the very same country, and under the same climate; and he considers this a circumstance as explicable only on the supposition of freedom of choice. He observes, moreover, and it is an observation which deserves to be attentively noted, that the Christians, though dispersed in so many different parts, could by no means be induced to deviate from their own peculiar laws and customs; and chose to suffer poverty, dangers, ignominy, and death itself, rather than to commit what Christ had declared to be criminal. Of his 'Commentaries in India' some fragments remain.[1] He also wrote a variety of 'Hymns,' which, being rapidly diffused, contributed, doubtless, to lend very powerful attractions to the errors which they conveyed. They were superseded in the fourth century by the 'Hymns' of Ephrem the Syrian, composed in the same rhythm, and to the same tunes. These last have thrown light on the opinions of Bardesanes, against whom some of them were directed.

The best account of this heresy is contained in the 'Dialogue against the Marcionites,' ascribed to Origen. For further information, see Euseb. 'Hist. Eccl.' lib. iv., c. 30; Epiphan. 'Hær.' 56; Theodoret, 'Hær. Fab.' lib. i., c. 22; Augustin, 'Hær.' 35; 'Chronic. Edessen. ap.' Jos. Simon Asseman, 'Biblioth Orient.' tom. i., p. 389. See also 'F. Strunzius,' 'Hist. Bardesanis et Bardesanistarum;' and particularly Beausobre, 'Hist. de Manich.' tom. ii. lib. iv. c. 9.

TATIAN (ENCRATITÆ)—SEVERUS (SEVERIANS).

Tatian. It may be here the most convenient place to notice the heresy of Tatian and his followers. Tatian, surnamed from his native country the Assyrian, after having acquired the learning of the Greeks, and visited various countries, came to Rome; in which city, being shocked at the disgusting and cruel superstitions that prevailed,[2] he began to feel that attachment for the Christian religion, which, on further investigation, ripened into conviction. On the martyrdom of Saint Justin,[3] whose acquaintance he had cultivated, and whose instructions he had received, he returned to Syria, where he published the errors which have caused his name to belong as much to the catalogue of heretics as of ecclesiastical writers. Some time prior to the adoption of these opinions, he composed a 'Discourse against the Gentiles,' which alone of his numerous works is still extant. The scope of it is to demonstrate that the Greeks were not the inventors of the sciences, but had first received them from those who were styled barbarians, and afterwards corrupted them, especially philosophy. In this treatise he also defends the Christian religion, describing in attractive terms the conduct of its followers. He discourses of the nature of God; of the

Oratio c. Græcos.

[1] See Porphyr. de Abstin. lib. iv. &c.
[2] Tat. Or. c. Græc. [3] Ibid.

Word; of the resurrection of the body; of freewill; of the soul (which he regards as in itself mortal, though to be raised up with the body); of devils; the whole interwoven with sarcastic remarks on the absurdities of paganism and the vices of philosophers. This treatise is learned and eloquent, but not sufficiently finished, and not methodically written. It is found annexed to the works of Justin, edited by the Benedictines. A good separate edition, containing the notes of W. Worth and other critics, was published at Oxford, 1700, 8vo.[1] Tatian. Edition.

The spring of Tatian's heresy is said to have been vanity,[2] first excited by the celebrity of his master, afterwards left uncontrolled by his death. The fame of his own pupils contributed to nourish his ambition. The desire of being the founder of a sect occasioned his fall. Such are the causes recorded; but, ignorant as we are in a great measure of the exact principles of the heretics, we are still more ignorant of their latent motives. When we mention any it is rather to state the opinion than to vouch for the knowledge and candour of ancient reporters. If in the present instance we might indulge in conjecture, we should be inclined to think that Tatian, fatigued and harassed by the obscurity of philosophy,[3] had sought satisfaction in the clearness of Christianity, but was soon startled by the difficulties which occurred; thus dissatisfaction returned, and his notions, drawn from the Græco-oriental philosophy, were again called into play. So difficult it is to repress the bent of nature, when confirmed by the force of education; so much easier it is partially to adopt new, than wholly to eradicate old opinions. Heresy. Alleged causes.

Tatian is said to have formed the sect called Encratitæ, or the Continent, in the reign of M. Aurelius. He invented Ænos and Principalities.[4] He maintained that the Creator was but a subordinate Deity,[5] whose words, "Let there be light," he represented not as a command but as a prayer addressed to the Supreme God.[6] To different deities also he ascribed the law and the gospel.[7] These steps were made in order, it would appear, to defend the opinions which distinguished his sect; and these opinions doubtless originated in the supposition that matter was the source of evil. Hence they asserted that Christ had not a real, but only an apparent body;[8] hence they endeavoured by excessive rigour to mortify the flesh; hence they condemned marriage,[9] appealing to the words of St. Paul, "He that soweth to his flesh shall of his flesh reap corruption;" hence, too, they abstained from animal food.[10] They also avoided wine, and even Encratitæ.

[1] Respecting this work, see Le Clerc, Hist. Eccles. An. 172, sec. 1; Bull, Detens. Fid. Nic.; Brucker, Hist. Crit. Philos. tom. iii. 378–396; Fabr. Biblioth. Græc. ed. Harles, tom. vii. p. 88.

[2] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. iii.; Hier. de Vir. Illust. c. xxix.

[3] See his account of his conversion, Or. c. Græc.

[4] Epiph. Hær. xlvi.

[5] Clem. Alex. Excerpt ex libr. Hypotyp.

[6] Orig. de Orat. lib. ii.

[7] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii.

[8] Hier. in Gal. p. 200.

[9] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxxi.

[10] Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xx.

Tatian. at the Eucharist used but water;[1] whence they are sometimes called

Hydroparastatæ. 'Hydroparastatæ,'[2] "offerers of water;" probably the same as the 'Aquarii.'[3] They likewise denied the salvation of Adam.[4] It was, probably, in defence of this system that Tatian wrote some of his lost works. He compiled a gospel, or rather a kind of harmony, formed out of passages taken from the Four[5] Evangelists; that is, it may be supposed, passages were selected or omitted, according as they coincided with or differed from his peculiar views. Thus he expunged

Tatian's Diatessaron. the genealogy of Christ (a point in which it was similar to the gospel of the Hebrews,[6] with which it has been confounded), and retrenched all that related to His human nature, and His descent from David—facts, the knowledge of which would alone enable us to determine that the 'Harmony,' still remaining, and sometimes ascribed to Tatian, but in which Christ is often called "the Son of David," is, in many respects, at least, a different work; and, probably, by a different author.[7] Theodoret informs us, that he met with above 200 copies of this 'Harmony,' which were used, as compendious works, by unsuspecting Christians. Tatian also wrote a book of problems, or

Other Works. questions, on the most obscure parts of Scripture, which questions his pupil, Rhodon, intended to resolve.[8] Besides these works, he composed a treatise respecting animals,[9] another against those who reject divine things, and another 'On Perfection according to the Saviour.' He also undertook to put the 'Epistles' of St. Paul into more elegant language.[10] His sect was widely spread.

The Encratitæ are sometimes called from their master 'Tatians,' or 'Tatianists;'[11] though it would appear that the former were a branch of the sect which had carried to greater heights the doctrines of the latter.[12]

The Encratitæ used the 'Acts' of St. Andrew, of St. John, of St. Thomas, the 'Gospel' of the Egyptians, and other apocryphal writings. They also used some of the books of the Old Testament.[13] Origen[14] asserts that they discarded the 'Epistles' of St. Paul, but

[1] Epiph. Hær. xlvi.

[2] Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xx.

[3] Made a different heresy by Augustine (Hær. lxiv.) and Philast. (Hær. lxxvii.) This practice had been followed by some Catholics in persecution, see Cyprian, Ep. 63.; Tillem. Mém. tom. ii. part ii. art. Les Encratites. On the ancient prejudice in the east against wine, see P. E. Jablonsky, Panth. Ægyptor. part i. p. 131; Mosh. de Reb. Christ. p. 399.

[4] Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xx.

[5] This is a strong proof, as Lardner has observed, that there were four, and but four gospels, which were in esteem with Christians. (Credib. part ii. c. xiii.)

[6] Du Pin, Biblioth. art. Tatian.

[7] On this subject see Mill. Proleg. in Nov. Test. p. 353; F. Wetstein, Proleg. in Nov. Test. p. 65; Vales, Not. ad Euseb. lib. iv. c. xxix.; and Lardner's Credib. &c. part ii. c. xxxvi. Asseman says that Tatian's Diatessaron is in the Vatican library, in the Arabic language. (Bib. Or. tom. i. p. 619.)

[8] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii.

[9] Tat. Or. c. Græc.

[10] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xxix.

[11] Aug. Hær. xxv. &c.

[12] Epiph. Hær. xlvii.

[13] Ibid.

[14] In Cels. lib. v. p. 274.

Eusebius[1] ascribes this measure only to the 'Severians,' so called from Severus, who considerably extended the heresy of Tatian. Severus.

Severus conceived that the existence and intermixture of good and evil in the world showed it to be subjected to opposite principles; some beneficent, and others mischievous; subordinate, however, to the Supreme Being. These principles, by a kind of compact, had distributed on earth an equal proportion of blessings and evils. Man, presenting an union of virtues and vices, was formed by the joint efforts of good and evil spirits. His duty, therefore, was to distinguish what he had received from these respective powers. Now every man was made up of two great properties, sensibility and reason. Sensibility produces the passions which engender misery; but reason gives birth to such pleasures only as promote tranquillity. Severus, therefore, inferred that the former was the gift of noxious, the latter of beneficent powers. As a consequence he regarded the seat of reason as the work of beneficent, and the seat of the passions as the work of maleficent beings; from the head to the navel was formed by the former, and from the navel downwards by the latter. Man, thus formed of two contrary parts, was placed upon the earth; round him the good beings had placed such aliments as serve to support the body without exciting the passions; while the evil beings had placed all that extinguishes reason and influences passion. As the miseries of man have been chiefly caused by drunkenness and lust, Severus concluded that wine and women were the productions of the evil principle.[2] System of the Severians.

The Severians rejected the 'Acts of the Apostles.' They seem to have retained the law, the prophets, and the gospel, but to have interpreted them in a peculiar manner.[3] Probably as a necessary conclusion to their opinion respecting the evil nature of matter, they denied the resurrection of the body, which the Encratitæ admitted.

Apparently another, though later branch of the Encratitæ, were the 'Apotactici,' or 'Renouncers;' so called because, besides following the opinions of Tatian respecting marriage and other subjects, they renounced all property, considering such as possessed anything, together with such as lived in the marriage state, as being incapable of salvation. Epiphanius argues very justly against them, not for giving up their property if they were so disposed, but for condemning all others that did not follow the same line of conduct.[4] They termed themselves 'Apostolical,'[5] concluding that by this austerity they imitated Apotactici.

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xxix.

[2] For this development of his opinion see Pluquet, Dict. des Hérésies, art. Sevère.

[3] The Severians must not be confounded with the followers of Severus, patriarch of Antioch, who, in the sixth century, formed a party among the Eutychians. Bergier, Dict. Théol. art. Sevère.

[4] See his comparison between the conduct of these heretics and of those persons in the church who renounced their goods or forbore from marriage. (Hær. p. 61.)

[5] Apostolici, qui se isto nomine arrogantissimè vocaverunt, eo quod in suam

Tatian. the apostles. They also appear to have been called 'Saccophori,' or Sack-bearers.

Respecting Tatian's heresy, see Clem. Alex. 'Strom.' lib. iii. p. 460, and 'Excerpta ex. Philos. Orient.' p. 806; Epiphan. 'Hær.' 46, c. 1; Orig. 'de Oratione,' c. 13; Hieron. 'Comm. in Galat.' ch. vi. See also Le Clerc, 'Hist. Ecc. An.' 173; and the dissertations affixed to Worth's edition of Tatian.

GNOSTICS OF ASIA MINOR.

MARCIONITES.

CERDO—MARCION—LUCIAN—APELLES.

CERDO AND MARCION.

Gnostic School of Asia Minor. THE next school of Gnostics (if the word be taken in its widest sense) may be called that of Italy, or Asia Minor; not because it was confined to those countries, for it was widely spread, but because it had its rise there.[1]

It was distinguished from the other Gnostic sects by its marked opposition to Judaism, by its rigorous ascetical discipline, and by its pretended claim to possess alone, in consequence of superior critical knowledge, the genuine Scriptures. Its chiefs were Cerdo and Marcion.[2]

Cerdo. Cerdo came from Syria to Rome in the time of Antoninus Pius, about the year 141.[3] Our accounts of his opinions are meagre and inconsistent.[4] According to Epiphanius,[5] he held two opposite principles; one good and unknown, God, the Father of Jesus; the other evil and known, the Creator, who spake in the law, and appeared to the prophets. According to the more ancient authority of Irenæus,[6] though he made a distinction between the God declared in the law and the prophets, and the God who was Father of Jesus Christ, he called the former 'Just,' the latter 'Good.' Theodoret[7] develops this view by giving Cerdo's illustration. The Creator, who was also the author of the Mosaic law, is 'Just,' for He requires that "an eye should be given for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;" but the God proclaimed in the gospels is 'Good,' for he commands, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," and if any man "take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." The

communionem non reciperent utentes conjugibus et res proprias possidentes: quales habet catholica et monachos et clericos plurimos. Sed ideo isti hæretici sunt, quoniam se ab ecclesiâ separantes, nullam spem putant eos habere, qui utuntur his rebus, quibus ipsi carent, &c. (Aug. Hær. xl.)

[1] Matter, Hist. du Gnostic. tom. i. p. 334.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxviii.; Euseb. Chron. p. 168; Philast. Hær. xliv. &c.

[4] Aug. de Hær. c. xxi.

[5] Hær. xli. c. i.

[6] Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxvii.

[7] Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xxiv.

former, he contended, directs us to love a friend, and hate an enemy; but the latter teaches us to love even our enemies.[1] Cerdo.

In consequence of this view he despised the authority of the Old Testament,[2] and maintained that the object of Christ's mission from the unknown Father was to overthrow the empire of the Creator of the world.[3]

But as he, doubtless, looked upon matter as evil, he would not allow the truth of the birth, and the reality of the passion of Christ. He supposed that He had assumed the mere phantom of a human form, and had suffered only in appearance.[4] He was also led in consequence to deny the resurrection of the body.[5]

These errors Cerdo recanted, and afterwards taught again.[6] The result was his ejection, or perhaps previous secession,[7] from the Church. The system of Cerdo was embraced and amplified, more boldly maintained and more successfully taught by his disciple Marcion, a native of Sinope,[8] in Pontus, who flourished in the reign of Antoninus Pius.[9] Marcion. Life.

Epiphanius traces his alienation from the true faith to an act of incontinence, in consequence of which he was not only excluded from the communion of the Church by his father, the bishop of Sinope, notwithstanding his professions of repentance, but also by the elders of the church of Rome, to the bishopric of which his ambitious views had been directed.[10] Beausobre[11] has shown, with his usual acuteness, the incredibility of a story, on which the ancient authors, who professedly wrote against Marcion, have been wholly silent, though the tenour of their argument, falling in with their indignation and animosity, would frequently have led them to allude to such a circumstance, if currently reported in their time. His subsequent conduct, at least, appears not to have exposed him to any accusation of immorality. Improbability of the story of his fall in Epiphanius.

Tertullian relates that Marcion, regretting the errors which had Tertullian's account of his recantation.

[1] It was justly observed that Cerdo had not attended to the precept of the law, "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and thou wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." (Exod. xxiii. 4.) Nor had Cerdo weighed the expressions of the Gospel, which show its author to be just: "With whatever measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. vii. 2; Luke, vi. 28.) Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xxiv.

[2] Epiph. Hær. xli. &c. [3] Ibid.

[4] Epiph. Hær. xli. &c.; Philast. Hær. xliv.

[5] Epiph. Hær. xli. &c. [6] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. iv. p. 77.

[7] Vales, Ann. in Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. ii.; Lardner, Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. ix.

[8] It is apparently owing to the situation and pursuit of his native city that he is called a sailor by Rhodon (ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii.), and frequently by Tertullian (Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. vi. &c.)

[9] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. v. c. xix. &c. On the time in which Marcion lived, see Lardner, Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. x. sec. 2.

[10] Hær. xlii. c. i. This story is also found in the Catalogue of Heresies, added to Tertull. de Præscript. [11] Histoire de Manich. tom. ii. p. 77.

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occasioned his repeated ejections from the Church, applied for readmission, and that his application was granted, provided he could bring back to the Catholic faith those persons whom he had drawn into heresy. To this condition he assented, but death prevented him from fulfilling it.[1] There is great reason to suppose that Tertullian has here confounded Marcion with Cerdo.[2]

Marcion is described as a man fond of innovations,[3] of an ardent temperament, and of considerable acquirements.[4]

Numerous followers.

It is certain that his followers were very numerous.[5] They are represented by Justin Martyr as being of all ranks, and in divers places.[6] The variety of works written against him sufficiently evince the fact.[7] About a thousand Marcionites were converted by Theodoret in his diocese.[8] These followers are said to have held their founder in high veneration. Many of them, however, differed from him on several points,[9] and divided themselves into many parties,[10] a circumstance which is not peculiar to this heresy, and which, by not being sufficiently considered, has proved a source of much confusion in the history of religious sects.

System of Marcion.

It is difficult to reconcile the accounts[11] of the opinions of Marcion, which have been transmitted to us. The following, however, appears, we think, to have been something like his system.

Two eternal principles, and two subordinate ones.

Familiar with the Stoical doctrines,[12] he admitted two eternal principles, God the Father, and matter. From God the Father, who was

[1] De Præcept. Hær. c. xxx.
[2] Tillem. Mém. tom. ii. p. 195, &c.
[3] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv.
[4] Hieron. in Os. c. x.
[5] See Lardner, Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. x. sec. 9.
[6] Apol. i. pp. 70, 92.
[7] Among others, Justin Martyr, Dionysius of Corinth, Theophilus of Antioch, Philip of Gortyna, Modestus, Melito, Apollinaris, &c.
[8] Ep. 113, tom. iii.
[9] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. ii.
[10] Rhodon, ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii.
[11] Theodoret (Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xxiv.) says Marcion held four principles; Epiphanius (Hær. xlii. c. iii.) that he held three; so also Cyril of Jerusalem (Cat. xvi. c. vii.), and the Dialogue against the Marcionites, ascribed to Origen. Augustine, expressly contradicting Epiphanius, says he held only two (De Hær. c. xxii.) According to Rhodon, in Eusebius, it was one Synerus who introduced the doctrine of three principles and three natures (Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii.) Some of these contradictory statements arose, perhaps, from confounding the different branches of the Marcionite heresy; they may, however, be also attributed, as Beausobre has shown, to the ambiguous meaning of ἀρχή, or principle, which was sometimes taken in its philosophical sense, sometimes in its political: in the former signifying a self-existent and eternal being, causing the existence of others (ἀρχὰς δὲ λέγομεν διὰ τοῦτο, ὅτι οὐκ ἐστὶ τι πρωτέρον, ἐξ οὗ γέγναται, Plut. de Plac. Phil. c. ii. p 875); in the latter, a being who has power and authority over the subjects whom he rules. When, therefore, the Marcionite asserted that he admitted but two principles, he meant in a philosophical sense; *i. e.* there were but two self-existent beings, causing the existence of others, God and Matter; when he asserted that there were three principles, he used the word in its political sense; *i. e.* there were three beings who had power and command, God, the Creator, and Satan. God having power over the Christians, the Creator over the Jews, the Evil One over the Pagans. (Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 89.)
[12] Tertull. de Præscript. c. vii.

essentially good, came the Creator, or Demiurge, whom, in conformity to the notions of Cerdo, he termed Just, or Severe.[1] From matter, which was essentially evil, came Satan. The good principle governs the Christians; the Demiurgic principle the Jews; the evil principle the Heathens.[2] Marcion

Marcion is often represented as having admitted the existence of two Gods.[3] The lax use of the title God, doubtless, led to this conclusion; but it is clear that he did not admit the existence of two equal and independent beings, having each of them the nature and perfections of the Deity. The good principle, the Marcionites maintained, was infinitely the most powerful; and Satan, to whom, in imitation of Scriptural expression, they sometimes gave the name of God, was considered by them as an angel.[4] The Supreme Deity—the Father of pure and infinite goodness, inaccessible, invisible,[5] the maker of spiritual and happy beings—created the immaterial and unseen world, far greater and better than this lower and visible world, of which the author (operating on matter pre-existent, which is in its nature evil)[6] was the Creator, the God of the Jews,[7] spoken of by the Prophets, and represented as a sanguinary Judge.[8] Whether he admitted two Gods.

It is necessary to ascertain what was their distinction between good, just, or severe, and evil. The division of mankind[9] by Bardesanes[10] will illustrate and explain it. Some men, like scorpions and adders, hurt without provocation; others are satisfied with doing evil to those who do evil to them; others, lastly, are gentle as lambs, and render not evil for evil: of these, the first are called wicked, the second just, or rather rigorous, the last good. By the evil one, therefore, was meant he who does evil, even to the guiltless; by the just, he whose treatment of men is measured by their mere deserts, whose penalties are consequently confined to the guilty; by the good one, he who does evil to no one, neither to the guilty nor to to the guiltless (goodness being employed in the sense of mildness and beneficence), in defence of which he urged the text, as he read it, "There is but one good, namely, God the Father." In this scheme, the Supreme Deity resembled the gods of Epicurus, and most philosophers,[11] neither Explanation of his distinction into good, just, and evil.

[1] He is often, however, said to have looked upon the Demiurge as an evil god. See Tertull. Adv. Marc.

[2] Orig. Dial. adv. Marcion, sec. 1.

[3] Iren. lib. iii. c. xxv. &c. When the Orthodox, in the Dialogue ascribed to Origen, asks the Marcionite if his three principles were equal in power, he answers, *μὴ γένοιτο, οὐκ εἰσὶν ἴσοι.*

[4] Lardner, Hist. of Heretics, book i. sec. 9; book ii. c. x. sec. 10.

[5] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. vi.

[6] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii.

[7] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xv.; Hier. Com. in Is. c. xliv. &c.

[8] Hier. Com. in Is. c. viii.

[9] Pointed out by Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 91.

[10] Ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. vi. c. x.

[11] Hoc commune est omnium philosophorum, non eorum modo, qui Deum nihil habere ipsum negotii dicunt, et nihil exhibere alteri; sed eorum etiam, qui Deum semper agere aliquid et moliri volunt,—nunquam nec irasci Deum nec nocere. (Cic. de Offic. lib. iii.) See Warburton, Div. Leg. book iii. sec. 4.

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suffering nor, in any case, inflicting pain or trouble, insusceptible alike of offence and anger.[1]

Whether this scheme was of any use in accounting for the origin of evil.

Marcion was drawn to the adoption of these notions chiefly by an anxiety—the great cause of most of the early philosophical heresies—to reconcile the origin of evil[2] with the attributes of the Deity. He thought it inconsistent with perfect benevolence to create a world of sin and misery like the present; he perceived not that his own system was exposed to the objection, that it was equally inconsistent with perfect benevolence not to have prevented the Creator, a being of imperfect power, from making this world, or not to have guarded against the evil results of the creation.

He also regarded the formation of all minute parts of the universe as a task unbecoming[3] the Supreme Deity; a very shallow, but not unusual, method of reasoning.

Opinions respecting Jesus Christ.

Marcion maintained that Jesus was the son of the good Deity, who came to reveal the existence of his Father,[4] and to deliver man from the empire of the Demiurge,[5] and, doubtless, of Satan, if, as it would appear, Marcion really separated these two principles. But, as he considered matter to be evil, and the body to be the work of the Demiurge,[6] he asserted[7] that Christ was not born at all, that He did not grow up from infancy and early youth, but descended at once in full manhood,[8] clothed however, not in a real, but in an apparent body.[9] In support of the assertion that the Saviour's body was but a phantasm, he urged that, in the Old Testament, angels had conversed and eaten with men, being only apparently clothed with human bodies;[10] he referred to the passage in the 'Epistle' of St. Paul to the 'Philippians,'[11] in which it is said, that "Christ, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, and took the *form* of a servant," that is, as Marcion pretended, not the *reality*, "and was made in the *likeness* of man," that is, in the outward shape or resemblance of man, "and found in *fashion* as a man," that is, not in *substance* or *flesh*.[12]

Future judgment.

It was also in consequence of these opinions that he denied the

[1] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xxv.

[2] On this subject see Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Marcionites. The orthodox, as that ingenious disputant has shown, have not solved the difficulty respecting the origin of evil. The failure is not peculiar to them, but to all who have treated a subject beyond the compass of the human intellect.

[3] Narem contrahentes impudentissimi Marcionitæ convertuntur ad destructionem operum creatoris: nimirum, inquiunt, grande opus et dignum Deo mundus. (Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xiii.) Animalia irrides minutiora, quæ maximus artifex de industriâ ingeniis aut viribus ampliavit. (Ibid. c. xiv.)

[4] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xv. [5] Ibid. c. xvi.

[6] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i c. xxvii. [7] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. xix.

[8] Tertull. Adv. Marc. c. vii. 21; De Carne Christi. c. i. &c.

[9] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xi. xxii. &c.

[10] Ibid. lib. iii. c. ix. [11] Ch. ii. 6–8.

[12] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. xi. Tertullian shows the consequences which result from supposing the body of Christ to be merely illusory. He also, very justly, quotes St. Luke, xxiv. 38, 39. See Marcion's way of evading this proof (Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. xliii.)

resurrection of our present material[1] body.[2] He allowed, however, the truth of a future judgment, but the Demiurge was to be judge or punisher.[3] Rejected by the Supreme God, the wicked would be seized by the fire of the Demiurge;[4] the souls of the virtuous, on the other hand, would partake of eternal happiness in the presence of the Benevolent Being and of Christ.[5] Marcion.

