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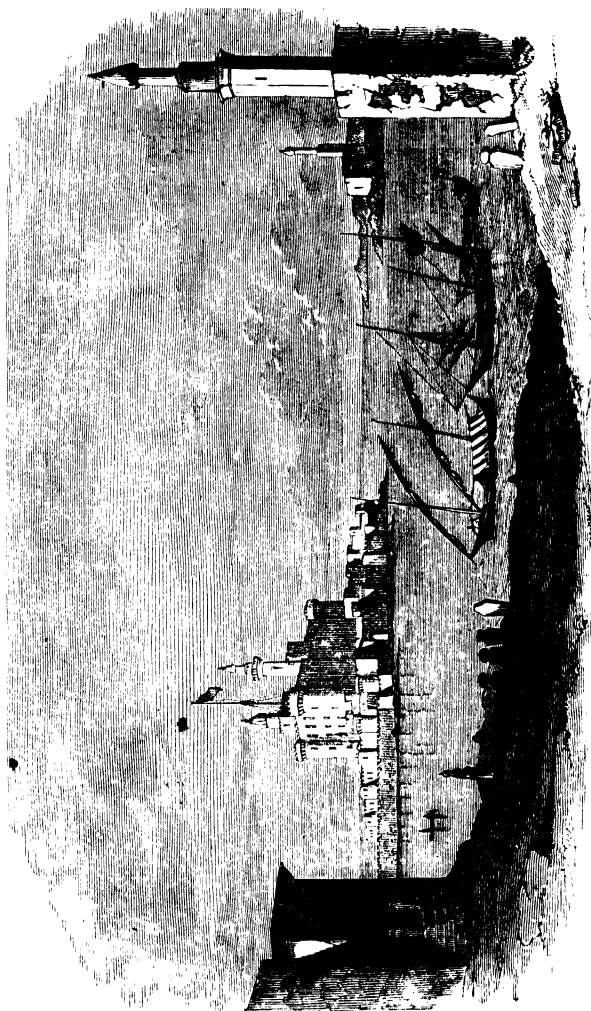
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True



EGYPT:

FROM THE CONQUEST OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT
TO NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

An Historical Sketch.

BY THE

REV. GEORGE TREVOR, M.A.,

CANON OF YORK,

Author of "Ancient Egypt: its Antiquities, Religion, and History."



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PREFACE.

THE MONUMENTS which monopolise the traveller's attention in Egypt are pre-historical: with the exception of such as were re-edifications of older structures, they belong to periods of which no written records remain, or are known to have existed. The legends collected by the Greek and Roman historians, and amplified at a later date in the lost books of Manetho and Eratosthenes, prove nothing so much as the absence of all trustworthy history; and the defect is not supplied from anything yet known of the papyri. The "temple registers," so confidently alluded to by some archæologists, belong to the realm of imagination rather than fact.

Of these legendary fragments and the light which is thrown upon them by the discoveries—or still more the conjectures—of Egyptologists, some account has been given in my volume on *Ancient Egypt*. The present is a continuation to our own times. Lying between the mythic ages of the Monuments and the desolation of the day, Egypt has a real and splendid History; a history indeed of other forces than her own, but one that closely

links her with some of the greatest of human events.

Though not included within the field of Revelation, she has lain so near to it as to receive, in a large degree, the illumination of both dispensations. Ancient Egypt was the cradle, the rival, and the grave of the Hebrew polity. The Macedonian kingdom, which inaugurates the historical period, spans the gap between the Old Testament and the New. In its capital the elder Scriptures were translated into the universal language, and the Jewish population was *hellenized* into new relations with mankind.

Roman Egypt saw Christianity mount from the hiding-place of the Holy Family to the throne of the Cæsars. The idols of an unknown antiquity fell before its power; and Christian churches rose upon the ruined temples along the course of the Nile. The earliest canon of the New Testament is the Alexandrian. The four œcumenical Councils met upon questions arising in Egypt, and the only human name which the Church has allowed to be affixed to one of her creeds is that of an Egyptian bishop. The Christian world was overflowed by the heresies and the orthodoxy of Egypt. Much of what is now produced as "advanced biblical criticism" was elaborated—and refuted—in her busy schools, while the language of the New Testament was still their vernacular tongue.

Finally, it was in Egypt that the false prophet of Arabia won his earliest and most lasting triumph. The church of Athanasius was the first to fall under the Moslem yoke, and the most patient of its bondage. It was Egypt whose sultans beat back the surging hosts of the Crusaders ;—Egypt that stooped to the servile rule of the Mamelukes ;—Egypt that, lying pulseless under the foot of the Ottoman, quenched the lightnings of Bonaparte himself.

Nor is the literary and commercial history less striking than the political. While the Bible alone confirms the grandeur of the monumental times, with the buried glories of Memphis and Thebes, the career of the historical capital was run in the face of day. Alexandria was the meeting-place of Eastern and Western civilisation ;—the emporium of Asiatic, African, and European trade ;—a metropolis of literature, art, and commerce which had no rival for splendour and comprehensiveness.

After losing the royalty which enabled it to bear away the palm from the universities of Greece, Alexandria survived to rival even imperial Rome. Her glory exceeded that of Tyre, when the Saracen conquest fell on her like a blight, and the discovery of the ocean route round the Cape of Good Hope reduced her to an obscure village of the Turkish empire. At the present day it is easier to recall the Pharaohs in Thebes, than to recognise

in Alexandria the capital of the greatest maritime power in the world.

Yet a throb has already passed along her wasted arteries. The invention of the steam engine has reversed the triumph of the Cape. The canal of the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, the Caliphs, is again to connect the two seas; and the rail is already (more surely) speeding the intelligence and trade of Christendom through the land of Goshen and the wilderness of the Exodus.

Who can foresee what may yet be in store for a country so fruitful in revolutions? whose golden age has left its Monuments to outlast the age of iron, and where the destroyers of Greek civilisation are becoming subject to the regenerated civilisation of the Franks?

This is the problem of the future: in the following sketch we walk amid the ashes of the past. It is undertaken, like the former, from a desire to contribute somewhat to the elucidation of God's message to man. May it promote a sound evangelical trust in the Author and Finisher of our faith;—clearer views of the danger of swerving from the simplicity of the Gospel;—a more self-sacrificing reliance on the blood of the Atonement;—and larger experience of the sanctification of the Spirit!

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EGYPT:

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Contrast between Monumental and Historical Egypt—Close of the Feud with Judæa—Greek Pharaohs—Prophecies of Daniel—Conquest of Alexander—Foundation of Alexandria—Funeral of Alexander—Partition of his Empire—Fulfilment of Prophecy.

IT is hardly possible to imagine a greater contrast than is presented between the *Monuments* and the *History* of EGYPT. The monuments tell of a Native Monarchy flourishing among the great empires of the East; its kings little less than demigods; its priesthood endued with a sanctity revered in distant lands; its chariots and horses pouring out to battle under the banners of a thousand gods; the nations of the earth bringing tribute; and art and luxury carried to an extent only possible to a numerous population, with abundant material resources and a high mental development. On the date and duration of this splendid period, the monuments are dumb. They witness what Ancient Egypt was; they know nothing of her rise, progress, or decay. Their testimony is confirmed by the position of Egypt in the Holy Scriptures, where her

rulers are found showing hospitality to the father of the faithful, or reducing his descendants into bondage. Still, we only know that Egypt was a great power before Israel was a nation. It gleams out of a remote antiquity with a splendour that cannot be denied; but the splendour is a pre-historic memory, separated from authentic chronology by a gulf, which nothing but the Bible can span. All that we know of it is, that it existed before Moses, and perished about the close of the Old Testament. With the first page of secular history Ancient Egypt is already dead. The Pharaohs have become a tradition, the temples and altars are shrouded in mystery, the fleets and armies have disappeared, the people are reduced to inexorable servitude.

The historical period divides itself into seven portions of about three centuries each; all are periods of subjugation. Egypt has been ruled by Persians, Greeks, Romans, Caliphs abroad, Caliphs at home, Mamelukes, and Turks; but never once, for twenty centuries, by a native government. She suffered seven complete conquests, and attempted a countless number of insurrections, but was never for a moment free. Nothing promises that she will ever be free again.

Historical Egypt, standing thus entirely apart from the monumental period, has its own beginning, middle, and end. Commencing with the obscure struggles hid beneath the Persian despotism, it emerges into day with Alexander the Great, and rises to political greatness under the Ptolemies. It shines with the glorious lustre of Christianity for three centuries under the Roman sway. Then declining from the purity of the faith, it sets in a dark night of Mussulman oppression.

Power, and knowledge, and commerce, and religion, all play their parts in this great drama. All have been enjoyed in Egypt to an extent which made her the centre of observation at some of the most momentous points of the world's history. All have so completely passed away as to render their very memory wonderful. Yet the country is still the same; its limits unchangeably guarded by nature; its mighty river still rolling from mysterious sources; its population, down-trodden and ignorant, still bearing the lineaments, and speaking the language, which were seen and heard by Alexander, Cleopatra, and the Cæsars, by Athanasius and Saladin.

Such unparalleled changes cannot fail to excite the interest of the Christian reader. All the elements which go to the rise and dissolution of states and churches, are here seen in operation. Their history leaves the salutary impression that the choicest gifts of Providence are bestowed in vain, where the Giver is Himself unknown or unloved. When power and art serve only to the increase of man's glory, and revelation is overlaid by unsanctified learning, civilization sinks into luxury, and religion yields to superstition. The national life is then dead; all that remains is to incorporate the worn-out population in some newer and more vigorous organisation.

Among the striking contrasts presented by Ancient and Historical Egypt, is the difference in their relations with the adjoining land of Judea. The long feud between the Land of Promise and the Land of Bondage ended with the fall of the Pharaohs, and the restoration of the Jews, at the close of the Old Testament canon. Palestine and Egypt were never afterwards

in a condition to contend for mastery. The Jews returned from Babylon to reinstate the church, but not the kingdom, of their ancestors. With ten tribes lost in the dispersion, and the wealthier portion of the remainder lingering beyond the Euphrates, it was a Hierarchy more than a Monarchy that henceforth ruled in Jerusalem. The temple was the acknowledged centre of revealed religion. Every faithful Jew contributed his half shekel to its maintenance, and turned his face towards it in prayer. The more devout continued to perform the pilgrimages enjoined by the law; but the kingdom of David and Solomon appeared no more till the types were swallowed up in the ANTITYPE. Its place was taken by a *faith*, diffused throughout the world by the dispersed tribes, and thus, by one of the clearest dispensations of Providence, preparing the nations for the advent of the Gospel.

The two largest sections of this dispersion were the Babylonian and the Egyptian; of the former, a great portion was afterwards removed into Syria, and found a new centre at Antioch. The Egyptian settlements, which dated from very early times, and were largely recruited by the fugitives at the fall of Samaria and Jerusalem, were continuously augmented, both in number and importance, during the four centuries which intervened between the last of the prophets and the opening of the Gospel. During the same interval, Egypt became again a great kingdom; her national usages were restored, her idols received new honours, and the insignia of the Pharaohs were seen on new and more magnificent temples. But the double crown was worn by the fair-haired foreigners so odious to the children of Ham. The government was no longer seated at Memphis or Thebes, but in a

new capital which still inscribes the conqueror's name on the portals of the East. Under this rule the Egyptians parted with many ancient enmities. Their new masters had no interest in the Jewish feud. Palestine and Egypt were border lands on which rival powers fought for empire. They were reconciled by common sufferings, and became closely interwoven in their after history.

This great change in the destinies of Egypt was inaugurated by the conquests and policy of Alexander the Great. Born about one hundred and sixty years after the cessation of inspired prophecy in Malachi, he began his reign over a small European state at twenty years of age, and died at thirty-three, in the palace of Babylon, emperor of the then civilised world. His biographer thinks that, "being like no other man, he could not have been given to the world without a special purpose in the Divine Being."¹ This judgment of a heathen observer, is confirmed by the inspired word of God; for Alexander is probably "the mighty king of Grecia," seen in the visions of Daniel, as a he-goat "coming from the west over the face of the whole earth," with a rapidity denoted by not touching the ground, and after vanquishing the Persian ram, "ruling with great dominion, and doing according to his will."² Bearing a name which signifies "helper of men," he was such an insatiable destroyer that he wept when no more kingdoms were left to subdue. His vast conquests, acquired by war, were left an inheritance of war to many generations, but both in its rise and its dissolution, his power offered a striking illustration of the inspired word, "There are many

¹ Arrian vii. 30.

² Dan. viii. 5, 21; xi. 3.

devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD that shall stand." ¹

Born in Europe and enthroned over Asia, Alexander's empire may be said to have begun and ended in Africa. Egypt was his stepping-stone to the imperial seat; to Egypt his remains were brought back for interment; and of the seven cities founded to perpetuate his name, the Egyptian Alexandria is the only survivor. He was received by the Egyptians as a deliverer rather than a conqueror. It was by the arms of Greek mercenaries more than their own prowess, that the Persian hordes had subdued Egypt; the natives heard with delight, four years after the detestable Ochus had met his death from the hand of an Egyptian,² that the arms of Greece were united against his successor.

The passage of the Hellespont, the conquest of Asia Minor, the battle of Issus [B.C. 333], and the flight of Darius, rang in notes of triumph along the banks of the Nile. The natives watched with undissembled pleasure, a progress which filled their masters with dismay. Leading his victorious legions down the coast, Alexander received the submission of Sidon, and then fell like a thunderbolt on Tyre,—“the joyous city, the mart of nations, whose merchants were princes, and whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth.”³ Old Tyre, which stood on the mainland, was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar;⁴ but a new city had arisen upon an island half a mile from the shore, where the inhabitants, relying on their fortifications and the Carthaginian alliance, determined to assert their independence at once of Persian and Mace-

¹ Prov. xix. 21.

² *Ancient Egypt*, p. 338.

³ Isa. xxiii. 3, 7, 8.

⁴ Ez. xxvi. 7.

donian power. Alexander, who owed all his other victories to the prowess and weapons of his infantry, here found his single opportunity for scientific warfare. Constructing a causeway, of which the remains are still in existence, out of the ruins of the old town, he passed his soldiers over the strait, and stormed the walls. Enraged at the resistance of the Syrians, the conqueror gave up the city to the flames. Tyre became again "the destroyed in the midst of the sea."¹ "The strangers, the terrible of the nations, drew their swords against the beauty of its wisdom, and defiled its brightness."² Ten thousand of the inhabitants were put to death, and the remainder reduced to slavery.

During the siege, Alexander required provisions from Judea, which being refused by the high priest on account of his oath to Darius, the conqueror marched upon Jerusalem for his revenge. His cruelties were here restrained by the Providence which still protected the chosen city. Jaddua the high priest³ was warned in a dream to go out in procession, arrayed in his robes of blue and scarlet, with the priests in their vestments, and the citizens in white garments. They met the conqueror on the eminence called *Sapha* ("Prospect"), when, to the amazement of his followers, the king saluted the high priest, and did reverence to the Holy Name inscribed on his tiara. He declared that just such a person had appeared to him in a dream in Macedonia, and encouraged him to cross over into Asia, by promising him victory over the Persians.

Alexander accompanied the high priest to the temple, and under his instruction offered sacrifices to the Lord. He was there made acquainted with the

¹ Ezek. xxvii. 32.

² Ezek. xxviii. 7.

³ Neh. xii. 11.

prophecies of Daniel ; and, delighted at this astonishing corroboration of his hopes, he granted the Jews the free enjoyment of their religion and laws, and at the high priest's solicitation exempted them from all tribute on the Sabbatical years.¹

This narrative of the Jewish historian has been called in question by those who are unwilling to acknowledge the inspiration of prophecy, and the Divine interposition in human affairs. It is not related by the heathen writers, who notoriously despised and misrepresented the faith both of Jews and Christians ; but the fact is confirmed by the favour incontestably shown by Alexander to the Jewish nation, and the numbers of Jews who, in consequence, willingly populated his settlements.

Returning to the coast, and provisioning his soldiers from the fleet which accompanied their march, the king at length reached Pelusium, and at once took possession of the town and harbour. The Persian garrison, weakened by large drafts sent into Asia, were in no condition to resist ; while the Egyptians received him with every demonstration of gratitude. Marching along the left bank of the river to Heliopolis, he crossed over to Memphis, and took the kingdom without a struggle.

The clemency which he had before extended to the Jews, now rewarded the submission of the Egyptians. The king went in state to the temple of Phthah, and paid the usual honours to Apis. The priests saluted him in their traditionary style, as " Son of the Sun ;" and to complete his investiture, he proceeded on a visit to the Sacred Oasis, for the further recognition of its secluded deity. Embarking on the Nile, he

1 Josephus, Ant. xi. 8.

floated down to Canopus, and thence pursued his journey along the coast. At fourteen miles' distance, he came to a village called Rhacotis, situated on a strip of sand between the sea and the Mareotic lake. The little island of Pharos, forming a breakwater in front, afforded the only refuge for ships on that part of the Mediterranean coast. It was a spot already known to mythology; Homer makes Menelaus repair to it in quest of a fair wind from the sea-god Proteus.¹ Alexander, who was a passionate admirer of Homer, and always slept with the *Iliad* under his pillow, no sooner saw the place than he exclaimed that, among other excellences, the poet was an admirable architect. He resolved to build a great city, and seizing a piece of chalk, began to trace out the plan with his own hand. The chalk being exhausted he called for flour; and when the birds devoured his tracings, the augurs turned the misfortune to account, by pronouncing it an omen of the abundance out of which the new city should nourish many nations.

From the coast the king proceeded inland to the oasis which contained the temple of Amun-ra, where the idol bore the figure of the ram-headed god Kneph.¹ The priests came out in procession, and greeted the conqueror in their usual formula as "Son of Amun." The ignorance and adulation of the Greeks turned this compliment into the myth that their monarch was the actual offspring of Jupiter; and Alexander was too vain to reject the appellation. But in his more serious moments he would repeat a thought which is found in the poets of his time, and which the Apostle has transferred to the page of inspiration,

¹ Od., iv. 360.

² *Ancient Egypt*, pp. 29, 130-133.

that "we are all the children of God;"¹ adding, that the best men were more peculiarly to be regarded as His sons. These cravings of the inner man find their true gratification in the spirit of adoption shed abroad in the believer by the Holy Ghost, through the precious blood of the Redeemer; but this privilege was not to be bestowed by an Egyptian priesthood. Alexander was flattered by being introduced in his robes of state to a private interview with the idol, and his eager inquiries on the success of his enterprises received the desired answers. He came out elated with a belief in his own divinity, adopted the horns of the idol, and sent out his edicts as the son of Jupiter Ammon.