According to Irenæus, Marcion also taught, that Cain, and others like him, the people of Sodom, and the Egyptians, and all the nations in general, notwithstanding the immorality of their lives, were saved by the Lord, when he descended into the lower regions; for they came to Him, and he took them up into His kingdom; but that Abel, Enoch, and Noah, and the patriarchs, and all the prophets, and other men who had pleased God, had not obtained salvation; for, as they knew that their God always tempted, and as they suspected he was then tempting them, they did not come to Jesus, nor believe in His annunciation, therefore their souls remained in the lower regions.[6] Epiphanius, also, mentions that, in the opinion of Marcion, the Lord descended into the lower regions, and saved Cain, Corah, Dathan, Abiram, and Esau, and all the nations who worshipped not the God of the Jews; but left there Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Solomon.[7] This singular doctrine is repeated by Theodoret,[8] and is alluded to by Tertullian;[9] no doubt, therefore, of his having held it, or, at least, some very similar notion, can reasonably be entertained. The following appears to be the most plausible explanation: it was commonly supposed that Christ, in order that the dead might be enabled to obtain salvation through faith in His name, as well as the living, had descended into Hades, and preached there: now Hades comprehended not merely the seat of torment for souls, but also the place of rest, the bosom of Abraham; in this last, Christ found the just men mentioned in the Old Testament; to them He announced the Supreme Deity hitherto unknown; but having been warned in the Scriptures to avoid such prophets as preached another God, even if they wrought signs or wonders, which came to pass, because Jehovah thus proved their fidelity,[10] they suspected that the Demiurge designed to try them, and rejected Christ. The Lord, therefore passed to Tartarus, and preached to the wicked who were suffering punishment, and they embraced the offer of mercy. and were saved.[11]

[1] See Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 5.
[2] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xxiv.; Epiph. Hær. xlii. &c.
[3] Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 3, &c. [4] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xxvii.
[5] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. xxiv.; lib. iv. c. xxxiv. Epiphanius was probably mistaken in asserting (Hær. xlii.) that Marcion admitted the transmigration of souls. See Lardner, Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. x. sec. 17.
[6] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxvii.
[7] Hær. xlii. c. iv. [8] Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xxiv.
[9] Adv. Marc, lib. iii. c. xxiv. [10] Deut. xiii. 3.
[11] This is the explanation of Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 3.

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Two Christs.

Though Marcion admitted that Jesus was Christ, the Son of the good God,[1] he would not allow that He was the Christ, or Messiah, foretold by the prophets, and Son of the Demiurge.[2] This last was, according to his account, a Saviour promised to the Jewish nation, and yet to come, in order to free them from their enemies.[3] The latter was designed to restore the state of the dispersed Jews, the former to deliver the whole human race. He denied that the descriptions given of Christ in the Old Testament corresponded with the accounts of him in the New.[4] He contended that these prophecies were not necessary in order to establish the mission, the truth of which was sufficiently proved by the manifestation of His power in miracles;[5] the reality of which miracles, therefore (though it may be thought their evidence would be weakened, if not destroyed, by his previous suppositions)[6] this heresiarch must have allowed.[7]

Marcion appears to have admitted, in the main,[8] the Gospel account of the death and resurrection of Christ (though, consistently with his notion, he could surely not have granted the reality of His sufferings).[9] He ascribed his crucifixion to the powers subject to the Demiurge, who had jealously observed that the Good Being was destroying the law.[10] The Creator was not aware that the death, or the apparent death, of Christ (for a pure spirit could not suffer death), would procure the salvation of mankind,[11] *i. e.*, their deliverance from the ancient law, and their adoption as children of the Perfect Father, and heirs of eternal life.

Thus, then, Marcion endeavoured to trace the difference between the Deity, all-powerful and perfectly good, and the Demiurge, just in his intentions, but weak and imperfect; and also between the Christ of the former and the Christ of the latter; consequently, between the doctrine of the former, and the doctrine of the latter; and consequently, also, between the conduct in the lower regions of those who admitted the one, and that of those who admitted the other.[12]

Marcion seems to have differed from the Gnostics of his age in not professing to be acquainted with secret traditions, under the cover of which he could neglect and despise received notions; he confined himself to the Scriptures; but then he pretended to be able to discern parts genuine and parts corrupted and parts spurious, in these Scriptures. He corrected what he conceived to have been altered with as

[1] Athan. cont. Sabell. tom. ii. p. 42. [2] Ibid.

[3] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xv.; lib. iii. c. vi. xx.; lib. iv. c. vi. See also Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 1. [4] Tertull. Adv. Marc.

[5] Ibid. lib. iii. c. iii. [6] Ibid. lib. iii. c. viii.

[7] Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 1. Compare Lardner, Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. x. sec. 22, and Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 492, note.

[8] He retrenched the fact of the garments of Jesus being divided, because foretold by the Psalmist. (Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. xlii.)

[9] Tertull. De Carne Christi, c. v.; Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. viii.

[10] Tertull. De Carne Christi, lib. iii. c. v.; Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 2.

[11] Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 2. [12] See Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. i. p. 389.

much boldness and presumption as he rejected what he imagined to have been interpolated. His system, ushered forth at a time when the Church was exposed to the attacks of the Pagan philosophers, of the Jews, and of the numerous sects of heretics, was peculiarly dangerous,[1] inasmuch as it tended to shake and confound the very foundations on which the weight of Christian evidences must rest. Entire fabrications were, perhaps, less to be dreaded than such attempts, because less specious and less likely to entangle the inexperienced examiner. Marcion, doubtless, availed himself of the circumstance, that a great variety of forged works, tales and legends, Gospels and Acts, were circulated in all quarters, in order to give an appearance of plausibility to his efforts. He observed, that in the time of St. Paul[2] false apostles had endeavoured to corrupt evangelical truths, and connecting this remark with supposed contradictions in the sacred volume, he very rashly concluded that, even in the earliest time, the contents of the New Testament had suffered from falsification. A slight view of the chief alterations which he made will be sufficient to give an idea of the extent to which he carried his critical reform. Marcion wholly rejected the Old Testament,[3] as proceeding from the Demiurge, whose law it was, in his opinion, the object of Christ's mission to destroy.[4] To attempt to unite the Old with the New Testament, according to his interpretation, was to put "new wine into old bottles," and "a piece of a new garment upon an old."[5] He wrote a work called 'Antitheses,'[6] in which he opposed passages of the Old and New Testament, with a view of showing, from the disagreement of the law and Gospel, that the same God could not be the author of both. For instance, he contrasted (without considering that the scheme of revelation, gradually developed, was adapted to the different capacities and situations of man under the old and under the new dispensations) the *lex talionis*, in the Old Testament, with the forgiveness of injuries in the New; the interference of Moses in a quarrel between the two Israelites, with the non-interference of Christ between the two brethren, on the subject of a division of their inheritance; the Mosaic permission of divorce, with the Christian prohibition of it, except in cases of adultery.[7] He considered the Deluge as a proof of mutability, and consequent imperfection, in the God of the Old Testament: as if the vicissitudes of human affairs necessarily implied a change in the Divine nature.[8] He objected, too, that God was represented as repenting; without observing that it is the poverty of language, and the limited nature of our faculties, which induce the necessity both of describing things spiritual by metaphors drawn from things sensible, and of speaking of the effects of the divine operations in modes of expression which are strictly applicable only to the workings of human

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Objections.

[1] Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. i. p. 351.
[2] Galat. ii. 4.
[3] Orig. Dial. c. Marc. sec. 2.
[4] Ibid. sec. 1.
[5] Vid. Epiph. Hær. p. 203.
[6] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. i.
[7] Tertull. Adv. Marc. and Orig. Dial. c. Marc.
[8] Ibid.

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feelings and passions. He urged as objections the ceremonies of the Mosaic law, the institution of sacrifices, the distinction of meats, and the command given to the Israelites to plunder the Egyptians, and other points. These objections were refuted by Tertullian, who wrote five books against this heresiarch. In the first, he shows the absurdity of supposing that the Supreme Deity is different from the Creator; in the second, he exposes the weakness of the arguments by which this absurdity was defended; in the third, he proves that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who was the Creator and the Author of the Jewish dispensation: he then reconciles the supposed contradiction between the Old and the New Testament, showing, in the fourth Book, that St. Luke's Gospel, and also in the fifth, that St. Paul's Epistles, are in harmony with the Jewish Scriptures. In his work on the 'Flesh of Christ,' he proves against Marcion and other heretics, that Christ took real and human flesh; and in his tract on the 'Resurrection of the Flesh,' he refutes those persons who denied that the body would rise again.[1] We have also a very curious refutation of the doctrine of Marcion, in the 'Dialogus contra Marcionitas, sive de Rectâ in Deum fide,'[2] ascribed, though wrongly, to Origen. To confirm his doctrine, Marcion expunged from the New Testament all quotations from the Old Testament, and all passages that referred to the law or prophets.

Tertull. Adv. Marcionem.

De Carne Christi. De Resurrectione Carnis. Dialog. de Rectâ Fide.

Marcion's Gospel.

Marcion compiled a Gospel,[3] chiefly from St. Luke (though without calling it by his name), whom he appears to have selected, because that Evangelist had been the companion of St. Paul, the great opposer of the Judaizing Christians. This preference for St. Luke has also been explained by the circumstance that his Gospel contained not the account of the marriage at Cana, and of some parables, not corresponding with Marcion's aversion to all pleasures and enjoyments.[4] This reason appears to be insufficient, as Marcion would doubtless have expunged these passages with as much temerity as he rejected the genealogy and baptism of Christ, and the history of the temptation,[5] from the Gospel, which he is said to have received in the main. It is not easy to account for his rejection of a Gospel so deeply revered in Asia Minor as that of St. John, with whose disciples he was acquainted.[6] On this subject we are unwilling to hazard conjectures. If the ancients have shown prejudice in avoiding to give us minute

[1] See Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, from p. 474 to 505.

[2] It was published in 1673, in 4to, with notes by J. R. Wetstein, who considers it as the work of Origen. See, however, Rivet, Crit. Sacr. lib. ii. xiii.; Beaus. Hist. de Man. tom. ii. p. 84.

[3] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxvii. &c. Marcion omitted the two first chapters of St. Luke.

[4] Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. i. p. 334.

[5] The Gospel of Marcion (which some deny to have been grounded on St. Luke) has exercised the pens of Semler, Læffler, Corodi, Eichhorn, Schmidt, Storr, Paulus, Hug, Arneth, Schütz, Gratz, Neander, Hahn, and Olshausen. (Matt. Hist. du Gnost. p. 357; Fabr. Biblioth. Græc. ed. Harl. tom. vii. p. 180, note.) See also, particularly, Simon's Hist. Crit. du Nouv. Test. and Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iii.

[6] Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. i. p. 334.

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information respecting the modes of reasoning by which Marcion was led to pretend that certain passages were spurious, far greater prejudice has in modern times been evinced by the assertion that the Marcionites were "enlightened sceptics," who present the "first specimen of Biblical criticism."[1] To have learned exactly the successive steps by which Marcion arrived at these false conclusions would have furnished us with additional instances of the mistakes to which unsound principles of criticism and logic infallibly lead; but, as far as we can now discover, it seems most just to conclude that, with the exception of slight variations in consequence of different readings, sometimes, perhaps, caprice, and sometimes, perhaps, the adoption of false rules of interpretation and reasoning,[2] but far more often the desire of removing obstacles to an assumed hypothesis, were, in this case, as in many others, the principal sources of innovation. One useful result must, however, follow from the inquiry; it has led to the examination of Christian evidences, and to the collection of manuscripts in ancient languages, by which we can now illustrate the authority and genuineness of the canonical books of the New Testament.

It would be foreign from our purpose to enter into a review of the different texts which Marcion altered; they will be found amply detailed by Epiphanius: some may be considered as only the various readings found in manuscripts,[3] but by far the most are, we think, gross and deliberate corruptions, designed to prevent the objections to which the system of Marcion was exposed. It ought, however, to be added, that he avoided expunging every text which militated against his opinions. Tertullian supposes that he so acted in order that, since he left what he might have omitted, it might be denied with greater plausibility that he had erased any passage, or, at least, erased it

[1] Eichhorn, cited by Matter, p. 355.

[2] It is a very melancholy fact, but one which cannot justify the conduct of Marcion, that some, even among the orthodox, are charged with having retrenched certain passages, because they appeared to them to ascribe too great a degree of human weakness to our Lord. For instance, Epiphanius says that in the copies of St. Luke which had not been corrected, it was written that Jesus had wept, but the orthodox had expunged the words: ὀρθόδοξοι δὲ ἀφείλοντο τὸ ῥητὸν, φοβηθέντες καὶ μὴ νοήσαντες αὐτοῦ τὸ τέλος καὶ τὸ ἰσχυρότατον. (Epiph. in Ancor. c. xxxi.) The account of Christ's agony in the garden, and the angel strengthening him, was also effaced in many copies: Nec sanè ignorandum nobis est, et in Græcis et in Latinis codicibus complurimis vel de adveniente Angelo vel de sudore sanguineo nihil scriptum reperiri. (Hilar. de Trin. lib. x.) See Daillé, Du Vrai Usage des Pères, p. 68, and Lardner's Hist. of Heret. p. 252.

[3] As instances of emendation, not intended to mutilate, and perhaps even correct. In Epistle to Galatians, v. 9, he reads δολοῖ (corrupteth) for ζυμοῖ (leaveneth). Epiphanius says that Marcion changed κύριον, in first Epistle to Corinthians, x. 9, into Χριστὸν; but Χριστὸν is the reading in our copies. He accuses him with having added ἰδίους, in Epistle to Thessalonians, ii. 15. It is in our copies. In second Epistle to Corinthians, iv. 4, Marcion explained Θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου to mean the Demiurge: to avoid the objection, Irenæus and other ancients place a comma after Θεὸς, and refer αἰῶνος τούτου to ἀπίστων; a singular instance of rash criticism.

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without sufficient cause.[1] To prove that these alterations were unauthorised, his opponents adopted the only course of argument which remained by which he might be refuted, viz., to establish the superior antiquity, and the consequent genuineness, of their copies of the Gospel of St. Luke.[2]

Marcion rejected the 'Acts' of the Apostles. Indeed, his New Testament consisted only of two parts;[3] the 'Gospel,' being chiefly that of St. Luke, mutilated and altered, and the 'Apostolicon,' consisting of ten of the 'Epistles' of St. Paul, also, for the most part, for similar reasons, mutilated and altered. The 'Epistles' which he admitted are the following, in the order in which he arranged them: the 'Epistle to the Galatians,' 'first' and 'second to the Corinthians,' 'Epistle to the Romans,' 'first' and 'second to the Thessalonians,' 'to the Ephesians,' which he called 'to the Laodiceans,' 'to the Colossians,' 'to Philemon,' 'to the Philippians.' Some variations appear to have been made by the followers of Marcion subsequent to the time of Tertullian.[4]

Conduct and customs of the Marcionites.

The conduct of the Marcionites in general appears not to have been marked by immorality. When Tertullian[5] taunts them by asking why, if they acted consistently with their opinion that the Deity, being of absolute goodness, was not to be feared, they did not comply with the pleasures and vices of the heathens, and save their lives in times of persecution by offering incense to idols? it is quite evident, from the tenour of his argument, that their actual practice (whatever may have been the supposed consequences of their principles) was apparently free from reproach.[6] As a proof of their sincerity, many of them are said to have submitted to martyrdom.[7] In times of per-

[1] Et Marcion quædam contraria sibi, illa credo industria eradere de Evangelio suo noluit, ut ex his quæ eradere potuit, nec erasit, illa quæ erasit, aut negetur erasisse, aut merito erasisse dicatur. (Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. xliii.)

[2] Ego meum dico verum: Marcion suum. Ego Marcionis affirma adulteratum; Marcion meum. Quis inter nos determinabit, nisi temporis ratio, ei præscribens auctoritatem, quod antiquius reperietur, et ei præjudicans vitiationem, quod posterius revincetur? (Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. xliii.)

[3] See Epiph. Adv. Hær. xlii. c. x. &c.

[4] At least, this seems the best way of reconciling Epiphanius with Tertullian on ch. ix., where the former asserts that the Epistle to Philemon was totally corrupted; the latter, that it, by reason of its brevity, had escaped the falsifying hands of Marcion.

[5] Age itaque, qui Deum non times quasi bonum quid non in omnem libidinem ebullis, summum quod sciam fructum vitæ omnibus qui Deum non timent? Quid non frequentas tam solennes voluptates Circi furentis, et caveæ sævientis et scenæ lascivientis? Quid non et in persecutionibus statim oblatâ acerrâ animam negatione lucraris? Absit, inquis, absit. Ergo jam times delictum, et timendo probasti illum timeri qui prohibet delictum. (Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xxvii.)

[6] Lardner, Hist. of Heret. book ii. c. x. sec. 26.

[7] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. xv. See Chap. II., p. 37. Clemens Alexandrinus says that some men hastened to deliver themselves to be put to death, out of aversion to the Demiurge (Strom. lib. iv.): he alludes, in all probability, to the Marcionites.

secution, according to Epiphanius, they abstained from animal food.[1] They were in the habit of fasting, especially on the sabbath, as being the day on which the Demiurge, or God of the Jews, towards whom they were anxious to show no respect, created the world and rested. The same principle of opposing the Creator, and of combating matter which is evil, which led them to subdue the body by fasting, and to embrace martyrdom with the greater cheerfulness as the means of being delivered from this corporeal prison, also induced them to extol virginity,[2] always to despise, and sometimes to forbid marriage, by which the world of the Demiurge is peopled.[3] Regarding the good Deity as holding married life in detestation, they admitted none to baptism but the unmarried,[4] none to the Eucharist but such as renounced the connubial state.[5] For these two sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist, they observed, though it appears not in all respects in the regular manner.[6] Marcion.

We are also informed that they had their own churches.[7] Such seem to be the most important particulars which remain of the manners of the Marcionites. The obvious fact, that nearly all their follies and absurdities may be traced to their very erroneous idea of the Creator of the universe, affords a striking proof of the danger of adopting a single false principle. Remarks.

Lucian, Lucan, or Leucius,[8] was one of the disciples of Marcion, who designed, by certain modifications, to improve his system, and who appears to have formed a distinct sect.[9] We are not, however, informed in what particular respects he deviated from his master. He agreed with him in holding the doctrine of the three principles,[10] good, just, and evil; he proscribed marriage, in order to oppose the economy of the Demiurge;[11] and he denied the reality of the body of Christ.[12] Lucian.

[1] Hær. xlii. c. xii. See, however, Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xiv.

[2] Epiph. Hær. xlii. c. iii.

[3] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. x.

[4] Ibid. c. xxix. &c.

[5] Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. ii. Nec alibi conjunctos ad sacramentum Baptismatis et Eucharistiæ admittens, nisi inter se conjuraverint adversus fructum nuptiarum, ut adversus ipsum creatorem. (Ibid. lib. iv. c. xxxiv.) Compare Clem. Alexandr. Strom. lib. iii. p. 43.

[6] They permitted women to baptize. (Epiph. Hær. xlii.) They used water in the cup. (Ibid.) They often repeated baptism many times. (Ibid.)

[7] Faciunt favos vespæ, faciunt ecclesias et Marcionitæ. Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. iv. c. v.

[8] Called in Epiphanius Lucian the Elder (Hær. xliii. c. i.); Tertullian (De Resur. Carn. c. ii.) and Origen (c. Cels. lib. ii.) call him Lucan. He seems to be the same heretic who is sometimes called Lucius, Leicius, Leucius, Lentitius, Leontius, Lentius, Seleucus, Lucius, Charinus, Nexocharides, and Leonides. (Lard. Hist. of Heret. book ii. c. xiii. sec. 6.)

[9] Epiph. Hær. xliii. c. i. He adds that this sect no longer existed in his time.

[10] Epiph. Hær. xliii. c. i. Photius says that Lucian represented the God of the Jews as an evil being, and Simon Magus as his minister; and called Christ Father and Son. (Cod. 114.)

[11] Epiph. Hær. xliii. c. i. In defence of his aversion to the Demiurge, he appealed to Malachi, iii. 14, 15.

[12] Phot. Cod. 114.

Lucian. With him, also, Lucian regarded the souls of animals to be of the same kind as the souls of men;[1] and hence it is, that he allowed the resurrection as well of the former as of the latter.[2] According to Tertullian,[3] he supposed that neither the body nor the soul would be raised, but a sort of third substance; which opinion is represented as being derived from Aristotle.

Forgeries. Lucian is chiefly known as being the author of numerous forgeries; among others, the 'History of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary;' the 'Protevangelion or Gospel of James;' the 'Gospel of Nicodemus;' the 'Acts or Journeyings of the Apostles,' &c.[4] Dr. Lardner closes his view of these apocryphal works with the following judicious remark:

Observations. —"One obvious conclusion to be drawn from this long account of the forgeries of Leucius is, that the Scriptures of the New Testament, particularly the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, were then received with distinguished respect, and regarded as writings of great authority: otherwise he would not have thought of publishing books under the names of the Evangelists and Apostles. Besides, these forged writings do not oppose, but confirm the general account given us in the canonical Scriptures. They all take for granted the dignity of our Lord's person, and His power of working miracles; they acknowledge the certainty of there having been such persons as Matthew and the other evangelists; and Peter and the other apostles. They authenticate the general and leading facts contained in the New Testament. They presuppose that the apostles received from Christ a commission to propagate His religion, and a supernatural power to enforce its authority. And thus they indirectly establish the truth and Divine original of the Gospel."

Apelles. Apelles, also a celebrated disciple of Marcion, considerably altered the system of his master.

He pretended to have received instructions by revelation, (which he afterwards committed to writing, and published under the title Φανερώσεις,)[5] from a female fanatic called Philumene; a circumstance which may be considered, indeed, as indicative of a mind, the powers of which were clouded and controlled by an overheated imagination, but is certainly not in itself a proof that Apelles had contrived, with the dexterity of impostors, to turn speculation into a handmaid of sensuality. The chief points in which he differed from Marcion were the

[1] Philast. Hær. 87. [2] Phot. Cod. 114; Philast. Hær. 87.

[3] Tertull. De Resur. Carn. c. ii.

[4] For an account of these forgeries see Beausobre, Hist. de Manich.; Jones, Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the Books of the New Testament; and Lardner's Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. xi.

[5] Le crédule enthousiasme d'Apelles pour une femme est excusé par des croyances analogues qui, dans l'antiquité et dans les temps modernes, dans la Grèce civilizée comme dans la sauvage Germanie, en Italie comme en Suède, ont attribué aux femmes des oracles et des révélations dont la délicatesse de leur être semblait les rendre plus susceptibles que les hommes. (Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. i. p. 413, note.) Tertullian accuses Apelles of some impurity; but see Lard. Hist. of Heret. p. 316.

following: he held but one principle;[1] one God of perfect goodness, nameless, or ineffable, unbegotten, who (probably by emanation) created the angels, and also another power,[2] or inferior god, or rather glorious and fiery angel,[3] namely, the Demiurge, the God of the Jewish nation.[4] This fiery angel, having drawn down, by earthly allurements, the souls of men from their super-celestial seats, encompassed them with sinful flesh.[5] He supposed that the distinction of the sexes which exists in the bodies, was derived from these souls, which were male and female.[6] Apelles, without supposing that the body of Christ was a mere phantasm, denied that He was born of the Virgin Mary; maintaining that in His descent from Heaven,[7] He borrowed a kind of aerial form from the substances of the upper world and the sidereal regions.[8] In support of this doctrine, he appealed to the words of Christ, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?"[9] and, in illustration of it, he referred to the angels, whom he represented as assuming a human body, without having entered the womb.[10] This ethereal body, Christ, on His ascension to Heaven, returned to the stars and the elements from which it had been derived.[11] By this theory Apelles doubtless thought to obviate the objection of the Marcionites, that to admit the reality of the body of Christ, was to admit the reality of His birth; and therefore His connection with the Demiurge, who created the human body.[12] But what, according to his system, was the object of Christ's mission, and what the entire scheme of Apelles? In our opinion, formed from a collation of passages,[13] the following: the Demiurge was not in his nature evil, but only imperfect; he created the world for the glory of the unbegotten God, the God essentially good; but being unable to prevent the introduction of evil into the world, he repented of his work. Hence the Demiurge requested the unbegotten God to send his son Jesus Christ, in order to amend and correct the world which he had formed. In process of time his request was granted, his purpose effected. The souls of men were to be saved; but the body, composed of gross matter, the work of imperfection, was not to rise again.[14]

Apelles.

Held one principle.

Christ's body a real but ethereal substance.

Analysis of his system.

[1] Rhod. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii.; Epiph. Hær. xliv. c. i. &c.

[2] Philast. Hær. 47.

[3] Tertull. de Præscr. c. xxxiv.; De Carne Christi, c. viii. &c.

[4] Tertullian's words are, Ab igneo Angelo, Deo scilicet Israelis et nostro. (De Anim. c. xxiii.) On the origin of this notion compare Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 506, with Matter, Hist. du Gnost. p. 416.

[5] Tertull. de Anim. c. xxiii.

[6] Ibid. c. xxxvi.

[7] Append. ad Tertull. de Præscr.

[8] Id. de Carne Christi, c. i.

[9] Ibid. c. vii.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Epiph. Hær. xliv.

[12] See Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 444.

[13] Deum, qui hunc mundum condidit, ad gloriam alterius ingeniti et boni Dei eum construxisse pronuntiavit. (Pamphil. pro Orig. ap. Hieron, tom. v.) Angelum quendam inclytum nominant (Apelleiani) qui mundum hunc instituerit, et instituto eo pœnitentiam admiserit. (Tertull. de Carne Christi, c. viii.) Illum autem ingenitum Deum in consummatione seculi misisse Jesum Christum ad emendationem mundi, rogatum ab eo Deo qui eum fecerat, ut mitteret filium suum ad mundi sui correctionem. (Pamph. pro Orig.)

[14] Tertull. de Præscrip. c. xxxiii. &c.

Apelles.

Apelles appears not to have utterly rejected the Old Testament;[1] he published many writings, in the form and under the title of 'Syllogisms,' in which the truth and authority of Moses were denied, or called in question,[2] in consequence of certain supposed contradictions or improbabilities.

Discussion with Rhodon.

Eusebius has preserved an account of a short discussion between Rhodon and Apelles; in which the latter, then advanced in years, and remarkable for his austere gravity, perplexed by the arguments of his opponent, answered, that the investigation of the Divine nature was fraught with difficulty; that the mind, exhausted by perpetual inquiry, must at length rest in faith; that though he could not explain how God was unbegotten, yet he firmly embraced the doctrine. He thought that all who believe in Christ crucified would be saved, provided their works should be found to have been good. Rhodon regarded these arguments as deserving nothing more or better than a smile. Lardner considers them as a testimony of the piety and charitableness of Apelles' principles.[3]

Thus different is his scheme from that of Marcion: in it the Supreme God is not utterly unknown; the mission of Christ was not against the wish of the Demiurge; His design was not to overthrow, but to amend the old system; His body was not mere appearance, but substantial. Apelles quoted, as a saying of our Saviour, and as in His Gospel, though it is not in our copies, "be good money-changers;" meaning, separate what is useful from all parts of the Scripture, as the money-changers distinguish what is genuine from what is counterfeit.

GNOSTICS OF EGYPT.

Gnostics of Egypt.

In Egypt, the fertile parent of mysteries and emblems, and at this period the seat as well of the various sects of Greek philosophers as of Judaism, strangely blended with Pythagorean and Platonic theories, the Gnostics borrowed largely from the different systems then flourishing, and found in the ancient traditions of that country, the notion of an unknown[4] Supreme Deity, who had manifested Himself by a series of emanations, one of which was the Creator.

Christianity, too, it may be remarked, had been taught in Egypt with a greater display of learning and subtilty; and the instructions of Pantænus, Clement, and Origen, combined, occasionally, with the

[1] Licet non omnibus modis Dei esse legem deneget et prophetas. (Pamph. pro Orig.) Compare, however, Rhod. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii.

[2] Comp. Rhod. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xiii. App. ad Tertull. de Præscrip. with Origen, in Gen. Hom. ii., from which it appears that Apelles denied the ark could hold the creatures mentioned; and Ambrose (De Paradiso, c. v.), where one of his difficulties is thus cited, Quomodo lignum vitæ plus operari videtur ad vitam, quam insufflatio Dei? &c.

[3] Hist. of Heret. p. 330.

[4] Amon, or Amon-Re, is like the πατὴρ ἄγνωστος of the Gnostics. See Champollion, Panthéon Egyptien.

advantages of the library of Alexandria, in investing speculations with the riches and lustre of erudition.[1] Gnostics of Egypt.

BASILIDES.

Basilides flourished in the second century, chiefly in the time of Hadrian. Inquiries into the origin of evil, involving, as a preliminary step, a view of the origin of the world, and, as connected points, the history of the Jewish state, and the theory of man's redemption, then principally exercised the reasoning, or rather the imaginative, powers of the converted portion of the philosophic world. Basilides was drawn into the common vortex of speculation. He was aware that the hypotheses, as well of the ancients as of his contemporaries, could not be regarded as affording any satisfactory solution of the disputed question. This consideration should have taught him the vanity of systems; unfortunately, it only instigated him to systematise. Imagining, doubtless, that notwithstanding the alloy of error, there was some solidity and value mixed up in the various notions of the Platonists and Pythagoreans as then modified, of the Cabalistic Jews and the Christian heretics, he attempted to combine select parts of their respective principles. He admitted the main point, on which nearly all the hypotheses, then prevalent, may be said to hinge—viz., that the world had been created, not by the immediate operation of the Supreme Being, but with his tacit consent, by the agency of inferior intelligences, or Æons, (who emanated from Him,) in whose want of skill originated evil.[2] This was the common theory: the various genealogies, offices, and actions of these intelligences formed the points of difference.

Basilides. Process of thought. Fundamental point.

It is a singular instance of the weakness which is found in intellects, otherwise acute, that Basilides should not have perceived that this theory offered no solution of the great difficulty. The simple question always returns: Why did God permit these unskilful architects to attempt a work for which they were unqualified? But illogical in themselves, and pernicious as contradicting the Divine authority, as these opinions were, it should, in common charity, be remembered, that they often arose from an anxiety "to vindicate the ways of God to man." These heretics always denied that such heresies were subversive of Christianity.

Inutility of this theory in accounting for the origin of evil.

The following is a sketch of his particular plan:—

The Supreme Being, the Unbegotten and Nameless Father, perfectly wise and good, produced from His own substance Intelligence (**Νοῦς**);

[1] Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. ii. p. 4.

[2] According to other explanations, Basilides maintained that the Powers of Darkness, who bordered upon the lowest world of the Pure Intelligences, having perceived their light, and being struck with the desire of sharing it, violently broke into their realms, and thus the two empires of Light and Darkness were mixed and confounded: in order to separate them, therefore, God caused this world to be created. Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. ii. p. 63.

Basilides.

Intelligence produced the Word (Λόγος); the Word, Prudence (Φρόνησις); Prudence produced Wisdom (Σοφία) and Power (Δύναμις); Wisdom and Power produced the Angels.[1] These angels were of different orders; of these orders the first formed, as their abode, the first heaven; the second, produced by the former, and inferior, the second heaven; and so on till the 365th, still degenerating, produced (if Irenæus may be relied upon) the 365th heaven.[2]

The angels, who occupy the last of these heavens, which is visible to us, touching on matter, eternal, self-animated, maleficent, formed out of this shapeless mass the world, and a new order of beings as its inhabitants. The Supreme Being approved of their world, endowed man, who had received from them but animal life, with a reasonable soul, and left him subject to the government of the angels. But acquired power corrupted their original purity. The angels endeavoured to extinguish the knowledge of the Supreme Being, and to establish their own worship. On a distribution of the world, the prince of the angels of this lower heaven, in which is found the earth, had the Jewish nation for his share. His power was displayed by the prodigies which he wrought in their favour. Turbulent and ambitious, he aspired to submit all nations to the Jews, so as to seize the undivided sovereignty of the whole earth. Then the other angels leagued against him, and the hatred against the Jews became deep and universal. Hence the wars, the disasters, the miseries, of that nation.

Digression on the notion of different nations being protected by different angels.

It ought to be here observed, that the notion of different nations, being each under the protection and government of an angel, was familiar to the Jews. In Deut. ch. xxxii. v. 8, 9, where we find in our version, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people, 'according to the number of the children of Israel,'" the Septuagint has translated the last words, "according to the number of the angels of God."[3] Allusion to this notion occurs in Daniel, ch. x. v. 20, 21; where the angel says to the prophet, "Now will I return to fight with the Prince of Persia; and when I am gone forth, lo, the Prince of Grecia shall come. But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth; and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."[4] After the captivity, the Jews made curious inquiries into the nature and offices of angels,

[1] Among the Æons, Clemens Alexandrinus also mentions Justice and Peace.

[2] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxiv.

[3] "Οτε διεμέριζεν ὁ ὕψιστος τὰ ἔθνη . . . . . ἔστησεν ὅρια ἐθνῶν κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ. Bochart conjectures that they had a bad copy before them, which left out the three first letters of Israel, and thus they read *Baneel*, the children of God, meaning the Israelites: instead of which, some transcribers put the *Angels of God*, who are sometimes called his sons. (Patrick, in loc.) Compare Arnald's Commentaries on the Book of Ecclesiasticus, c. xvii. v. 17: "In the divisions of the nations of the whole earth, he set a ruler over every people, but Israel is the Lord's portion."

[4] See also Beausob. Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 16.

and gradually began to worship them. The sect of *Angelici* seems to have existed in the first ages of the Church. St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Colossians (ch. ii. v. 18), "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility (affecting humility) and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind."[1] Basilides.

Theodoret and Œcumenius remark that the worship of angels continued long in Pisidia, Phrygia, and Laodicea, near to Colosse, where they had "oratories of St. Michael, the captain of the Lord's host," as he is called in Joshua.[2] In the 'Book of the Pastor' it is said, that the Christians, as soon as they believe, are under the government of Michael, "the good messenger," saith Hermas, "being Michael, who hath the government over his people."[3]

Since the ambition and jealousy of the angel-creators of the world have thus existed, mankind had pined under their tyranny. In compassion for their miseries, the unbegotten and nameless Father sent his first-begotten Νοῦς, or Divine Intelligence, who is Christ,[4] to free such as would believe in Him, and to destroy the empire of the angels. System of Basilides. Mission of Christ.

This Νοῦς, or Christ, the chief of the Æons, descended into the man Jesus, at his baptism, and using him as an instrument, revealed to mankind the knowledge of the true God, and performed various miracles. This object being accomplished, the man Jesus was crucified, but not the Christ, who was united to Him only as far as the functions of his ministry required. Basilides maintained, therefore, that it was not the crucified man, but the son of God, who was the object of faith.

Irenæus,[5] however, says, that in the scheme of Basilides, it was Simon the Cyrenian, who was crucified, having been transformed into the likeness of Jesus, who himself assumed the shape of Simon, stood by, and smiled at the illusion of his enemies, and afterwards ascended to heaven. This absurd story, the origin of which cannot be traced, is, in the judgment of the very acute Beausobre,[6] unworthy of credit. It Story of the substitution of Simon in the room of Jesus.

[1] Theodoret thus explains the passage:—"They who advocated the law persuaded men to worship angels, because, according to them, the law was given by angels. And this they advised, pretending faith with humility, by saying that the God of the Universe was invisible, inaccessible, and incomprehensible, and that it was fit that these favours should be procured by means of angels." (In loc.)

[2] Ch. v. 14, 15. Εὐκτήρια τοῦ ἁγίου Μιχαὴλ. Œcumen. ap. Hæschel. Not. in Orig. p. 231. Whitby, in Col. ii. 18.

[3] Whitby, in Col. ii. 18; Pluquet, Dict. des Héres. art. Angéliques.

[4] Basilides called the Saviour Caulacau (Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. iv.) from Isaiah, xxviii. 10, where our translation is "line upon line," but the Septuagint, ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι, "hope upon hope." See Clodius, Diss. de Caulacau: Nicolaus, Diss. de Salvatore Basilidis Caulacau dicto; Brucker, Diss. de Caulacau Basilidianorum (in Museo. Helvet. part xxii. p. 229); Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. ii. p. 89.

[5] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxiv.

[6] Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 24; and see also Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. p. 354. It may probably have been the notion of some Basilidian.

Basilides. Contempt for martyrdom.

is said, indeed, to have been in consequence of it, that the followers of Basilides decried martyrdom, which was suffering not for Christ, but for Simon. But it is more probable that they disparaged it because Basilides considered all the pains and sufferings of this life as penalties inflicted by Divine justice. It was, in his opinion, utterly inconsistent with the righteousness of God to suffer the innocent to be punished; in answer, therefore, to the examples of martyrs, which the orthodox urged as an objection, he maintained that no man is without fault: that God punished in man either criminal desire, or actual, though secret, crimes, or sins committed in a previous state of existence. This argument led Basilides to assert that Jesus, though a man of the greatest excellence, since the Divine Intelligence had chosen Him as his organ, was not absolutely impeccable. It is better, he said, to make any supposition than to admit that Providence could be the author of any evil, which would be the case on the admission that undeserved sufferings had been inflicted on any one. It appears, then, that the disciples of Basilides undervalued martyrdom,[1] and probably on this account ate, without scruple, things offered to idols.[2] It is also affirmed, that the Basilidians, who said that God was to be loved and not feared,[3] regarded all kinds of lewdness as indifferent;[4] an accusation which appears to have originated in an unfair construction of the opinions of Basilides, who, instead of falling into the common error of unreasonably extolling virginity, considered it not as a virtue in itself, but as a state of life, which, being free from incumbrances, might be occasionally convenient, especially in times of persecution.[5] Clemens Alexandrinus, whose notices of Basilides are valuable, expressly says, that though some Basilidians led vicious lives, Basilides himself, and his son Isidore, taught a contrary course.[6] Indeed, so far from inculcating a lax morality, Basilides held that of sins committed *before* baptism, those only would be remitted, which are involuntary and through ignorance.[7] It certainly appears very probable, that some of the followers of Basilides availed themselves of the construction of which, however unintentionally, his principles were susceptible, in order to abandon themselves to licentiousness.

Admits metempsychosis.

Basilides taught that the soul could not be disengaged from the present body, in which it expiated sins committed in an anterior life, till it had been purified by successive transmigrations from body to body.

Two souls.

He also adopted the Pythagorean notions of the two souls in man, to explain the conflict between reason and passion.

But his system has, perhaps, acquired most note from a singular

[1] Orig. in Matt.; App. ad Tertull. de Præscrip.; Philast. Hær. xxxii.; Epiph. Hær. xxiv. c. iv.

[2] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxiv. [3] Clem. Alexandr. Strom. &c.

[4] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxiii. Comp. Philast. Hær. xxxii.; Epiph. Hær. xxiv. c. iii.

[5] See his explanation of Matt. xix. 10-15, quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus (Strom. lib. iii.), and explained by Beausobre, Hist. du Manich. tom. ii. p. 43.

[6] Strom. lib. iii. p. 427. [7] Ibid. lib. iv. p. 536.

circumstance, arising from the adoption of Pythagorean ideas,[1] from an intimation of the cabalistic and oriental philosophy, and from a fondness, so common among Egyptians, for a kind of hieroglyphical symbols. Basilides sought to know what numbers were most agreeable to the Supreme Intelligence; he fixed upon 365,[2] the number of days in the year, which he expressed by the word Abraxas, or

Basilides.

[1] The following development of the notion of Pythagoras on the influence of numbers is given by the Abbé Pluquet:—Pythagore, dont Basilide avoit adopté les principes, reconnaissait, comme les Chaldéens ses maîtres, l'existence d'une Intelligence Suprême, qui avait formé le monde; ce philosophe voulut connaître la fin que cette Intelligence s'etait proposée dans la production du monde: il porta sur la nature un œil attentif, pour découvrir les lois qu'elle suit dans les phénomènes, et saisir le fil qui liait les évènemens. Ses premiers regards se portèrent vers le ciel, où l'auteur de la nature semble manifester plus clairement son dessein. Il y découvrit un ordre admirable et une harmonie constante; il jugea que l'ordre et l'harmonie constante qui régnaient dans le ciel, n'étaient que les rapports qu'on apercevait entre les distances des corps célestes et leurs mouvemens réciproques. La distance et le mouvement sont des grandeurs, ces grandeurs ont des parties, et les plus grandes ne sont que les plus petites, multipliées un certain nombre de fois. Ainsi les distances, les mouvemens des corps célestes s'exprimaient par des nombres, et l'Intelligence Suprême, avant la production du monde, ne les connaissait que par des nombres purement intelligibles. C'est donc, selon Pythagore, sur le rapport que l'Intelligence Suprême apercevait entre les nombres intelligibles, qu'elle avait formé et exécuté le plan du monde. Le rapport des nombres entr'eux n'est point arbitraire; le rapport d'égalité entre deux fois deux et quatre, est un rapport nécessaire, indépendant, immuable. Puisque les rapports des nombres ne sont point arbitraires, et que l'ordre des productions de l'Intelligence Suprême dépend du rapport qui est entre les nombres, il est clair qu'il y a des nombres qui ont un rapport essentiel avec l'ordre et l'harmonie, et que l'Intelligence Suprême qui aime l'ordre et l'harmonie, suit dans son action ces rapports de ces nombres, et ne peut s'en écarter. La connaissance de ce rapport, où ce rapport est dans la loi qui dirige l'Intelligence Suprême dans ses productions, et comme ces rapports s'expriment euxmêmes par des nombres, on supposa dans les nombres une force et une puissance capable de déterminer l'Intelligence à produire certains effets plûtot que d'autres. D'après ces idées, on rechercha qu'ils étaient les nombres qui plaisaient davantage à l'Etre Suprême; on vit qu'il y avait un soleil, on jugea que l'unité était agréable à la Divinité: on vit sept planètes, on conclut encore que le nombre de sept était agréable à l'Intelligence Suprême. Telle était la philosophie Pythagoricienne qui s'était répandue dans l'Orient, pendant le premier et le second siècle du Christianisme, et qui dura long-temps après. (Dict. des Héres. tom. i. p. 592.)

[2] Ut Basilides, qui omnipotentem Deum appellat Abraxas, et eundem secundum Græcas literas et annui cursus numerum dicit in solis circulo contineri: quem ethnici, sub eodem numero aliarum literarum vocant Mythram. (Hier. in Amos. c. iii.)

A . . .	1	M . . .	40
B . . .	2	E . . .	5
P . . .	100	I . . .	10
A . . .	1	Θ . . .	9
Ξ . . .	60	P . . .	100
A . . .	1	A . . .	1
C . . .	200	C . . .	200
ABPAΞAC =	365	MEIΘPAC =	365

Mithras is the Deity of the Persians, or the Sun, who is also Apollo, the God of Healing.

Basilides. Abrasax.

Abrasax (ABPACAΞ[1]), compounded of Greek letters used as numerical characters. It may be remarked, that these kind of numerical designation were not rare at that period. Possibly Basilides meant to express by it the number of Intelligences which compose the Pleroma, or the Deity under various manifestations, or, perhaps, the sun, in which Pythagoras supposes that the Intelligence resided which produced the world. This word Abraxas was graven on gems, of which a very great number are found in the cabinets of antiquaries. This is the most common supposition respecting the origin of these gems; many, however, and widely different, have been the conjectures offered, for as yet nearly all that has been written on the subject is conjectural. It has exercised the learning of numerous writers, among whom may be reckoned not only Chifflet,[2] who republished with an ample commentary the work of J. Macarius ('Jean l'Heureux') and Montfaucon,[3] who are generally referred to, but also Salmasius,[4] Kircher,[5] Pignorius,[6] Augustinus,[7] Gorlæus,[8] Maffei,[9] Stoch,[10] Passerius,[11] Bartolus,[12] Lippert,[13] Ficornius,[14] and many others mentioned by Matter[15] and other writers.[16]

Gnostic gems.

But even the derivation of this enigmatic word Abraxas has been much contested; mysteries have been sought in the syllables, and even in the letters, which compose it. Beausobre and Lardner have concluded, from an examination of the subject,[17] that Abraxas was not the

[1] Irenæus says the Basilidians call the Prince of the Heaven Abraxas, that name having in it the number CCCLXV. (Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. 33.) So also Theodoret, Hæret. Fab. lib. i. c. i. Besides Jerome, the author of the Catalogue of Heresies, prefixed to Tertull. de Præser. says, that the Supreme God of the Basilidians was called Abraxas. Compare Epiph. Hær. xxiv. c. vii.

[2] Macarii Abraxas, seu de Gemmis Basilidianis.

[3] Palæograph. Græc. lib. ii. c. viii.

[4] De Annis Climactericis et Antiquâ Astrologiâ.

[5] Œdipus Ægyptiacus.

[6] Mensa Isiaca.

[7] Gemmæ et Sculpturæ Antiquæ depictæ, &c.

[8] Dactyliotheca, ed. Gronov.

[9] Gemme Antiche Figurate da Domenico de Rossi, &c.

[10] Gemmæ Antiquæ Cælatæ, per B. Picart.

[11] Thesaur. Gemmarum Astriferarum Antiquarum. Curâ et studio Ant. F. Gori.

[12] Museum Odescalchum, s. Thesaur. Antiq. Gemmar.

[13] Dactyliotheca Universalis.

[14] Gemmæ Antiquæ litteratæ aliæque rariores, ab A. P. H. Galeotti.

[15] Hist. du Gnost. tom. ii. p. 52. He also refers to the notices of these gems found in the following tracts: Le Pois, Discours sur les Médailles; Baronius, Annales Ecclesiastici, tom. ii. p. 72; Sponius, Miscellanea Eruditæ Antiquitatis; De la Chausse, Romanum Museum; Molinet, Cabinet de la Bibliothèque de Sainte Genevieve; Beger, Thesaurus Brandeborgicus; Fabretti, Inscriptiones Antiquæ, &c.; Ebermayer, Thesaurus Gemmarum; Middleton, Germana Antiq. Monumenta, &c.

[16] A small work, entitled Essay on Ancient Coins, Medals, and Gems, as illustrating the Progress of Christianity in the Early Ages, by Dr. J. Walsh, contains some gems from the collection of Lord Strangford, &c.

[17] Bellerman maintains that it comes from the Coptic, the ancient language of Egypt: the syllable Sadsch (which the Greeks were obliged to convert into σαξ, or

god of the Basilidians; that this name signifies nothing but the sun; that the figures found in Chifflet and Montfaucon are, for the most part, Egyptian; that there is no kind of proof that any of them belonged to the Basilidians; that those which have Iao, Sabaoth, &c. upon them, were the works of professors of magic, who were not Christians; and that some of these figures derived their origin from the Simonians and Ophites, who made no profession of Christianity.[1] Basilides.

It certainly appears to be an error to call every Gnostic gem an Abraxas, or every Abraxas a genuine Basilidian stone. It is probable that these gems were used as talismans or amulets, intended to insure the protection of celestial intelligences; as such, other Gnostics and even heathens may, particularly in a country like Egypt, so noted for hieroglyphics, by an impulse of superstition, have been led to imitate these supposed preservatives. Even the orthodox Christians, long after the heresy of Basilides had expired, still used magical charms and amulets, as the language both of fathers and councils sufficiently attests.[2]

Montfaucon, who has given plates of a great number of these gems, has divided them into seven classes: the first contains such as have at the top the head of a cock, which is the symbol of the sun; the second class such as have the head or body of a lion, expressive of the strength and the vehement heat of the sun—on these is often the inscription Mythras; the third class such as have the figure or inscription of Serapis;[3] the fourth are sphinxes, apes, and animals of that kind; the fifth are human figures, with the names Iao, Sabaoth, Adonai, &c.; the sixth are inscriptions without figures; the seventh such as have monstrous forms. Montfaucon's classification.

It is possible that from this expression Abraxas may have arisen Abracadabra.

σας, or σαζ, as the last letter of this syllable could be expressed only by X, Σ, or Z), signifying word, and Abrak, blessed, holy, adorable; Abraxas, being, therefore, "the sacred word." Munter, who also derives it from the Coptic, makes it signify "the new word." (Matt. Hist. du Gnost. tom. ii. p. 50.) Beausobre derives it from ἀβρὸς, which he renders magnificent, and either σάω, I save, I heal, or σᾶ, signifying safety or health. (Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 55.) Wendelin, compounding it of the initials of Hebrew and of Greek words, finds no difficulty in discovering in the word both the Trinity, and Salvation by the Cross; two doctrines, by the way, which correspond not with the notions of the Basilidians. (Miscell. Chifflet, vol. vi.)

[1] Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 68, and Lardner's Hist. of Heret. book ii. c. ii. sec. 28.

[2] Thiers, Traité des Superstitions, and Le Brun, Histoire Critique des Pratiques Superstitieuses, lib. iii.

[3] It is, perhaps, in consequence of the use of such amulets, that the Christians of Egypt were sometimes said to have adored Serapis: in the curious Letter of Adrian found in Vopiscus, Ægyptum, quam mihi laudabus, Serviane carissime, totam didici levem, pendulam, et ad omnia famæ momenta volitantem. Illi, qui Serapin colunt, Christiani sunt, devoti sunt Serapidi, qui se Christi episcopos dicunt. Nemo illic archi-synagogus Judæorum, nemo Samarites, nemo Christianorum Presbyter; non Mathematicus, non Aruspex, non Alyptes. Ipse ille Patriarcha, cum Ægyptum venerit, ab aliis Serapidem adorare, ab aliis cogitur Christum. (Vit. Saturnin. p. 245.)

Basilides.

the superstitious use of the word *Abracadabra*, described by Serenus Samonicus,[1] (the preceptor of the younger Gordian), who has been ranked, apparently without cause, among the followers of Basilides.

Basilides pretended that his opinions were derived from Glaucias,[2] the interpreter of St. Peter, and also appealed to certain prophecies of Barcabbas and Barcoph or Parchor.[3] He regarded the prophecies in the Old Testament as being given by the angel-creators of the world, and the law by their chief, who brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt,[4] and through whose jealousy and machinations Jesus was sacrificed. It is evident, therefore, that, consistently with his view of the object of Christ's mission, he could not regard it as the duty of a Christian to receive and comply with the Jewish Scriptures. The New Testament, however, he appears, for the most part at least, to have admitted.[5] Besides composing odes,[6] he wrote twenty-four books of commentaries upon the Gospel,[7] which work is probably the same[8] which is called the Gospel of Basilides, mentioned by Origen,[9] Ambrose,[10] and Jerome;[11] a circumstance which proves that expositions on the New Testament were written at an early period, by which all attempts at alteration or corruption would scarcely have escaped being very soon discovered.[12]

[1] Mortiferum magis est, quod Græcis hemitritæum
Vulgatur verbis, hoc nostrâ dicere linguâ
Non potuere ulli, puto, nec voluere parentes.
Inscribis Chartæ, quod dicitur Abracadabra,
Sæpius et subter repetis, sed detrahe summam,
Et magis atque magis desint elementa figuris
Singula, quæ semper rapies, et cætera figes,
Donec in angustum redigatur litera conum,
His lino nexis collum redimire memento, &c.
Serem. Sam. de Medic. n. 53.