Returning to his rising city, the king found it sufficiently advanced to receive the colonies which he designed for its population. The first rank was granted to the Greeks, or, as his followers chose to designate themselves, the "men of Macedonia." This was the official style of the new municipality; it was continued in the public assembly long after the original element had disappeared in a confluence of many races. The founder added a copious infusion of his new favourites, the Jews, the value of whose allegiance he had learned from the high priest's refusal to aid him with supplies against Tyre, when bound by his oath to Darius. The Jews were assigned a separate quarter to dwell in, but obtained equal political privileges with the Macedonians. The remainder of the population were Egyptians, governed by the native

¹ Acts xvii. 28. Cleanthes [B.C. 300], in a hymn to Jupiter, writes, "For we are all thy progeny;" and Aratus [B.C. 270] says, "We are all dependent on Jove, for we are also his offspring." See Dean Alford's *New Testament*, *in loco*.

laws, and placed under a *nomarch* or prefect of their own nation. To this well-considered constitution the founder added his own name ; and Alexandria justified his policy by becoming the capital of the greatest maritime state in the world, and monopolising the trade of Asia for eighteen centuries. It was then suddenly reduced to an insignificant village by the opening of the sea-route round the Cape of Good Hope ; but steam has restored its importance in our own day, and two thousand years after his death, the name of Alexander is still written on the principal avenue from Europe to the East.

The city lay in a shallow bay between two headlands, covered by the island about three-quarters of a mile from the shore. Behind it was the lake Marcotis, connected with the Nile by a canal, which kept it full during the summer heats, and rendered the air cool and salubrious. The lake was nearly forty miles long, and thirteen or fourteen broad ; eight islands, covered with verdure, spotted its surface. Alexander cut a second canal into the sea, and by giving his city a harbour on each side, provided ample accommodation for both foreign and inland commerce. The entire space, from the sea to the lake, was included in the original city ; the site of which is still marked by the obelisk called "Cleopatra's Needle," and the Roman column which bears the name of "Pompey's Pillar." At a later period, when the island was connected with the mainland by a causeway, the inhabitants migrated seaward, and modern Alexandria stands almost wholly on the mole and the Pharos.

It was in Alexandria that the Greeks first learned the use of the papyrus, which grew in large quantities on the lake. Some authors think it was then first

employed for writing;¹ if so, the Egyptian scrolls found in the tombs must be many centuries later than our antiquaries suppose. It may be, however, that the Greeks only improved a manufacture long known to the natives. The Greeks previously wrote on wooden tablets covered with wax, or on a thin bark called *βιβλος* in Greek, and *liber* in Latin; from which our own words *Bible* and *library* are derived. The Persians and Ionians are said to have used skins of sheep and goats for their records, and the “rolls” of the Holy Scriptures² were doubtless of the same material.

From his new city Alexander returned to Memphis, where he settled the government of the Egyptians to their great satisfaction. Entrusting the military posts exclusively to Macedonians, he placed the civil authority in the hands of a native governor, with injunctions to observe the ancient laws and religious usages of the people.

After completing his arrangements in Egypt, Alexander hastened to meet Darius on the banks of the Euphrates; and there fulfilled the word of prophecy, by extinguishing the Persian power, and raising himself to the empire of the East. He became a mighty king with great dominions, and did according to his will.³ Meanwhile, his good intentions were grievously thwarted by the cupidity and tyranny of his representative in Egypt. The complaints of the injured natives reached the conqueror's ears; but superstition enabled the culprit to purchase a forgiveness, which would have been vainly implored from

¹ Prideaux's *Connection of Old and New Testament*, B.C. 332.

² Deut. xvii. 18; Isa. viii. 1; Jer. xxxvi. 2; Ezek. ii. 9.

³ Dan. xi. 3.

his justice. Alexander's sworn friend Hephæstion died in Media, of a fever produced by the excess so familiar at the conqueror's banquets. The king was inconsolable; threw himself upon the corpse, tore his hair, and acted all the transports of Achilles on the death of Patroclus. Not content with these demonstrations, he demanded divine honours for a man who had shortened the life which he received from his Creator, by worse than brutal intemperance. Egypt was the home of the gods, and Cleomenes, the governor, was promised indulgence for his offences on condition of obtaining the desired honours. The oracle was easily persuaded to elevate the king's friend to the rank of a demigod. A temple was erected to his worship in the new capital. His name was given to the beacon which threw its guiding ray from the island of Pharos, and the merchants of Alexandria henceforth headed their bills of lading with an invocation "in the name of Hephæstion."

Such concessions to a mortal man would have been accounted impious by the priests who conversed with Herodotus: they show the progress of Greek superstition among the later hierarchy. From the same source, doubtless, Manetho derived the fictitious gods and demigods, whose reigns he has prefixed to the first king Menes.¹

Alexander could now boast that he had subdued heaven as well as earth; he had created not only a new empire, but a new god. The poison of Egyptian adulation joined with the sensual excesses of the East to corrupt his nobler nature. But this great conqueror was soon to go the way of all flesh. The violent passions, to which he gave way on the death of

¹ *Ancient Egypt*, 230.

his friend, being aggravated by intemperance, proved too strong both for mind and body. Always superstitious, he was now overwhelmed with omens of death or disaster. An immoderate draught of wine, at the end of a night spent in revelry, needed not the drug, which some have suspected, to fill his veins with the fever which proved fatal to his Patroclus. The soldiers deplored the unwonted absence of their Achilles ; and insisting on being admitted to his presence, they found him in the grasp of a greater captain than himself. Parched and speechless, the king with difficulty stretched forth a hand as they approached his couch ; and on the 22nd of May, B.C. 323, Alexander the Great returned to dust, in the thirty-third year of his age, and the seventh of his universal empire.

His body lay embalmed for more than a year in the palace at Babylon, while the funeral obsequies of this mighty prince were debated. The place of burial was hardly yet determined upon, when the soldiers, under the command of Arridæus, took up their great leader's remains, and began to escort them towards his paternal kingdom. In Syria, the corpse was met by an army from Egypt under the command of Ptolemy, the lieutenant of that province, who demanded the sacred deposit in the name of Amun, the true father of Alexander, to be laid in the soil which was consecrated by his abode.

Arridæus at once consented ; but on reaching Memphis, the two commanders agreed to forget the oasis of Amun, and lay their chief's remains in the metropolis, which bore his own name. A splendid mausoleum was erected, where "the body," as it was reverently named, was deposited with divine honours, enclosed in a golden coffin, having an outer sarco-

phagus of stone. Before the funeral rites were completed, Alexander's kingdom was broken and divided towards the "four winds of Heaven."¹ That pompous grave could not even afford a safe resting-place for his dust. His golden coffin tempted the cupidity of an ignoble successor; its contents were transferred to a case of glass, and have since altogether disappeared. All that remains is a green-brescia sarcophagus, rescued sixty years ago from some French soldiers, and shown in the British Museum (on very dubious authority), as the receptacle of what was once Alexander the Great.²

Ptolemy had his own object in view in claiming possession of his deceased commander's remains. Alexander had foreseen the contest that must arise after his death, but being questioned on the succession, he answered only, "let it go to the worthiest." That is a character more easily claimed than conceded. For seven days his generals debated over his corpse, and then determined to preserve his empire undivided. Macedon was their home, and, as they strove to believe, the capital of all the dominions reduced under its sceptre. They were determined to uphold the hereditary succession; and Roxana, the conqueror's Persian wife, having declared herself in a condition to give an heir to Alexander, Philip Arridæus, his half-brother, was proclaimed in the interim. The new king being young and nearly imbecile, the council further assigned him a regent in the person of Perdicas, to whom Alexander had bequeathed the care of his family.

¹ Dan. xi. 4.

² This sarcophagus was brought from the Church of Athanasius, where it may have served for a font. It bears the hieroglyphics of Amyrtæus, and was probably constructed for that king. To how many other mummies may it also have afforded a receptacle!

These arrangements were characterised by much prudence, but their authors were ignorant of a decree which Alexander himself may have remembered. The same prophecy which assigned him the conquest of the East, is express in denying him a successor. "Not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up even for others beside those."¹ In bowing to the claims of the sceptre, the generals had not parted with the sword; they were appointed to rule the several provinces under the new king; and each went to his command, revolving the means of throwing off his allegiance, and pursuing the steps of their old leader to conquest and empire.

The southern vice-royalty, including Egypt and Arabia, was held by Ptolemy, Alexander's intimate friend, and one of his bravest officers. He was generally supposed to be an illegitimate son of the late king Philip, in whose court he was brought up; but prudently eschewing the dangerous honour, he contented himself with the surname of his mother's husband *Lagus*, and transmitted it to a line of kings who flourished long after Alexander's race was extinct. Repairing to his province, Ptolemy gratified the Egyptians, and strengthened himself, by putting Cleomenes to death in spite of Alexander's pardon. Next, he united the Cyrenian Pentapolis to his government; and cultivating the affections of all by a justice and moderation to which they were little used, he became the most popular and powerful of the Macedonian governors.

The other commanders, meanwhile, were taking similar steps in their respective provinces; while

¹ Dan. xi. 4.

Perdiccas aimed at securing the empire to himself, by a marriage with Alexander's sister, Cleopatra. On the birth of the expected heir he received the name of Alexander, and was joined with Philip Arridæus in the sovereignty. The regent, perceiving that Ptolemy must be reduced before he could venture to open his designs upon Macedon, marched into Egypt, taking the two kings with him to countenance his proceedings; but failing in his attempt to cross the river at Memphis, he was deserted and put to death by his own soldiers. Ptolemy immediately coming into the royal camp, the army hailed him as their leader, and demanded his appointment to the regency. Preferring, however, his own position, he procured the dangerous charge to be given to his friends Pithon and Arridæus, from whom it was shortly after transferred to Antipater, who commanded in Macedon.

Ptolemy was left secure in Egypt; and anxious to annex Syria and Judea, he offered to purchase them of Laomedon, to whom these provinces were assigned in the original distribution of the empire. The other refusing this proposal, he attacked him by sea and land, and quickly made himself master of Syria and Phœnicia. The Jews alone, with their usual regard to an oath, refused to submit, whereupon the invader entered Judea, and laid siege to Jerusalem.¹ Observing that the walls were left undefended on the Sabbath, Ptolemy ordered the assault on that day, and easily captured the city. To punish the inhabitants for their resistance, he carried one hundred thousand Jews captive into Egypt; but, justly prizing their fidelity, he took a large number into his own service,

¹ B.C. 320.

and settled the remainder with full civic rights in Alexandria and Cyrene.¹ Large numbers of Samaritans were also brought into Egypt on this occasion, and became a conspicuous section of its motley population. These human importations, so frequent in ancient history, betray at once the decay of the native races through the ravages of war, and the little reliance which was reposed in the survivors. Another and more remarkable emigration occurred a few years after, when Ptolemy was obliged to retreat before Antigonus, who, on the death of Antipater, had become the chief authority in Asia: several thousand families of Jews and Samaritans voluntarily followed him to Alexandria, and took up their abode in the quarters allotted to their nations.

The Macedonian empire was now falling to pieces amid the struggles of the different commanders for power. The young king Philip and Eurydice, his wife, were put to death, with their chief adherents, by Olympias, the mother of Alexander. This bloody deed was revenged by Cassander, the son of Antipater, who besieged the queen-mother, and having taken her prisoner, caused her to be slain. Alexander, now the sole king, he confined with his mother Roxana in the castle of Amphipolis, where he had them both privately murdered, seven years later.

In the meantime, Antigonus had driven Seleucus out of Babylon, and forced him to take refuge with Ptolemy. These commanders representing the common danger to Cassander and Lysimachus, the ruler of Thrace, a league was formed between the four for

¹ From these Cyrenian Jews were descended Jason, the author of a history of the Maccabees (2 Macc. i.), and Simon the Cyrenian (Mark xv. 21).

the destruction of Antigonus, the first of Alexander's generals, to assume the title of king. Seleucus marching from Egypt [B.C. 312], recovered Babylon, and eventually obtained the largest share of the empire. On account of Ptolemy's assistance, the prophet describes him as "one of his princes," noting their respective dominions in the remarkable words, "The king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion."¹

The conflict was brought to an issue in the decisive battle of Ipsus in Phrygia [B.C. 301]. Antigonus was slain, and his army put to flight. His son Demetrius, escaping with a few troops, bore the title of king for some time in different districts and towns; but the victory was complete. The allies proceeded to a new partition of the empire, in which Cassander was recognised king of Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus of Thrace and the two sides of the Hellespont; Ptolemy of Egypt, Libya, Arabia, parts of Syria and Asia Minor, with some adjacent islands; while Seleucus received the remainder of Syria, Mesopotamia, Chaldæa, and all the rest of Alexander's acquisitions. The great horn was broken, and for it came up four notable ones towards the four winds of heaven. "Four kingdoms stood up *out of the nation, but not in his power*" and "*not to his posterity*;"² for while every member of Alexander's family came to an untimely end, the new dynasties were all Greek, founded by Greek arms, and reserving by common stipulations the dominancy of the Greek race.

¹ Dan. xi. 5.

² Dan. viii. 22; xi. 4.

CHAPTER II.

THE PTOLEMIES.

Great maritime State—Greeks and Natives—Temples rebuilt—Serapis—Literature and Art—Coinage—Abdication of Soter—Philadelphus—Coronation Pageant—Library—SEPTUAGINT—Prophecies—Magnificence of Alexandria—Euergetes I.—Extension of the Empire—Men of letters—Colossus of Rhodes—Philopator—Battle of Raphia—Outrage in the Temple of Jerusalem—Persecution of the Jews—Death, and Decline of the Monarchy.

THE kingdom of Ptolemy Lagus, called *Soter* (Saviour), from the succour he had rendered in a great strait to the island of Rhodes, comprehended Egypt, Libya, Arabia, Palestine, Cœle-Syria,¹ with the islands of Cos, Rhodes, Cyprus, and part of the southern coast of Asia Minor. This new monarchy marks the completion of a revolution in the Egyptian state, which had been in progress from the time that the throne of the Pharaohs was removed into the Delta.² In the days when oceans separated nations instead of uniting them, Egypt was a secluded valley, enjoying the longest inland navigation in the world, and nourishing her religion and patriotism, as China does at this day, in horror of the sea, and in supreme contempt of all "outside barbarians." This

¹ Syria was divided into four parts: Syria *Proper* or *Antiochena* extended from the head of the Sinus Issicus (now the Gulf of Aïasso) southward to Mount Lebanon: *Cœle*, or Hollow, Syria lay between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, including Damascus and its territories: from hence to the borders of Egypt was *Palestine*; finally, the sea-coast from Tripoli to Gaza was called *Phœnicia*.

² *Ancient Egypt*, p. 305.

was Ancient Egypt, whose glory passed away before history was born. Her traditions were sadly impaired by Psamaticus and his successors, and now retired into the old Coptic valley, quite out of view. The Egypt of history is a powerful maritime state, with an unbroken coast-line of 1200 miles long, occupying the entire south-eastern side of the Mediterranean, from Cos to Cyrene. The traffic of Ethiopia and Arabia was replaced by the opening commerce of Europe and Asia. Islanders and hardy mariners were incorporated in the population, and (reviving the monumental legends of the Great Rameses) the mountains of Lebanon again offered their forests to complete the dominion of the once hated sea.

None of the new kingdoms, out of Greece, contained so large a portion of Greeks as the dominions of Ptolemy. The king was a universal favourite with his old fellow-soldiers, numbers of whom came to end their days under his sway. The mercantile classes were attracted by the rising trade; the educated ones by the royal patronage of literature and art. All were welcomed into a capital founded for their reception, where they could enjoy their free institutions without molesting the subject race. Alexandria was, in fact, a Macedonian state in the Egyptian territory. Exempt from the rule of the nomarch who administered native law to the surrounding district, its citizens retained the privilege of bearing arms, and the old free expression of opinion in the Gymnasium; while the Egyptians were ruled with a tighter rein, according to their custom, but still with equity and consideration.

The Greeks, like the British in India, disapproved the admixture of the ruling and subject races. The

offspring was condemned to the inferior *status*, and became worshippers of Isis and Osiris rather than of Jupiter and Juno. They were so numerous that among the mummies at Thebes twenty per cent. exhibit signs of European descent; and of the skulls at Memphis, scarcely more than a quarter are allowed to be pure Coptic. Still, the mixed race was Egyptian in the eye of the law. It inherited none of the Macedonian rights, but was ruled by that paternal form of government, which always pleases ignorant and vain-glorious races, who are incapable of the self-denial and sacrifice demanded by free institutions.

Ptolemy gratified his Egyptian subjects by re-edi-fying the temples which the Persians had destroyed; so carefully preserving the ancient architecture and dedications that in the want of hieroglyphic knowledge, his ruins were long mistaken for those of the Pharaohs. In fact, the Pharaohs were outdone in grandeur and beauty by these more civilized successors. The priesthood and the sacrifices were restored on a scale of profuse expenditure; and not to fall short of the Egyptians in any point, Ptolemy placed his new capital under the care of a new god.

A nameless idol was found at Sinope in the Black Sea, which the inhabitants readily parted with for a cargo of corn. Ptolemy, inspired by a dream, had it brought to Alexandria. The Greeks were in doubt whether the misshapen log were an Apollo or a Pluto: Manetho the court priest, whose fictions some Egyptologers prefer to the word of God, pronounced it a *Serapis*. This name—compounded, apparently, of Osiris and Apis—was now supplanting the older deity as the husband of Isis, and judge of the dead. He was figured at Memphis with a bull's

head; but Greek taste repudiating this monstrosity, the Alexandrian idol was a human figure, seated and crowned with a basket or bushel. The right hand grasped a serpent with three tails, ending in the heads of a dog, a lion, and a wolf. The Greeks esteemed it a form of Jupiter. It was of colossal size, touching on either side the walls of the sanctuary, where it sat solitary and in darkness. At certain times only the sun's rays were admitted, through a small window, to fall on the idol's lips, and were then said to convey the salutation of his brother deity, Horus.

The temple of Serapis was the loftiest and most splendid edifice in Alexandria. It stood upon an artificial mound, ascended on four sides by a flight of a hundred steps, terminating in a portico, which opened into the great court. A fountain and a pair of obelisks from some older site adorned the centre; the walls were covered with painting, and the roof glittered with gold. Like the temple at Jerusalem and the Roman capitol, the Serapeum was at once the sanctuary and the citadel of Alexandria. The Greeks connected what they knew of the Osirian faith and philosophy with the new idol. It was introduced in conjunction with Isis into imperial Rome, and carried by her legions to every part of the world. His temple, however, was everywhere in the suburbs of the place; some say, because the Egyptians refused to admit the foreign deity into their cities, but more probably because, as judge of the dead, his abode was thought improper among the homes of the living.¹

¹ A law of the Twelve Tables ordained that no foreign deities should be worshipped at Rome: notwithstanding there was a temple of Isis and Serapis destroyed by order of the Senate, B.C. 168, and their

In return for the munificent patronage bestowed upon their gods, the Egyptian priests now invented a new son of Osiris, called *Macedo*; and Ptolemy was saluted as a descendant of the "great god," and a blood relation of the Pharaohs.