That is,
A B R A C A D A B R A
B R A C A D A B R A
R A C A D A B R A
A C A D A B R A
C A D A B R A
A D A B R A
D A B R A
A B R A
B R A
R A
A

[2] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vii. p. 764.
[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. vii. Clem. Strom. lib. vi. p. 641.
[4] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxiii.
[5] See, however, Hier. in Epist. ad Tit. in Proem.
[6] See Grabe, Spicil. Patr. tom. ii.
[7] Agripp. Castor ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. vii.
[8] Beausobre, Hist. de Man. tom. ii. pp. 3, 4.
[9] Hom. in Luc. lib. i.
[10] Præf. in Comm. in Luc.
[11] Ibid. in Matth.
[12] Lardner's Hist. of Heret. p. 123.

CARPOCRATES—(Branches of Carpocratianism.)

Carpocrates of Alexandria,[1] who lived in the reign of the emperor Hadrian, was the founder of the sect of Carpocratians. Like the other Gnostics, they held the existence of one Supreme Principle, the unknown and unnamed Father,[2] and the formation of the visible world and all which is therein by angels, much inferior to the Father.[3] Carpocrates.

They regarded Jesus Christ as having been born, in the ordinary course of nature, of Joseph and Mary; but as having excelled other men not only by the holiness and virtue of His life, but by the wonderful firmness and purity of His mind, which had retained the remembrance of what He had seen, in a pre-existent state, with the Father. They admitted that He had been educated among the Jews, but had despised them, and had therefore obtained the power to surmount His sufferings, and afterwards ascended to the Father.[4] The Carpocratians boasted of resembling Christ, and even allowed, hypothetically speaking, that, if any person had a purer soul, or despised in a greater degree the things here below, he might excel Him.[5] They had pictures of Christ and His apostles, and also of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and other eminent men, whom they are said to have honoured with superstitious rites.[6] Carpocrates maintained the notion of the transmigration of the soul, which must perform all which it was destined, before it can obtain rest. In support of his doctrine he cited the words of our Lord, "Verily, thou shalt not depart hence, until thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Doctrines. Morality.

But the Carpocratians are chiefly stigmatized on account of the consequences which they drew from their principles. They are charged with asserting, that there was nothing good or evil in itself; that the distinction between right and wrong was not real, but depended merely on human opinion;[7] an assertion which appears inconsistent with their view of the character of Christ, and which was, perhaps, applied not to moral duties, but to positive rites.[8] They are also said to have taught the community of women; a doctrine which, together with their notions of a pre-existent state, and of metempsychosis, may be traced to Plato, in whose writings Carpocrates and his son Epiphanes (by whom the opinions of this sect were much amplified, and to whom extraordinary honour was paid[9]) were familiarly versed.[10] In conse-

[1] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii. p. 428. Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. v. Epiphanius calls him a Cephalenian. (Hær. xlii. c. iii.)

[2] The Πατὴρ ἄγνωστος ἀκατονόμαστος, so often mentioned by the Gnostics, was both known in India and Persia, and even reached the West, as may be inferred from Acts xvii. 27.

[3] Epiph. Hær. xxvii. c. xi. Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxv. &c.

[4] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxv. [5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid. Comp. page 45 of this volume. [7] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxv.

[8] See Lardner's Hist. of Heret. p. 136.

[9] He wrote many works, and is said to have been honoured after his death as a god at Sama, in Cephalenia, the birth-place of his mother. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii. p. 428. [10] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii. p. 428.

Carpocrates. quence of these last opinions, they are represented as having indulged in the grossest licentiousness, and as having given occasion to the dreadful calumnies[1] by which the early Christians were assailed.[2]

Epiphanius says the Carpocratians rejected the Old Testament. It appears not certain that they rejected any part of the New.

Antitactics. The 'Antitactics' pretended, it is said, that it was their duty to practise all which the Scriptures forbid, in the hope of again attaining that state of innocence and bliss in which man had been originally placed by the Perfect and Good Being, and from which an evil and envious creature had drawn him, by infusing into his mind ideas of right and wrong, which have attached the feeling of shame to that which nature itself inspires, connected the notion of crime with that of happiness, remorse with pleasure, and, by leaving man tormented by opposite impulses—his propensities on the one side, and the law on the other—filled the world with murmuring, with disorders, and with misery; such was the flimsy reasoning by which these infatuated men endeavoured to justify their opposition to the laws which regulate society.[3]

Gnostics. The general term 'Gnostics' is applied to all those early sects who pretended to possess a certain mysterious *gnosis*, or higher degree of religious knowledge, and a deeper acquaintance with the intellectual world than other men. But it was claimed, especially, by a branch of the Carpocratians. They used several apocryphal works, among others the Gospel of St. Philip. Their notions, which appear to have been almost pantheistic, led to that utter disregard of external laws, by which they sank into the lowest effeminacy. They also thought that after death the soul passes through kingdoms of various intelligences, and that those which have not arrived at perfect gnosis, fall to the lot of the prince of this world, who, in the form of a dragon, devours them and casts them into the material world: then they are forced to begin again, in the shapes of various animals, their career of purification. The others pass into the region of Sabaoth, prince of the world, bruise the serpent's head, and enter into the abode of Barbelo,[4] who is here substituted for the 'Sophia' of the Gnostics.

Among the Carpocratian heresies may, perhaps, be reckoned the Adamites and the Prodicians.

Adamites. The 'Adamites'[5] (if such a sect really existed[6]) affected to imitate

[1] Euseb, Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. vii. Epiph. Hær. xxvii. &c. The charge of promiscuous lewdness, cast against the Christians, was probably previous to the time of Carpocrates, who flourished under Hadrian. Lardn. Hist. of Heret. p. 28.

[2] Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Cainites.

[3] Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xvi. Pluquet, Dict. des Héréś. lib. i. p. 425, &c.

[4] Hence another sect is said to have been called Barbeliotes, or Barborites. On the derivation of the corrupt word Barbelo, see Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 327. The Phibionites, or Phemionites, were, also, an obscure and depraved branch of Carpocratians.

[5] Epiph. Hær. lii. See a curious passage from Evagrius, quoted in Pluquet, Dict. des Héréś. art. Adamites.

[6] On this subject see the Dissertation of Beausobre in the Biblioth. Germaniq. tom. ii. reprinted at the end of L'Enfant's Histoire des Hussites.

the primitive conduct, even the nudity, of man in his state of innocence. Carpocrates.
At first, perhaps, irreproachable in their morals, though strangely misled by false reasoning and enthusiasm, they were naturally drawn, by the tendency of their principles, into corruptions, alike dangerous to themselves, and ruinous to the peace and regularity of civil society.[1]

The 'Prodicians,' or followers of Prodicius, who is sometimes called Prodicians.
the founder of the Adamites, are placed by some writers among the Valentinians. They are represented as having abandoned themselves to licentiousness, (though they kept private their vicious practices through fear,) under pretence that they were, by nature, the children of the Supreme Deity, and privileged to live without control, in whatever manner they chose.[2] They boasted of possessing certain secret books of Zoroaster,[3] who was, at that period, peculiarly venerated by philosophical heretics. They are, moreover, said to have denied the utility of prayer,[4] and the necessity of martyrdom.[5]

VALENTINUS.

Disciples of Valentinus.

SECUNDUS—PTOLEMY—MARCUS—COLOBARSUS—HERACLEON.

Lesser Gnostic Sects.

SETHIANS—CAINITES—OPHITES.

Valentinus was a native of Egypt, and flourished in the reign of System of Valentinus.
Antoninus Pius. He is described as a man of eloquence and talent, who seceded from the Church on being disappointed in his hope of obtaining a bishopric. Valentinus supposed a Supreme Being, infinite and incomprehensible, dwelling in heights invisible and ineffable, and, therefore, called Βυθὸς, the depth which the understanding cannot fathom; the Προπάτωρ, who hath always been, and who will always be. This is evidently the unknown and nameless Father, (the Πατὴρ ἄγνωστος, the Πατὴρ ἀνωνόμαστος,) eternal and perfect, constantly found as the leading principle in the Gnostic systems.

The notion of absolute creation being rejected, the Supreme Being was considered as developing or sending forth what was hidden or concentrated in the Pleroma. This act produced certain intelligences, or hypostatical manifestations of the Deity, called sometimes developments, (διαθέσεις,) sometimes powers, (δυνάμεις,) but more commonly Æons (αἰῶνες). Such is the theory of emanations, which, though adapted by the Gnostics before Valentinus, received from him considerable increase from the fertility of his speculative powers. New classifications of Æons, new names, new associations, peculiarly distinguish his doctrines.

[1] The Turlupins furnish a deplorable illustration of this remark.
[2] Clem. Alexandr. Strom. lib. iii. p. 438.
[3] Ibid. lib. i. p. 304.
[4] Ibid. lib. vii. p. 722.
[5] Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. iii. See also page 19, note [1], and Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 151.

Valentinus. The Supreme Deity, or Bythos, after having spent numberless ages in silent repose, resolved to reveal himself, and employed, for this purpose, his thought, (Ἔννοια,) who alone had dwelt with or within him. Ennoia, who is not a manifestation, but the source of all manifestation, is also called Χάρις and Σιγή, her happiness being perfect, and her essence ineffable. This notion of the Supreme Being dwelling, before the production of worlds, with silence, was familiar to the Indians, the Persians, the Jews, and also to other Gnostic sects.

The first manifestation which the thought of the Supreme Being produced, was Intelligence; that is, in the allegorical language of Valentinus, Ennoia, impregnated by Bythos, gave birth to Nous (Νοῦς), the only Son (Μονογενὴς).

Nous is the first of the Æons, the beginning of all things, alone able to comprehend the greatness of the Father. By him the Divinity is revealed; without him all had remained concealed in the depths of Bythos. With Nous (though he was termed Monagenes) was born Truth (Ἀλήθεια): these two, together with Bythos and Ennoia, form the first Tetrad or Quarternion, the root from which all the remaining Æons are derived.

These Æons are but the revealed forms of the Supreme Being—but the names of Him whose perfections no one name can express. They are in the language of generation, which easily flows from that of emanation, and which was used not merely in the theogony of Egypt but also of Greece, some males, and some females; the first being considered as the active, the second as the passive principles, united homogeneously by pairs or syzygies, as the Bythos with the Ennoia. From their union sprang other Æons, who are considered as their image or revelation. The combination of all these Æons constituted the Pleroma, or fulness of the attributes and perfections of the Godhead.

From the abovementioned quarternion (Βυθὸς, Ἔννοια, Νοῦς, and Ἀλήθεια) arose the following manifestations. From Νοῦς sprang the Word (Λόγος) and Life (Ζωὴ), and from them Man (Ἄνθρωπος) and the Church (Ἐκκλησία). This second Tetrad forms with the first the Ogdoad.

From Λόγος and Ζωὴ sprang ten more Æons: Βύθιος (or, as some read, another Βυθὸς) and Μίξις, Ἀγήρατος, and Ἕνωσις, Αὐτοφυὴς and Ἡδονὴ, Ἀκίνητος and Σύγκρασις, Μονογενὴς (another of the name) and Μακαρία.

From Ἄνθρωπος and Ἐκκλησία sprang twelve Æons: Παράκλητος and Πίστις, Πατρικὸς and Ἐλπὶς, Μητρικὸς and Ἀγάπη, Αἰνὸς (or rather Ἀεινοῦς) and Σύνεσις, Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς and Μακαριότης, Θελητὸς and Σοφία.

These thirty Æons formed the Pleroma.

Without attempting to explain the details of this strange system, it is sufficiently obvious that the above Decad in a manner typically intimated the Divine attributes—the nature of Bythos, which is always the same, neither impaired by age nor affected by change. The female

Æons revealed their condition and influence—Union, Pleasure, Felicity, &c. In the Dodecad are marked those points in the Divine Nature to which the Valentinian looks for protection: the Holy Ghost, Hope, Faith, Charity, Intelligence, Happiness, Wisdom, and other Æons, whose nature is not evident. Valentinus.

All these Æons, though pure manifestations of the Deity, reflecting some rays of the Divine attributes, were unequal, bordering on imperfection, and decreasing in knowledge, in proportion as they were removed from the Deity. From this gradual degeneration ensued the Fall even in the heavenly ranks, a notion long known in the East. The Fall is thus imagined by Valentinus. The entire knowledge of Bythos was communicated only by Νοῦς, his only-begotten son. He was desirous of imparting it to the other Æons, but was prevented by Σιγὴ, his mother. The Æons then were consumed with a secret desire of knowing the hidden God. This desire was especially vehement in Σοφία, the last of the Æons, who disdained her companion Θελητὸς, and pined to be united with Bythos. The violent struggles of her passion to attain an object incompatible with her imperfect nature would at length have gradually annihilated her, had she not been forced to return to the limits assigned her capacity, and thus preserved by the Æon Ὅρος (Limitation), who was sent forth for that express purpose, not having before existed, while the harmony of the Pleroma was undisturbed. It is scarcely necessary to point out the meaning of a myth which is so obviously intended to show, that the intelligence, unchecked by its proper bounds aud will, which aspires to a degree of knowledge unattainable in its actual state, wastes away with feverish speculation, loses itself in endless mazes, and would at length fret its powers into decay and destruction.

To Ὅρος, who, by casting out Ἐνθύμησις, had restored Σοφία to the Pleroma, are applied the names Μεταγωγὸς, Ὁροθέτης, Σταυρὸς, or, perhaps, Σταυρωτὴς, Λυτρωτὴς, and Καρπιστὴς.

But as the passionate agitations of Σοφία had troubled the harmony of the Pleroma, a restoration was necessary: hence new existences.

Νοῦς begot Christ (Χριστὸς) and the Holy Spirit (Πνεῦμα, considered as a female Æon), of which the following were the offices: Christ explained to the Æons the nature of the union of the different pairs in the Pleroma, or of the successive developments by means of which they were enabled to arrive at the knowledge of the Supreme Being: after this communication the Holy Spirit rendered them grateful and satisfied with the instruction which they had received. Thus were calm and harmony restored. All the Æons, with mutual affection, resolved to glorify Bythos, by contributing to form a creature possessing all which is excellent in nature. The fable of Pandora will naturally suggest itself to the reader. By these joint contributions was produced the Æon Jesus, who contained in his person the seed of Divine life, to be spread among all existing beings who were without the Pleroma.

Valentinus.

He was also called Christ, as being to the inferior world what Christ had been to the Pleroma, which may be termed the celestial or intellectual world.

Between the higher or celestial and the lower or terrestrial world is an intermediate region, touching upon the latter and governing it, as itself is governed by the former.

In the vehemence of her desire to be united with Bythos, Sophia had produced a female Æon called Κατω-σοφία, the Achamoth of the Cabala, who was but an abortion, an imperfect creature, and who, incapable of being exalted to the Pleroma by the exertions of Ὅρος, Χριστὸς, and Πνεῦμα, was precipitated into Chaos, or the regions of darkness. In a degraded state of chequered joys and grief, she was alternately swayed by different emotions; now shuddering at the thought of falling into annihilation, now ravished by the remembrance of the realms of light from which she had fallen; now giving birth to various beings, or drawing out of Chaos all living souls, and among them the soul of the Demiurge, and all material substances. From her tears came the element of water; from her sadness, opaque matter; from her smiles, caused at the remembrance of Christ, light. At length, in her anguish she supplicated Christ, who first sent her Horus (Ὅρος), and afterwards the Æon Jesus, as a deliverer.

Thrown into ecstacy at the appearance of Christ, with his attendant angels, Sophia-Achamoth produced three different kinds of existences or elements—the material, the animal, and the spiritual. Out of the animal, and the soul to which, during her passion, she had given birth, she formed the Demiurge, who was also called Μητροπάτωρ.

Assisted by Sophia and Jesus, the Demiurge separated the material from the animal principle, which were confounded in Chaos, and formed six regions—the imperfect image of the upper world—and, in order to govern them, six Intelligences, who, with the Demiurge and his mother, were the imperfect image of the Ogdoad of the Pleroma.

The Demiurge would have formed man after his image, so that he would have possessed only the material principle: but without his knowledge, and through the unperceived communication of Sophia, he imparted a portion of divine light to man; and thus the creature, displaying a degree of superiority to the inferior creation, surprised the Creator. His jealousy was consequently excited. In unison with the six spirits, he forbade man to taste of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and, on the transgression of this order, he cast man out from the aerial region of Paradise into this gross and material world, where his soul is clothed with corporeal covering, by which its energies are cramped and debilitated, and subjected to the influence of material spirits, which fill it with evil desires. The degeneracy of the soul would then have been in danger of increase, but that Sophia—the "light of the world," the "salt of the earth,"—enlightens and fortifies it by some secret invisible power. Those who follow her impulse, by combating evil and the powers of matter, strengthen the seeds of

divine life, which she was instrumental in imparting, and then become truly "the spiritual," —they reveal God even in this lower world, to which the Saviour will come to deliver whatever is found to correspond with the spirituality of his nature. Valentinus.

Valentinus divided man as well as substances into three different classes: the spiritual (or pneumatic), the material (hylic), and the animal (psychical). The spiritual are they who, having the seeds of divine life, display it in this world; the material or carnal, they who are blindly carried away by the passions excited by the matter, of which they are composed, and the spirits which govern it; the animal, they who fluctuate uncertainly between these two classes. The material are represented by Cain, the animal by Abel, the spiritual by Seth. The material are doomed to certain perdition, and the spiritual to certain salvation. The future state of the animal is uncertain; it will depend on the greater degree of inclination which they may have shown either for the material or for the spiritual: by assuming the spirit, the vesture of incorruptibility, they may become immortal; but not having the higher capacities or intuition of truth, which distinguish the spiritual, they cannot comprehend divine points: they have not faith, cannot obtain faith but through the miracles, and, even with this extraordinary aid, they cannot raise themselves higher than the empire of the Demiurge, a middle region between the celestial and terrestrial worlds, which is much below felicity. Whereas the spiritual will in time arrive to so high a degree of perfection, as to be able to cast away the animal principle, which is the only present vehicle of intelligence. For the ψυχή was long regarded as a kind of element in which the Πνεῦμα resided. And hence the Valentinians rejected the testimony of the senses, which they referred to the animal portion in human nature, and explained the five foolish virgins in the parable to mean the five senses in man. In applying this triple division, Valentinus considered the Christians as spiritual, and ranged the Jews under the Demiurge, who was animal, and the heathens under Matter, or Satan, that is, the progeny of Matter resisting the creative act of the Divinity. He allowed, however, that there were individual exceptions to this general classification; the spiritual, who compose the new Church, having existed in all nations. Triple division of mankind.

And here it is worthy of remark, that Valentinus admitted not the theory of preceding Gnostics, who regarded Satan as a fallen angel, or an eternal principle of evil. His notions approach nearer to the Greek philosophy on the subject of matter, which he considered as shapeless and dead, unsubstantial and void, mere darkness, the shadow of reality (σκιὰ τοῦ ὄντος), which, resisting the pervading principle of divine life, has within itself a mode of being productive of evil.

As a redemption had in a manner been necessary in the superior worlds, in consequence of their fall, it was especially necessary in the lower regions, in consequence of their deep degeneracy. In each of the worlds inhabited by intelligences, there was a peculiar redemption

Valentinus. effected by the first of the spirits of each class, imitating the Supreme Saviour.

The Demiurge, who was himself merely psychical, had promised those over whom he ruled a deliverer, but only one of an animal nature, according to his conceptions and power. Ignorant of his origin, and of the Pleroma, the Demiurge was in some respects even more ignorant than his creature Satan, the "Spirit of wickedness." He knew neither the true method of redemption, nor the true nature of the Redeemer.

The Redeemer was the Æon Jesus, an image of the Superior Christ; according to his ideas, was the world formed; by his means were such of the inhabitants, as were susceptible of elevation into the Pleroma, redeemed. Composed of the spiritual principle, derived from Sophia Achamoth, and the animal principle, drawn from the Demiurge, he had also a corporeal form, made with exquisite skill, and the Superior Christ (who has been above described as formed out of the contributions of the Æons), descended upon him in the shape of a dove at his baptism. He had nothing material, having passed through the body of the Virgin merely as water through a canal. The carnal and animal Christ alone was crucified; the Saviour quitted him when he was examined by Pilate.

It was during this union with the Superior Christ, that Jesus performed the most important part of His mission; before that period He was chiefly distinguished by His moral life, enabled, in consequence of the nature of His body, to engage in the common actions of men, without sharing their earthly affections.

Such as were only of an animal nature received the assistance only of the animal Saviour, after his separation from Christ. His crucifixion, the image of the act of redemption in the higher world, brought back animal man into the limits of his nature (for the word σταυρὸς may also be considered as a bound or fence); and enabled the psychical principle, by successful struggles, utterly to destroy the hylic principle, which destruction is the ultimate end in the present constitution of things.

The Saviour, on the point of death, still recommended the animal seed, which He had received from his mother, that it might pass beyond the kingdom of the Demiurge, and rise with the Spiritual into the realms of the superior Saviour. The animal Saviour carried what remained after the separation of the pneumatic principle into the kingdom of the Demiurge, who, cheerfully acknowledging the superior revelation of the Saviour, transmitted to him the sovereignty. To this state the psychical beings may be admitted.

The union of the spiritual with the superior Christ, typified by his union with Jesus at the baptism, will purge the soul, so that it may overcome the evil spirits which lay strong siege against it. "For the heart," says Valentinus, "which is not purified from the evil spirits that fix within it their impure abode, may be compared to an inn,

which men, regardless of property not their own, disorder and defile. Valentinus
But as soon as it becomes an object of some one's care, as soon as the good Being visits and sanctifies it, then shines it forth with the brilliancy of a pure light—then truly is it said of the person who possesses such a heart that he shall see God." In another place, after having addressed the Spiritual, "the immortal from the beginning," "the children of life eternal," he adds, "If you dissolve the material world without suffering yourselves to be dissolved by it, you are masters of the creation, and you rule over all which is formed but to perish." For it was the opinion of Valentinus, that the present state of things would cease when the end of redemption was fully attained. Then will the fire, which is spread or concealed in the world, burst forth from all quarters, destroy the very dross of matter, the last seat of evil. And at this final consummation, Sophia Achamoth, the bride of the Æon Jesus, will be received into the Pleroma, together with the spirits, who, then arrived at maturity, will enjoy the delights of an intimate union with their fond companions. This is the Ἀναπαύσις, celebrated by many Gnostics.

The animal men, being satisfied with the middle region, between the Pleroma and this world, which they will share with the Demiurge, the felicity of divine life, issuing from Bythos, the fountain of all things, will flow into every degree of existence.

Such was, as far as can now be discovered, the fanciful system by which Valentinus chiefly intended to explain the origin of evil; for this question, it should be remembered, was the great source of heresy in the early centuries of the Church.

The sect of Valentinus obtained great celebrity. It was very widely spread, and was, according to Tertullian, numerous among the Gnostics. But his followers introduced considerable alterations into the systems of their master; a circumstance which has probably, in this case, as in many others, been productive of much confusion.

Valentinus perverted the sacred Scriptures by interpretation, but avoided mutilating them. The works of Valentinus are lost; but we have still fragments of his 'Letters,' 'Treatises,' and 'Homilies.' The above sketch of his system is chiefly taken from Irenæus.[1] It has also been incidentally described by Clemens Alexandrinus;[2] and Origen,[3] Theodoret,[4] and Epiphanius,[5] furnish us with some additional information. The brief account of Tertullian is little more than a translation of the first book of Irenæus against the Gnostics; he may have seen the treatise of Valentinus entitled 'Sophia;'[6] but his anti-oriental spirit made him but an indifferent expositor of heresies, which he appears not to have taken sufficient pains to understand.

[1] Adv. Hær. lib. i. [2] Strom. and Excerpta Theodoti, affixed to his works.
[3] C. Cels. and De Princip. [4] Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. vii. [5] Hær. xxxi.
[6] Woide supposed that he had found this treatise among the MSS. of Dr. Askew; but see Matter, Hist. du Gnost. p. 163, note.

Followers. The most noted disciples and successors who altered the system of Valentinus, were Secundus, Ptolemy, Marcus, Colobarsus, Heracleon, to whom may be added Theotimus and Alexander. Axionicus alone adhered faithfully to the theories of Valentinus.

Secundus. Secundus (from whom the 'Secundians' received their name) is said to have acquired great reputation. He divided the first Ogdoad of the Pleroma into two Tetrads, the right and the left, or *light* and *darkness*. God, though himself above all evil, no sooner began his developments, than the germ of difference between good and evil manifested themselves. This deviation from the system of Valentinus, and approximation to the ancient notions of the East, contributed to the increase of the sect of the Secundians, and were the means of bringing over Isidore, the son of Basilides, and Epiphanes, the son of Carpocrates.

Isidore. Epiphanes.

Ptolemy. Ptolemy founded the second branch of the Valentinians. He had different notions respecting the number and nature of the Æons. His opinions may be learnt from the very curious 'Letter,' preserved by Epiphanius, which he addressed to an orthodox female, called Flora, with a view to convince her of the truth of his system. On the subject of the Old Testament, he argues that the Mosaic law is too full of imperfections to have proceeded from the perfect Deity; and yet contains too many points of excellence, too many prohibitions against wickedness, to have been the work of an evil being. The same argument he applies to the inferior creation, which evinces too many defects to have proceeded from the unknown Father, and too many marks of wisdom to have arisen from the principle of evil. Consequently, both the law and the creation, being of mixed good and evil, arose from the Demiurge, who is himself a being of a middle nature.

In the laws of the Pentateuch (which is not perfect) must still be distinguished what proceeded from the Demiurge, what was given by Moses, and what was subsequently added by the ancients. The part which came from Moses is not contrary to that of the Demiurge, but it was drawn from the reluctant legislator in consequence of the hardness of heart of the Jews; that part which was added by the ancients, is that which is often censured by Jesus Christ. Again, the law of the Demiurge admits of a triple division: the first consists of those pure laws of unmixed good which Jesus Christ came to accomplish; the second are those mixed with evil, for instance, that of retaliation, which He came to abolish by the substitution of better precepts; the third are those which, being merely typical, have been converted from things sensible into things spiritual; such are sacrifices, fasts, the passover, circumcision, and other rites, which, being symbolical, have been succeeded by the true worship of the heart, by mental abstinence from evil, by the sacrifice of love for God and of charity for man.

Marcus. Marcus, another disciple, founded the sect of 'Marcosians.' He is

accused of magic; an accusation very common against heretics, and, doubtless, often proceeding from want of sufficient acquaintance with what might be private in their ceremonies, or obscure in their doctrine. If the instances given of his arts are correct, he must be considered as having resorted to a kind of legerdemain for purposes of imposture. His chief refinement on the system of Valentinus consisted in adding to it some Cabalistic notions. He attached great mystery to the letters of the alphabet, without which truth could not be discovered, and in which its whole perfection resided. Jesus, according to his idea, was said to be Alpha and Beta, because He had in him all numbers. He maintained that when the Father wished to manifest himself, he produced by the word of his mouth the Logos, who contained the whole Pleroma of Æons, that is all the attributes of God, which Æons or attributes were thus displayed. When the Supreme Being pronounced the first word, it was a syllable of four letters, which became four beings, who formed the first tetrad; the second word consisted of four letters, and formed the second tetrad; both tetrads corresponding to the Ogdoad of Valentinus; the third word consisted of ten, and the fourth of twelve letters, which, forming the decad and dodecad, completed the Pleroma. But these thirty Æons of the Pleroma were not the only spirits formed by this method. Each of the letters which produce them contains a number of letters in itself; for instance, the letter delta contains five, δ, ε, λ, τ, α, and each of these contains many others, so that it alone contains an immense series. The reader will, doubtless, be satisfied with this short specimen. Marcus.

Colobarsus, the coadjutor of Marcus, afterwards separated from him. His alteration consisted chiefly in presenting a new Æogony and a new Christogony. Colobarsus.

Heracleon was one of the most learned and celebrated of the Valentinians. He appeals not to apocryphal writings, which, though commonly used by the Gnostics, may have tended, from their multiplicity and from their evident inferiority to the canonical works, rather to impede than to advance the progress of heresy. He applied himself to writing 'Commentaries' on several parts of the New Testament, more especially of St. John; and instead of attaching himself to the doctrinal parts, or Æogony, of the Valentinian system, he turned his attention to more practical details. Some fragments of these 'Commentaries' remain. We give the substance of his remarks on St. Luke, ch. xii. v. 8, 11, 12, which appears worthy of being transcribed, if it were only on account of the historical information it contains:—"There is one confession by faith and manner of life, and another confession by word of mouth. The latter, which is made before persons in power, is considered by many as the only one necessary. But this opinion is erroneous. For it may be made even by hypocrites. And besides it cannot be universally applied: for not all who are saved have made this confession, and, in consequence, Heracleon.

Heracleon. suffered martyrdom: for instance, Matthew, Philip, Thomas, Levi,[1] and many others. There is then a general and a particular confession. The first is made by works and actions, agreeable to right faith; the second, which is made before authorities, will ensue, if occasion should so require, for, beyond a doubt, that man will make a true confession in words, who hath before made it in the tenour of his actions."[2]

Remarks. Among the Valentinian chiefs are Florinus, who founded the 'Florinians,' and others. After the time of these more eminent disciples, the schools of the Valentinians, so famed (more especially the Marcosian), fell into demoralization and decay. In the fifth century they had become obscure. The fatal notion that the spiritual, exalted above positive laws, were incapable of corruption, naturally led, at least among the mass of followers, to those deplorable results, which were, perhaps, not anticipated by the first or more enlightened teachers, and which afford a very useful lesson to the philosophic observer of the history of the human mind. Supposed internal excellence was said to exempt the possessor from strict attention to external conduct. Intellectual speculations degenerated into sensual debasement. The infatuated mystic imagined that his superior spirituality was as little affected by these acts of indulgence as the nature of precious metals is altered by the gross matter in which they happen to lie. The scrupulous Christian, who spent his life in the practice of moral duties, and exposed his person to the fury of persecutors, was regarded as an ignorant and narrow-minded man, doomed to toil for his salvation, in the opinion of those who, suddenly raised by a mysterious science to perfection, imagined themselves the very seeds of election![3] When they were in danger of judgment, the power of Sophia Achamoth would cover the redeemed with the armour of Orcus, and, becoming invisible, they would escape the power of the Demiurge.

At the same time we cannot but repeat the remark, which we have thought it a duty due to truth so often to make, that the accounts of the ancient fathers must be cautiously received; that the general state of a sect must not be judged of by some individual instances; that consequences, however strictly deducible from certain doctrines, are not to be urged, unless it can be shown that these consequences were actually deduced by those who held the doctrines; and that the alarm, excited by these either real or supposed consequences, must often have concurred with want of opportunity, at a moment of extreme danger from enemies without and within, and with the fear of con-

[1] Levi means Lebbeus, who is also called Judas or Thaddeus. This passage shows that the modern traditions, that all the apostles suffered death, are not correct. For further information see Lardner, Hist. of Heret. book ii. c. viii.

[2] Ap. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iv. p. 502.

[3] In drawing up this account we have been guided by Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 510–521; and especially by Matter, Hist. du Gnost. vol. ii. p. 101–177.

tracting impurity by reading impious works,[1] to check the desire of minutely explaining, or candidly weighing, the numerous obscure and diversified systems of the ancient Gnostics.[2] Remarks.

A succinct view of some less considerable Gnostic sects may be requisite to complete our sketch of the early heresies.

The error of the 'Sethians'[3] is grounded on an allegorical explanation of the first part of 'Genesis,' which they regarded as containing not an historical narrative, but a series of myths. According to their notion, there were from the beginning two sorts of men—the material, created by evil Genii; and the animal, created by the Demiurge. Abel, the representative of the animal race, having through his weakness been overcome by Cain, the representative of the material race, Sophia substituted Seth, to whom she imparted the additional aid of the spiritual principle. The descendants of Seth formed a family of spiritual persons,[4] who struggled against the angels of darkness. When Sophia resolved to destroy the wicked by the deluge, this family escaped, but among them Ham, who was of the other race, contrived, by means of the evil angels, to enter clandestinely into the ark. Hence was the vigilance of Sophia increased, and, at the crisis of the greatest danger, she sent to save the human race Seth, in the person of Jesus Christ,[5] the type of the spiritual. The Sethians, it may be remarked, were not anti-judaical, as were many of the Gnostics. They acknowledged the holiness of the patriarchs and the prophets. They thought, as many Gnostics, that Christ descended into Jesus at His baptism, and left Him when He was led away to be crucified. They had many apocryphal books, such as Seven Books of Seth, &c. Sethians.

The 'Cainites' (if the accounts of them are correct, and any sect really assumed that name), on the contrary, extolled Cain, regarding him as a superior power. They are also said to have paid divine honours to Judas, and also to Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and the people of Sodom. They appear, in short, not only to have regarded as superior men all those who are represented as enemies of God by the writers of the Old Testament, but also to have considered the books of the New Testament as works written by persons, who had been deceived in their opinions by their attachment to Judaism. Judas was their only spiritual apostle, the only one who understood the Gnosis. He alone knew that by the death of the Saviour, the Cainites.

[1] That this fear deterred many Christians from reading the works of the heretics appears from Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. vii.

[2] There is a work by Bishop Hooper (of Bath and Wells), De Valentinianorum Hæresi conjecturæ quibus illius origo ex Ægyptiacâ Theologiâ deducitur.

[3] On the subject of the Sethians see Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxxi.; Epiph. Hær. xxxix.; Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i.

[4] See Genesis iii. 15; iv. 25, 26. In Numbers xxiv. 17 (where, instead of "destroy," some translate "rule over"), the expression "children of Seth," has been interpreted to mean "the Church, or the Faithful."

[5] Possibly they only thought that Jesus was descended from Seth. See Lardner, Hist. of Heret. art. Sethians.

Cainites. empire of Jaldabaoth would be destroyed, and it was to accomplish this purpose that he betrayed Him. To him we owe, in a manner, our salvation, and the knowledge which we have attained by it. In defence of these notions they referred to the Gospel of Judas, which, with other apocryphal books, they had in use. They also appealed to a work, which they pretended to have been written by St. Paul after his ascension to the third heaven.[1]

Nor is their conduct represented in a more favourable light than their principles. Desirous of showing their contempt for the Judaical laws, and in mockery of the evil angels, they are said to have abandoned themselves to the lowest sensuality. Thus the same principle, which led one party to the most rigid continence, was pleaded by another (so full of contrarieties is man) as a defence of the most unrestrained licentiousness.

Ophites The Sethians and the Cainites may, perhaps, be considered as branches of the 'Ophites' (so called from ὄφις, a serpent)—the most remarkable of the Gnostic sects after the Valentinians, from whom they appear to have separated, though their existence has been traced to a much higher period.

They agreed with the Gnostic theories in many points: they regarded the Old Testament as being inspired by an inferior God, and containing but few revelations of Sophia; and the New Testament as containing the opinions of our Saviour, mutilated by his disciples.

The Ophites had their peculiar theory of Æons, which was more simple than that of the Valentinians. They had their notion of the formation of the world against the will of God; of the chiefs of the seven planets presiding over the world; and the union of Christ with the man Jesus, and his mission to destroy the empire of the Demiurge; but our limits prevent us from giving minute details of such sects as have exerted but little influence on the opinions of man in their own or succeeding ages.

The point in which the Ophites are most remarkable is the honour which they paid to the serpent, in the belief that it was under the figure of that animal that wisdom had revealed herself to mankind. This belief was founded on the narrative in 'Genesis,' that the serpent had made Adam and Eve acquainted with the taste of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and therefore had effected the greatest services. The Ophites, however, were much divided on this subject. Some thought that the genius Ophis, after having thus advised and enlightened man, was precipitated, as well as man, into a material body by the exasperated Demiurge Jaldabaoth; hence Ophis was converted from the friend into an enemy and seducer of the human race, on whose account he had fallen. Others considered him as having continued to be the faithful genius of Sophia, with whom he was sometimes confounded. With him also the Saviour was sometimes identified; in defence of which they appealed to the passage where

[1] See 2 Corinth. xii. 4.

Christ is compared in his crucifixion to the lifting up of the brazen serpent by Moses in the wilderness.[1] It is evident, therefore, that the notion is of Jewish origin, though afterwards it was possibly connected with the theories of the Egyptians respecting the god Cneph, or Agathodemon. And the Phœnicians, it may be remarked, considered the serpent as the most pneumatic of all reptiles. For the rapidity and vigour of its movements, the variety and flexibleness of its attitudes, together with its longevity, appeared to give it a character of mystery, which was confirmed by the sacred rites of various nations. In the Greek mythology the serpent was a salutary emblem, the type of Æsculapius, who was worshipped under the form of that animal at Epidaurus as a good genius. Hence it is found on Greek coins with the legend Σωτὴρ, saviour, or healer. Those Ophites who honoured the serpent are said to have kept this animal in a chest or kind of cage; and when the period of commemorating the supposed services rendered to mankind by the power which had assumed this form was arrived, they opened the door of the cage, and with a certain cry called him forth. The serpent is then described as coming out, crawling up to the tables, and twisting itself round certain loaves which had been there placed on them, and thus sanctifying them.[2] They urged that the serpent was the symbol of the prudent artifices which Sophia was obliged to resort to against Jaldabaoth.[3] Ophites.

Though these were the true Ophites, they formed, it would seem, but the smaller part of the sect so denominated. The notion so common in the east, and in the 'Zend-Avesta,' that the serpent was connected with the principle of evil, was probably embraced by the majority: they allowed, however, that the disobedience of man to the Demiurge was productive of the most salutary effects.

Origen, who was led to the inquiry because Celsus had confounded the Ophites with the Christians, has presented to us their diagram,[4] which was a kind of symbolic picture of their belief, accompanied with some prayers. This very curious monument is probably in an imperfect state, and, consequently, scarcely intelligible. It appears,

[1] "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14, 15.) The passage there alluded to is in Numbers xxi. 8, 9. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." The serpent appears frequently in the superstitions and customs of the Egyptians. (See Sir John Marsham, Chronic.) The Israelites, as it appears from 1 Kings xviii. 4, "burnt incense" to it all the days of Hezekiah. Ælius Lampridius informs us, that Heliogabalus "kept at Rome, serpents which were called Agathodemones, Good Demons, by the Egyptians." See also the gems having serpents in Montfaucon.

[2] Lardner looks upon this story as a mere calumny. See Hist. Heret. p. 111.

[3] This symbol, said they, was reproduced in the shape of the bowels of man. See Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxx. Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xiv.

[4] See an account of it in Matter, Hist. du Gnost. tom. ii. p. 222.

Ophites. however, that they supposed the world to be ruled by different powers; that these powers had separated their regions; that the soul, in order to return to heaven, must gain, or deceive, those powers, and pass unnoticed, from one world to another.[1]

According to Origen, the Ophites are so far from being Christians, that they would admit no one into their sect till he had cursed Jesus. This appears to be incorrect. The name of their master was Euphrates.

We now pass to heresies no longer of Oriental origin.

PRAXEAS.

Praxeas. Our knowledge of the opinions of Praxeas is almost entirely drawn from the treatise written against him by Tertullian.[2] From this piece it appears that Praxeas, coming from Asia to Rome, had by his representations induced the bishop of that see to recall letters of peace, in which he had recognised the prophecies of Montanus;[3] a step, it must be cautiously remarked, not calculated to produce a favourable impression on the mind of Tertullian, who, at the time when he wrote this work, had joined the sect of Montanists.[4] Praxeas is described as a man of an unquiet temper; elated at having suffered persecution, which is said to have consisted in a short imprisonment in the cause of the Christian religion.[5] From Rome, in which city he openly taught the errors which have added his name to the list of heretics, he appears to have proceeded to Africa. It was there, probably, that he held a dispute on the subject of his new doctrines, acknowledged himself confuted, and delivered to the Church a formal recantation.[6] Whether his conduct in this instance proceeded from conviction, or from interested motives, cannot be known; it is certain, however, that he afterwards maintained again the same opinions.

His opinions. His heresy consisted in denying the distinct personality of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, which he conceived to be inconsistent with the unity of God.[7] In the words of Tertullian, he asserted that the

[1] On the subject of the Ophites see Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. i. c. xxxiv.; Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vii.; Orig. c. Cels. lib. vi. sec. 25; App. ad Tertull. De Præscrip.; Epiph. Hær. xxxvii. xxxix.; Aug. Hær. xvii.; Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xiv.; Damas, De Hær. c. xxxvii. &c.

[2] Praxeas is not mentioned by Irenæus, Eusebius, Epiphanius, or Theodoret. No distinct account of this heresy is found in Philaster or Augustine, but he is spoken of by them in the Chapter on Sabellius.

[3] Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. i. [4] See p. 105, and below, note [6].

[5] Nam iste primus ex Asiâ hoc genus perversitatis intulit Romæ, homo et aliàs inquietus, insuper de jactatione martyrii inflatus, ob solum et simplex et breve carceris tædium. Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. i.

[6] Manet chirographum apud Psychicos, apud quos tunc res gesta est. Exinde silentium. Et nos quidem postea agnitio Paracleti atque defensio, disjunxit à Psychicis. Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. i. By Psychici (ψυχικοὶ), or animal (homines solius animæ et carnis) (De Jejun. c. xvii.), Tertullian means the Catholics, to distinguish them from the πνευματικοὶ, or spiritual, which appellation he applied to the Montanists.

[7] Unicum Dominum vindicat Omnipotenteum mundi conditorem, ut et de unico

Father himself descended into the Virgin, was born of her, suffered, and, in short, was himself Jesus Christ.[1] And hence his sect were called *Patripassians*. Praxeas, however, denied the fairness of this statement. He said the Father did not suffer in the Son, but sympathised with the Son.[2] Praxeas.

In order to support the entire identity of the Father and Son, Praxeas appealed to various passages of the sacred Scriptures. After quoting texts in the Old Testament in which the unity is asserted,[3] he referred to the expressions in St. John's Gospel, " I and my Father are one. He who has seen me has seen the Father also. I in my Father, and my Father in me."[4]

Yet, on the other hand, in order to disprove the distinction of persons—the Trinity—Praxeas is represented as asserting that, in the passages on which the doctrine was grounded, the Son meant the flesh, *i. e.* man, *i. e.* Jesus; the Father meant the Spirit, *i. e.* God, *i. e.* Christ.[5]

To these arguments the answers of Tertullian are the more interesting, as they lead him to give a view of his own sentiments—a summary of faith—on the great doctrines in question.[6]

The heresy of Praxeas[7] appears not to have made very extensive progress; it was almost unknown in Africa in the time of Optatus.[8]

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hæresim faciat. Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. i. Tertullian says, that the simple-minded, not to call them unwise and unlearned (or superficial)—who always form the majority of believers—inasmuch as the true faith condemns polytheism, were alarmed at the doctrine of the Trinity, which they supposed divided the Unity. Simplices quique ne dixerim imprudentes et idiotæ. By idiotæ Tertullian, doubtless, meant persons who do not possess that thorough knowledge of a subject which is obtained by those who have professionally studied it. The meaning of the word is clearly illustrated by Bentley, in his Remarks on a late Discourse on Free-Thinking, p. 33, and by Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 527, note.

[1] Ipsum dicit Patrem descendisse in virginem, ipsum ex eâ natum, ipsum passum; denique ipsum esse Jesum Christum. (Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. i.)

[2] Ergo nec compassus est Pater Filio; sic enim, directam blasphemiam in Patrem veriti, diminui eam hoc modo sperant, concedentes jam Patrem et Filium duos esse, si Filius quidem patitur; Pater vero compatitur. (Ibid. c. xxix.)

[3] Ibid. c. xviii. xix. [4] Ibid. c. xx.

[5] Ut æquè in unâ personâ utrumque distinguant Patrem et Filium, dicentes Filium carnem esse, id est, hominem, id est, Jesum; Patrem autem Spiritum, id est, Deum, id est Christum. (Tertull. Adv. Prax. c. xxvii.) Again, Ecce inquiunt ab Angelo prædicatum est, propterea quod nascetur sanctum, vocabitur Filius Dei; Caro itaque nata, est Caro itaque erit Filius Dei. (Ibid.) From these passages, two inferences may, we think, be drawn; first, that Praxeas did not suppose that the Divine Nature had suffered on the Cross; and, secondly, that Praxeas admitted the Miraculous Conception. (See Lardner's Hist. of Heret. book ii. c. xx.)

[6] The arguments of Tertullian have been detailed at large, and their agreement with the Articles of the Church of England examined, in an interesting analysis of the Treatise against Praxeas by Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 523–548.

[7] In the Catalogue of Heresies affixed to Tertull. de Præscript. it is said that this heresy was confirmed by Victorinus. Beausobre supposes that Victor, bishop of Rome, is here meant. (Hist. de Manich.)

[8] Lib. i. p. 37. See also below our account of the heresies of Noetus and Sabellius.

THEODOTUS AND ARTEMON—(MELCHISEDECHIANS).

Theodotus. Theodotus of Byzantium, by trade a tanner,[1] but of acknowledged learning and ability,[2] was the founder of the sect of *Theodotians*. He maintained that Jesus was a mere man,[3] but of eminent virtue, and born of a virgin[4] by the operation of the Holy Spirit. This view of the nature of Christ he considered, or affected to consider, as extenuating the apostacy[5] into which he had fallen in some persecution;[6] perhaps that which was inflicted upon the Christians by M. Aurelius.[7]

Artemon. Artemon, or Artemas (from whom the *Artemonists* were so denominated), maintained, apparently with greater fame, the same opinions as Theodotus; but it is difficult to determine whether he was prior or posterior to him in point of time.

In defence of these notions, the Artemonites appealed to the primitive doctrine as taught by the Apostles, and as preserved by the Church till the time of Victor, thirteenth bishop of Rome; by whose successor, Zephyrinus, the truth, according to their statement, was first corrupted. In refutation of this argument, the Catholic writers referred to the sacred Scriptures; to the preceding ecclesiastical writers, as Justin, Miltiades, Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Melito, who asserted the divinity of Christ; to the ancient hymns and canticles of the Church; and to the sentence of excommunication pronounced by Victor against Theodotus. This account of their reasoning we derive from an anonymous writer (supposed by some to be Caius,[8] priest of Rome), whose 'Argument against the Heresy of Artemon' is cited by Eusebius.[9] From his extracts, it also appears that some of the Theodotians engaged with zeal in the study of works on geometry and on philosophical subjects, and applied the principles of grammar and logic to the support of their peculiar doctrines.[10] They are accused of corrupting the Scripture, their copies being, it is said, different[11] one

[1] Theodotus, the Tanner, is not to be confounded, as Cave has done, with Theodotus the Valentinian. (Beaus. Hist. de Manich. tom. i. p. 420, &c.)

[2] Epiphan. Anac. p. 397. Hær. liv. cf. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. xxviii.

[3] Theodotus and his followers defended their opinion by appealing to the passages of the Old and New Testament (a proof that they admitted their authority); among the rest to the following, Deut. xviii. 15; Isaiah liii. 3; Matt. xii. 31, 32; Luke i. 35; Acts ii. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 5, &c. Theodotus cited John viii. 40. "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God." The Theodotians, therefore, did not, as it has been said, reject St. John.

[4] Theodoret. Hær. Fab. lib. ii. c. v. &c. Epiphanius, however, asserts that Theodotus taught that Christ was born in the same manner as other human beings. (Hær. liv.) But Epiphanius himself says, that Theodotus appealed to Luke i. 35; which, if correct, seems to contradict his previous account.

[5] Epiphan. Anac. p. 397. Append. ad Tertull. de Præscript. Philast. Hær. l. Aug. Hær. xxxiii. No mention of this circumstance is found in the anonymous writers against the Artemonites cited by Eusebius, or in Theodoret.

[6] Οὐκ οἶδα εἰπεῖν ἐν ὁποίῳ διωγμῷ. Epiphan. Hær. 54.

[7] Baron. Annal. Ann. 196, sec. 2, &c.

[8] See Phot. Biblioth. Cod. 48. Tillem. Mém. Art. Les Théodotiens.

[9] Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xxviii. [10] Ibid. [11] Ibid.

from the other; and some of them are represented as rejecting the Law and the Prophets.[1] Artemon.

Among the followers of Theodotus was another of the same name, a banker by profession, who is said[2] to have founded a new sect, called *Melchisedechians*.[3] They coincided with the Theodotians respecting the nature of Christ, but entertained particular opinions on the subject of Melchisedec, whom they described as being not a human being, but a celestial virtue or power; the intercessor or advocate of celestial angels or powers, as Christ was of men.[4] Melchisedec, according to their notion, had literally, in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews,[5] "neither father nor mother;" his beginning and end were incomprehensible. They regarded him as superior to Christ,[6] who is called "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."[7] They are said to have used certain apocryphal books of their own invention.[8] Melchisedechians.

HERMOGENES.

Hermogenes appears to have been a painter by profession,[9] and to have lived in Africa.[10] He was still living in the time of Tertullian, who wrote against him a tract,[11] which enables us to form some judgment on the nature of his heresy. Hermogenes.

It arose from an attempt to prove satisfactorily that God was not the author of evil, and consisted in asserting that all things, even the soul[12] and spirit, were created out of self-existent and eternal matter. System and method of reasoning.

[1] This sect either had, or were desirous of having, bishops. See the ridiculous story of Natalis told in Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. xxviii. and illustrated by Jortin, Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 227.

[2] Theodoret, Hær. Fab. lib. ii. c. vi.

[3] Lardner observes: "Possibly there never was any such set of men. But some Catholics, from some comparisons occasionally made by the Theodotians, or others, between Jesus and Melchisedec, imagined a distinct sect, and gave it such a name as they saw fit." (Hist. of Heretics, book ii. c. xvii. sec. 7.)

[4] Append. ad Tertull. de Præscript. The opinion that Melchisedec was not a man but an angel, or a celestial power, was held by other Christians; among the rest, by Origen and Didymus. (Hier. Ep. 126.)

[5] Ch. vii. 3.

[6] Ap. ad Tertull. de Præscript. See also Philast. Hær. lii. and cxliv.

[7] Psalm cx. 4.

[8] Philast. Hær. lii. Respecting Melchisedec, see also a subsequent article on *Hierax*.

[9] Tertull. Adv. Hermogenem, c. i.

[10] Philast. Hær. liv. Augustin. Hær. xli.

[11] But for this Tract (to which may be added the notice of Theodoret) we should scarcely have had any knowledge of Hermogenes, though it appears Theophilus of Antioch had undertaken to refute him. (Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. xxiv.) He is neither mentioned by Irenæus nor by Epiphanius; he is omitted in the catalogue affixed to Tertullian, de Præscriptione, nor is a distinct article assigned to him by Philaster or Augustine.