With his other qualifications for rule, the king united a love of literature and the arts, which attracted the most eminent professors to his court. He was no mean author himself; his account of Alexander's wars furnished the materials for Arrian, and is much commended by that historian. Resolved to make Alexandria the resort of all kinds of learning, he erected a college of philosophy, with a lecture-room and other schools, liberally endowed from the public revenue. His library soon grew to be the largest in the world. Poets, historians, sculptors, painters, mathematicians, crowded to this new centre of arts and sciences. Learning retired from the decaying schools of Greece, to take up her home again by the waters of the Nile. The Alexandrian Museum flourished under all the Ptolemies, amidst the vice and folly of the day, and bequeathed a splendid reputation to the school of Christian philosophy, which inherited its honours.

Soter's delight was to mix in the literary circle as an equal. He wore the plainest clothing, abjured state, and dined and slept in the houses of his friends as "Ptolemy the Macedonian." So

altars were again overthrown B.C. 58. (Tertull. *Ap. vi.*) Tiberius had a statue of Isis thrown into the Tiber, but Vespasian adopted Serapis as his patron deity, and pretended to work miracles in his name at Alexandria. (Suet. *in Vesp. vii.*) His worship extended into Britain under Hadrian; and a tablet now in the York Museum shows that a temple was erected to Serapis, by the commander of the sixth legion, on the site of the present railway station, which is separated from ancient Eburacum by the river Ouse.

slender was his personal expenditure, that when he invited them in return, he would borrow their dishes and tables to eke out his furniture. The glory of a king, he was wont to say, was to make others rich, not to be rich himself. He was not displeased when, having asked Euclid to teach him a shorter way to geometry, the philosopher, in allusion to the roads which in Persia were kept clear for the king's use, replied that "there was no royal road to mathematics."

At these literary dinners Diodorus, the inventor of the dilemma in logic, used to vent his paradox that motion was impossible, since a body could not move in the place where it was, and certainly not in a place where it was not. Socrates had solved the problem by *walking*, but the sophist was put to a harder test when, having fallen down and dislocated his shoulder, his surgeon began to inquire if the dislocation occurred in the place where the joint was before the accident, or in that where it now protruded! The discomfited rhetorician entreated him to set the limb first, and dispute about its motion afterwards.

Among other distinguished men who flourished under the patronage of Ptolemy were Apelles, the famous painter of Cos, his rival Antiphilus, and Stilpo the philosopher, whose renown was so great that when his native city Megara was stormed by king Demetrius, he ordered Stilpo's house to be spared, though every temple and tower should fall. On the king offering further to compensate him for his losses, the philosopher replied, that he owned nothing but his learning, and that was not lost.

Anatomy also was first taught in Alexandria, where Erasistratus, the grandson of Aristotle, and Herophilus laid the foundation of the art of healing from a

practical knowledge of the human frame. Possibly they inherited some advantages from the Egyptian custom of embalming; or they may have obtained an easier supply of subjects for the dissecting knife from the inferior race that swarmed in Egypt.

The same reign enriched Alexandria with the art of engraving cameos and coins. The ancient Egyptians exchanged their gold and silver by weight; and as every little Greek state was now pouring its money into the Alexandrian market, the confusion was more distracting than is experienced by a modern traveller in the border states of Germany. A coinage was indispensable, and the value and workmanship of Ptolemy's currency attest the wealth of his kingdom. His standard was the Egyptian talent, which more than doubled the Attic. The gold piece was of eight drachms, and the silver of four;—equal respectively to five pounds and half a crown of our money; whereas the Attic stater was only seventeen shillings. Again, in the Alexandrian reckoning, the unit of value was the silver didrachm, nearly one shilling and sixpence English, while in Greece it was only half that sum.¹

In the twentieth year of his reign, the thirty-ninth from the death of Alexander, the founder of the Macedonian kingdom in Egypt resigned the crown

¹ The *Attic* drachma before the Persian war weighed $67\frac{1}{2}$ grains troy; it fell to $65\frac{1}{2}$ under Alexander, and to 55 under the Cæsars. The stater, or gold-piece, was worth 25 silver drachmæ. A recent discovery gives 140 grains as the weight of the *Egyptian* unit; but some authors think that Ptolemy adopted the *Macedonian* standard, which was 116. Every talent contained 6,000 grains: the following, therefore, are the weights and values of the respective talents, reckoning the silver at five shillings the ounce:—

Attic (in Alexander's time)	..	818 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.	=	£204	13	9
Egyptian	.. ..	1750 oz.	=	437	10	0
Macedonian	.. ..	1450 oz.	=	362	10	0

which he had created, and retired to end his days in a private station. Ptolemy was then eighty years of age; he had not been happy in his family. Thais, the notorious companion of Alexander, was the mother of his two eldest sons, and they never emerged into public life. His first wife was Eurydice, the daughter of Antipater, for whom he entertained little affection, and her son Ceraunus (the thunderer) was banished for treason. The king sought a second consort, during her lifetime, in Cleopatra the widowed queen of Epirus, sister to Alexander the Great; but she was murdered on the road to Egypt by means of Antigonus. Her name, which signifies "father's pride," was assumed by most of the queens, as Ptolemy was by all the kings, of the Macedonian dynasty in Egypt. Soter next married Berenice, a Macedonian widow of great beauty, who was a companion of Eurydice. She enjoyed his full affection, and to her son he now voluntarily resigned his throne. The old man expired the next year [B. C. 284], with the reputation of the wisest and best ruler of his age. He had the rare happiness of seeing his son succeed without rebellion or war. His policy was continued in a prince educated on his own far-reaching principles; and though a conqueror and a foreigner, Egypt mourned in the first of her fair-haired kings a truer benefactor than any of her swarthy Pharaohs.

His "warrior" name¹ was inherited by a long line of princes, distinguished by the glories and the vices of peace. Philadelphus, as the second Ptolemy surnamed himself, was born at Cos, an island selected by Soter as a kind of family castle. Educated under the best masters, at a distance from the contamina-

¹ Ptolemy signifies "warlike."

tions of the Egyptian court, he united his mother's beauty and gentleness with the enlarged views of his father; and ascending the throne with an overflowing treasury, displayed the greatness of his monarchy in the splendour of his coronation.

The ceremonial was copied from the sculptures of Thothmes and Rameses, but some striking alterations showed the impression already made by the influx of Greek tradition. Osiris was now identified with Bacchus: the pageant opened with the great god surrounded by satyrs, sileni, and altars, and crowned with ivy and vine leaves. The idol, a huge Egyptian colossus, rode in a car, attended by priests and priestesses, arrayed in scarlet and gold, and pouring wine from a golden vessel. Isis, in a smaller chariot, was followed by a cart laden with grapes, and a cask of wine running freely among the crowd. Precious vases from Delphi and Athens added to the incongruity of the show. Osiris was brought on again, mounted on an elephant, as if returning from India; the old fable of his travels was symbolized by a train of foreign birds and animals; ostriches, parrots, elephants, bears, leopards, stags, a camelopard, and a rhinoceros, assured the delighted Egyptians of the extent and variety of their great god's travels and conquests. The Greek spectator was shown his own Bacchus flying from Juno. Alexander and Ptolemy Soter followed, crowned with ivy and supported by allegorical figures: Amun-ra and the other gods of Egypt came behind. Thrones of ivory and gold were carried, with crowns of enormous value, and golden shields and breastplates. Wagon-loads of gold and silver plate and costly perfumes, guarded by 60,000 infantry and 20,000 horse, made up a pageant

which, beginning by torchlight before day, had not all passed when the sun went down at night. Three hundred and fifty thousand pounds were spent on the games for the people. This extravagance is related not in old-world, priestly legends, but by a Greek historian, who was an eye-witness of the spectacle.

Philadelphus inherited his father's love of art along with his enlightened principles of government. He spared neither pains nor money to increase the treasures of the Alexandrian Museum : it contained in his reign 200,000 rolls of papyrus, and was the first of all the Greek schools of poetry, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine. Demetrius Phalereus, after losing the government of Athens, found a purer delight in the charge and arrangement of these volumes. At the head of the mathematicians were Euclid himself, and Ctesibus the inventor of hydraulics. Theocritus, Callimachus, and Philetas were among its poets; Aristarchus and Aratus taught astronomy. The native writers, Manetho and Petosiris, were employed to restore the Egyptian annals, and Zoilus the grammarian here began the critical school, to whose labours the world is indebted for the text of Homer. Paintings, statues, and cameos, illustrated the advanced condition of art; but the greatest and most permanent work of the age was the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, known to the civilized world by the name of the SEPTUAGINT.

Josephus relates at great length¹ that this work was effected in the island of Pharos, in seventy-two days, by as many elders, sent from Jerusalem in compliance with Ptolemy's application to the high priest Eleazar. His account is taken from the relation

¹ *Jew. Ant.*, xii. 2.

of Aristéas, an officer of the king's guard, alleged to have carried his letter to Jerusalem. Philo added that the seventy-two interpreters agreed to a word in the translation; and the story was afterwards improved by their being placed by pairs in thirty-six cells (the ruins of which were shown in the second century of Christianity), where they translated apart, yet without the difference of a word or a letter from each other! These accounts being generally believed by the Christian fathers, the translation was called the *Septuagint*, and was supposed to be an exact, and even miraculous, counterpart of the Hebrew Scripture. The whole story, however, has been examined and refuted by the learned Dean Prideaux,¹ and the history of the pretended Aristéas is now generally allowed to be a forgery, by some Alexandrian Jew, in the second century before Christ.

The translation was undoubtedly made at Alexandria, but the Septuagint, like the Nile, conceals its sources. It was probably begun in the time of the earlier Ptolemies; but instead of being the work of Hebrew scholars from Jerusalem, it exhibits the forms and phrases of the Macedonian Greek prevalent in Alexandria,² with a plentiful sprinkling of Egyptian words. The internal evidence, also, is against the entire version being composed at one time. The Pentateuch is more perfectly rendered than the later books; and the probability is that the "Law" and the "Prophets" were translated at different times, as they were required for the use of the Alexandrian synagogues. The Jews lost their familiarity with the ancient Hebrew during the captivity, and after their

¹ *Connection of Old and New Test.*, Anno 277 B.C.

² *Smith's Bib. Dict.*, iii. 1205.

return the Holy Scriptures were explained in the synagogue in their vernacular Chaldee or Aramaic.¹ For this purpose the Targums (or interpretations) were composed. The Jews at Alexandria, being still less familiar with Hebrew, would require a translation in their own common Greek, and this was accordingly executed at an early date. The "Law" being then the only portion read in the synagogue, the version was probably limited to the Pentateuch; this was the book which Demetrius placed in the library of Philadelphus. In the time of the Maccabees the scarcity of copies of the Law occasioned the Prophets to be read instead, and then they also would be translated. This was not effected at Alexandria till the time of Onias the priest, as appears from Isaiah xix. 18, where the Hebrew "city of destruction" is rendered in the Greek "city of righteousness," in honour of the temple then built at Onion.

The value of the Septuagint does not depend on the fable to which it owes its name. Lower Egypt had long contained a considerable number of Jewish settlers, and the privileges enjoyed in Alexandria attracted large bodies to that celebrated emporium of trade and learning. They met the Greeks with equal rights in the municipal assembly; their rabbis disputed with the philosophers in the schools; and their merchants already evinced that extraordinary talent for commerce, which has since distinguished them in all the cities of Asia and Europe. The Scriptures of such a people, though little noticed by the Greek authors, must have exercised a considerable influence on public opinion. They diffused clearer views of the Divine Being and His

¹ Nehem. viii. 7, 8.

relations to mankind, which were the great subjects of philosophical speculation. By so elevating the low views of the Pagan world, they assisted to prepare the highway of the gospel, when the day of their visitation should arrive. With ourselves the authority of the Septuagint is derived from the sanction of our blessed Saviour and His inspired apostles. That it was never an inspired or perfect translation may be inferred with certainty from their occasionally supplying another rendering; but its general accuracy is no less clearly established by their general use of it. The passages actually quoted in the New Testament have of course the guarantee of its own sacred authority.

Though Philadelphus was a lover of peace, he was engaged in hostilities with his half-brother Magas (his mother's son by her first husband), whom he had appointed viceroy in Cyrene. The ungrateful prince revolted against his benefactor, and set up an independent royalty. On the other side, also, Egypt was troubled by the efforts made by the kings of Asia, who had removed their capital from Babylon to Antioch (B.C. 301), to possess themselves of Cælo-Syria. Antiochus II., succeeding his father B.C. 261, fought with all his might for this object against Philadelphus.

Both wars were eventually terminated, without loss of territory, by the marriage of Ptolemy's son with the daughter of the new king of Cyrene, and of his daughter with the Syrian monarch. The princesses were both named Berenice, and both possessed that personal beauty which distinguished the Macedonian families, and occasioned their daughters to be sought in marriage by all the leading princes of the age. The

advantage of an alliance with his formidable neighbour induced Philadelphus to overlook his daughter's danger in becoming the wife of Antiochus, who repudiated his queen Laodice and her sons to receive his new consort. This disastrous union had been shadowed out by the prophet: the "king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power;"¹ in fact, the union proved fatal both to herself and the king.

Philadelphus appears to have been the first of the eastern powers to recognise the rising fortunes of Rome. He sent ambassadors to desire their friendship, though without relinquishing his amicable relations with the Carthaginians; and the senate, proud of his alliance, returned the courtesy by an embassy in the year B.C. 275. This was perhaps the first occasion of a Roman foot touching the soil, where Rome was to be so long supreme.

The ambassadors beheld in Alexandria a city far exceeding their own in grandeur, and without doubt the most magnificent in the world. The Pharos was now joined to the mainland by a causeway or mole, called the Heptastadium, which was flanked on both sides with docks, quays, and splendid buildings. The harbours to right and left communicated by two arched openings in the causeway. The western division, called the port of Eunostus, contained the basin of Rhacotis, with the arsenal and granaries on either side: this basin was the mouth of the ship canal that led into the Mareotic Lake. Further west was the Necropolis, running for two miles along the coast. From this point to the eastern or Canopic gate a broad straight street traversed the city, presenting a constant succession

¹ Dan. xi. 6.

of temples and splendid mansions. It was crossed by another, through which might be seen the shipping in the lake at one end and in the sea at the other. The hippodrome, or circus for chariot races, was outside the Canopic gate. The great harbour, appropriated to merchant shipping, lay to the east of the Heptastadium. The entrance was between the promontory of Lochias and the north-eastern point of the Pharos.

Off this point was an isolated rock bearing the same name, on which stood the Tower, or lighthouse, renowned as one of the seven wonders of the world. It was a square building of white marble, erected or completed by Philadelphus, who supplanted the name of Hephæstion by a new dedication to his own parents. It was inscribed "King Ptolemy to the Saviour gods, for the benefit of those who pass by sea;" but the architect traced his employer's name in plaster, and engraved his own on the stone beneath; so that in after times, when the plaster fell away, Sostratus of Cnidus, the son of Dexiphanes, was seen usurping the founder's place. This stupendous work is said to have cost 800 talents, which, computed at the lowest standard of Alexandria, amount to nearly £300,000.

Near Cape Lochias was the closed or Royal port, conducting to the quarter called Bruchion, in which stood the museum, the king's palace, and the *soma* or royal mausoleum, where Philadelphus deposited the golden coffin of Alexander and the mummy of his father Ptolemy. The artificial mound which sustained the temple of Pan rose like a sugar-loaf in the midst of the town, and was encircled by a spiral ascent conducting to a view of the entire city.

The buildings were so sumptuous that architectural magnificence came to be called the Philadel-

phian style. The king built a temple to his parents, where their statues of ivory and gold were worshipped, like ancient Pharaohs, by the title of the "gods Ptolemy and Berenice, saviours." To his wife and sister Arsinoë,¹ out of affection to whom he had adopted the name of Philadelphus (sister loving), he dedicated another temple, with a golden sanctuary containing a statue of topaz four cubits in height. It was designed to construct a dome of loadstone, under which the queen's image in steel was to hover in mid air, suspended by the equal attraction from every part. In front of this temple was an obelisk, originally intended for Nectanebus, but left in the quarry without inscription: it was now brought to Alexandria, from whence Maximus the prefect afterwards sent it to Rome, where it still graces the Vatican.

Philadelphus further showed his affection by building the city Arsinoë, at the head of the Red Sea, some forty miles north of Suez.² He changed the name of Cosseir to Philotera, in memory of another sister; and two hundred miles farther south made a new port with the name of his mother, Berenice. To this place, which was nearly in the same latitude with

¹ The Ptolemies stained their glory by copying these incestuous unions from the Egyptians, to whom they were recommended by the example of their gods Isis and Osiris. The king had been previously married to another Arsinoë, daughter of Lysimachus king of Thrace, and his sister to Lysimachus himself. After his death she became the wife of her half-brother Ceraunus, king of Macedonia, and she now ascended a third of the four Macedonian thrones by marrying her own brother. She was deified with him by the name of the "brother gods," but having no children, the throne descended to the issue of her husband's previous marriage.

² The water has receded that distance, and left the site of Arsinoë buried in sand. This alteration seems to be foretold by the prophet, when he says, "the Lord shall destroy *the tongue* of the Egyptian sea," Isa. xi. 15.

Syene, a road was cut through the desert from Coptos ; this traffic so altered the character of the interior that Theocritus celebrates it as one of the glories of Philadelphus that he had rendered Upper Egypt safe to the Greek traveller.¹

The forests of Lebanon enabled the king to maintain a powerful fleet in either sea. His army consisted of 200,000 foot, and 40,000 horse, with 300 elephants, and 2000 armed chariots. Money was never spared to augment his treasures of art and literature ; while his court displayed, on the grandest scale, the regal state which his father's martial simplicity eschewed. Yet, at the death of Philadelphus, the treasury contained the enormous sum of 740,000 talents, equaling in our currency two, or perhaps three, hundred millions of money.

Philadelphus was succeeded after a reign of thirty-eight years by a third Ptolemy, surnamed Euergetes, "benefactor ;" a title which his great reputation induced so many princes, of more doubtful pretension, to assume, that it became a common appellation of despots.² He was the eldest son of Philadelphus and his first queen Arsinoë. His sister Berenice had been wedded to Antiochus, king of Asia, on the peace lately made between the two kingdoms ; but no sooner was her father dead, than Laodice prevailed on Antiochus to restore her to his palace, and then caused him to be poisoned. The throne was seized by her eldest son Seleucus, who put Berenice and her child to death, thus fulfilling to the letter, the prophetic language of Daniel.³ Her brother resented the barbarous act by marching to Babylon, and capturing the capital Seleucia, with a large part of Asia Minor.

¹ *Theoc. Id.*, xv. 48. ² Luke xxii. 25. ³ Dan. xi. 6.

Thus, "a branch of her roots came with an army and entered into the fortress of the king of the north, and prevailed."¹ On his return, he visited the temple at Jerusalem, and offered gifts and thanksgivings for his victories.

During this expedition, queen Berenice, also called Cleopatra, whom the Alexandrian poets ranked with Venus and the Graces, made a vow to cut off her beautiful hair, and hang it up in the temple to the gods, if her husband returned in safety. Her fulfilment of this obligation was celebrated by all the literary world; and Conon, the astronomer, gave the name of "Berenice's Hair" to a new constellation which is familiar to hundreds who never heard of the queen of Egypt or her poetical flatterers.

In this expedition, the king further fulfilled the prophecy² by recovering a considerable number of images and sacred vessels, of which Cambyses had despoiled the Egyptian temples three hundred years before. Their restoration diffused the greatest joy among the priests and people of Upper Egypt, and it was on this occasion that a grateful country saluted their monarch by the name of Euergetes. "So the king of the south came into his kingdom, and returned to his own land."³ He was the first native-born Ptolemy, and the only one known to have visited the capital of native idolatry. The great temple at Karnak again saw a Pharaoh within its walls; his figure is sculptured in a Greek dress, sacrificing to his parents, the "brother gods." Temples were raised by him in the Great Oasis, at Esne, and at Canopus. In some of the inscriptions his consort is called "wife and sister," after the native usage, though, being the

¹ Dan. xi. 7.

² Dan. xi. 8.

³ Dan. xi. 9.

daughter of Magas, she was only his cousin by the half-blood.

These tokens of regard to the ancient religion greatly augmented the king's popularity with his native subjects; they were delighted beyond measure when, like another Amunoph or Rameses, he undertook an expedition into Ethiopia, to subdue the ancient tributaries of the south. Euergetes easily vanquished the wild tribes as far as the mountains of Abyssinia, and set up a marble chair at Adule, within the Straits of Babelmandel, to commemorate his conquests. This was the most southerly point ever reached by an army from Egypt, but it was too distant to become incorporated in the kingdom. Two centuries later, Strabo found the monument an unknown wonder, and was told it was erected by the great Sesostris.

The Egyptian kingdom was now larger and more powerful than any empire of the time. Extending from the Hellespont to the Euphrates, and southward to the mouth of the Red Sea, it comprehended Egypt and Cyrene, with the islands of Cyprus and Rhodes, Ethiopia, Arabia, Phœnicia, Judæa, Cœlo-Syria and part of Upper Syria, with the coast of Asia Minor from Pamphylia to Troy. Even across the Hellespont, some of the maritime states voluntarily accepted the protection of the greatest naval power of the age. Towards the end of this reign a dispute with the high priest shows the nature of the relations with Jerusalem. Onias, son of Simon the Just,¹ had withheld the annual tribute of twenty talents. Euergetes sending an officer to enforce its payment, the high

¹ Jaddua was succeeded by his son, Onias I. (circ. B.C. 300). He was followed by his son, Simon the Just, who closes the list of "famous men" commemorated by the author of *Ecclesiasticus* (1. i.)

priest placed the affair in the hands of his nephew Joseph, who repaired to Alexandria. There he not only procured a remission of this offensive tax, but obtained a lease to himself of the royal revenues in Judæa, Samaria, Cœlo-Syria, and Phœnicia.¹ This privilege was retained till the provinces were lost to Antiochus, and the disputes between his family and the high priest greatly conduced to the final subjugation of the holy city.

The enlightened policy of the Ptolemies secured to every people a general observance of their laws and religious usages. Their sufferings arose from the low state of morals, and the continual march of desolating armies. The first was a universal curse before the gospel came to regenerate mankind; and from the latter Egypt was long singularly free. Her misfortunes were due, in fact, to too much indulgence. An over-tendency to native superstition gradually corrupted the Macedonian conquerors, and lowered their administration to the base standard of the Pharaohs. The seeds of this evil, planted under Euergetes, developed themselves in the vice and luxury of his successors, and resulted in the utter destruction of the magnificent empire of the Ptolemies.

Among the men of letters who now graced the Museum of Alexandria were Aristophanes the grammarian, who invented or revived the Greek accents, Eratosthenes of Cyrene, who discovered the shape of the earth, and the means of determining a place by its latitude, Conon the great astronomer, and Apollonius of Perga, the discoverer of conic sections. Eratosthenes was a man of so much learning, that he was called a second Plato; the wits spoke of him as

¹ Joseph. *Jud. Ant.*, xii. 4.

Beta, or *number two*.¹ He was employed to correct the errors of Manetho, by writing a new history of the Pharaohs; but as neither ever imparted to the Greeks the knowledge of the hieroglyphics, still familiarly used in the temples, it must be concluded that those inscriptions never really contained any history, or chronology, which could bear the light of criticism. The systems since elaborated from their relics are indebted to the imagination, far more than the researches, of Egyptologists.

The year in which Euergetes died [B.C. 222] was rendered memorable by the fall of the Colossus of Rhodes, a huge brazen statue of Apollo (the sun-god) which was accounted one of the seven wonders of the world. It stood at the mouth of the harbour, with one foot on either side, the ships sailing beneath as they entered. Hence the comparison of Shakespeare—

“Why man! he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a colossus; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs.”²

The statue, being 105 feet high, could hardly have exceeded fifty in the stride; we infer that it was not the main entrance of the harbour, but the inner basin appropriated to the ships of war, which it surmounted. The colossus was hollow, and contained a winding stair ascending to a look-out in the head. It was designed by Chares of Lindus, who was twelve years in completing it. Every finger was as large as an ordinary statue, and the thumb could scarcely be clasped with both arms. These gigantic statues, the offspring of ancient Egyptian art, are always found in

¹ Sharpe's *History of Egypt*, i. 332.

² *Julius Cæsar*, act i., scene 2.

connexion with the worship of the sun, which lay at the bottom of Egyptian idolatry. It was erected in the year B.C. 288; and, after standing sixty-six years, was broken off at the knees by an earthquake, which laid the city walls in the dust. The Rhodians, sending ambassadors to all the states of Greek origin to solicit aid for its re-erection, collected above five times the amount required; but then discovering that the Delphic oracle had forbidden the intended restoration, they converted the money to their own use, and left the image where it fell. Nearly nine hundred years later a Saracen caliph sold the brass to the Jews, when it was found to be still 720,000 pounds in weight.

To those who delighted in omens, the fall of this great image might have portended the approaching dissolution of the power under which it was erected. The three first Ptolemies exhausted the fortunes and the virtues of their family. In the two next centuries their descendants were engaged in undoing their work, dissolving the empire, and reducing their country to a Roman province.

The fourth Ptolemy began his reign by putting his mother and brother to death, on a charge of poisoning his father—a deed which was believed to have been perpetrated by himself. In order further to avert the odium of his crime, he assumed the designation of *Philopator*, or “father loving.” These murders involved the death of Cleomenes king of Sparta, who had found refuge in the court of Euergetes. For his strenuous protest against the bloody act he was committed to prison; and escaping thence headed an insurrection in the streets of Alexandria, but failing, he destroyed himself with his own dagger. Having secured the throne, the king gave himself up to the

most abominable vices of an eastern despot. The better portion of his Greek officers were so disgusted that Theodotus, an Ætolian, the governor of Cœlo-Syria, offered his province to Antiochus the Great, who had succeeded to the throne of Asia, and was beginning to repair the shattered state of his kingdom. This occasioned the wars described in the third book of Maccabees;—a work found in the Alexandrian Septuagint, though, not being translated into Latin, it has no place in the apocryphal writings of the western church.

The war with Antiochus was brought to a conclusion, after two years, by a great battle fought between the two kings at Raphia, a town between Gaza and the desert stream, called in Scripture “the river of Egypt,”¹ which formed the southern boundary of Palestine. The Egyptian army consisted of 70,000 foot, 5000 horse, and 73 elephants from Ethiopia: on the other side were 62,000 foot, 6000 horse, and 102 elephants of Asia. These unwieldy beasts, from the time that Alexander the Great encountered them on the other side of the Indus, formed a portion of every great army. Yet they were often more destructive to their own side than the enemy; for when wounded, or taken with a sudden panic, they would turn to the rear, and trample down everything in their way. Philopator was in some danger of such a reverse, on the present occasion, from the terror experienced by his elephants at the sight and smell of the larger beasts of India; but the difficulty was overcome.

¹ Gen. xv. 18; Isa. xxvii. 12. This river emptied itself into the Mediterranean at Rhinocorura, a port to the east of the great Serbonian marsh, famous for its trade with ancient Tyre. Its place is now occupied by a stream called El Arish.

The king, with his queen Arsinoe,¹ rode on horseback through the ranks, exhorting the soldiers to fight for their wives and children; and the result was the defeat of Antiochus, who fled with the loss of 10,000 killed, and 4000 taken prisoners. Philopator recovered the disputed provinces, and Egypt was preserved from the invasion and conquest that must have followed an opposite result.

As the Macedonian kings had no faith of their own, it is not surprising that Philopator, in proceeding to Jerusalem, should wish to present a thank-offering on the national altar. His gifts and sacrifices were accepted by the high priest;² but when he desired to pass beyond the court of the Gentiles, and, with the privilege of an Egyptian king, to enter the sanctuary and behold the god, he was informed that none but the sons of Aaron were admitted into the sacred building, and that the veil which covered the Holy of Holies could be passed only by the high priest once a year, on the great day of atonement. Indignant at a sanctity exceeding that of Egyptian temples, the king declared he was not bound by Jewish restrictions, and commanded the priests to lead on. His soldiers filling the courts, resistance appeared impossible. The streets rang with the cries and shrieks of the people, and all hands were lifted up to God to defend his holy habitation from pollution. On a sudden the king fell to the ground in a fit, "like a reed broken by the wind," and was carried away speechless and half dead.³

¹ Called Euridice by Justin, and Cleopatra by Livy. Arsinoe and Cleopatra were names constantly assumed by the queens of the Ptolemæan dynasty.

² Simon, son of Onias II.

³ 3 Macc. ii., where the prayer of Simon the high priest is re-

Philopator did not venture to repeat his attempt; but quitted Jerusalem, vowing vengeance on the whole race. On his return to Alexandria, he ordered a decree to be engraved on a pillar, at the gates of his palace, forbidding any one to enter who did not sacrifice to his gods. This puerile attempt at retaliation had the effect of depriving the Jews of all appeal to the crown, which in despotic countries is almost equivalent to outlawry. Next, he formally deprived them of the rank granted by Alexander in the city assembly, and reduced them to the condition of native Egyptians. Finally, he ordered them to attend and be enrolled in that class, receiving the customary badge of an ivy leaf tattooed on the forehead. This mark, which was borne by the king himself, procured him the nickname of *Gallus*, the title of the priests of Bacchus, who were similarly distinguished among the Greeks. It was, doubtless, an emblem of the Osirian idolatry, answering to the (so-called) *caste marks* of the Hindus, and strictly forbidden to the children of Israel.¹

Having issued these ordinances against the worshippers of Jehovah, the tyrant offered, to such as would sacrifice to the gods of Egypt, the continuance of their civil rights as Macedonians. Of the many thousands then in Alexandria only 300 embraced the condition. Enraged at this obstinacy, the king sent out orders to bring all the Jews in Egypt to Alexandria in chains, and confined them in the hippodrome, resolving to throw them to his elephants at a public spectacle. Twice the attendant crowds were disappointed of the

lated at length, and the event is described as the just judgment of the All-seeing God.

¹ Lev. xix. 28.

sight by the king's absence from intemperance; on the third day, the elephants having been maddened by wine, turned on the spectators instead of the victims, and destroyed great numbers of the people. The calamity was ascribed to the Divine interposition, and so frightened the tyrant that he rescinded his decrees, restored the Jews to their privileges, and delivered up the apostates to the sentence of the Levitical law.¹

These proceedings were followed by a native insurrection, in which the Jews apparently took part against their persecutor, since not less than 40,000 are said to have perished at this time. His own queen, notwithstanding her services at Raphia, in the most critical moment of his life, was the monster's next victim. At last, in the seventeenth year of his reign, a miserable death, occasioned by intemperance and debauchery, rejoiced Egypt, while it reduced the jesters, eunuchs, and courtesans who surrounded the throne to despair. A wild attempt was made to conceal the fact, but the joyful intelligence soon reached the populace of Alexandria. An angry mob rushed to the palace; the infant heir was secured, and the ministers and companions of his father's vices were driven out to perish under the clubs and stones of the people in the hippodrome.

A century had now elapsed from the foundation of the monarchy; and its vigour was plainly departed. The crimes of this reign undid the policy on which Lagus had rested his throne. The Greeks were enervated and alienated by the vices of the court; the Jews exasperated by a persecution of their faith; and two powerful kings were watching to effect the dismemberment of the empire.

¹ Deut. xiii. 6—11.

Antiochus and Philip of Macedon fell at once upon the foreign provinces. The former, entering Judæa, proclaimed a remission of tribute, and the exclusion of strangers from the temple. His offers were eagerly accepted, and the people, who had hitherto preferred the Egyptian alliance, threw themselves, with a short-sighted policy, into the hands of the Syrians. It was not long before they had to reflect with remorse that, by their own assistance, the direst enemy of their faith and worship "stood in the glorious land, which by his hand was to be consumed."¹ The catastrophe was delayed, and the throne of Egypt upheld, by the intervention of a new power; but from this time the shadow of another conqueror is thrown across the fortunes both of Egypt and Palestine, and the fall of the Ptolemies is begun.

¹ Dan. xi. 16.

CHAPTER III.

THE PTOLEMIES (*continued*).

Comparison with Mussulmans in India—Tribute—Religion—Confiscation—Decay of Population—Moral Degradation—Roman Alliance—Ptolemy V. (Epiphanes)—Rosetta Stone—Loss of Asia Minor—Military Tactics—Prophecies of Daniel—Ptolemy VI. (Philometor)—Antiochus Epiphanes—Disorders at Jerusalem—Plunder of the Temple—Seizure of Pelusium—Evacuation of Egypt—Desecration of the Temple and Altar—Maccabees—Feast of the Dedication—Death of Antiochus—Prophecies—Temple of Onion—Mixture of Religions—Death of Judas Maccabeus—And of Philometor—Ptolemy VII. (Physcon)—His Crimes—And Death.

THE position of the Macedonian kings in Egypt may be compared with that of the Great Moguls in India. Both were foreign conquerors, domiciled among a subjugated people, but remaining aliens to the last. Both kept possession by the sword, sustaining their numbers by a constant immigration of the dominant race. The government was administered for the benefit of the rulers rather than the ruled. The natives are heard of as occasional insurgents, but the history is that of their conquerors.

The comparison is, undoubtedly, greatly in favour of the Ptolemies. The Mussulman sway, even under the best rulers, was one of brute force ; barbarous, exacting, and intolerant. The Ptolemies, on the contrary, exercised a moderate and beneficial rule. Five million bushels of wheat, which formed the crown tribute under Philadelphus, was far from being oppressive to a country proverbially rich in agricultural produce. The commerce developed by Greek enterprise enriched the settlers without impoverishing the natives

It must be added that, by adopting the native religion, the Greek rulers spared the Egyptians the innumerable miseries endured by the Hindus from Moslem bigotry. In Egypt the natives were not only free to practise their ancestral worship, but were gratified by a lavish expenditure on its rites. Their temples were re-edified with a splendour exceeding the glory of the Pharaohs, and a taste to which native art never attained.

On the other hand, the prodigious sums of money, the astonishing luxury, the jewels and heaps of bullion, which figure in the accounts of the Alexandrian court, remind us too strongly of the treasuries of Delhi, and the means by which they were replenished. These gorgeous spoils are the sure trophies of an incessant war of confiscation. The spoil of a rich vizier or nawab was always motive enough with a Great Mogul, or the Grand Signor, to issue his death warrant; and the hoards of the Ptolemies were doubtless fed by similar transfers of wealth, which some unscrupulous nomarch had wrung from a helpless people. Such a government, however enlightened the individual ruler, tends of necessity to the impoverishment of the chiefs, and the decay of the population. The remains of cities, found in the jungles of India, attest that under Mussulman rule the Hindu population was unable to hold its own against the beasts of the field; and with all the well-known fruitfulness of the Egyptian race, the free population, which numbered six millions in the reign of the first Ptolemy, had fallen to half that number before his dynasty was extinct.¹

A government of this description is still more injurious to the morals of the subject race. The

¹ Diod. Sic., i. 31, xvii. 52.

Hindus, whom Alexander the Great observed to be remarkable for veracity, became notorious for universal disregard of truth under the iron rule of Mohammedan despotism. The Egyptians, it may be feared, never stood high in the scale of morals, and three centuries of Persian tyranny had passed over their heads when the Macedonian power began. To "act the Egyptian," was a Greek proverb for deceit and malice; and Philadelphus was complimented by the Doric poet for having enabled a traveller to penetrate the interior without fear of the robbers, who, like the dacoits of India, or the brigands of papal Italy, infested the roads. But falsehood and robbery are the natural weapons of an enslaved population; and if the Ptolemies found the Egyptians already expert in their use, their government was not likely to wean them to nobler pursuits.

The time was now come when the parallel was to be completed by the appearance of a third power in the field, under whom the foreign monarchy, and the subjugated population, were to pass into a province of another empire. The Romans came to Alexandria with a purpose very different from that of the British merchants in India. But the intervention of each had the effect of rendering the princes they supported regardless of their own subjects, in comparison with foreign favour; both resulted in the expulsion of their puppets, and the re-organization of the country under strangers.

The death of Philopator was followed three years after by the defeat of Hannibal at Zama [B.C. 202], and the Roman senate sent ambassadors to Alexandria to announce the victorious conclusion of the second Punic war. The timid statesmen

who had charge of the infant king, instantly implored the Republic to undertake the guardianship, and prevent the dismemberment of the empire. This was an invitation which Rome, republican, imperial, or papal, has seldom declined. The kings of Syria and Macedon were commanded to desist from their encroachments; but the former offering to give back the provinces he had seized, in dowry with his daughter Cleopatra, he was permitted to retain possession till the king of Egypt was of an age to espouse her.

Ptolemy V. having attained his fourteenth year, was crowned with the usual pompous ceremonial which the Greeks called *anaclæteria*. On this occasion the priests issued the decree which is engraved on the Rosetta stone, and has proved the key to our knowledge of the hieroglyphics, and religion of Ancient Egypt.¹ The king is there styled "Ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt, son of the gods Philopatores, approved by Phthah, the living image of Amun, son of the Sun (Ra), Ptolemy immortal, god *Epiphanes* most gracious." The decree ordains that his statue shall be worshipped in every temple, and be carried in procession with the other gods of the country; plainly showing how large a part of the Egyptian idolatry consisted in the deification of the kings. It was engraved in the sacred, common, and Greek letters, and this trilingual inscription enabled Dr. Young, and after him Champollion, followed by a new school of zealous antiquarians, to recover the long lost secret of the hieroglyphic character, and decipher the inscriptions on the ruined monuments. The Greek authors who had them before their eyes at a time when every priest could have interpreted them

¹ *Ancient Egypt*, Appendix.

with certainty, never cared to learn or to record what they learned, on subjects which now excite and baffle the curiosity of the inquiring world. May it not be inferred that the Alexandrians, knowing better than we do the value of those priestly legends, thought them not worthy to be compared with Greek history? Much less should Christians allow the Scriptures of Divine truth to be disturbed by imaginations derived from the same dubious and polluted sources.