[12] Ceterum adversus Hermogenem, qui eam (animam) ex materiâ, non ex Dei flatu contendit, flatum propriè tuemur. Ille enim adversus ipsius scripturæ fidem flatum in spiritum vertit, ut dum incredibile est Spiritum Dei in delictum et mox in judicium devenire, ex materiâ potius anima credatur, quam ex Dei Spiritu. (Tertull. De Anim. c. ii.) It may be remarked that Hermogenes did not deny a

Hermogenes. Hermogenes arrived at this conclusion by the following reasoning: God must have made the world either out of Himself, *i. e.*, His own substance, or out of nothing, or out of pre-existent matter. Now, God did not make the world out of His own substance—this would be inconsistent with His indivisible and immutable nature, of which, moreover, evil could not form a part; neither did God create it out of nothing[1]—this, by implying that He had produced evil, when He was at liberty not to produce it, would be contradictory to His infinite goodness. It remained, therefore, to assert, that God made it out of uncreated matter, to the defects of which matter the origin of evil was to be traced.[2]

Objections. To this system (which is but the doctrine of the Stoics, which he is said to have studied) it was objected that it made matter independent of God, equal if not superior to God, necessary as God; that, in fact, it made two Gods—a consequence which Hermogenes denied, expressly declaring that there was but one God, the maker of the world, supreme, unchangeably good, with whom no other being was comparable.[3] It was also urged, and very justly, that the difficulty respecting the existence of evil was not removed; for, if God *could* not purge matter of its evil qualities, He is not omnipotent; if He *would* not, He is not infinitely good.[4]

Arguments of Hermogenes against absolute creation. Hermogenes endeavoured to support his opinions by expressions of Scripture, which he contended nowhere affirmed that matter was created from nothing. He maintained that the first words of Genesis, *in principio* (as they are translated in the Latin version), meant the first principle, *i. e.*, pre-existent and eternal matter, out of which heaven and earth were created—as clay is the principle of the vessel which is formed from it—and that by the "earth," in the sentence "the earth was without form and void," is signified this same matter.[5]

Hermogenes also argued that the word *Lord*, which was from eternity applied to God, implied the existence from eternity of something over which He was Lord—that something was matter. To avoid this inference, Tertullian answers that the title Lord, being merely relative, was not applicable to God before the Creation.[6]

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future judgment. The notion of Hermogenes that the soul was made out of matter was refuted by Tertullian, in a work entitled De Censu Animæ, On the Origin of the Soul, which is now lost. (De Anim. c. i.)

[1] It would appear that Hermogenes did not argue from the physical impossibility of creation from nothing, but from the moral impossibility of explaining, on that supposition, the permission of evil. Proinde ex nihilo non potuisse eum facere sic contendit. Bonum et optimum definiens Dominum, qui bona atque optima tam velit facere quam sit; immò nihil non bonum atque optimum et velle eum et facere. Igitur omnia ab eo bona et optima oportuisse fieri secundum conditionem ipsius. Inveniri autem mala ab eo facta, utique non ex arbitrio, nec ex voluntate. . . . Quod ergo non ex arbitrio suo fecerit, intelligi oportere ex vitio alicujus rei factum, ex materiâ esse sine dubio. (Tertull. Adv. Herm. c. ii.)

[2] Ibid. c. iii. [3] Ibid. c. iv. v. vi. xii. [4] Ibid. c. x. xiv.

[5] Ibid. c. xxiii. [6] Ibid. c. iii.

Hermogenes.

Nature of matter.

Of matter, Hermogenes is said to have taken the following view: it was partly corporeal, because bodies were drawn from it; it was partly incorporeal, because it had motion,[1] and motion is incorporeal (as if motion were a part, and not a particular state of a substance). Out of a portion of this matter, God formed the universe. It lay a confused and undigested mass—agitated by vague and undetermined motion, turbulent, and like the fermentation of water when it boils over—which the mere approach of the Deity reduced into order and harmony; somewhat after the manner that beauty, by its very appearance, affects the mind; and that the loadstone, by approximation only, attracts a piece of iron.[2] But matter (which Hermogenes sometimes said was, properly speaking, neither good nor evil) still retained a certain blind force, a degree of inflexibility, owing to which it could not be entirely bent and conformed to the will of the Deity. Hence the evils and disorders which afflict the world.

Hermogenes is also said to have asserted that the body of Christ was deposited in the sun,[3] and that the Devil and demons would be again resolved into matter.[4]

Other opinions.

Hermogenes disputed with ingenuity, and set forth his arguments in syllogistic arrangement. The answers of Tertullian bear the usual character of his style; sometimes intemperate, generally harsh, often acute.[5]

As Tertullian frequently appeals to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament in his refutation, it may be, doubtless, inferred that their authority was fully allowed by Hermogenes; who, in fact, is not even said to have established a separate communion.[6]

MONTANUS—(MONTANISTS).

Montanus.

The sect of *Montanists* derived their name from Montanus, who began to publish his opinions about the 171st year of the Christian

[1] Commune autem inter illos facis, quod à semet ipsis moventur et semper moventur. Quid minus materiæ quam Deo adscribis? Totum consortium divinitatis hoc erit, libertas et æternitas motûs. Sed Deus compositè, materia inconditè movetur. Nam, secundum ollæ similitudinem sic erat, inquis, materiæ motus, antequam disponeretur, concretus, inquietus, inadprehensibilis, præ nimietate certaminis. (Tertull. Adv. Herm. c. xlii. xliii.) The Hebrew word *tehom*, which we translate *deep* in Genesis, i. 2 ("and darkness was upon the face of the deep") signifies tumult and turbid confusion. See Bishop Patrick's Comment. upon Genes.

[2] Tertull. Adv. Herm. The expression of Anaxagoras will naturally suggest itself, Πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ εἶτα Νοῦς ἐλθὼν αὐτα διεκοσμησε. Diog. Laert.

[3] Theodoret, Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xix. &c. The same opinion is attributed to the followers of Seleucus and Hermias in Philaster (Hær. lv.) and Augustine (Hær. lix.)

[4] Theod. Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. xix.

[5] It has been remarked that they are in many respects similar to those used by Dr. Clarke to disprove the eternity of matter. Bergier, Dict. de Théologie, art. Hermogéniens.

[6] On the heresy of Hermogenes, see Lardner's Hist. of Heretics, p. 374–387, and particularly the excellent analysis of Tertullian's Tract against Hermogenes in Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 563–574.

Montanus. era.[1] They are also called Cataphrygians and Phrygians, from the country in which they first appeared, or chiefly abounded. Montanus was a native of Ardaba, in Mysia, which was contiguous to Phrygia, or perhaps formed a part of it.

Opinions of the Montanists. The main error of Montanus consisted in his assertion that the Paraclete, or Comforter, delivered through his mouth precepts of a severe discipline necessary towards the perfection of the Christian scheme. He maintained, as far as we can judge of his views from the expressions of his celebrated disciple Tertullian, that revelation had not received its full development; that as Christ had withdrawn the indulgences granted by Moses, so the Paraclete abolished the permissions of St. Paul;[2] that the system, which was in its infancy under the Law and the Prophets, and in its youth under the Gospel, was brought to its state of maturity by the Paraclete. This reasoning was employed to conciliate belief in the authority of the new revelations, which he pretended to communicate, when, under the influence of delirious agitation,[3] he poured forth the wild effusions of a disordered imagination, and the austere dictates of a harsh and melancholy temperament. The precise meaning of incoherent expressions, uttered in the paroxysms of frenzy, it was doubtless difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain; the nature of his pretension has, therefore, been variously represented; yet it appears not that he assumed the character of the Paraclete, or Holy Ghost,[4] much less of God the Father, though his language might occasionally lead to that supposition. He

[1] Euseb. in Chronic. Epiphanius places the beginning of the Cataphrygian heresy about the nineteenth year of Antoninus (Hær. xlviii. c. i.), *i. e.* about A.D. 156; and yet says (Hær. li. c. xxxiii.) that the church of Thyatira was corrupted by the Cataphrygians ninety-three years after the death of Christ, *i. e.* about A.D. 126. The accounts of Eusebius are more consistent with themselves and with other historical facts. The subject has, however, been much contested. J. P. Baratier, the young but learned author of the Treatise De Successione Romanor. Pontific., refers the commencement of this heresy to the year 126; Blondel, who supposes that Montanus may have forged the Sibylline books, to the year 142; Le Clerc (in Hist. Eccles. Duor. Prior. Sæc. p. 676) to the year 157.

[2] Regnavit duritia cordis usque ad Christum, regnaverit et infirmitas carnis usque ad Paracletum. Tertull. de Mon. c. xiv. &c.

[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xvi. xvii.

[4] Mosheim, in his Ecclesiastical History (cent. ii. c. v. p. 237, note), maintains that Montanus made a distinction between the Paraclete promised by Christ to his apostles, and the Holy Spirit that was shed upon them on the day of Pentecost; and understood by the former a divine teacher, pointed out by Christ under the name of Paraclete or Comforter, who was to perfect the Gospel by the addition of some doctrines omitted by our Saviour, and to cast a full light upon others, which were expressed in an obscure and imperfect manner, though, for wise reasons, they subsisted during the ministry of Christ. This paraclete Montanus represented himself to be. Though Mosheim refers to no passage, we suppose he grounded this assertion on what the author of the Catalogue of Heresies, affixed to Tertullian, de Præscriptione, says,—that Proclus, the head of one of the sects into which the Montanists divided themselves, distinguished between the Holy Ghost, which inspired the apostles, and the Paraclete, which spoke in Montanus. But see the remarks of Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 23–29.

considered himself as the chosen instrument of the Divinity, but not as the depositary in which it was embodied.[1] Montanus.

Montanus made no alteration in the fundamental articles of the Christian faith;[2] he objected to no part of the Ancient and New Testament; his chief innovations affected discipline. He enjoined abstinence and multiplied fasts.[3] He regarded second marriages[4] as adultery, and seems to have spoken of marriage in general with implicit censure: he rejected penance, and denied absolution to heinous sins committed after baptism:[5] he condemned flight during persecution, and the purchase of safety by money.[6] His prohibitions are also thought to have extended to the use of ornaments in attire, and to the cultivation of the arts and sciences. These notions, it will be remarked, were not altogether novel or peculiar to himself. Marriage had already been viewed by some of the more rigid party in the Church in no favourable light, though their opinions were obscurely and reluctantly expressed. A tendency to imagine that a degree of moral excellence and spiritual knowledge (Γνῶσις), carried beyond the standard of Christianity, as vulgarly understood, was requisite in forming the character of a perfect Christian, had already been intimated. The indulgence of ascetic practices, which laid the foundation of monastic life, was already considered as neither unusual nor blamable. Even the pretension to inspiration was not in itself calculated to excite suspicion or surprise. The gift of prophecy was sup-

[1] Tertull. de Jejun. c. i. &c.; Philast. Hær. xlix. &c.

[2] Epiph. Hær. xlviii. &c. According to Theodoret, though Montanus made no innovation in the doctrine of the Trinity, some of his followers denied the hypostases, and agreed with Sabellius and Noetus. (Hær. Fab. lib. iii. c. ii.) Comp. Add. ad Tertull. de Præscript.; Hieron. tom. iv. p. 64; Isid. Pelus. lib. i. Ep. 67.

[3] Apoll. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xviii.; Tertull. de Jejun. c. i.; Hier. tom. iv. p. 65, in Matt. c. ix. tom. iv. p. 31. "The difference between the Orthodox and Montanists, on the subject of fasting, appears to have consisted in the following particulars. With respect to the *Jejunium*, or total abstinence from food, the former thought that the interval between our Saviour's death and resurrection was the only period during which the apostles observed a total fast; and consequently the only period during which fasting was of positive obligation upon all Christians. At other times it rested with themselves to determine whether they would fast or not. The Montanists, on the contrary, contended that there were other seasons during which fasting was obligatory, and that the appointment of those seasons constituted a part of the revelations of the Paraclete. With respect to the *Dies Stationarii*, the Montanists not only pronounced the fast obligatory upon all Christians, but prolonged it until the evening, instead of terminating it, as was the Orthodox custom, at the ninth hour. In the observance of the *Xerophagiæ*, the Montanists abstained—not only from flesh and wine, like the Orthodox—but also from the richer and more juicy kinds of fruit, and omitted all their customary ablutions. Montanus appears to have enjoined only two weeks of *Xerophagiæ* in the year; but his followers were animated by a greater love of fasting than their master; for Jerome says that, in his day, the Montanists kept three Lents, one of them after Whitsunday." Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, pp. 416, 417.

[4] Aug. Hær. xxvi. Comp. Tertull. Adv. Marc. lib. i. c. xxx.; De Monog. c. i. &c.

[5] Tertull. de Pud. c. i. xix. xx.; Hier. Adv. Marc. p. 65.

[6] Tertull. de Fugâ in Persecut.

Montanus. posed to have been but a little time previous possessed by some eminent members of the Church,[1] and was expected to continue till the second coming of Christ. In what, then, were the doctrines of Montanus considered as essentially heretically? His first pretension was looked upon as heretical, not so much because he asserted that he was inspired, as because he maintained that he was inspired and commissioned to alter and to perfect the Christian system—an opinion which, as it was grounded on the inadequateness of the morality of the Gospel, and as it opened a door for the claims of innumerable visionaries, was pregnant with the most dangerous consequences. The particular precepts which he delivered were also deemed heretical, not so much because they were regarded as noxious in themselves, as because they were imposed as obligations—mortifications, in their nature voluntary, being represented as necessary,[2] and the authority of the Church being transferred to an individual, who assumed the language of the Supreme Being. This view of the subject, though sufficiently obvious, appears not to have been universally seized.

The predictions of Montanus were heard with reverence, which invited repetition, by many persons, of whom some, particularly two females of rank and fortune,[3] Maximilla and Prisca, or Priscilla, professed to be inspired by the same spirit, and contributed by their wealth to the increase and organization of the new sect. Themiso, one of its members, prevented Zoticus, bishop of Comana, and Julian, bishop of Apamæa, from convicting of imposture the spirit by which they conceived that Maximilla was possessed. Others, however, not merely refused to recognise the pretensions, but endeavoured to check the preaching of Montanus, whom they viewed in the light of a demoniac. It was urged that those fits of spiritual frenzy, which suspended his powers of reason, were not observable in the prophets of the Old and New Testament, who, retaining full possession of their faculties, clearly understood the meaning of the predictions which they uttered.[4] It is also possible that, as the Montanists predicted wars and seditions, and the approaching downfall of the Roman empire,[5] many were apprehensive that, by suffering themselves at a critical period to be identified with intemperate enthusiasts, they would increase the distrust and enmity of the civil government, and involve the Christians in additional difficulties and dangers. The dictates of prudence, though not, perhaps, tempered with mildness, prevailed. The faithful met at different times and places; the new prophecy was diligently examined; and the Asiatic councils condemned and excommunicated a sect, who either anticipated or confirmed the sentence by secession from the Church. A bishop of Rome, whose name is not mentioned, was inclined to form a more favourable judgment, but the

[1] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. v. c. vi.; Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xvii.
[2] Tertull. de Jejun. c. ii. [3] Hier. tom. iv. p. 477.
[4] Epiph Hær. xlviii. c. iii. &c.; Hier. Prol. in Is. tom. iii. p. 3, &c.
[5] See Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. and Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 21.

arguments and representations of Praxeas prevailed on him to retract the letters of reconciliation which he had sent, and to leave the decisions of his predecessors in undiminished force.[1] Montanus.

The progress of the heresy was not, however, stopped; it spread itself over many parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Montanus himself dwelt at Pepuza, a desert place in Phrygia, the seat of a ruined city, where he pretended that the heavenly Jerusalem had descended.[2] The efforts of the orthodox appear not to have relaxed. Montanism was attacked by several writers. Of two of these, viz., an anonymous author (supposed to be Asterius Urbanus), who wrote about thirteen years after the death of Maximilla, and Apollonius, who wrote forty years after Montanus began to prophesy, Eusebius has preserved some fragments.[3] The anonymous author informs us, among other circumstances, that it was reported that Montanus and Maximilla destroyed themselves by hanging, but he does not vouch for the truth of the report. Apollonius represents the austerity of Montanus as the cloak of avarice and luxury; objecting to him that he dyed his hair, darkened his eyebrows, wore splendid attire, indulged in amusements, and lent money on usury. As we proceed, accounts darken, and the language of doubt gradually assumes the tone of more determined prejudice. Cyril of Jerusalem,[4] and Isidore of Pelusium,[5] who could not be so accurately informed as contemporaries, speak of him as of a man stained with the deepest crimes.

The enormities which have been described by writers of the fourth and fifth centuries as practised at the mysteries of the Montanists are revolting and incredible. These descriptions wear the appearance of ignorance and enmity. And many mistakes have doubtless arisen from confounding the later with the earlier Montanists, and from attributing the faults of individuals to the whole body.

It would be certainly rash to decide positively upon the character of Montanus—to pronounce him wholly a deceiver or wholly deceived. He is said to have been a recent convert to Christianity, and to have been led into heresy by an ambitious desire of obtaining ecclesiastical distinctions. It is not impossible that there may be some truth in the assertion. Yet it seems to us, from a review of his conduct, that, whatever may have been its secret spring, it bears much more obviously the traits of enthusiasm than of imposture, with which also, however, it may have been blended. The Montanists were afterwards divided into smaller sects:[6] such were the 'Priscillians,' so called from Priscilla; the 'Quintillani,' from Quintilla; the 'Pepuziani,' from Pepuza; the 'Artoturitæ,' from using bread and cheese in their mysteries; and the 'Tascodrugitæ,' so named from two Phrygian Character of Montanus. Sects of Montanists.

[1] Tertull. Adv. Praxeam. c. i.
[2] Apoll. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xviii. Conf. Epiph. Hær. xlviii.
[3] Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. xvi.
[4] Catech. 16, n. 8.
[5] Lib. i. Ep. 243.
[6] Epiph. Hær. xlix.

Montanus. words,[1] indicating their custom of putting the finger on the nose whilst at prayer.[2]

The Montanists maintained that the heavenly Jerusalem would descend on earth, and that the saints would reign there for a thousand years.[3] A brief view of the opinions of the 'Millenarii' or 'Chiliasts,' in general, may serve to complete our account of the heresies of the second century.

Millennium. The doctrine of the Millennium, which may be traced back to a very early period in the history of the Church, was held under different modifications, by many of the most distinguished fathers in the primi-

Its rise. tive ages.[4] It originated chiefly in too literal an interpretation of the prophetic writings, more especially of some passages in the Apocalyse,[5] and appears to have corresponded with the notions and prejudices of the Judaizing Christians.[6] The first, according to Eusebius, who introduced it, was Papias, a man of slender capacity, who had

By whom maintained or rejected. published certain parables of Christ, not recorded in the Gospel, and various fables which he pretended to have received by unwritten tradition.[7] It was subsequently embraced by Irenæus,[8] Justin Martyr,[9] Tertullian,[10] Lactantius,[11] and others, but was severely attacked by Origen, with whose peculiar opinions it was inconsistent. Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, about the middle of the third century, wrote, in defence of the doctrine, a work entitled 'A Confutation of the Allegorists' (by which name were designated such as explained allegorically the passages on which the opinion of a millennium rested). This work, which acquired much reputation, was refuted with equal zeal and candour by Dionysius of Alexandria, whose truly Christian exertions were successful in checking this error. It was still common, however, in the time of Jerome, who himself was one of its opponents.

The following appear to have been the general opinions of the

[1] *ταςκὸς*, in Phrygian a stake, and *ῥοῦγγος*, a nose or beak.

[2] Augustine (de Hær. c. xxvi.) and Theodoret (Hær. Fab. lib. iii. c. ii.) speak of them as sects of Montanists then existing: so also Jerome (Adv. Marc. Ep. 27), &c. For an account of Montanus, see Tillemont, Mém. art. Montanistes; Lardner's Hist. of Heretics, p. 388–406; and Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 12–36.

[3] The millennium was also held by the Cerinthians, the Marcionites, &c.

[4] It was not universally held in the church. In answer to a question on this opinion put by Trypho, Justin Martyr answers, *'Ωμολόγησα οὖν σοὶ καὶ πρότερον, ὅτι ἐγὼ μὲν καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ ταῦτα φρονοῦμεν, ὡς καὶ πάντως ἐπίστασθε τοῦτο γενησόμενον, πολλοὺς δ' αὖ, καὶ τῶν τῆς καθαρᾶς καὶ εὐσεβοῦς ὄντων Χριστιανῶν γνώμης, τοῦτο μὴ γνωρίζειν ἐσήμαινα σοὶ.* (Dial. cum Tryph.) Daillé boldly inserts *μὴ* before *τῆς καθαρᾶς . . . γνώμης.*

[5] Ch. xx. v. 4–6. See also passages in Isaiah, &c.

[6] It is called by Jerome a Jewish fable. Such as maintained it were said to interpret Scripture after the manner of the Jews. The conversion and restoration of the Jews were fixed to this period.

[7] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. xxxix.

[8] Lib. v. c. xxxii.–xxxvi.

[9] Dial. cum. Tryph.

[10] Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. xxix.

[11] Lib. vii. c. xxiv.–xxvi.

Millenarians.

Opinions of the ancient Millenaries.

ancient 'Millenarii:'—They thought that the city or temple of Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and splendidly adorned with gold and jewels,[1] and that Christ, having come down from heaven upon earth,[2] all the just,[3] both those who were before dead, and those who were still found alive,[4] should reign with Him in the land of Judæa for the space of a thousand years, at the expiration of which the conflagration of the world and the last judgment were to take place. The descriptions which they give of this period of enjoyment are not marked by that spiritual character which peculiarly distinguishes the state of beatitude in the Christian paradise. The productions of nature were to be lavishly multiplied and prodigiously enlarged to administer to corporeal delights.[5] The earth was to pour forth spontaneously its abundant harvests. The rocks of the mountains were to exude honey, wines were to run down with the stream, and the rivers to overflow with milk.[6] Rich vineyards and luxuriant fruits, delicious fare and immoderate banquets, were the pictures of bliss which they drew and embellished.[7] And lest the prospect of any exertion should cast the slightest shade over the brilliancy of the colouring, they imagined that nations should serve them as slaves, that princes should bow down to them,[8] that aliens should come to offer them gold and frankincense and precious stones, and should perform for them menial offices, as ploughmen or as builders.[9] And not merely men, but beasts, both wild and domestic, should be raised up and subjected to them.[10] The marriage state[11] was still, in the opinion of nearly all the Millenaries, to flourish during this term of triumph. While such were the carnal views of many of the Millenaries (for some, Tertullian[12] for

[1] Iren. lib. v. c. xxxiv., xxxv. Just. Dial. cum Tryph. Orig. De Principiis, lib. ii. c. xii. Hier. Pref. in lib. xviii. Com. in Isiam.

[2] Nep. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. vii. xxiv. &c.

[3] Lact. lib. vii. c. xxiv.

[4] Iren. Adv. Hær. lib. v. c. xxxv.

[5] See a very absurd passage in Irenæus, lib. v. c. xxiii.—"Quemadmodum presbyteri meminerunt, qui Joannem discipulum Domini viderunt, audisse se ab eo, quemadmodum de temporibus illis docebat Dominus, et dicebat: Venient dies in quibus vineæ nascentur singulæ decem millia palmitum habentes, et in uno palmite dena millia brachiorum, et in uno vero palmite dena millia flagellorum, et in unoquoque flagello dena millia botruum, et in unoquoque botro dena millia acinorum, et unumquodque acinum expressum dabit viginti quinque metretas vini. Et cum eorum apprehenderit aliquis sanctorum botrum, alius clamabit botrus, ego melior sum, me sume, per me Dominum benedic," &c.

[6] Lactant, lib. vii. c. xxiv.

[7] Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. xx. c. vii.

[8] Iren. lib. v. c. xxxiii.

[9] Orig. de Princep. lib. ii. c. xii.

[10] Iren. lib. v. c. xxxiii. Stephan. Gobar. ap. Phot. Cod. 232.

[11] Iren. lib. c. xxxv. Lact. lib. v. c. xxxiv. Orig. de Princ. lib. ii. c. xii. Philoc. c. xxvi. Steph. Gob. ap. Phot. Cod. 232. Methodius is of a different opinion (ap. Epiph. Hær. lxiv. sec. 32). On this subject see Tillem. Mém. tom. ii. part ii. p. 243, art. Les Millénaires, and Whitby's Treatise of the True Millenium, added to his Commentaries on the Epistles, from which the above sketch has been chiefly drawn.

[12] Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 363. With respect to Justin Martyr, Bishop Kaye remarks, "Middleton has most unfairly charged Justin with maintaining that the saints will pass the millenium in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures.

Millenarians. instance, regarded the enjoyments of this period as purely, or at least as chiefly, spiritual), it is not surprising that Origen should represent the doctrine as a reproach to Christianity, the heathens themselves having better sentiments. It is a lamentable fact that notions so mistaken, and apparently so calculated to degrade the affections, should have been so generally adopted in the less corrupted ages of the Christian Church. The history of heresy teaches a great lesson of toleration. That men of unquestionable ability, learning, and piety, should have fallen into errors, from which so many of their inferiors in every quality of heart and mind have been exempt, is a circumstance which most strongly inculcates the necessity not merely of great circumspection, to avoid errors ourselves, but also of great indulgence in viewing the errors of others.

Nothing of this kind is to be found in Justin's description," &c. (See Some Account of the Writings and Opinions of Justin Martyr, p. 104, note.)

SECTION III.

HERETICS OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

MANICHÆUS.	BERYLLUS.
HIERAX.	PAUL OF SAMOSATA.
NOETUS.	NOVATIANS.
SABELLIUS.	

MANICHÆUS—(MANICHÆISM).

Manichæus. Life.

MANI, Manes, or Manichæus, lived, and perhaps received his birth, in the territories subject to the kings of Persia. According to the Greek writers,[1] he was a slave, and was purchased by a widow, who set him free, adopted him as her son, gave him a liberal education, and bequeathed to him her property. This account is wholly unnoticed by eastern authors; and as Manes, among the Greeks, was a common designation for a slave,[2] it is possible that his name may have created this error, as it appears to have occasioned others.[3] That he was a man of considerable talent and learning is acknowledged; his skill in astronomy is particularly mentioned.[4]

Account of eastern writers.