At eighteen years of age Ptolemy Epiphanes claimed and received his bride. The provinces promised as her dower were in form, perhaps, handed over to his officers, but the king of Syria never really surrendered his hold; and as Cleopatra counselled her husband for his own good, instead of bringing him, as her father hoped,¹ into his war against the Romans, the hostilities can hardly be said to have intermitted. The possessions of Asia Minor were permanently lost to Egypt. The Romans wrested them from Antiochus, and confined him to the other side of the Taurus; but they restored to the Greek cities their liberty, and bestowing the provinces of Caria and Lycia on the Rhodians, gave the rest to Eumenes, king of Pergamus.

These wars established the superiority of Roman arms and tactics over the Greek phalanx, which had hitherto decided the fortune of battles. The phalanx was a body of spearmen, so closely packed that each man covered but a single square yard. The column was sixteen deep; and their spears being seven yards long, when the ranks came to the charge, the points of the fifth were a yard in advance of the front. It was impregnable while on the defensive, but in advance or retreat it was apt to become dis-

¹ Dan. xi. 17.

ordered ; open country, therefore, was requisite to its efficiency ; forests, marshes, and rivers were impediments which could hardly be surmounted without breaking. The Romans, on the contrary, after improving their military knowledge in the wars with Hannibal (one of the greatest generals of any age), knew how to make the most both of time and ground. They fought with swords and javelins in open ranks, having a clear yard on each side of every man, that is, four square yards to each ; by loosening their ranks and widening their front they could escape the bristling mass of spear points, and fall on the flank and rear of the phalanx. The Romans were at this time, what the Macedonians had once been, a homogeneous force, animated by the same martial ardour throughout, and used to acts of individual heroism ; whereas the armies opposed to them consisted of mercenaries, or trained natives, who fought well so long as they expected success, but had no objection to change sides when fortune had declared for another master.

Soon after his defeat by the Romans,¹ Antiochus the Great was slain in an attack on the temple of Jupiter Belus, at Elymais in Persia ; he “stumbled and fell, and was not found.”² His career was very distinctly foreshadowed to the prophet by the angel sent to “make him understand what should befall his people in the latter days.”³ This war with Philopator, and his defeat at Raphia ;⁴ the resumption of it at his death ; the league made against Epiphanes ;⁵ and the complicity of the prophet’s own people the Jews,⁶ are

¹ Dan. xi. 18, B.C. 187.

³ Dan. x. 14.

⁵ Dan. xi. 13.

² Dan. xi. 19.

⁴ Dan. xi. 10—12.

⁶ Dan. xi. 14.

all predicted. Then we see Antiochus reconquering Palestine,¹ and consuming its resource in the siege of Jerusalem. The marriage of Cleopatra, whom he wished to "corrupt" to his interests in preference to her husband's,² was followed by his conquest of the Greek islands and maritime states.³ Then came his defeat by Lucius Scipio the Roman consul, and his compulsory retreat to his own land, where he finally fell.⁴ All were foretold with surprising minuteness, and fell out in exact accordance with the prophecy.

In the same year, Cleopatra bore Epiphanes a son, and the congratulations offered by the chiefs of Cœlo-Syria on the occasion show that the province was now formally under the crown of Egypt. Antiochus had stipulated for half its revenues during his lifetime, and probably he retained the collection in order to pay himself first. The heavy tribute laid upon him by the Romans renders it doubtful whether any portion in fact reached the Alexandrian exchequer. Seleucus, his son and successor, predicted as "a raiser of taxes,"⁵ is known for little else than his efforts to meet these demands; and his necessities would certainly induce him to retain what he could lay his hands upon. Epiphanes was in no condition to make war. He was a weak and cruel prince, inglorious abroad and distrusted at home. Two native insurrections, in which he vented his rancour on the leaders by tying them to his chariot wheels, and dragging them round the walls of the city, prepared his subjects to hear without regret that he had at last been taken off by poison, while still only talking of enforcing his rights in Syria. His son, another

¹ Dan. xi. 15, 16.² Dan. xi. 17.³ Dan. xi. 18.⁴ Dan. xi. 19.⁵ Dan. xi. 20.

minor of seven years of age, ascended the throne under the regency of Cleopatra, and bore the suitable appellation of Philometor, "mother-loying."

It was of little use for the queen to make demands on her brother which he was in no condition to comply with. The Syrian kingdom was still drained to pay the Roman tribute of 1000 talents. This exaction probably gave occasion to Heliodorus' desperate expedient of plundering the temple at Jerusalem, of which an account is given in the Second Book of Maccabees.¹ Soon after Seleucus was secretly poisoned by the same officer, being "destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle."² Demetrius his son being absent at Rome, Heliodorus attempted to usurp the throne, which was also claimed for Cleopatra; but it passed to her younger brother Antiochus, through the influence of the king of Pergamus and his brother Attalus. Their assistance was gained by "flatteries"³ and promises which he never fulfilled; for though assuming the title of "illustrious," Antiochus is far more accurately described in the prophet's expression, "a vile person." His character was in fact so despicable that many considered him actually out of his mind, and his title of Epiphanes was parodied into *Epimanes*, the "madman."

On the death of his mother, the young king of Egypt demanded possession of his Cœlo-Syrian provinces; but Antiochus boldly affirmed his father had never yielded them, contending moreover that by the original partition of Alexander's empire they belonged to the Syrian kingdom. Being threatened with hostilities, he anticipated the war by marching upon Pelusium, where he routed the Egyptian forces, and

¹ 2 Macc. iii.

² Dan. xi. 20.

³ Dan. xi. 21.

proceeding to Memphis became master of the king's person. His power "overflowed" the kingdom like an inundation,¹ and whether as captor or guardian he readily procured the acquiescence of his feeble nephew. "Both these king's hearts were to do mischief, they spoke lies to each other at one table."² When the uncle was at last induced to retire, he carried with him "great riches" from the spoil of Egypt,³ and finally seized the island of Cyprus as his prize.

From Egypt Antiochus proceeded to Jerusalem, where his rule had already been productive of fatal results. The high priesthood, while still occupied by Onias III.,⁴ was sold to his brother Joshua, who Grecised his name into Jason. The Greek dress, sports, and appellations, were freely indulged in. The temple service was neglected, and a deputation of Jewish youths actually carried offerings from the house of the Lord to the festival of Hercules at Tyre.⁵ Jason reaped the reward of his impiety by being in turn replaced by his brother Onias, who bought the sacred office of Antiochus for 300 talents of gold. To pay the money, he sold the vessels of the sanctuary, which becoming known, was the occasion of some bloody riots.

A rumour being spread that Antiochus was dead, Jason made an unsuccessful effort to recover the pontificate, but the king, "his heart being against the holy covenant,"⁶ vowed in a fury to suppress the whole nation with their troublesome religion. Forcing his way into the city at the head of his troops, he

¹ Dan. xi. 25, 26.

² Dan. xi. 27.

³ Dan. xi. 28, 43; 1 Macc. i. 19.

⁴ Son of Simon II., son of Onias II.

⁵ 2 Macc. iv. 7.

⁶ Dan. xi. 28.

ordered an indiscriminate massacre of Ptolemy's friends,¹ during three days, and went himself to plunder the temple. Menelaus conducted him into the sanctuary, where he took the golden altar, the candlestick, and the sacred vessels, with other treasures to the value of 1800 talents of gold. With this booty he departed, carrying off a large train of captives, and having sacrificed a sow on the great altar.²

The state of Egypt diverted his wrath for a while. The Alexandrians resenting the submission of Philometor, raised his younger brother to the throne, by the title of Ptolemy Euergetes II., and sent to Rome to solicit his recognition. This gave Antiochus an excuse for a third expedition into Egypt, under pretence of restoring the deposed king. He took the opportunity to seize Pelusium for himself, and having thus secured the key of Egypt, returned to Antioch. Philometor, warned by this act of rapacity, came to an accommodation with his brother; they agreed to reign as joint-sovereigns, and solicit all the states of Greece against Antiochus. The latter thereupon returned in a fury, mastered Memphis, and was marching on Alexandria with a determination to subdue the whole kingdom, when he was met, four miles from the city, by the ambassadors of the Roman Republic. They imperiously ordered him to retire and evacuate Egypt. Drawing a circle round him on the sand with the point of a staff, Caius Popilius Lena declared that if the king crossed that line before promising compliance, it would be a declaration of war against Rome. The tribute enforced on his father had expired with his

¹ According to 2 Macc. v. 14, 80,000 persons were slain, and as many taken prisoners. Josephus adds that they were of Ptolemy's part (*Bell. Jud.*, i. 1).

² 1 Macc. i. 20; 2 Macc. v. 11; *Joseph. Ant.*, xii. v.

accession, and the senate was no longer interested in filling the Syrian exchequer. There was no mistaking this outspoken menace, and the tyrant had no option but to obey. "The ships of Chittim had come against him;" he returned, "grieved, and having indignation against the holy covenant,"¹ to vent his wrath upon the hapless Jews.

An army under Apollonius gained admittance to Jerusalem, by the old stratagem of making the attack on the sabbath, when no one would stir in the defence. Again there was an indiscriminate massacre. The city was fired, and the walls demolished; after which a fortress was raised in the city of David to command the desecrated temple. The worshippers being afraid to approach, the sacrifices ceased, and the sanctuary was deserted for three years and a half. An idolatrous altar was erected, and sacrifices offered to Jupiter Olympius. "The abomination that maketh desolate" was set in the holy place,² and the horrified Jews fled into the wilderness to hide themselves in thickets and caves: among these fugitives was Judas Maccabæus, the future champion and restorer of his nation.³

The persecution thus commenced was extended throughout the East, by a decree issued from Antioch that no gods but the king's should be worshipped in any part of his dominions. The pagans obeyed the order with their accustomed servility; the Samaritans, who in prosperous times claimed to be descendants of Jacob,⁴ now petitioned to be recognised as Sidonians, and their temple on Mount Gerizim, hitherto consecrated (like that at Jerusalem) to "a God

¹ Dan. xi. 30.

² Dan. xi. 31; Matt. xxiv. 15.

³ 1 Macc. i., 2 Macc. vi., *Jos. Ant.* xiii. 8.

⁴ John iv. 12.

without a name,"¹ was dedicated to Jupiter protector of foreigners. The Mosaic rites were rigorously interdicted, and officers sent into every village to compel the Jews to sacrifice to idols. Many were driven to apostatise, and the king was thus enabled to "have intelligence with them that forsook the holy covenant."²

In this trying period, Mattathias the Asmonean, a priest of the course of Joarib,³ flew to arms against the persecutor. Observing the inhuman custom of the heathen to make their attacks on the sabbath day, when the Jews thought it wrong to resist, he published a decree that it was lawful to defend their lives in case of necessity; and having got a little army together, he began to pull down the idols, and restore the true worship. The work was carried on after him by his son Judas, who displayed on his standard the words of Moses, *Mi Camo-ka Baalim Jehovah*, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?"⁴ From the initial letters of these words was framed the name *Macabi*, given to him and to all who imitated his zeal and endurance for the Lord God of Israel.⁵ Judas defeated the enemy in a succession of battles, which compelled the Syrians to acknowledge that the Lord still fought for Israel.⁶

After driving the king's forces out of the country, he recovered Jerusalem, and found the altar still bearing the profane idol, the temple gates in ashes,

¹ See Acts xvii. 23.

² Dan. xi. 30.

³ 1 Macc. ii., 1 Chron. xxiv. 7. The family name Asmonean was derived from Chasmon, the great grandfather of Mattathias.

⁴ Ex. xv. 11.

⁵ According to another etymology, *Maccabi* signifies "hammer," and was given to Judas for a surname, as *Martel* was to the French king.—*Smith's Bib. Dict.*, ii. 164.

⁶ Josh. x. 14.

and the sanctuary open and deserted. The whole precincts were overgrown with weeds and shrubs, like a forest. Judas cleared the courts, built a new altar, and restored the true worship as before; making new vessels out of his spoils, in lieu of those which Antiochus had carried away. The dedication was solemnized at the winter solstice of the year B.C. 165, three years and a half after the desecration by Apollonius. The feast was appointed to be observed as an annual solemnity, and in due time was attended by the Son of God himself in human nature.¹

Antiochus, on receiving this intelligence in Media, hastened back with the determination of converting Jerusalem into the sepulchre of the nation; but the hand of God smote him on the road. He was obliged to quit his chariot for a litter, and that for a bed in a town on the confines of Babylonia. Here, after languishing in great torture, haunted by the spectres of many crimes, he "came to his end, and there was none to help him."² His death was so remarkable, that Polybius the heathen historian ascribes it to the vengeance of Diana, whose temple he had plundered in Persia; but Josephus and the two Books of Maccabees make us acquainted with a sacrilege against the true God which might well have provoked an anticipation of Herod's doom.³

This great oppressor of the people of God under the Jewish economy was a type of Antichrist, the predicted destroyer of the evangelical church: the prophecies relating to him have therefore a twofold interpretation. The eleventh chapter of Daniel plainly foretells the history down to the

¹ John x. 22.

² Dan. xi. 45.

³ Acts xii. 21—23.

thirtieth verse; after that it is interpreted by some in like manner of the subsequent history of this king. Others conceive that a transition is here made from the Greek to the Roman kingdom, and that all which follows is to be understood of later times, and the final apostacy yet to be revealed. Perhaps the best view is that of Jerome, briefly explained by Dean Prideaux: "The truth of the matter seems to be this, that as much of these prophecies as relate to the wars of the king of the north and the king of the south, that is, of the king of Syria and the king of Egypt, was wholly and ultimately fulfilled in those wars; but as much of these prophecies as related to the profanation and persecution which Antiochus Epiphanes brought upon the Jewish church was all *typically* fulfilled in them; but they were to have their ultimate and thorough completion only in those profanations and persecutions which Antichrist was to bring upon the church of Christ in after times." ¹ Accordingly he explains the "taking away of the daily sacrifice, and the abomination that maketh desolate," Dan. xi. 31, with "the time, times, and an half" in xii. 7, *primarily* of the three years and a half in which the temple lay polluted and deserted before the dedication of Judas Maccabæus; and *typically* of the twelve hundred and sixty days (or years) in Rev. xi. 3; xii. 6, at the expiry of which the Christian church is to be cleansed from the sacrilege of Antichrist. It will be observed

¹ *Old and New Testament connected*, An. 164. The criticisms, by which some modern rationalists seek to impugn the date and authenticity of these prophecies, were anticipated by Porphyry, the bitter enemy of Christianity in the third century; and, like most of the present "advanced Biblical criticism," have long ago been explored and refuted.

that the phrase "abomination of desolation" is applied by Christ himself to the then approaching pollution of the temple by the Roman legions;¹ consequently this was one distinct stage in the typical prophecy. Such predictions admit of successive cycles of fulfilment, each approaching nearer to "the end of all things;" but on these topics the reader must be referred to the works especially dedicated to their elucidation.

Meantime the two Ptolemies being again at variance, the elder fled to Rome to seek protection of the republic. At the same time Demetrius, son of Seleucus and rightful heir of Syria, visited the imperial city, vainly imploring the like assistance to recover the throne of his father. The proud republic made and unmade kings at her pleasure. Orders were issued to divide Egypt, the elder Ptolemy to reign in Alexandria and the younger in Cyrene. Euergetes, known in history by the less flattering appellation of *Physcon* (the fat), remonstrated against the unequal partition, and succeeded in having Cyprus added to his share. On this occasion, Plutarch says he made an offer of marriage to Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus, and the widowed mother of the Gracchi; but the Roman matron refused to quit her country and her children to reign as a queen in Africa. She had a happy escape, for *Physcon's* vices were of such a dye that his self-laudatory title of "benefactor" was commonly converted into *Kakergetes*, "the evil-doer." The state of Cyrene rose in rebellion against him, and he was only replaced on the throne by his injured brother; who refused, however, to subject Cyprus to his rule.

¹ Matt. xxiv. 15.

During the troubles in Judea, a large number of Jews took refuge in Egypt, where their settlements were daily increasing in size and importance. Among the fugitives was Onias, son of the high priest Onias III.,¹ whom Philometor received with the distinction due to the head of his party in Palestine. The king granted him a town and district in the nome of Heliopolis, which, according to Manetho, was the birthplace of Moses, or as he calls him Osarsiph.² The ancient Egyptian name of this city was On, the temple or house of the Sun, the third great deity of Lower Egypt.³ Raamses⁴ with Bethshemesh in Hebrew,⁵ and Heliopolis in Greek, have the same signification. This district contained a ruined temple to Pasht⁶ (Diana), at a place called Bubastis or Leontopolis, 180 furlongs distant from Memphis.⁷ Here Onias desired the king's permission to build a temple to the true God, after the model of that at Jerusalem, intending to transfer the priesthood, from which he was excluded at Jerusalem, to his Hellenist countrymen in Egypt. He justified his design from the passage in Isaiah, "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts: one shall be called

¹ *Jos. Ant.* xiii. 3, but in *Jud. Bell.* vii. 10, he calls him a son of Simon.

² *i.e.* "Saved by Osiris," who was supposed to dwell in the Nile. See *Ancient Egypt*, p. 9.

³ *Ancient Egypt*, p. 136.

⁴ *Ex.* i. 11.

⁵ *Jer.* xliii. 13.

⁶ *Ancient Egypt*, p. 143.

⁷ *Jos. Ant.* xiii. 3, *Jud. Bell.* vii. 10. Sir Gardner Wilkinson thinks he has discovered the site at Shibbeen, twelve miles north of Heliopolis. Mr. Poole calls it a blunder in Josephus to confound it with Leontopolis, which was the capital of another nome (*Bib. Dict.* ii. 633). Possibly, as Pasht was figured with a lion's head, her temple may have borne the same also, and thence the name.

The city of destruction. In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD.”¹ The word here rightly rendered “destruction” differs only by one letter (*ch* for *h*) from a word which would signify “the *sun*,” and the margin of the English version gives the alternative reading, “city of the sun,” which in Greek is Heliopolis.² Ptolemy expressed his surprise that the God of Israel should be pleased with a temple in a place so unclean and full of animals sacred to idols; but yielding to the prophecy alleged by Onias, he gave him the ground, and endowed the temple with a large revenue. Onias rebuilt the town, which was called, by a combination of his own name with the ancient appellation of the nome, *Onion*. His temple was surrounded with a brick wall after the Egyptian fashion; inside the plan was the same as that of Jerusalem, only smaller and poorer. It had a tower of stone sixty cubits high, an altar of burnt-offering, and a sanctuary furnished like the original, except that, instead of the candlestick, a great lamp was suspended from the roof by a golden chain. The candlestick with its seven lights was either too costly to be imitated, or Onias dared not assume the symbol which belonged in a special signification to the true

¹ Isa. xix. 18, 19.

² To improve the application, the Septuagint reads, by a manifest corruption of the text, “city of righteousness,” which shows this part of the translation to have been made after the erection of the new temple. During the persecution of Antiochus, the copies of the law were so diligently sought after and destroyed, that the Maccabees were obliged to take the synagogue lessons from the prophets; and this portion of the Hebrew Scripture was then translated into Greek, for similar use among the Hellenists.

temple.¹ Here he set up the daily sacrifice with all the rites and festivals prescribed in the law. This worship continued for more than two centuries after the final destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, and constituted a stronghold of union among the Hellenist Jews. It contributed also in no small degree to extend the knowledge of the Old Testament among the Gentiles, and so to prepare the way for its fulfilment in the New.

Ptolemy was, of course, not insensible to the advantage of thus attaching the Jews to his government. At the same time, he was equally active in promoting the worship of the Egyptians, exhibiting, like many other rulers, just that degree of interest in religion which best secured his political ends. To this reign belongs the great temple at Apollinopolis,² the largest and best preserved of Egyptian monuments; its massive walls prove these structures to have been as useful for fortresses as for places of worship.

The mixture of race, and general laxity of creed, in Egypt occasioned the transfer of some religious usages from one sect to another. The Egyptian temples had long contained cells for the practice of the monastic life. It was complained in this reign that some of these had been taken possession of by Macedonian recluses. The Jews copied the same practice in their Essenes and Therapeutæ; and when Christianity was introduced, it was still in Egypt that monks and hermits first fled from the duties of life to the imaginary holiness of solitude.

The king still played an important part in the affairs of Syria. Antiochus Epiphanes was suc-

¹ Compare Zech. iv. 2—10 with Rev. i. 12, 20; iv. 5.

² *Ancient Egypt*, p. 75.

ceeded by his son Antiochus Eupator; but the latter was dispossessed and slain by Demetrius, who had been supplanted at the death of his father Seleucus. He resumed the war against Judas Maccabæus, who, after gaining several victories, being taken at a disadvantage by a force six or seven times the number of his own, fell bravely fighting B.C. 161. The command then devolved on his brother Jonathan, with whom Demetrius, alarmed by the appearance of a rival to his throne, earnestly desired a reconciliation. The pretender was Alexander Balas, who gave himself out for a son of Antiochus Epiphanes. Jonathan took advantage of the dispute to secure the emancipation of the temple, and to repair and strengthen the city. From Alexander he received a grant of the high priesthood, with the temporal authority, which continued hereditary in the Asmonean family till the time of Herod. Demetrius was at last slain in a great battle.

Alexander's cause was warmly espoused by the king of Egypt who gave him his daughter Cleopatra in marriage, and led an army to his support, which was joined at Joppa by the high priest and his forces. Alexander, however, suspecting that the design was to reannex the provinces to Egypt, laid a plot for Philometor's life, which the latter discovering, the people of Antioch offered the kingdom to Ptolemy himself, and, according to Josephus, he was actually crowned king of Asia. In the battle that ensued Alexander was slain. The triumph was of little value to the king of Egypt, for he received a wound in the engagement of which he died in five days.¹

¹ B.C. 146, the year in which Carthage was finally destroyed by Scipio Africanus the younger, and Corinth was burnt by the Consul L. Mummius.

The Egyptian crown was instantly claimed by Physcon; but his outrages on humanity and decency roused universal horror and resentment. The Roman senate called their ambassador to account for countenancing the wretch, and Cato the censor complained loudly of the corruption of Egyptian gold, which preserved such a criminal from condign punishment. Scipio Africanus was sent to settle the government, but the tyrant being left in possession, the Alexandrians rose and drove him into the island of Cyprus. There, fearing they might confer the crown on his heir, he put the infant to death, and sent the mutilated members to its horrified mother, who had been called to govern in the interim. It shows the degraded state of public and private morals in that dissolute age, that after these unheard-of crimes, Physcon was permitted to regain the throne.

Physcon sustained the character of a Ptolemy as a patron of letters. He was an author himself, and wrote a commentary on Homer, which no one has cared to notice or preserve. The writer of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, Jesus the son of Sirach, came into Egypt in this reign, and there completed the proverbs of his grandfather. They contain unmistakeable allusions to the Greek philosophy, and the wicked king now reigning in Egypt.¹ The majority of the men of letters, however, being friends of Philometor, fled from the infamous rule of his brother, to teach in the islands and ports of the Mediterranean. Pergamus in Asia Minor was becoming, under Eumenes and Attalus, what Alexandria had been under Soter and Philadelphus. Physcon tried to check its growth by forbidding the export of papyrus,

¹ Chap. li. 6.

which had become the universal material of literature. Eumenes, therefore, had his books copied on sheepskins, and the name of his capital was given to the more durable *parchment*.

When death at last relieved the world of this disgrace to humanity, Physcon's natural corpulence was so bloated with disease that he measured six feet round the body, and could not move without crutches. Eating and drinking still, he passed to his account, in the fifty-fourth year of a reign which mainly contributed to change the name of Ptolemy from the glory, to the reproach, of Egypt.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PTOLEMIES (*continued*).

Lathyrus—Insurrection—Power of the Romans—Loss of Cos—Auletes—Bribery at Rome—Roman Intervention—Coffin of Alexander the Great—Fugitives—Diodorus Siculus—Manetho—State of Religion—Sacred Animals—Funerals—Osirian Justification—Castes—Polygamy—Revenue—Trade—Gold Mines—Private Life—Caricatures—Death of Auletes—Pompey—Julius Cæsar—Capture of Alexandria—Cleopatra—Burning of the Library—Cæsar's Danger—His Death—Mark Antony—Luxury of Cleopatra—Her Accomplishments and Vices—Defeat at Actium—Suicide of Antony and Cleopatra—Extinction of the Kingdom.

THE kingdom was now rapidly falling. It would be repulsive to trace the bloody and incestuous annals of the inglorious reigns that followed. The throne was ascended by Cleopatra Cocce, in joint sovereignty with her son Ptolemy Soter II., more generally known as Lathyrus, from having the mark of Osiris tatooed on his forehead. The queen expelled her son, to substitute his brother Alexander. The convulsions which ensued destroyed her three daughters; at last, she was herself assassinated by the favoured son. The two brothers alternately drove each other into Cyprus; the younger perished in a naval engagement; and finally Lathyrus retained the sovereignty undisturbed. In these family feuds the Jews of Egypt actively supported the queen-mother, who entrusted her army to the two sons of Onias the priest.

The natives took the opportunity to rise on their own account; and for three years they defied the efforts of the Macedonian and Jewish troops. In this rebellion, Thebes was stormed and demolished by the

king's forces. The massive temples, which had served as fortresses to the insurgent Copts, were pulled down, and their ruins alone remained to attest the grandeur of the ancient capital.

The Romans, meanwhile, having reduced Carthage to a province, were rapidly sweeping round the Mediterranean coast. Cyrene and Cyprus were already severed from the Egyptian crown. Apion, to whom Philometor had bequeathed Cyrene, left the Republic his heir, but instead of entering at once on their legacy, the senate proclaimed the freedom of the respective cities; thereby ensuring a succession of struggles, which must ultimately end in annexation. Libya and Egypt might wait awhile; on the opposite coast was a power which demanded immediate attention.

Mithridates king of Pontus, now overrunning Asia Minor, was, next to Hannibal, the most formidable foe ever encountered by the Roman legions. Cicero thought him second only to Alexander the Great.¹ He tasked the powers of Rome for nearly thirty years; and when he fell, Egypt was the only state west of Persia that retained its monarchy. Her fleet, which once ranged the two seas, was now unable to defend her coasts. Cos, the family citadel of the Ptolemies, was seized by Mithridates, and the scarlet chlamys of Alexander the Great, preserved there as the palladium of the monarchy, fell into his hands. This garment was believed to carry with it the command of the world. Pompey took it from Mithridates, and wore it as his greatest prize when riding in triumph to the Capitol. Certainly, the sceptre went with it from the Ptolemies.

¹ *Acad. Quest.*, II., i. 3.

Lathyrus was the last undoubted king of the line. On his death [B.C. 80] the throne was filled by his daughter; but a pretender appeared at Rome, calling himself the son of Alexander, escaped from Mithridates, into whose hands he had fallen at the capture of Cos. The dictator Sylla espoused his cause. He obtained the royal titles at Alexandria, married, and then murdered, the queen his cousin, and in return was seized by her guards, and butchered in the gymnasium.

The coast was now clear for the Roman Republic. There was no acknowledged heir; the last king had bequeathed the realm to his protectors; they had only to take possession, and give peace to an outraged and impotent people. But the conscript fathers were of another mind. Their hands were still full of Mithridates; besides it was pleasanter and more lucrative to bestow tributary crowns than to enlarge the boundaries of the Republic. Crowns were sued and paid for; it gratified the people's pride to see suppliant monarchs waiting in the forum; and the chiefs of the senate received a goodly first-fruits of the royal revenues which they condescended to award.

The Alexandrians were accordingly permitted to enthrone an illegitimate son of Lathyrus, who assumed the title of Ptolemy *Neos Dionysus*, i.e. the young Bacchus, or Osiris. His musical skill obtained him the nickname of *Auletes*, "the piper." He rewarded the patronage of Pompey the Great with a crown of gold, valued at four thousand pieces, and when expelled, and forced to go in person to Rome, he gave Julius Cæsar six thousand talents for advocating his title in the senate. Cato, whom he met at Rhodes on the voyage, roughly told him he had better go back and

make friends with his subjects, for all the wealth of Egypt would not satisfy the rapacity of the senators.

The eloquence of Cicero was thought to obey the Egyptian piper's charm. The great orator defended him against the charge of complicity in the death of his predecessor, with a warmth which, coupled with his client's reputation, justifies the suspicion. The king's gold was more than a match for the people's complaint. The Alexandrian deputies were dismissed with a command to receive back their monarch. Pompey, Cæsar, and Lentulus strove for the honour of enforcing obedience. Pompey would have gained it; but the tribunes of the people, alarmed at his greatness, prevailed on the pontifex to find a prohibition in the Sibylline books. Cicero urged Lentulus to go unbidden; and on his refusal, proposed the expedition to Gabienus, the proconsul of Syria. The latter demanded the enormous bribe of ten thousand talents; and having received it, marched his forces to Pelusium, defeated the Egyptian army, and reinstated Auletes, leaving a Roman garrison in Alexandria for his defence. In this expedition, the horse was commanded by Mark Antony, who then first entered the country which was to furnish him a royal consort, a diadem, and a grave.

Auletes' first act was to put his daughter to death for having accepted the crown during his expulsion. She had married her cousin Seleucus, prince of Syria, but so low in his tastes and pleasures, that the scurrilous Alexandrians gave him the nickname of *scullion*.¹ It was he who made away with the golden coffin of Alexander the Great, replacing it by one of glass.

The Greek element was now almost extinct in the

¹ Cybiosactes.

armies of Egypt; the Jewish still retained its courage and discipline; but the ranks were mostly filled with brigands from Syria and Cilicia. Rome sent a constant immigration of fugitive debtors, slaves, and criminals, and the refugees made Alexandria a very cave of Adullam. By enrolling themselves in the army these men acquired the freedom of the state. They were joined by many of Gabienus's legion, preferring the high pay and loose discipline of native troops to the barren honours of the regular army. Such soldiers were less terrible to the enemy than to the country they defended. The roads were infested by armed robbers; villagers combining together lived upon plunder; property was everywhere unsafe, but the merchant or farmer might buy back what he had been robbed of, on applying to a chief, and paying a royalty of one fourth of its value.

It was in this reign that Diodorus of Sicily visited Egypt, and wrote his account of the manners and religion of its people. The slight esteem in which Manetho was held in the world of letters is shown by his never quoting him, though professedly in quest of information upon the subject of his writings. The decay of what learning the native priests ever possessed is further seen in the inferiority of his information to that of Herodotus. Greek criticism could throw no light on the Coptic legends, but the endeavour to emulate Greek notions robbed the legends of the simplicity which was their only value. Memphis was still a large city, with palaces, streets, and temples, only second to Alexandria. Its priests knew all the kings who had built porticoes to the temple of Phthah; but when the traveller questioned

them on the far older pyramids, they knew no more than we do. Herodotus remains to this day the most authentic, because the least pretentious, historian of Ancient Egypt.

The schools of Alexandria pretended to discover the cosmical secrets concealed in the Egyptian idolatry. The worship of the sun and the Nile typified, they said, the great agencies of creation and production. When the temple of Serapis was opened, and the singer on the steps sprinkled water on the marble floor, at the same time that he held out fire to the people and invoked the god in the Egyptian tongue, the man of letters saw the deification of the two primordial elements of the universe. But such explications are as useless as they are numerous and inconsistent. They can never be reduced to a rational system; and the simple idolater who bows down to a stock or a stone is perhaps not farther from God, than the learned one who plumes himself on worshipping the creature of his own imagination.

Religion, as the word denotes, is designed to "bind again" the broken ties between God and man. Philosophy is only a study, the insufficiency of which is demonstrated by its invariable neglect of the common people. No philosopher ever tried to elevate mankind by sanctifying the heart through the remission of sins. Their domain was the head, and that only among the educated classes. The schools of Alexandria could make sceptics of a few hundreds of the richer and more luxurious citizens, but the Egyptian population was still passionately idolatrous.

The sacred animals were enshrined in the temples; their mummies were interred with ceremonies more

costly than a royal funeral. One hundred talents was spent in this reign on the interment of the bull Apis.¹ The Egyptians "have often been accused of eating one another, but never of eating a sacred animal."² An outrage upon one of these beasts would provoke more excitement than a score of murders. It was common to hear of highway robberies,³ but when a Roman soldier accidentally killed a cat, the populace rose in a fury. In vain the king assured them it was unintentional. They seized the offender, and put him to death in the streets, under the eyes of Diodorus.⁴ Cats were as precious in Alexandria as in the ancient Bubastis. They were identified with Neith, whom some take to be a form of Pasht, and as Neith was explained to be the same with Athene,⁵ the cat, like the owl at Athens, was sacred to the goddess of learning. The wiser Greeks showed their contempt for these identifications, by the proverb which, speaking of things most unlike, said, "they resembled each other as a cat resembles Minerva." A "cat in a yellow robe" was a proverb for an overdressed awkward blunderer.⁶

The dead were embalmed as of old,⁷ and ferried over the lake for the judgment of Osiris. The dog-headed Anubis brought out the scales; Horus, with his hawk's eye, saw to the weight; the forty-two assessors pronounced their verdict, and Thoth, with the Ibis-head, wrote it down.⁸ These characters would appear to have been personated by the priests, who had masks and head-dresses to represent the gods. The

¹ *Diod. Sic.*, i. 84.

² *Sharpe*, ii. 23.

³ *Diod. Sic.*, i. 80.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i. 83.

⁵ *Ancient Egypt*, p. 135.

⁶ *Plut. Prov. Alex.*

⁷ *Ancient Egypt*, p. 193.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 194—200.

inquiry was in most cases a matter of form ; and as our coroners' inquests generally insist on returning the verdict which secures Christian burial, so the departed Egyptian was pretty sure to be "justified," and passed on to Osiris for a similar judgment. The phrase was so universal as to be simply equivalent to "deceased." It was a proverbial description of wickedness to say "the man was too bad to be praised at his funeral."¹ After all, interment was an expensive process, and the mummies seem to be chiefly of priestly families.²

In temporal matters, also, the Egyptians still claimed to be ruled by the wisdom of their ancestors. The king, the priests, and the soldiers, were the only landholders. Herdsmen, husbandmen, and craftsmen, were of a lower caste.³ Suits were decided by the thirty judges of Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis, according to the Eight Sacred books. Murder was punished with death ; and to the credit of the Egyptian law, it is noted that the murder of a slave was equally capital.⁴ The priests alone retained the original law of marriage ; polygamy was allowed to all other classes.

The Ptolemies showed their wisdom in permitting the natives to enjoy their ancient tribunals, contenting themselves with a monopoly of the sword and the exchequer. The revenues of the country amounted to 12,500 talents, or about three millions and a half sterling,⁵ one half of which was contributed from the port of Alexandria. The internal trade was so diminished, that not more than twenty ships sailed annually from the Red Sea to India. The manufacture of fine linen, also, had

¹ *Plut. Prov. Alex.* ² *Sharpe*, ii. 26. ³ *Gen.* xlv. 34.

⁴ *Diod. Sic.*, i. 77.

⁵ *Strabo*, xvii.

almost disappeared; but the gold mines were still actively worked. Gangs of slaves, criminals, and prisoners of war, laboured in chains at the diggings near the Golden Berenice; they were guarded by soldiers unable to speak their language. The rock was broken, pounded, and washed; after which the metal was melted out in a furnace. These mines, said to yield seven millions in the time of Rameses the Great, were now nearly exhausted. The decrease implies no little diminution of human misery, since the yield of early times must have been due to the toil of countless captives, dragged from their homes in the cruel old-world wars.

In private life the Egyptians appeared serious and even gloomy, according to Roman notions. Their holidays were religious, and their religion was largely tinged with funeral solemnities. A nation of slaves are not often distinguished for cheerfulness. The Alexandrians, on the other hand, were offensively gay and light-minded. They delighted in scurrilous jests and buffoonery. To them we must probably attribute the caricatures shown in the British Museum, where the old sculptures are copied and turned into ridicule. Cats, dogs, and monkeys are figured in the attributes of the Egyptian gods and kings. Rameses, fighting against the Ethiopians, appears as an army of mice attacking a castle defended by cats. A dog is seated on a throne, with another bearing a jar behind him, while a cat presents sacred offerings. Singularly enough, a lion is playing chess with a unicorn, in ludicrous imitation of a king and queen of Egypt.¹

Such was Egypt in the reign of Auletes. Of the monarch, a single anecdote may suffice. He was so

¹ *Sharpe*, ii. 28.

true to his affected title of Bacchus, that he actually punished sobriety and decency. Demetrius the Platonic philosopher was accused of never drinking wine, and going to the feasts of Bacchus in the dress of a man, instead of a woman. He only saved his life, by appearing at court in a state of intoxication, and executing a dance with cymbals, in a robe of waving gauze.

The vices of this king openly challenged foreign subjugation. It remained for his children to make independence incompatible with the honour of humanity. Auletes died in the twenty-ninth year of his infamous reign, leaving two sons and two daughters to the guardianship of the Republic. Pompey was appointed tutor and administrator of the realm; but Pompey's star was now waning, and he reached Egypt only to meet an ignominious death. Julius Cæsar passed the Rubicon, and the Roman territory became the battle-field of the legions which had carried her eagles through the world.