According to eastern writers, not very ancient, Mani, having acquired some reputation, drew together a number of followers who opposed the religion of Zoroaster, which at that time was established in Persia. This conduct having excited disturbances, exposed him to the anger of Sapor, to avoid whose pursuit he fled into Turkestan. From his retirement he circulated notions which inspired an ignorant multitude with an extraordinary degree of reverence for his character. Having assured his followers that he was about to proceed to the heavenly regions, and to remain there for the space of a year, he concealed himself in a cave, and, at the expiration of that period, appeared in an appointed place, and showed them a work, filled with strange figures, and called *Ergenk* and *Estenk*, which he pretended to have brought from above; an artifice which considerably increased the number of his disciples. On the death of Sapor, Hormisdas, his successor, embraced the tenets of Mani, and treated him with marks of distinguished kindness. Baharam or Varanes, the next king, also appeared to regard him with favour at the commencement of his reign; but having drawn him out of a castle (which Hormisdas had built for him as a place of security),

[1] Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. xxii. &c.

[2] Vid. Comm. in Arist. Av. 1329.

[3] See the derivations of Cyril of Jerusalem (Cat. vi. n. 24), &c.

[4] Epiph. Hær. lxvi. c. xiii. It is probable that he believed that this earth had two inhabited hemispheres, the upper and the lower, and therefore that there are Antipodes. Beaus. Hist. de Manich. tom. ii. p. 374.

Manichæus. under pretence of holding a dispute with the doctors of the Zoroastrian sect, he flayed him alive, and caused his skin to be filled with straw, and to be hung up as an object of terror to his followers. Of these some fled to India, some, it is said, penetrated into China, and others, remaining in Persia, were reduced to a state of slavery.[1] Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian,[2] ascribes his execution not to his religious opinions, but to the indignation of the king on the death of his son, whom Manes had undertaken to cure of an illness. But whether these circumstances be true or not, the fact of his having been put to death seems to be indisputable.[3]

Account of Greek writers.

Sources of the accounts of Manes in the fathers. Acts of the Dispute at Caschar.

The accounts of Manes which are found in the fathers, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Socrates, and others, were drawn from an ancient piece, entitled 'The Acts of the Dispute between Archelaus, bishop of Mesopotamia, and the Hæresiarch Manes.'[4] Of this piece, which is said to have been written originally in Syriac and translated into Greek, we have now only a Latin version, which is considered as having been written before the seventh century. The authority of these Acts has been attacked with great ingenuity and research by Beausobre[5] in his 'History of Manichæus and Manichæism,'[6] a work which bears continual proofs of the most extensive acquaintance with ancient philosophy and ecclesiastical antiquities combined with extraordinary acuteness and with

Beausobre's Histoire de Manichée.

[1] This is the account in D'Herbelot, Bibl. Or. art. Mani. See also Hyde, De Relig. Vet. Pers. c. xxi.

[2] Hist. Eccles. lib. i. c. xxii. [3] Lardn. Credib. part ii. c. lxiii.

[4] Acta Disputationis Archelai, Episcopi Mesopotamiæ, et Manetis Hæresiarchæ. It was published under this title by M. Zaccagni, Librarian of the Vatican. See Collect. Monument. Ecclesiæ Græcæ et Latinæ, Romæ, 1698, in 4to. Valesius has inserted nearly the whole of the Dispute in his notes on Socrates. See also Cellier, Hist. des Aut. Eccles. tom. iii.; and Hippol. Oper. ed. Fabric.

[5] En général toute cette Pièce, qu'on nomme, 'Les Actes de la Dispute d'Archelaüs,' n'est qu'un Roman fabriqué par un Grec, et publié depuis l'an 330, soixante ans ou environ après la mort de Manichée. (Disc. Prélim. p. 6.) He considers the Greek, by whom this fiction was written, as having had some memoirs respecting the life and opinions of Manes. (Pref. p. vi.) Il y a quelques vérités, mais en petit nombre, et le peu qu'il y en a est altéré, confus, melé de fables manifestes. (Disc. Prel. p. 6.) The following is Mosheim's opinion: Satis quidem ille (Beausobre) luculenter ostendit, esse quædam in his Actis de quorum veritate jure optimo dubites: at non, opinor, testatum fecit, nunquam ejusmodi Archelai et Manetis disputationem contigisse. Certè hoc neque ex erroribus nonnullis Historicis, quos scriptor sive admisit, sive admisisse videtur, neque ex veterum et recentiorum quorundam de his Actis silentio firmiter effici potest. Majora verò non habet vir doctissimus argumenta, qui excellenti quidem ingenio præditus, verum justo proclivior erat ad veterum scriptorum Christianorum fidem infirmandam, et conjecturis suis nimis sæpe fidebat. Quidquid id est, magnæ tamen antiquitatis commendationem hæc Acta habent, et quod nec ipse adversarius eorum diffiteri velit, multa continent aut valde probabilia, aut vero consentientia. (De Reb. Christ. p. 729.)

[6] A new edition, or perhaps, as Lardner wished (Cred. part ii. c. xxxiii. sec. 7), a translation of this work, with such additional remarks as the researches and strictures of succeeding writers have furnished, accompanied with a good index, is, we think, a great desideratum. It is objected to Beausobre, that he is rather loquacious; but who can complain of the loquacity of genius?

singular candour. Dilating on every point, even remotely connected with his principal object, the author has illustrated a great variety of questions with all the aids which a learning almost inexhaustible can supply to the nicest subtilty and discrimination. True it is, however, that this celebrated work has been considered as not wholly exempt from defects.[1] In studiously avoiding the practice, so common before his time, of invariably impugning the motives and ridiculing the systems of the early heretics, Beausobre was, perhaps, led into the contrary extreme of seeking too often to justify their conduct and to systematise their notions. Doubtless the heretics neither on all occasions acted conformably to their principles, nor at all times reasoned consistently with their own theories. If it is a mistake to suppose them always vicious or absurd, it is equally one to regard the fathers as always ignorant or unfair. Manichæus.

Jerome places the rise of Manichæism in the year of Christ 277. In Beausobre's opinion,[2] it was known in Rome probably about that time, but it may have arisen in Persia eight or ten years sooner. Lardner[3] is doubtful whether it was known in the Roman empire before the very end of the third century, or the beginning of the fourth. Date of the rise of Manichæism.

Scythian and Terebinthus are said to have been the predecessors of Manes, but the accounts given of these two persons appear too incorrect to entitle them to credit.[4] Scythian and Terebinthus.

Among the works of Manes may be reckoned four books, sometimes ascribed to Terebinthus, and sometimes to Scythian, entitled the 'Mysteries,' the 'Chapters' or 'Heads,' the 'Gospel,' and the 'Treasure.' In the 'Mysteries' Manes endeavoured to demonstrate the doctrine of two principles from the mixture of good and evil which is found in the world. He grounded his reasoning on the argument, that, if there were one sole cause, simple, perfect, and good, in the highest degree, the whole, corresponding with the nature and will of that cause, would show simplicity, perfection, and goodness, and everything would be immortal, holy, and happy, like himself.[5] The 'Chapters' contained a summary of the chief articles of the Manichæan scheme. Of the 'Gospel' nothing certain can be asserted. Beausobre, apparently without sufficient grounds,[6] considers it as a collection of the meditations and pretended revelations of Manes. The 'Treasure,' or 'Treasure of Life,' may, perhaps, have derived its name from the words of Christ, wherein he compares his doctrine to a treasure hid in a field.[7] Manes also wrote other works[8] and letters, and among them the 'Epistle of the Foundation,' of which we have fragments still extant in St. Augustine, who undertook to refute it.[9] Works of Manes.

[1] For an answer to the attacks with which it was assailed, see Biblioth. Germanique, tom. xxxvii. &c.
[2] Hist. de Man. tom. i. p. 121.
[3] Credib. part ii. c. lxiii. sec. 2.
[4] Ibid. sec. 3.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Matt. xiii. 44.
[8] Lardn. Credib. part ii. c. lxiii. sec. 3.
[9] Cont. Ep. Manich. There is a fragment of it in another of his works, De Natur. Boni, c. xlvi. There are also fragments in the Treatise de Fide (c. v. xi. xxviii.) joined to his works. He also wrote a Letter to Menoch, a Manichæan

Manichæus. His works appear to have been originally written some in Syriac, some in Persic.

Pretensions of Manichæus. Although the accounts of the pretensions of Manichæus[1] which the ancients have left us are not consistent, it appears not difficult to draw from them a probable conclusion. He is represented sometimes as endeavouring to assume the appearance of Christ, sometimes as calling himself an apostle, more frequently as professing to be the Holy Ghost. At the beginning of the conference at Caschar,[2] he is introduced as saying, "I am a disciple of Christ, an apostle of Jesus. I am the Paraclete, promised to be sent by Jesus, to convince the world of sin and of righteousness:[3] as also Paul, who was sent before me, said that he knew in part, and prophesied in part;[4] reserving for me that which is perfect, that I might do away that which is in part. Receive, therefore, this third testimony, that I am a chosen apostle of Christ. If you will receive my words, you will obtain salvation: if not, you will be consumed by eternal fire." St. Augustine informs us that the Manichees asserted that our Lord's promise of sending the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, had been fulfilled in their master Manichæus; that in his 'Epistles' he styles himself apostle of Jesus Christ, forasmuch as Christ had promised him, and into him had sent the Holy Ghost; and that, accordingly, he had twelve disciples in imitation of the number of the apostles, which number, adds Augustine, is retained by the Manichees to this day.[5] It is obvious that the pretensions of Manichæus were of a nature extremely similar to those of Montanus. The following is Beausobre's opinion: "Manichæus assumed the authority of an apostle of Christ, and a prophet immediately inspired by the Paraclete, to reform all religions, and to reveal to the world truths, in which our Lord thought not proper to instruct his first disciples. This was his imposture or fanaticism. For whatever the ancients may assert, there are no evident proofs that he ever endeavoured to pass for the Paraclète, or the Holy Spirit."[6] The Manichæans boasted of possessing superior knowledge, and ridiculed the Catholics, as if they undervalued the use of reasoning. It was the hope of thus enlarging his understanding, which Augustine himself confesses, seduced him when young into the Manichæan heresy. The errors of Mani undoubtedly arose from an attempt to combine a philosophical scheme, formed out of the principles of the magi, with the Christian revelation.[7]

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female. From this piece Julian, the Pelagian, urged parts in a work against Augustine, who has transcribed them in his answer entitled Opus Imperfectum, because left unfinished. Also a Letter to Marcellus, which Beausobre considers to be genuine. Lardner thinks it probable that the Epistle to Patricius, cited by Julian, the Pelagian, in the Opus Imperfectum of Augustine, is the same as the Epistle of the Foundation. (Credib. part ii. c. lxiii.) Fragments of some of his Letters were published by Fabricius in the fifth volume of his Bibliotheca Græca.

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vii. c. 31. Epiph. Hær. lxvi. &c.

[2] Act. Archel. [3] John xvi. 8. [4] See 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10.

[5] Aug. Hær. xlvi. Lardner, Credib. part ii. c. lxiii.

[6] Beaus. Hist. de Manich. tom. i. Præf. p. x. xi. [7] Ibid. p. 179.

Manichæus.

Origin of the notion of two principles.

The leading principle of Manichæism, that the world and its phenomena are attributable to two distinct powers, one essentially good, and the other essentially evil, may undoubtedly be traced to an age much earlier than the rise of the Christian religion. It has its root in that train of thought which is natural to man in the first rude state of society. When the knowledge of one Supreme Being was nearly extinct, and the progress of civilization had not yet provided against the various wants to which the human frame is subject, men feelingly considered themselves as beings exposed to a perpetual succession of good and evil. They could derive food and enjoyment from their flocks and from the fruits of the earth; but these flocks were often wasted by disease, these fruits often destroyed by the inclemency of the seasons. They reflected, moreover, that their own conduct was a kind of copy of this state,—at one time they imparted a portion of their stock and laboured to relieve their neighbour, at another they plundered his harvests and depopulated his abode. The idea of invisible powers not being effaced from the mind, they offered to them prayers against the continuance of misery, yet misery continued. By these considerations, therefore, they were probably led to imagine that the goods and ills of life flowed from good and evil spirits, who struggled for the predominance. And as these goods and ills vary in magnitude, so these spirits were thought to vary in power. But the notion of infinite gradation is not easily conceived, and the scale was supposed to terminate in two presiding and independent spirits, one by nature good, the other by nature evil, who employed these subordinate agents.

The process of thought by which this conclusion was arrived at was soon neglected, and the conclusion itself opened a wide field for systems and hypotheses, particularly in Persia and in the East. Light is the greatest of blessings,—it beautifies the face of nature, it brings to maturity the productions of the earth, it cheers and directs the steps of man,—it was, therefore, the first good, and the beneficent spirit was supposed to reside in pure light. But darkness was observed to be attended with storms and fearful commotions: vague horrors are associated with the very idea; therefore the evil spirit was said to dwell in the abyss of night.

The two spirits were at war: the origin of the war then furnished another subject of speculation, and the following hypothesis, though under a great variety of modifications, was commonly adopted. The two opposite beings were originally independent: each resided in his own portion of space. But the powers of darkness, ever turbulent and agitated, were in continual seditions, and the vanquished in their flight from the victors passed the "flaming bounds," and entered the happy realms. A consequence of this irruption was the formation of the world, and the intermixture of good and evil.[1]

It may be remarked, that the doctrine of two independent powers

[1] Such is the development of Pluquet, Dict. des Héres. art. Manicheïsme, sec. 1.

Manichæus.

The Manichæan system contrary to the Sacred Scriptures.

was expressly contradicted by the Jewish Scriptures, wherein good and evil are represented as being at the disposal of God alone. "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal."[1] Again, "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things."[2] These last words being directed to Cyrus, king of Persia, may, perhaps, be considered as conveying a warning against the lessons of the magi.[3]

The superstitious Hebrews, however, had their good and evil fortune under the names of Gad and Méni (though they did not consider them as eternal and independent creators[4]), as the Romans had their Joves and Vejoves.[5] The Persians had their Ormizdas and Arimanius.

The Egyptians called the good god Osiris, and the evil Typhon. There is a very curious treatise of Plutarch on Isis and Osiris, in which the antiquity and extent of dualism are discussed.

System of Manichæus.

The system of Manichæus, as developed by Beausobre,[6] appears to have been the following: Manichæus acknowledged one God, in whom all the attributes, which in his opinion were necessary to constitute perfection, resided. Unable to conceive a substance having neither place nor extension, he represented the Deity as a living immaterial Light, which had eternally dwelt in the highest heaven, or intellectual world, accompanied with pure and immortal intelligences, or Æons, proceeding from his essence.

From the Father emanated two persons—far superior to the other emanations—the Son and the Holy Ghost, consubstantial with Him, but subordinate to Him. The Son, since the formation of the material world, dwells in the sun and moon, the former of which is pure fire, the latter pure water. The Holy Ghost dwells in the air. There they execute the orders of the Father; there they will remain till the consummation of the age.

In a corner of infinite space existed from eternity an evil power—matter, or the Devil, or darkness, according as philosophical, or common, or mystical terms were used. His empire was divided into five regions, the uppermost containing within it the rest, each of which had one of the elements of matter, and each its prince, subject to the evil power. These two empires were separated by some kind of wall, and on a certain side were neighbours.

The powers of darkness, on the occasion of a sedition, came forth from their bounds, saw the Light, and made an irruption into its realms. God opposed to them a power, called "the first man," who was gifted with the five elements of the celestial substance (one of which was light, that is, probably, the human soul); but as he proved

[1] Deut. xxxii. 39. [2] Isaiah xlv. 6.

[3] Prideaux, Scrip. Conn. part i. p. 215.

[4] Bergier, Dict. Théol. art. Manich.

[5] Spencer, Diss. de Hirco Emiss. c. xix. sec. 1.

[6] See his Preface; his view is also extracted by Jortin, Rem. on Eccles. Hist. vol. ii.

weaker than his adversaries, the Deity sent another power, called "the Living Spirit," who effected his deliverance. The demons, vanquished by the Living Spirit, were chained in the air, and became the cause of storms, thunder and lightning, and pestilence. The Living Spirit left them no more liberty than he judged necessary for his designs. Manichæus.

But the demons having seized the portion of the heavenly substance, light and darkness became confounded.

The Living Spirit undertook, therefore, to separate such parts of the celestial substance as had not been blended with matter. Of these he formed the sun and moon, and of such as had suffered but little corruption the planets and the lower heaven. The rest, which was mixed with matter, was used in forming this sublunary world, in which good and evil are woven together.

The demons having retained the most excellent part of the heavenly substance which they had seized—human souls, the Evil Power made two bodies, of different sexes, on the model of "the first man," whom he had seen, and imprisoned in them the first souls they had taken. Their object was to allure and rivet them by the blandishments of sense, and to render them enamoured with their captivity, and as bodies of similar figures and organs to the two first are generated, the souls, which flutter in the air and are dispersed throughout nature, enter incautiously into these corporeal prisons, which concupiscence incessantly prepares for them. Thus united, and attached by the attractions which they find, they drink the fatal poison from the cup of oblivion, by which they lose the remembrance of their heavenly origin. To procure their liberation, the Divine Providence at first employed the ministry of good angels, who taught the patriarchs salutary truths; these delivered the instruction to their descendants; and lest this light should be totally extinguished, God ceased not to raise up, in all times and among all nations, sages and prophets, till at length He sent His Son. Jesus Christ informed men of their true origin, the causes of the captivity of their souls, and the means of recovering their former dignity. Having wrought innumerable miracles in order to confirm His doctrine, He taught them, by His mystical crucifixion, how they should mortify incessantly their flesh and its passions. He showed them also, by His mystical resurrection and ascension, that death destroys not the man, but only his prison, and restores to purified souls the liberty of returning to their heavenly country.[1]

[1] The Manichæans not merely assumed the name of Christians, but constantly applied to Christ the titles of Lord and Saviour, and professed the strongest attachment for his revealed religion. At the beginning of the dispute with Augustine, in the year 392, Fortunatus, the Manichæan presbyter, affirms in a confession of faith, that his sect believed that God is incorruptible, glorious, inaccessible, incomprehensible, impassible, dwelling in His own eternal light: that He produces nothing from Himself corruptible, neither darkness, nor demons, nor Satan: that He sent a Saviour, like Himself, the Word, born before the foundation of the world, who came among men to save the souls worthy of His holy favour, and sanctified by His heavenly commandments: that under His conduct those souls

Manichæus. Maintaining that flesh was composed of the most vicious part of matter, Manichæus asserted that Christ was man in figure only; that He was born, took nourishment, suffered, died, and rose again in appearance only, not in reality. Hence he denied the resurrection of the flesh; hence he disapproved of marriage, by which it is perpetuated; hence he recommended those austerities which mortify the body, and abstinence from wine and flesh, by which its sensual affections are inflamed. He required of his elect, or the perfect, to live in voluntary poverty and without interfering in temporal matters. To those whose aspirations were less exalted, he conceded the use of meat and wine and the possession of property.

As all human souls cannot acquire perfect purity in the course of this life, he admitted the transmigration of souls, but asserted that those which were not purged by a certain number of revolutions are delivered to the demons of the air, to be tormented and tamed by them; that after this discipline, they are sent into other bodies, as it were into a new school, till, having acquired a sufficient degree of purity, they traverse the region of matter, and pass into the moon (which consists of water): that the moon, when full of these spirits, which happens when the whole of her surface is illuminated, transmits them to the sun, who in his turn sends them to that place which the Manichæans called "the pillar of glory."

The Holy Ghost, who dwells in the air, continually assists the souls, pouring over them its salutary influence. The sun, which is composed of a fire pure and purifying, facilitates their ascent to heaven, and detaches the material particles which weigh them down.

When all the souls and all the parts of the celestial substance shall be separated from matter, then shall be the consummation of the age. The destroying fire shall burst from the caverns in which the Creator has enclosed it; the angel who sustains the earth in its equilibrium shall let it fall into the flames, and then cast the useless mass from the bounds of the world into the place which the Scripture calls "outer darkness." There the demons shall dwell for ever; and the indolent souls, who have not finished their purification when this great catastrophe shall take place (as the punishment of their negligence), shall be appointed to keep the demons confined in their prison, in order that they may make no further attempts against the kingdom of God. The punishments to which the human souls are subjected, are intended to

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shall, according to His promise, again return to the kingdom of God, which cannot be attained through any other Mediator. This he represents as their belief; adding, that they held the doctrine of the Trinity.

[1] The Manichæan sect was divided into two parts, elect and auditors. The Assembly of the Manichæans appears to have been headed by a president, representing Jesus Christ, and twelve masters, in imitation of the twelve apostles. These were followed by seventy-two bishops (after the example of the seventy-two disciples of our Saviour). These bishops had presbyters and deacons under them. All the members of the religious orders were chosen from the class of the elect. See Mosheim, de Reb. Christ.

produce reformation; but those which are found imperfect at the last day are destined to this employment, which is rather a privation of superior happiness than actual misery. Manichæus.

Manichæus rejected the Old Testament, and denied the superior authority of the Hebrew prophets, to whom he opposed other prophets, whose books the Eastern nations professed to have preserved. He affirmed that prophets had arisen in every nation, and that the Christian Church, consisting mostly of Gentiles, was to be guided by those illuminated Gentile instructors, rather than by Hebrew teachers.

Manichæus pretended that the Gospels were either not composed by the authors whose names they bear, or had been corrupted by Judaizing Christians. Yet it appears not that the Manichæans curtailed or interpolated the New Testament.

He admitted the authority of apocryphal books written to maintain the heresies of the Docetæ (or those who held that Christ had only the appearance of a man), and the Encratitæ.

Bayle's defence of Manichæism

Bayle,[1] who was fond of embarrassing his literary adversaries by the defence of metaphysical difficulties best calculated to display the brilliancy of his own talents, undertook to extenuate the absurdities, and to give point to the objections of the Manichæan system, not indeed with a view of establishing its truth, which he did not admit, but in order to involve all systems indiscriminately in the darkness of Pyrrhonism. The nature and extent of this brief notice will not allow us to detail the various arguments advanced on a subject, in which the human understanding is perplexed and lost. His reasoning, which had startled others by its boldness, or entangled them by its subtilty, was attacked[2] by Le Clerc under the name of Theodore Parrhase,[3] by Dom Alexander Gaudin,[4] by Archbishop King,[5] by Jacquelot,[6] by De la Placette,[7] by Leibnitz,[8] and by Malebranche.[9]

Answers made to it.

Disciples of Manes.

Manichæism coming from Persia excited the aversion of the Roman

[1] Dict. Hist. art. Manichéens.

[2] See a brief analysis of their answers in Pluquet, Dict. des Héres. tom. ii. p. 375.

[3] Parrhasiana, ou Pensées diverses sur des Matières de Critique, d'Histoire, de Morale, et de Politique, p. 301. See the answers of Bayle in Dict. Hist. art. Origène. Rép. aux Quest. d'un Provincial, tom. iii. c. 172.

[4] La Distinction et la Nature du Bien et du Mal traité où l'on combat l'Erreur des Manichéens, les Sentimens de Montagne et de Charron, et ceux de M. Bayle, 1704. See also Hist. des Ouvrages des Savans, Août, 1705, Art. 7.

[5] De Origine Mali, 1702. The translation, with notes, and a Dissertation concerning the Principle and Criterion of Virtue and the Origin of the Passions, by Bishop Edmund Law, appeared in 1732. A third edition was published in 1739. Bayle, Rep. aux Quest. d'un Provincial, tom. ii. p. 74. See also Rép. des Lettres, 1796, Janvier, p. 57.

[6] Conformité de la Foi et de la Raison. Comp. Rép. aux Quest. d'un Provincial, tom. iii. See also Examen de la Théologie de M. Bayle. Entretiens d'Ariste et de Thémiste.

[7] Réponse à deux Objections de M. Bayle, in 12mo, 1707.

[8] Essais de Théodicée, p. 3, n. 405, &c.

[9] See Conversat. Christ. Traité de la Nature et de la Grâce. Réflexion sur la Prémotion Physique. The principles of Malebranche were attacked by Arnauld, Réflex. Phil. et Théol. sur le Traité de la Nature et de la Grâce, 3 vol. in 12mo. De l'Action de Dieu sur les Créatures, &c. in 4to.

Manichæus. emperors. From the time of Diocletian to that of Anastasius, various means of persecution were employed against the Manichæans. They were banished, spoiled, or butchered. In 491, the mother of Anastasius, being a Manichæan, caused a suspension of the rigorous laws to which they were subjected. After having enjoyed tranquillity twenty-seven years, they were deprived of it by Justin and his followers. About the middle of the seventh century, a Manichæan woman, named Callinice, taught her errors to her two sons, Paul and John, and sent them to preach in Armenia. The disciples of Paul took the name of 'Paulicians.' His successor, Sylvan, undertook to accommodate Manichæism with Scripture, as received by the orthodox, and thus obtained great success in making proselytes. In 810, the Paulicians were divided under two chiefs, one called Sergius, the other Baanes; the followers of the last were called 'Baanites;' after a bloody war they were reunited by one Theodotus.[1] But the state of Manichæism in later times belongs to a subsequent period of history.

HIERAX.

Hierax. Hierax, or Hieracas, a native of Leontium, or Leontopolis, in Egypt, founded the sect of 'Hieracites,' about the end of the third century. He was distinguished as well by his austerity and abstemiousness as by his extensive acquaintance with literature and science. He composed[2] commentaries on various parts of the Old and New Testament, the whole of which he is said to have committed to memory.

Agreeing with Manichæus, of whom he has been reckoned a disciple,[3] on some points, he differed from him on many others. Regarding the mission of Jesus Christ, as having introduced more rigid rules of conduct than the laws of Moses, he inferred that the enjoyment of wine, of meats, of marriage, and of all sensual pleasures was abolished, or at least forbidden to such as aspired to a high degree of virtue.