In this crisis the Alexandrian government was left to itself, and proceeded to work out its destruction after the familiar mode. The will of Auletes directed Cleopatra, his eldest child (then seventeen years of age), to marry her brother Ptolemy, and reign conjointly; but Pothinus, who had charge of the young king, disliking the lady, proclaimed Ptolemy alone. Cleopatra fled into Syria; and returning with an army, was encamped near her brother's forces in Pelusium, when Pompey, flying from Pharsalia, arrived off the harbour in a single galley. He was still guardian of Egypt, and sending a message ashore, he besought his ward to repay the kindness which he had formerly shown to his father. Gratitude was an unknown

word in Egyptian councils. The native officers, who had the king's ear, were more afraid of Cæsar than obliged to Pompey. They urged the proverb familiar to the East, that "dead men do not bite;" and having invited Pompey to land, they fell upon him as he stepped from his boat, and smote off the head which had been thrice crowned with laurels in the Roman capitol. His body lay exposed on the barbarous shore till his bondman Philip, assisted by a poor old Roman who happened to pass, gathered a funeral pile from the waifs on the coast, and humbly celebrated the last rites.

Cæsar, quickly following, marched into Alexandria, with his lictors carrying the fasces before him, and assuming the trust reposed in the Roman people, summoned Ptolemy and Cleopatra to disband their armies and submit their differences to his award. The young queen, relying on her beauty, caused herself to be conveyed, wrapped up in a carpet like a bale of goods, to Cæsar's lodgings, and made herself mistress at once of his heart and his legions. In her loose estimation of the marriage bond, she was Cæsar's wife, but that did not hinder them from insisting on the provisions of her father's will. Cæsar gave judgment that Ptolemy should share the throne with his sister, but the award was too manifestly corrupt to be submitted to. The king's party attacked the Bruchion, where the Romans were quartered, and, aided by the excited populace, reduced Cæsar, who had only three thousand men with him, to the utmost extremity. The Romans were obliged to burn the galleys which they could not man; and the flames extending to the city, destroyed the museum, with its four hundred thousand volumes, the collection of ages and the glory of Alexandria.

Arsinoë, the sister of Cleopatra, who had escaped from the palace, headed the royal army; her fleet fought the Roman galleys in the harbour, and though twice repulsed by the skill and courage of the enemy, inflicted considerable damage. Cæsar's own vessel was sunk, and the general saved himself by swimming with one hand, while he held his papers over his head in the other. His scarlet chlamys was taken, and hung up in the city to replace the lost trophy of Alexander. A truce was obtained by releasing Ptolemy, but the king attacked the Romans again the moment he got to his army. Reinforcements, however, arrived from Syria and Cilicia; Cæsar was enabled to storm Alexandria, and march into the Delta, where, after a series of defeats, Ptolemy was drowned in the Nile.

Meanwhile, Cæsar had been named dictator at Rome, and was anxious to escape from the inglorious war, in which a dishonourable passion had involved him. He was little scrupulous in bursting his bonds. Though Cleopatra had borne him a son, he left her to reign in Egypt, with her youngest brother for a consort, when he should come of age. Arsinoë was dragged to Rome, and walked behind his chariot in the triumph. Five years after, Cleopatra and her son Cæsarion were visiting at the dictator's villa on the Tiber, when, at the foot of Pompey's statue, Cæsar fell dead under the daggers of the conspirators. He went out of the world with the fame of having conquered in fifty battles, and taken the lives of more than a million of men!

Cicero tells us that Cleopatra applied to him for assistance to get Cæsarion acknowledged as her colleague on the throne of Egypt, instead of Ptolemy;

but the orator, who was never his father's friend, wished for no more Cæsars. She found herself unsafe in the imperial city, and escaping to Egypt with her child, removed her intended husband by poison.

The death of Julius Cæsar, followed by that of Brutus and Cassius, left the mastery of Rome open to Mark Antony, who had won the hearts of the citizens at the dictator's funeral, and defeated his murderers in the battle of Philippi. He had a formidable rival in Octavian, the nephew and heir of Cæsar; but his most fatal enemy was the queen of Egypt, who at last destroyed him in the toils prepared for a sterner soldier. Cleopatra was but a child when Antony came into Egypt to set her father again on the throne. They may have met at Cæsar's villa in Rome; but he was far from being favourably disposed towards her, when he summoned her to answer before him at Tarsus, for the assistance given to Cassius in the late conflicts. Cleopatra sailed in person to meet the charge. She entered the river in a magnificent galley covered with gold; the sails were of scarlet, and the silver oars kept time to melodious music. The silken tackle was handled by maidens dressed as sea-nymphs and graces; while their mistress lay under an awning like Venus attended by cupids. Perfumes and the smoke of incense loaded the winds; the people rushed in crowds to the spectacle, and Antony was left alone on the tribunal, where he proposed to receive the accused. Having landed, she entertained him at a costly banquet; and then begged him to accept, as a trifling present, the jewelled plate and embroidered couches which attracted his admiration. Having wagered to give him a dinner that should cost ten thousand sestertia (£60,000), she took one of her ear-

rings valued at that sum, and dropping the pearl into vinegar, dissolved it and drank it off. The umpire snatched the fellow jewel from her ear, and decided the wager in her favour, without permitting a second sacrifice. This pearl was afterwards cut into a pair, for the statue of Venus in the Pantheon at Rome, where it was long admired as a specimen of the fabulous treasures of Egypt.

It would be needless and unedifying to pursue the tale of sin which Plutarch thought unworthy of his pages. To judge from a contemporary portrait preserved on the walls of the temple of Denderah, Cleopatra's beauty was greatly overrated; but the proof of her charms is to be found in the infatuation of so many of the leading men of her age. Her mental attractions were not inferior to her personal ones. With great natural talents, she was educated in all the accomplishments of a queen; her voice resembled an instrument of many strings, and she was reputed the only Egyptian sovereign who could converse with all her subjects in their native tongues—Egyptian, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Troglodyte. Her own court-language was Greek, and the imperial Latin was familiar. All the arts of pleasing that gold could procure, or oriental luxury could suggest, were united in this celebrated woman; but no one of either sex ever plunged deeper into crime. She was polluted with every vice that disgraced her infamous father. Her early years were stained with a mother's blood; her first petition to Antony was, to drag her sister Arsinoë from the altar of Diana at Ephesus, and put her to death. Her ambition and avarice were as insatiable as her profusion. Always extravagant, she was always covetous. Her constant demand

upon her many lovers was to increase her possessions. No one who knew her ever trusted her affection or her oaths. Not a single effort is recorded to benefit the people over whom she reigned; not one generous aspiration for the good of mankind ever fell from those beautiful lips. When a low Nile spread famine through the land, and the favoured Alexandrians were obliged to submit to a diminished ration of corn, the Jews and native Egyptians were told to shift for themselves; in other words, they were to die. Yet the queen was at that moment wasting millions in her profligate debaucheries with the Roman Triumvir. Such was the wretched mortal whom the first generals of haughty Rome made the mistress of their lives and honour, and the adulation of the Egyptian priests worshipped as a goddess! So dark was that old-world civilisation on which, a few years later, the Sun of Righteousness was to "arise with healing in his wings."¹

Antony reannexed to Cleopatra's crown the provinces of Cælo-Syria and Phœnicia, with the rich island of Cyprus and portions of Cilicia and Arabia. Judea had been granted by his influence to Herod, whom at an earlier period Cleopatra had invited into her own service. She implored Antony to destroy him, and add his kingdom to her own. She obtained, however, only the region about Jericho, famous for the production of balsam: this was farmed of her by Herod, who paid two hundred talents besides for her share of Arabia. According to Josephus, Cleopatra nearly lost her life in attempting to play off her blandishments on the ruthless king of Judea. She ventured to pay him a visit in his own

¹ Mal. iv. 2.

realm, when, justly deeming her the bane of his patron Antony, as well as his own deadly rival, he seriously contemplated putting her to death. He was dissuaded by his friends, but remaining impregnable to her advances, he reconducted her to Egypt.

The enlargement of the kingdom was celebrated in a grand assembly at Alexandria, where the Roman general sat on a golden throne, wearing a royal diadem, and an eastern scimitar; the queen was arrayed as the goddess Isis, whose names she assumed on her coins. Cæsarion was declared her colleague, and her children by Antony were proclaimed "kings the offspring of kings." The deluded man never doubted of his final triumph at Rome; and Cleopatra so partook his confidence, that her favourite asseveration was, "As sure as I shall date my decrees from the Capitol."

Octavian, however, was already styling himself Cæsar, and soon to be decorated with the sovereign title of Augustus. He had been Antony's friend and colleague; his sister was Antony's neglected wife. They were now rivals and opponents; and while the one wasted time and strength in Egypt, the other was rapidly gaining the mastery of the world. They met in a sea-fight off Actium, at the mouth of the Adriatic, when Antony was defeated through the flight of Cleopatra with the Egyptian fleet. He abandoned his army, to follow her to Alexandria; there their feasting was interrupted by the arrival of Octavian. Mutual distrust and reproaches ensued; the queen was prepared to transfer her blandishments to the new conqueror, but, afraid of Antony, she shut herself up with her trea-

tures in a monument, and sent him word that she was dead. The ruined man cast himself on his sword in despair, and was carried dying to the foot of the monument. Cleopatra and her attendants drew him up by cords to the window, where he expired in her arms, while Octavian entered the city unopposed. His first orders were to secure the queen alive. A messenger held her in parley at the window while three men climbed up her place of retreat, and bursting into the room, snatched the lifted dagger from her hand.

She received an early visit from the conqueror, who endeavoured to soothe her by promises of honourable treatment, and by permission to give a sumptuous funeral to Mark Antony. For a moment the queen indulged the hope of beguiling another Cæsar, but discovering that his intention was to carry her to Rome, and make her walk, like her dead sister, behind the victor's chariot, she took poison, or, as was more commonly reported, died by the bite of an asp secretly introduced in a basket of figs.¹ She was found dead on a gilded couch, dressed in her royal robes, with one of her ladies stretched lifeless at her feet, and another, just expiring, in the act of arranging the diadem on her head.

So perished, in the thirty-ninth year of her age, one of the most fascinating and wicked of women. Her name, which had been the glory of Macedonian queens, was henceforth a disgrace to her sex. The dynasty of the Ptolemies fell extinguished in her obloquy. She was buried in regal splendour by

¹ This report has been discredited as derived from the figure of the asp, which formed one of the royal insignia; but the historians give it as authentic, and the precaution taken by Octavian would render it difficult to procure any ordinary poison.

the side of Antony, the last sovereign of Egypt, and the land of the Pharaohs was henceforth a province of the Roman empire. "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun."¹

¹ Eccl. ix. 6. A brief note will suffice to chronicle the fate of Cleopatra's children. Cæsarion was inhumanly slain by Octavian, to whom his friend Arrian suggested that *two* Cæsars would be inconvenient. Selene, Antony's daughter, after gracing Octavian's triumph at Rome, was married to Juba, the young king of Mauritania. Their son Ptolemy was dispossessed of his kingdom, and after wandering about Greece and Asia Minor, was put to death by Caligula. Drusilla, another grandchild of Cleopatra, married Antonius Felix, the procurator of Judea, who, according to Suetonius, obtained three wives, all of royal blood. His first wife, a daughter of Herod Agrippa, was also called Drusilla, a name derived from Drusus, son of the Emperor Tiberius, with whom her father was brought up. She was the person who sat with Felix when St. Paul reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come (Acts xxiv. 24). Her sister Bernice heard the same apostle when he appeared before their brother Agrippa (Acts xxv. 23). The name of Felix's third wife is unknown.

CHAPTER V.

THE CÆSARS.

Nature of the Government—Octavian—Spoliation—Tribute—Religion—Roman Empire—Cæsareum—Strabo—Memnon—Lake Mæris—Jews—Trade—Literature—Ecclesiastical—Wisdom—Philo—Revelation and Philosophy—Therapeutæ—Monasticism—Persecution of Jews—Expedition to Palestine.

THE Egyptians had little cause to lament the fall of the Macedonian kingdom. The beneficent policy of the early Ptolemies had long been supplanted by an oriental despotism of the most sensual type. The population was diminishing, the trade falling off, the revenues unequal to the extravagance of the court, and the nation demoralized by its vices. For three hundred years the natives had been slaves upon their own soil, and now that their masters had forfeited the respect of mankind, it was better to pass to others with whom justice, honour, and morality were something more than words. The Romans, it is true, reserved liberty for themselves; for the provinces it was deemed enough to be ruled by free men. The rule was severe, and the abuses many; yet this was in fact the constitution best adapted to those broken communities, which fell by their own collapse under the Roman sway. If the governor was a despot to the province, he was a servant subject to jealous supervision at Rome. The home authorities

were always ready to call him to a strict account.¹ Perhaps no better form could be devised, in the absence of self-government, if the training and responsibility of the governor could always be depended upon. A despot educated in a free country, imbued with her liberties and acting under a continuous responsibility to her government, would be the ideal of a ruler for people who have lost the capacity to rule themselves. The Romans were, of course, far removed from an ideal, which the light of Christianity and the progress of nineteen centuries have not perfected among ourselves; yet the Roman administration, with its rough honesty of purpose, must have been a wholesome medicine in the demoralized, rotten state of Egypt.

To Alexandria and the Macedonians it was indeed a bitter discipline. Octavian cherished a cold contemptuous hatred of Antony and his oriental rule. He entered Alexandria on foot, leaning on the arm of his friend Arrius. To the philosopher's request and the memory of Alexander the Great, the citizens were told, they owed their lives and property. He visited the Soma, and laid a golden crown, with a garland of flowers, on the glass coffin which contained the founder's mummy; but when asked to inspect the Ptolemies, who lay in the same building, he turned away with the remark, that he had come to see a king, not dead men. In the same spirit he threw down all the

¹ Cornelius Gallus, the first prefect of Egypt, was recalled by Augustus, and killed himself to escape his trial. His offence was, encroaching on the imperial majesty; but when a tax-gatherer killed and ate a famous fighting cock at Alexandria, Augustus had him crucified for outraging the favourite pastime of the people. Tiberius, on receiving a larger amount of taxes from Egypt than usual, told the prefect he wished his sheep to be sheared, not flayed.

statues of Antony, and only spared those of Cleopatra on receiving a ransom of a thousand talents from one who still respected the last of the Ptolemies. To humble the Alexandrians, he restored the Jews to the privileges of citizenship conferred by Alexander and the first Ptolemy. The decree was engraved on a pillar in the city, to the infinite mortification of the Greeks. The conqueror carried his resentment to the extent of founding a new city, at the spot where he had vanquished Antony's forces, four or five miles to the east of Alexandria. Thither he removed the imperial sacrifices from the Serapeum, and the temples and palaces of Nicopolis, for a moment, threatened the old capital with desertion.

Passing into Memphis, he treated the native capital with equal insolence. The Egyptians, now inured to subjugation, argued good or evil from the manner in which a new master respected, and was respected by, the bull Apis. Octavian coldly declined to see the beast at all;—he had no belief in quadruped deities. The monuments he surveyed with a different feeling. The two obelisks which adorn the Piazza del Popolo and the Monte Citorio at Rome, were designed to perpetuate the names of Thothmes IV. and Psamaticus. In removing them the conqueror commenced that art spoliation of Egypt, which has since filled the cities and museums of civilised Europe with the works of the dusky sons of Ham.

Octavian carried off also the royal treasures to Rome. The double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, the jewels, ornaments, and curious valuables amassed from father to son by the magnificent lords of the gold mines, were drawn in waggons, through the shouting populace, to the capitol, and the value was

so enormous that people said it lowered the currency, and raised the price of land in Italy.¹

The gold of Egypt continued to flow to Rome in payment of tribute, till it disappeared from the Alexandrian coinage. The royalty of corn, which, under the Cæsars, was four times as much as in the time of Philadelphus, was likewise shipped away; and instead of being distributed in daily rations to the citizens of Alexandria, went to feed the poor of a foreign capital. The Greeks suffered severely; but the Jews, who were one third of the population of Alexandria, profited by the humiliation of their rivals, and the Egyptians, long accustomed to see the products of their labour taken by others, were content to retain their temples and their gods.

The Romans had no religion of their own which they could honestly offer to any conquered people. Religion at Rome was avowedly an affair of state policy, and family pride. Their deities neither desired nor accepted the homage of foreign proselytes. In regard to the soul and its state after death, no one pretended to know anything. The popular opinions were derived from the poets, and the conjectures of the learned hovered darkly among the disputes of the philosophers. Both were so uncertain that the new conquerors of Egypt, like their predecessors, were glad to gather any broken rays of primeval tradition that might linger in its stately temples. It was from the banks of the Nile that Greek and Roman mythology borrowed the Stygian river, with Charon's boat, the monster Cerberus, and the awful judge of the dead. The Roman legions who ridiculed their own idols trembled before the gods of Egypt. Its temples, rites, and

¹ Suet., *Vit. Aug.* 41.

priesthood were objects not of toleration, but of awe. The satirists laughed at the animal and vegetable gods :¹ but the mystic rites of Isis and Serapis found so many votaries that Augustus was obliged to make a law to prohibit their introduction into Rome ; the very beggars in the streets showed their sores and solicited alms “in the name of the Holy Osiris.”²

If it be any consolation to subject nations to know that others share their servitude, the Alexandrians might comfort themselves with the thought that the fall of their independence, such as it was, was simultaneous with that of the Roman Republic. Three years after Cleopatra's death the senate surrendered the empire into the hands of Octavian, by creating him permanent *Imperator* and *Consul*. To these were added the title of *Princeps*, first or chief of the senate, and the new name *Augustus*, designed to express the peaceful majesty, which the emperor desired to impress on his sway. Shortly after Augustus assumed the title and office of *Pontifex Maximus*, or Supreme Pontiff, which carried the appointment of the priests, and the entire management of the Roman religion.

Under the empire as thus settled, the provinces were governed, either by *proconsuls* appointed by the senate, or by the *legati* of the emperor, under whom they enjoyed their own local usages controlled by his arbitrary pleasure.³ Countries where the local laws were peculiar, were considered the personal charge of the emperor, who entrusted them to special commissioners called *procurators*, but in Egypt the imperial

¹ *Juv. Sat.* xv. 1—12.

² *Hor. Ep.* i. xvii. 60.

³ The provinces were divided between the senate and the emperor ; the former appointed the proconsuls by lot, the emperor nominated his legates during pleasure. Both appointments were confined to senators who had filled the offices of consul and prætor.

representative bore the title of the *Prefect*. He was always of the knightly order, and this was the only important trust not confined to members of the senate.

In Judea, Augustus consented to continue the kingdom to Herod, who met him at Alexandria, and by timely submission procured a further grant of the adjacent provinces enjoyed by Cleopatra. On the removal of his son Archelaus [A.D. 6] the kingdom was abolished, and a procurator appointed, who resided at Cæsarea on the coast.