Nor was this his only error. He denied the resurrection of the body; he pretended that children, who died before the age of reason, could not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which was promised to those only who had successfully combated the passions of the flesh; he supposed that Melchisedec was the Holy Spirit, endeavouring to confirm this notion by an apocryphal book, entitled 'Anabaticon,' or 'The Ascension of Isaiah.' With respect to the Father and the Son, he compared them to two wicks lighted in the same lamp, and with the same oil.[4]

[1] For an account of the authors who wrote against the Manichæans, see Lardner's Credibility, part ii. c. lxiii. Among their most celebrated opponents was St. Augustine, who had himself been nine years among the auditors of this sect.

[2] He composed a dissertation On the Creation of the World in Six Days, and also Hymns.

[3] Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. i. lib. ii, c. vi. sec. 2, note. See, however, Mosheim (de Reb. Christ. p. 903) and Lardner (Credib. part ii. c. lxii. sec. 7), who are of a different opinion.

[4] See the Letter of Arius to Alexander in Epiphanius (Hær. lxix. c. vii.), Athanasius (De duab. Synod. Oper. tom. i. p. 728), and Hilary (de Trinit. lib. vi. sec. 5, &c.)

It was doubtless this speculative turn of mind which led him to interpret, or rather to obscure, the Sacred Scripture by numerous allegories. Hierax.

His austere doctrines proved particularly attractive to the monks or ascetics of Egypt. Many of his followers sincerely observed, though others merely affected to observe, an entire abstinence from animal food, and other rigorous practices.[1]

NOETUS.

The heresies which had already appeared on the subject of the Trinity, continued in the third century. Noetus.

Noetus, a native of Smyrna, or, according to another account, of Ephesus, taught that there was but one person in the Godhead, which at one time was called the Father, and at another the Son. He maintained, therefore, that it was the Father who had been born of the Virgin Mary, and had suffered on the cross; whence his followers, like those of Praxeas, have been called 'Patripassians.'

Having been called before the priests, he disavowed, without inwardly renouncing his errors, which, when they had been adopted by some persons, he openly professed. Being again summoned, he persisted in the opinion which he had taught, and was expelled from the Church. His conduct has been ascribed to pride, which, as it is allied to folly, induced him, it is said, to pretend that he was (more probably that he was like) Moses, and that his brother was (more probably that he might be compared to) Aaron. His name was almost unknown in the time of St. Augustine. His errors are mentioned in an ancient piece still extant, and ascribed to Hippolytus,[2] from which Epiphanius has almost entirely borrowed his refutation of this hæresiarch.

SABELLIUS.

Though the doctrines of Sabellius acquired great repute, but little is known of his history. He was born in Pentapolis, a division of Cyrenaic Libya. It was in its capital, Ptolemais, of which he was, perhaps, bishop, that he first taught the heresy so well known under the name of Sabellianism. This heresy, which arose from the fear of appearing to fall into polytheism,[3] consisted in asserting that the different persons of the Godhead are merely different operations of one Being; that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are but various names of God, according as he is viewed in various relations. Thus, when God was considered as resolving to save mankind, He was called Sabellius.

[1] On the subject of Hierax see Epiphan. Hær. lxvii.

[2] Serm. c. Hær. Noeti, in the 2nd volume of the works of Hippolytus, edited by Fabricius. Besides which discourse, see on the subject of Noetus, Epiphanius, Hær. lvii. Theodoret, Hær. Fab. lib. iii. c. iii. Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. i. part ii. lib. iii. c. vi. p. 533. Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. p. 682; and Lardner's Credib. part ii. c. xli.

[3] When the Sabellians met the Orthodox, they said to them, τι ἂν εἴπωμεν ὦ οὗτοι, ἵνα θεὸν ἔχομεν ἢ τρεῖς θεούς, Epiphan. Hær. lxii. Comp. page 168, art. *Praxeas*, note[7].

Sabellius.

the Father; when as entering into the Virgin's womb, and as suffering death on the cross, He was called the Son; and when as displaying His efficacy on the minds of sinners, He was called the Holy Ghost. He gave the law as Father; He was incarnate as Son; He descended upon the apostles as Holy Ghost.[1] Thus these different appellations of God were borrowed from the different acts for man's salvation.[2] The Trinity was the Divine nature under the three ideas of substance, thought, and will, or action. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were three denominations in one hypostasis, as in man, body, soul, and spirit.[3] In defence of this view he maintained that the doctrine of the Church opened a field to gross corporeal imaginations.

His disciples were called 'Patripassians.' Yet Sabellius is said by Epiphanius[4] to have denied that the Father suffered death. According to Mosheim, Sabellius "maintained that a certain *energy* only, proceeding from the supreme Parent, or a certain portion of the Divine Nature, was united to the Son of God, the man Jesus; and he considered, in the same manner, the Holy Ghost as a portion of the everlasting Father."[5]

[1] Theodoret, Hær. Fab. lib. ii. c. ix.

[2] Again, the Father might be compared to the figure or substance of the sun, the Son to the power of lightning (τὸ φωτιστικὸν), and the Holy Ghost to the power of heating (τὸ θαλπτὸν). Epiph. Hær. lii.

[3] Ὡς ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴ καὶ πνεῦμα. Epiph. Hær. lxii. Comp. Basil, Ep. 210, Oper. tom. iii. p. 317, and Isid. Pelus. lib. i. Ep. 247.

[4] Anaceph. Oper. tom. ii. p. 146. Comp. J. Damasc. de Hær. n. 72.

[5] Eccles. Hist. Cent. 3. part ii. c. v. Com. De Reb. Christ. p. 689–699. Beausobre thus explains Sabellianism: Sabellius ne concevoit en Dieu qu'une seule Personne, dont le Verbe est la Raison, la Sagesse, et dont le Saint Esprit est la Vertu. Ni le Verbe, ni le Saint Esprit, n'etoient point, selon Sabellius, des Hypostases, tout de même que les facultez de raisonner et de vouloir, ou d'agir, n'ont point une subsistance distincte de celle de l'âme humaine, et ne sont point des personnes différentes de l'homme. . . . . L'erreur Sabelliene consistoit à anéantir la Personalité du Verbe et du Saint Esprit, la Trinité n'étant autre chose, dans ce système, que la Nature Divine considérée sous les trois idées de Substance, de Substance qui pense, de Substance qui veut et qui agit. . . . . Jésus, Fils de Marie, est le Fils de Dieu, parcequ'il a été conçu du Saint Esprit, et que le Verbe ou la Sagesse de Dieu, qui est toujours en Dieu, de qui elle est un attribut inséparable, a déployé sa Vertu dans la Personne de Jésus, afin de lui révéler les veritez, qu'il devoit enseigner aux hommes, et le revetir du pouvoir nécessaire pour confirmer ces véritez par des miracles. Le Verbe ne sort jamais du Père, que comme notre Raison sort, pour ainsi dire, hors de nous, lorsqu'elle fait connaître, par des paroles et par des commandemens, quelles sont nos pensées et nos volontez. Ainsi le Verbe, qui a été en Jésus-Christ, n'est qu'un Verbe Déclaratif, qui a manifesté à Jésus la Science du Salut, et un Verbe Opératif qui lui a conféré une Puissance miraculeuse. L'union du Verbe Divin avec la Personne de Jésus n'est point une union substantielle, mais de Vertu, et de Vertu seulement. Aussi les Sabelliens ne reconnoissoient-ils acune union hypostatique de l'Essence Divine avec la Nature Humaine de Jésus-Christ. Ce n'est qu'une Opération de la Divinité, une pleine effusion de la Sagesse et de la Vertu Divine dans l'âme du Seigneur. (Hist. de Manich. tom. i. p. 537.) He also concludes that it was not true that the Sabellians were Patripassians: Ni de leur aveu, car ils soutenoient, que la Divinité est impassible, comme Epiphane le dit en propres termes: ni par une conséquence légitime, car ils n'ont jamais reconnu aucune union substantielle de la Nature Divine avec la Nature Humaine de Jésus-Christ. (Ibid.)

Facundus says, that the Church had not begun to use the word *person* in the Trinity, till it was obliged to do so in order to defend the faith against Sabellius.[1] Sabellius.

The opinions of Sabellius had made so many proselytes (among others, some bishops) in Pentapolis, that Dionysius of Alexandria sent legates to that province, and wrote three letters in refutation of this heresy. But it is often the failing of controversialists, to be so violently bent against one extreme as to overlook the other. In his efforts to prove that the Son was a different Person from the Father, he unfortunately made too much difference between their natures. He dropped the expressions that the Son was the work of the Father; that He was to the Father as the vine to the vine-dresser, and the vessel to the carpenter;—that He did not exist before He was made. These expressions (of which Origen afterwards availed himself) induced some persons to complain against him to Dionysius, bishop of Rome. On being informed of this proceeding, he wrote 'Four Books,' in which he refuted both the errors of Sabellius and that which was ascribed to himself. These books formed, probably, the piece entitled 'A Refutation and an Apology,' in which, according to Athanasius, though he did not much approve of the word consubstantial, his opinions respecting the Trinity corresponded with the orthodox faith.[2]

From this account of their controversy we may infer, that the opinion of the Church at that period was that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were not different names of the Divine Nature, and that, moreover, it would not allow, even when it was of great importance to confute an opposite error, expressions which might be considered as asserting that the Son was of a different nature from the Father.[3] From the vindication of Dionysius we may also remark how dangerous it is to conclude that, because certain consequences may be even justly deduced from unguarded expressions or illustrations, it necessarily follows that the author in whom they are found perceived or allowed those consequences. Remarks

From an extract from the work of Dionysius against Sabellius, preserved by Eusebius,[4] it appears that this heresiarch coincided with Hermogenes in denying that matter was created; hence it is, perhaps, that his disciples were sometimes called 'Hermogenians.'[5] They received the canonical Scriptures, but also used some apocryphal books, chiefly the Gospel according to the Egyptians.[6]

[1] Pro Defens. Trium. Capitul. lib. i.

[2] Sabellius is mentioned by nearly all writers on heresies of this period. See especially Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. 6. Epiphan. Hær. 62. Athanas. Lib. de Sententiâ Dionysii. See also particularly Historia Sabelliana by the learned Wormius, printed at Frankfort and Leipsic, 1696. Comp. Beausobre, Hist. de Manich. tom. i. p. 535. See also Tillem. Mém. p. 4. Art. Les Sabelliens.

[3] Pluquet, Dict. des Héres. Art. Sabellius.

[4] Præp. Evang. lib. vii. c. xix.

[5] August. Hær. 41, &c.

[6] Epiph. Hær. 62.

BERYLLUS.

Beryllus. Beryllus, bishop of Bozrah in Arabia, a man of great learning and repute, taught that Jesus Christ had no proper existence or distinct personality before His incarnation, that He was the only God, inasmuch as the Father resided in Him.[1]

After many persons had attempted to withdraw him from his heresy, Origen had a conference with him, in which he succeeded, by mildness of address in discovering his sentiments, and by strength of argument in refuting them, and thus was Beryllus brought back into the path of truth;[2] a striking instance of the effects of sound learning when tempered with gentleness, moderation, and charity. The same man, whom volumes of controversial invective would perhaps have left confirmed in error and exasperated into enmity, is often not only persuaded, but conciliated by a few well-directed and candid observations.

Beryllus had written some works which are no longer extant. We have also to regret the loss of the account of his conference with Origen, mentioned by Eusebius and Jerome.[3]

PAUL OF SAMOSATA.

Paul of Samosata. A. D. 260. The history of Paul, a native of Samosata, and bishop of Antioch, presents a very mournful view of the progress of ambition and luxury in the Church, at a period not much beyond the middle of the third century. It must be read, however, with the caution at all times necessary to be observed in examining the statements of an adverse party. The sketch which we give is drawn from the circular letter (preserved by Eusebius[4]) which was transmitted to the various churches of the empire, and particularly to Dionysius and Maximus, bishops of Rome and Alexandria, by the bishops assembled at the Council of Antioch to judge of the opinions of Paul. He is said to have possessed great wealth, which was neither acquired by inheritance from his parents, nor gained by his own industry, but amassed by extortions and sacrileges, and drawn from the injured by deceitful promises of protection, and under a false appearance of piety. His pride was equal to his avarice. Preferring to the title of Bishop that of Ducenarius,[5] or Procurator of the Emperor, he was charged with

[1] Τὸν σωτῆρα καὶ κύριον ἡμῶν λέγειν τολμῶν μὴ προϋφεστάναι, κατ' ἰδίαν οὐσίας περιγραφὴν πρὸ τῆς εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιδημίας, μηδὲ μὴν θεότητα ἰδίαν ἔχειν, ἀλλ' ἐμπολιτευομένην αὐτῷ μόνην τὴν πατρικήν. (Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxiii. tom. ii. p. 238, ed. Heinichen.) On the meaning of these words, see Mosheim, de Reb. Christ. p. 699.

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxiii. See also c. xx. &c.

[3] De Vir. Illust. c. lx. On the subject of Beryllus, see also Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. vii.

[4] Hist. Eccl. lib. vii. c. xxx.

[5] The Ducenarii, or Imperial attendants, were so called, because their salary was 200 sestertia, or 1,600*l.* a-year. (Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. c. xvi.) In the Palmyrene Inscription the word ducenarius (in Greek δουκηνάριος) is often found. Athanasius says that Zenobia protected Paul. (Ad Solitar. vit. agentes Op. tom. i. p. 857. Vid. Bayle, Dict. Hist. art. Zénobie.) It has been conjectured that Paul obtained through her the office of Ducenarius.

displaying in the places of public resort, amid a crowd of attendants, an affectation of business, and a degree of splendour and arrogance, which, though designed to dazzle and astonish, drew down odium on the Christian religion. Having raised a high and stately throne in the church, he assumed the manners of a sophist, and imitated the pomp of a secular judge. His gestures were theatrical and violent. It is added, that he warmly reproved such as listened with the modesty and seriousness so becoming in the house of God, instead of expressing their applause with confused and tumultuary cries. For the hymns sung in honour of Christ, which he termed recent inventions, he substituted hymns in praise of himself. The neighbouring bishops and priests pronounced the most extravagant panegyrics in his presence, assuring their congregations that he was an angel descended from heaven. His impieties were dissembled by his clergy, who were attached to his interest by the riches which he bestowed, or who, conscious of their own detected crimes, were kept in dependence from the fear of punishment. He is also represented as being much addicted to the pleasures of the table, and as exciting great scandal by leading with him, wherever he went, two young females remarkable for their beauty. This conduct, continue the writers, would have awakened accusations even against one who professed the orthodox faith. The expression of indignation seems, however, to have been drawn forth by the heretical opinions which he maintained, and of which we shall endeavour to convey an idea, as far as we can collect anything clear and consistent from the confused accounts of ancient writers.

Heresy.

His main errors appear to have been the two opinions—that the Logos was not a distinct person from the Father; and that the Logos was not strictly united with the human nature of Christ. The first affected the doctrine of the Trinity, the second that of the Incarnation; this last was that which excited most attention. To explain his notion more fully, he taught that the Logos and the Holy Spirit were in the Father, merely as reason is in man, without any real and personal existence. Properly speaking, there was neither Father, nor Son, nor Holy Ghost, but simply one God.[1] Jesus Christ was born a man, not exalted by nature above other human beings, but into Him descended, from God, the Logos—the wisdom and the light. In this there was no personal hypostatical union, but the Logos merely dwelt in, and operated through Him. Jesus Christ was, indeed, called God, but only in an improper sense of the word; *i. e.*, only by virtue of the inhabitation of the Logos in Him.[2] He was not just essentially, or by His nature, but He exercised justice by the communication of the divine Logos, which (at the period, doubtless, of His death) was said to have quitted Him, and returned to the Father. These opinions Paul maintained in tracts, which, as we learn from

[1] Epiph. Hær. lxv. c. i.

[2] It is in this sense that he meant that the Son was consubstantial with the Father. See Tillem. Mém. tom. iv. part ii.

Vincentius Lerinensis, abounded with quotations from Scripture. No part of these works remains, if we except the Ten Questions on difficulties, which are preserved in the pieces ascribed to his opponent Dionysius of Alexandria, pieces of which the genuineness is doubted.

Councils against Paul.

Many councils assembled to examine the errors of Paul; one was held at Antioch in the year 264. Bishops, as well as priests and deacons, came to it in great numbers, and from very distant parts. Paul promised to renounce his erroneous doctrines. Firmilian (Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, who appears to have presided,) hoping that the affair might be terminated without bringing prejudice against the Christian community, deferred giving judgment. But as the promise of Paul was not performed, and as the fame of his errors continued to spread in all quarters, the rulers of the Church, after having fruitlessly attempted to effect a reformation by letters, met again at Antioch, under the reign of Aurelian, about the year 269 or 270. This last council was composed of many bishops. All the means of conciliation—exhortations, prayers, and appeals to former assurances—were tried in vain. The crafty Heresiarch disguised his notions with much art; but Malchion, a learned rhetorician, who had been raised to the priesthood, succeeded in a conference in laying open the nature of his errors.

Paul was unanimously deposed and excommunicated, and Domnus, the son of his predecessor Demetrian, elected in his place. The council wrote the Synodal letter, to which we have already alluded, to the whole Church, giving a detail of their proceedings. Paul refused to submit to this decision, and, by the favour of Zenobia, was enabled to retain his office, and to keep possession of the house of the Church, or the Bishop's seat. At length, towards the end of the year 272, Aurelian, who had retaken Antioch, in consequence of the petitions which he received, commanded that the episcopal mansion should be delivered up to those persons to whom the bishops of Rome and Italy addressed their letters; either because these bishops were better known, or less interested than the eastern bishops, or lastly, because he wished to promote the subjection of the provinces to the seat of the empire. Thus the sentence of the council was carried into execution.[1]

Paulianists.

The followers of Paul were denominated *Paulianists* or *Paulians*. There were some at the period of the Nicene council; and even as late as the year 428. Theodoret informs us that, in 450, no remains of them were seen, and even the name of such a sect was not generally known.[2]

Arabian philosophers.

Beside the above-mentioned errors, there arose, as we have already remarked, a sect in Arabia, which denied the necessary immortality of the soul, supposing that it would perish with the body, though it would be again raised with it by the power of God. Origen, having

[1] Gibbon, Decline and Fall, &c. c. xvi.

[2] Hær. Fab. lib. i. c. ii. See Tillem. Mém. tom. iv. part ii. art. Paul de Samosate, where, as usual, almost everything which refers to the subject is collected.

been sent to refute this rising sect, appears to have been completely successful in bringing it back into the bosom of the Church.[1]

NOVATIANS.

The schism of the *Novatians* was commenced by Novatus, and carried on by Novatian, of which two persons, who are often confounded, it may be necessary to give a brief account. Novatians.

Novatus was a priest of the Church of Carthage. He is described (the description is from his enemies) as notorious for his restless and innovating spirit,—a torch which kindled factions and war, a mist which carried into all quarters discord and tempests. Full of dissimulation and perfidy, he sought confidence but to betray it, lavished flattery but to deceive. Swollen with arrogance and vanity, he had lost all sense of duty. Driven by ungovernable rapaciousness, he plundered the wards and robbed the widows of the Church. Aware that his crimes would be visited with just severity, he hailed with joy the persecution which shielded him for a time from the scrutiny and condemnation of his indignant brethren. To avoid the shame of a sentence of deposition, (in which the bishops were unanimous,) he voluntarily withdrew from the Church. Resolved to embroil the community which he had dishonoured, he united with the schismatic Felicissimus, who, with some other priests, had exerted himself in opposing Cyprian,[2] and admitted scandalous sinners to the communion, before they had undergone the required penance. He then passed from Africa to Rome, and joined Novatian. Novatus.

Novatian appears to have been a man of a very different disposition. A philosopher before he embraced Christianity, he was distinguished by his attainments and his eloquence. The occasion of his difference with the Church, was the election of Cornelius to the see of Rome, over which he himself was ambitious of presiding. With a view to impugn the ordination of Cornelius, he advanced against him various defamatory charges, which Cyprian has considered unbecoming the sacerdotal dignity to publish. His principal ground of objection which we find mentioned, was, that Cornelius admitted to the com- Novatian.

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xxxvii.

[2] Cyprian (Ep. 49), Mosheim observes, "Verissima hæc omnia esse, rerum Christianarum scriptores non dubitant, quoniam à sanctissimo martyre scripta sunt, cui fidem simpliciter affirmanti habendum esse arbitrantur. Atque absit, ut sanctum virum ego mentitum esse dicam, et studio fallere voluisse. At dabunt mihi, ut opinor, facilè viri boni atque rerum periti, martyrem falli et errare, commotionem animi vehementiâ excæcari sæpe atque concitatæ imaginationis æstu modo ad exaggerandum, modo ad diminuendum impelli posse. Hoc ergo si eximio alioquin Cypriano in hâc causâ evenisse suspicemur, nullâ manes ejus injuriâ afficiemus. In recensendis vitiis Novati manifesto declamat, Rhetorisque officio fungitur: et sciunt, qui hominem norunt, nullâ in re facilius errari posse, quam in aliorum, præsertim adversariorum, mentibus depingendis, &c." (De Reb. Christian. p. 500.) It is added that he neglected his father in his illness, and paid him no honours after his death. He struck his wife while pregnant with his foot, and caused her to miscarry.

munion such as had been guilty of idolatry; a relaxation which, according to his own opinion, ought in no case to be allowed. In this schism he was followed by some of the clergy and of the people, and, from the beginning, by the greater part of the confessors; men who, having themselves suffered persecution with firmness, were unwilling that those who had shown less courage should enjoy equal privileges. This defection is attributed in a great degree to the intrigues of Novatus, who artfully impelled the irritated but wavering Novatian into decisive measures. Thus the same person, who had but just before adopted the extreme lenity of Felicissimus, now advocated the extreme rigour of Novatian, the two opposite errors which, at the same time, rent the Church. Such is the versatility of error, and perhaps of interest.

By his counsels, when the ordination of Cornelius, notwithstanding his opposition, was ratified by the Church, Novatian contrived to get himself elected bishop,[1] though he had before protested that the desire of the episcopal dignity had not influenced his conduct.

Without entering into a detail of the fruitless attempts of Novatian to obtain a general approval of his election, it is more useful towards acquiring a just notion of the ecclesiastical discipline at that period, to state some of the particular pleas urged against its validity by Cornelius in his letters preserved by Eusebius.

He informs us that Novatian, when dangerously ill, had baptism administered to him in bed, without afterwards receiving the ceremonies required by the canons of the Church; and the clergy and people objected to a person, so baptized, being ordained priest, but were prevailed upon to permit it, in his case, by particular request of the bishop. From this account we may infer, that it was contrary to the laws, or at least, to the customs of the Christians in that age, to admit to the priesthood those who had received clinical baptism only, and had not subsequently gone through the usual rites annexed to Baptism; *i. e.*, had not received milk and honey, unction, and the imposition of hands.

Cornelius also reproaches Novatian with having, during persecution, denied his sacerdotal office, and with having said, (on being requested by the deacons to assist his distressed brethren,) that he wished to be no longer a priest, and designed to embrace another philosophy.

The refusal of the African bishops to recognise Novatian was soon followed by a diminution of his adherents. Of the three bishops who had ordained him, one acknowledged his error with contrition, and was readmitted to the communion of the Church. The confessors with-

[1] To effect this purpose, two of his partisans were sent to three ignorant and rustic bishops, who lived in the smallest province of Italy, and prevailed upon them to hasten to Rome as mediators, to put an end to the divisions which agitated the Church. On the arrival of these bishops, Novatian is said to have shut them up in a chamber, to have reduced them to a state of intoxication, and then to have induced them to ordain him bishop by the imposition of hands.

drew from his party; and, besides other assemblies, a synod of sixty bishops, and a great number of his clergy, convened at Rome by Cornelius, passed a sentence of excommunication against him and his followers. These measures were not effectual in preventing him from holding his notions, which were for a long time maintained by a numerous sect, of which he became the founder.

Opinions of the Novatians.

The Novatians appear not to have entertained sentiments on doctrinal points at variance with the opinions of the orthodox Christians. The leading feature of difference was, that such as had been guilty of heinous crimes, as apostacy and other sins, could not be admitted into the Church, which had no power to pardon them; and, indeed, contracted pollution by receiving them into her communion. Hence they called themselves *Cathari*, as it were Puritans, and rebaptized their proselytes. Still Novatian maintained the necessity of penance: either to avoid odium, or because the hope of salvation was not, like the reconciliation of the Church, denied to the penitent sinners. The effect of this severity was so fatal, that some who had apostatized during persecution, returned, through despair, to Paganism.[1]

The Novatians, probably, made additions to the tenets of their master; such, perhaps, was their condemnation of second marriages.

Novatian's works, &c.

Novatian, besides an eloquent letter written to Cyprian in the name of the clergy of Rome, before the election of Cornelius, composed various works, which are lost. The two treatises, one on the Trinity, and the other on Jewish meats, which are found in the works of Tertullian, are, probably, to be ascribed to Novatian. The design of the latter tract is to prove the animals called unclean were not so in their nature; but that it was forbidden that they should be eaten, by the Mosaic law, in order to teach men to avoid the sins of which they were the figure. For instance, swine's flesh was prohibited, to deter us from a carnal life. The author then enjoins temperance and abstinence from meats offered to idols.

The style of Novatian is reckoned pure and elegant, his reasoning methodical, his citations apposite, and his spirit candid.[2]

Socrates[3] says, that Novatian suffered martyrdom under Valerian, but this opinion has been rejected by other writers.

[1] Cypr. in Nov. [2] Dupin, Biblioth. p. 112.

[3] Lib. iv. c. xxviii. On the subject of Novatian and his schism, see Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. xliii.; Cyprian, Ep. 49, 52, &c.; Tillemont, Mém. On the name Novatian, see Lardner, Cred. part ii. c. xlvii.

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