The Egyptians, who could not imagine themselves without a king, gave the titles of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies to their absent emperor. The priests engraved hieroglyphic inscriptions to Cæsar Autocrator, son of the sun, king of Upper and Lower Egypt, beloved of Phthah and Isis. The emperor's head was stamped on the Alexandrian coinage, with the Roman eagle and thunderbolt on the reverse.¹ A temple was even erected in honour of the second emperor Tiberius, and named *Sebaste*, or the shrine of Cæsar. It stood by the Great port, near the Sun Gate, leading to the Heptastadium, and in front of it were two obelisks of the great Pharaohs, Thothmes III., and Rameses II. These have long outlived the empires they were designed to commemorate. One is now fallen, but the other still stands in the sand that covers the ruins of the Cæsareum, and is an object of admiration by the mistaken cognomen of Cleopatra's Needle.

To Strabo, who visited Egypt during the reign of Augustus [B.C. 30—A.D. 14], we owe the best account of the country at this time. At Alexandria the two harbours held more ships than any other port in

¹ Matt. xxii. 20.

the world; its export trade exceeded that of all Italy. The citadel on the Acro-Lochias, and the lighthouse on the Pharos, attracted all eyes in the approach. A fourth part of the city was covered with temples and palaces. The suburbs extended across the lake. To the east of the city was the hippodrome for chariot races; to the west the public gardens, with their groves of palms, and the necropolis and catacombs. On the shores of the lake lay the vineyards, which produced the famous Marcotic wine.¹ Heliopolis was deserted, but the houses of Plato and Eudoxus were still shown. At Memphis, the second city in the kingdom, the traveller saw the Apis through a window, and witnessed a bull-fight in the temple dromos. At Crocodilopolis, the sacred crocodile came at the call of his attendant to be fed with cakes and wine.

Strabo accompanied the prefect in a march to Syene, saw and heard the musical Colossus at Thebes, but could not decide where the music came from. Upper Egypt was filled with Arab Troglodytes from Ethiopia. Half the people of Coptos were Arabs; they were the camel-drivers and carriers of the trade across the desert. The Roman garrison at Syene was constantly engaged in checking the incursions of these robbers from the south. Candace their queen was a masculine woman, who had lost an eye in these conflicts. Their capital was Napata, at the fourth cataract.

The Arsinoite nome was still fertilized by the Mœris Lake,² which by the time of Pliny had been suffered to escape through the decaying banks, and leave only

¹ Upper Egypt, as the monuments show, always had wine, but it was neither good nor plentiful; it was used at Rome for vinegar. The Alexandrian grape was far superior. The Marcotic was a white wine, sweet and thin, of a very delicate flavour.

² *Anc. Egypt*, pp. 27—77.

the modern Birket el Keiroun. This barbarous piece of neglect has ruined the most fruitful district in Egypt, and left the two pyramids, once surrounded by water, standing on the dry ground.

The Jews were the people most worthy of attention in Egypt. They constituted a third part of the population of Alexandria, and were thickly planted on the eastern side of the Delta, where the ancient land of Goshen was still fertilized by the canal leading into the Red Sea. Altogether they were not less than a million of souls, closely united by religious and political institutions, having a visible centre in the temple and priesthood of Onion.¹ They had served in the armies and in the councils of the Ptolemies; they were the leading merchants of Egypt, and monopolized by far the largest part of the commerce, which made Alexandria the common mart of the eastern and western nations. The gold and silver exported to India was valued at £400,000 yearly, and the goods received in return were sold at Rome for a hundred times as much.

The course of the trade was up the Nile to Coptos, whence striking across the desert to Berenice, the merchants embarked on the Red Sea, and coasting Africa as far as the equator, met the trade wind, which carried them to the shores of Malabar. A hoard of gold coins, dug up in our own time near Calicut, has revealed the line of a traffic which was carefully concealed from the Romans and Carthaginians;² it seems highly probable that the Jewish colonies still subsisting in that country had their origin in this intercourse.

¹ Still the connexion with Jerusalem was maintained in sufficient strength to support a "a synagogue of the Alexandrians" in the holy city (Acts vi. 9).

² Sharpe's *Egypt*.

Along with their social and commercial advantages the Jews ardently cultivated letters, and their writers enjoyed a prominent rank in the Alexandrian schools. The Hebrew theology there came in contact with Greek philosophy, and the result is exemplified in two Apocryphal books, both apparently written at Alexandria. In the thirty-eighth year of Ptolemy Euergetes II. [B.C. 132], the grandson of a famous Rabbi at Jerusalem, came into Egypt, and found a commendable degree of learning, but too little acquaintance with the Hebrew text and exposition of Scripture.¹ He observed that the Law and the Prophets lost some of their force when rendered into other versions;² and to assist those "who in a strange country were willing to learn, being prepared before in manners to live after the law," he translated a compilation of his grandfather's by the name of the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach. This work was so popular among the early Christians, that it was read in the churches, and acquired the Latin name of *Liber Ecclesiasticus*. It was quoted as Scripture by the fathers of Egypt and Carthage, but was never in the canon, Jewish or Christian. In this book the Divine Being is represented as He is revealed in the Mosaic writings; the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the universe.³

1 *Ecclus.*—Second or translator's "prologue." The English reading, "book of no small learning," is clearly wrong; the marginal rendering "help," is better, but the Greek seems to mean "way," in the sense of *sect*, or else "similitude." The reference is probably to the Hellenist form of Judaism, including the rites of the temple at Onion.

2 This reflection on the Septuagint contrasts with the strong language of the Alexandrians, who spoke of that version as the "twin sister, the exact, nay inspired, reproduction of the Hebrew."—*Philo Jud. de Vit. Mos.* xi. 510.

3 *Ecclus.* xvii. 1—17; xviii. 3.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning, middle, and end of Wisdom.¹ She is personified as in Prov. viii., and identified with the Word, or Spirit, that came out of the mouth of the Most High.² The doctrines and precepts are those of the Psalms and Proverbs. The latter part recounts the praises of the "famous men" of Old Testament history, and the contents are everywhere thoroughly Scriptural.

A marked difference of thought can be traced in the book entitled the Wisdom of Solomon, which is apparently the original work of an Alexandrian Jew. Here the language is in parts distinctly that of Greek philosophy. God is said to have made the world out of "matter without form;"³ implying matter to be uncreated. The human body is spoken of as a mere weight and clog on the soul,⁴ in contrast to the Scriptural doctrine of the "redemption of the body" here and hereafter;⁵ and the pre-existence of souls, part of the doctrine of transmigration, is distinctly implied.⁶ Other passages exhibit thoroughly Scriptural views. The fall of man is attributed to the devil, who brought death into the world;⁷ and there is one passage which has been often thought to convey a prophecy of the Passion of Christ.⁸ This mixture of Revelation and philosophy shows the repute achieved by the Septuagint in the schools of Alexandria; the

¹ Ecclus. i. 1, 14,* 16, 18.

² Ibid. xxiv. 3.

³ Wisd. xi. 17.

⁴ Ibid. ix. 15.

⁵ Rom. viii. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 51—54; 2 Cor. v. 1—4; 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4, 17.

⁶ Wisd. viii. 20.

⁷ Ibid. ii. 23, 24.

⁸ Ibid. ii. 12—20. It is quoted as such by Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, and other fathers, but modern critics conceive the coincidence to be due partly to the Old Testament Scriptures referred to, and partly "to the concurrence of each typical form of reproach and suffering in the Lord's Passion."—*Smith's Bib. Diet.* ii. 1781.

Hellenist Jews corrupted their creed with Gentile philosophy, but philosophy was in turn indebted to Judaism, for higher views of God and the soul, than human reason alone could attain.

The fullest exponent of Hellenist learning was Philo, to whom some have attributed the authorship of the book of Wisdom. He flourished at Alexandria from B.C. 20 to A.D. 50, and his writings set the example to the early Christian divines of combining the Mosaic revelation with the Platonic philosophy. The doctrine of Wisdom, which in the Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus faintly shadows forth the *Logos* or Word, revealed by St. John as the Son of God,¹ was taken up by Philo without any clear or consistent view. At one time he speaks of the *Logos* as a Divine Person; at another, only as a spirit in man enabling him to receive the Divine revelation. He halts between the Scriptural view, in which the Word, like the Angel of the covenant, is God himself mediating with man, and the Greek conception of Him as the reason, or utterance, of the Divine mind. The disciples of reason, feeling after God by arguing from their own existence to its hidden Author, were lost in the thick darkness which to unassisted nature ever veils the Infinite. The disciples of Revelation began with God's own account of himself in Holy Scripture, and from thence explained the phenomena of human life. The two systems met at Alexandria: as the law was a school-master to the Jews, so philosophy, more darkly, prepared the way of the gospel among the Gentiles. It was from the force of prejudice that, when the gospel was come, the Judaizing Christian went back to the

¹ John i. 1.

beggarly elements of the law on the one hand, and the Gentile corrupted it with philosophy on the other. Meantime, the world was moving darkly on to the advent of One who was to confound its wisdom, and illumine its foolishness, by the manifestation of THE TRUTH.

It is from the pen of Philo that Eusebius¹ borrows his account of the Jewish hermits, who tenanted a cluster of cells on a hill near the lake Mareotis, under the name of *Therapeutæ*. The historian labours, apparently against the general opinion, to prove that they were Christians, because they sold their goods, like the disciples of the apostles (Acts ii. 34—36), fasted, and took vows of celibacy. He forgets that the last is *not* attributed to any apostolical Christians, and the first was *not* in order to a solitary life. The extracts which he adduces as incontestable proofs of Christianity, curiously enough, do not once mention Christ or His redeeming work. However much they may resemble what Eusebius called “religion,” they are like nothing that we read of in the New Testament. The *Therapeutæ* were manifestly Jews who had grafted an Egyptian superstition on their own religion.

The Old Testament, like the New, abounds in precepts which teach us our duty to God and our neighbour. Its religion is one of practical, social life; it counsels such retirement for prayer and meditation as enables the soul to strengthen herself by communion with God, and return more vigorous to her duty among men. But it nowhere countenances that diseased state of mind, always common in the East, which flies from the burden and heat of the daily task, to bury itself in solitude, and spend existence in

¹ *Hist. Eccl.* ii. 17

contemplations never to be reduced to practice. It nowhere suggests that, to love God, it is necessary to shun our neighbour, or that the prizes of the next world are won by neglecting our duty in this.

The Therapeutæ, like their Brahman and Buddhist counterparts at this day, were devoted to the contemplation of the Divine Essence. God was to be always in their thoughts. Prayer and fasting were constant exercises; the remainder of the day was spent in meditation and study of the Law and the Prophets, with the commentaries which delighted in allegorical and secondary interpretations. For six days the solitude of the cell was unbroken; on the seventh they met in synagogue. The only festival was the fiftieth day, when they dined in company on bread and water, seasoned with salt and a few cresses.¹

With all their learning and piety, the Jews were hated with the deep hatred always borne by false religions to the true one. The Greeks resented their equality in the gymnasium; the Egyptians, to please the Greeks, framed a legend making Hierosolymus and Judæus sons of Typho, the spirit of evil and murderer of Osiris. The Jews fell into the hands of their enemies on the accession of Caligula, who, with the strange vanity of the most wicked of ancient idolaters, insisted on receiving Divine worship, though not worthy of ordinary human respect. He ordered his statue to be placed among the gods in every temple of the empire: the Alexandrian Greeks pounced at once on the Jewish synagogues, and not having statues enough of Caligula, they borrowed some Ptolemies from the gymnasium to place in their assemblies. The Jews resisted with

¹ *Philo. de Vit. cont.*

their usual constancy. A riot ensued, in which the mob plundered their houses and stoned them in the streets. Flaccus the prefect abolished their rights as citizens, and had their councillors scourged in the theatre. They were not allowed even to memorialize the emperor; but Caligula was made acquainted with these outrages by his friend Agrippa, who had just received the kingdom of Judea, and touched at Alexandria on his way to take possession. The king was himself insulted as a Jew by the Greeks and the prefect. The emperor's pleasure was signified in a way which leaves a strange impression of the forms of law under the Roman empire. The prefect was entertaining a party at supper, when a Roman galley entered the harbour after dark, and quietly disembarked a cohort of soldiers. Their commander led them straight to the palace, and entering the banqueting-room without noise, presented Flaccus with his recall. He was arrested on the spot, hurried on board the vessel, and taken off to Rome the same evening!

Philo then proceeded with a delegation of Jews to lay their grievances before the emperor. The Greeks, on the other hand, sent the grammarian Apion to accuse the Jews of not worshipping the emperor, and to demand the abolition of their rights of citizenship in Alexandria. As soon as it was admitted that they did not adore his statue, Caligula refused to hear another word from the Jews, and Philo withdrew with the remark that, "If the emperor was against them, God was their friend."

Claudius restored their civic rights, with the unmolested enjoyment of their religion; but they lost all again under Nero, from the excesses of a pretended prophet, who drew together a body of four thou-

sand men in Egypt, and led them, by an anticipation of crusading zeal, to rescue the Temple and Holy Land of Palestine from infidel bondage. Felix, the then procurator, easily routed the tumultuous force, but the leader seems to have escaped, since St. Paul was afterwards mistaken for "that Egyptian."¹

At this point, we leave to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and turn to those wonderful things of God, which, unknown to them, were transacting at this time for the salvation of the world.

¹ Acts xxi. 38.

CHAPTER VI.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GOSPEL. •

Closing of the Gates of Janus—Birth of Christ—The Taxing—Shepherds of Bethlehem—Magi—Flight into Egypt—Early Believers—Ethiopian Eunuch—Peter and Mark—Gospel Preaching—Monasticism—Conversions—Martyrdom of the Evangelist—Peter at Rome—John Mark.

THE events which shed imperishable lustre on the era of the Cæsars, were not the fall of the Republic, the conquest of Egypt, nor the foundation of that marvellous empire which, after ruling the known world in unbroken majesty for four centuries, has left its language, laws, and institutions imprinted on all the states of Europe to the present day. A truer, wider, and more enduring Kingdom was at the same time silently introduced in one of the most despised provinces of Rome; and not only that haughty empire, but all things present and to come, were to bow to its power. In the reign of the first emperor JESUS CHRIST was born at Bethlehem in Judea; in the reign of the second He was crucified at Jerusalem; in the reign of the fifth one, at least, of His chief apostles died by martyrdom at Rome. What a revolution of human society, thought, and aspiration was begun by those events, in which none but the sufferers saw any significance at the time!

Augustus had the honour of three times closing the

gates of Janus at Rome, which stood open in war, and were shut in time of peace. Only two such intervals had been enjoyed from the founding of the city [B.C. 753] to the fall of the Republic; once under Numa Pompilius, and a second time at the close of the first Punic war [B.C. 241], when the third Ptolemy was reigning in Alexandria. During all the remainder of their turbulent sway the senate and people of Rome were incessantly engaged in war. Augustus began his administration by closing the gates of blood after the conquest of Egypt. Four years later, he reopened the double doors on his departure for Spain, and closed them again the same year on the submission of that country. They were thrown open once more in less than a year, when Gallus, the prefect of Egypt, attempted the conquest of Arabia, and his successor marched into Ethiopia. War continued for about twenty years; and then Augustus having consolidated his power, and the whole empire being in profound tranquillity, he closed the gates for a third time amid general rejoicings.

At this auspicious era, the PRINCE OF PEACE was born. The year was the 749th or 750th of the Roman city; the last of Herod's reign, and four years before the Christian era, as calculated by Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century, and now universally received.¹ In the same year Augustus directed a general census or "taxing" of the entire empire;² a proceeding which, being highly resented in Judea, was not pushed to its completion till ten years later, when Quirinus (Cyrenius) was appointed procurator, on the deposal of

¹ See Archbishop of York's article, "JESUS CHRIST," in Smith's *Bib. Dict.* i. 1039—1072.

² *Tac. Annal.* i. 2; *Sueton. Aug.* xxviii. 101.

Archelaus.¹ Herod, ever anxious to please the emperor, would immediately promulgate the ordinance, and following the usage of his kingdom, appoint his subjects to be enrolled in the ancestral cities of their respective families.² At Bethlehem, accordingly, all who enjoyed the distinction of belonging to "the house and lineage of David," were enjoined to present themselves. Among them came a carpenter of Nazareth, bearing the name of the ancient Hebrew viceroy of Egypt, who, being "a just man" and honoured by communications from God, was prompt to pay obedience to the command. Joseph was accompanied by his virgin wife, to whom he had been espoused, in all probability, as the heir male of her father.³ The marriage rites had been lately cele-

1 Luke ii. 1, 2. The Greek word translated "taxed" properly means only "enrolled," whether in view of a tax, a census of the population, or any other object. Josephus (*Ant.* xvii. 2) mentions that at this time an oath of fidelity to Cæsar was exacted of all the Jewish nation, in consequence of the wide-spread expectation of a king to appear among them. This would require just such an enrolment as St. Luke relates. It took place under the reign of Herod, whereas Cyrenius was appointed procurator on the suppression of the kingdom after the banishment of Archelaus. Josephus (*Ant.* xvii. ; 1) mentions that his first act was to demand an account of all the *estates*, as Herod had taken of the *persons*. This second step was hotly resisted by the Jews, in anticipation of a third, the actual levy of a tax. All would naturally be regarded as parts of the same design. Nevertheless it has been shown to be highly probable that Cyrenius was *twice* procurator, and St. Luke may mean that the "taxing" was made at his first appointment, which would be exactly at the time, B.C. 4 (Alford's *Greek Test. in loco*). Our historical information is singularly imperfect at this period.

2 Luke ii. 3.

3 Lord Arthur Hervey's article on the "Genealogy of Jesus Christ," in *Smith's Bib. Dict.* i. 665, supposes Joseph to be the son of Heli, and lineal descendant of David's son Nathan, according to the pedigree given by St. Luke. St. Matthew's genealogy represents the royal succession in the legal heirs, devolving on Jacob the father of Mary and brother of Heli. His title passed with his daughter's hand to her first cousin Joseph, nephew and son *in law* to her father.

brated under Divine direction, and Mary (though in no condition for a journey) was required, as being herself also a descendant of David, to appear at his city. The hospitality of the little town was inadequate to the accommodation of all its visitors; even the public caravanserai was found crowded with guests. The humble couple were content to take refuge in one of the sheds where travellers stabled their beasts; and in this lowly spot, the first home of Him who often in this world had not where to lay His head, the Virgin mother "brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes," made, perhaps, by tearing up her own upper garment, "and laid Him in a manger."¹

There was no proclamation of this birth at Rome; no stir among the great ones of the earth; but it was announced to the watchers of the East by a star, and heralded by angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem. The Holy Ghost had prepared witnesses in heaven and in earth; and when the saving Name had been bestowed, and the Virgin mother took up the Holy Child to the temple, to offer the poor sacrifice which they could afford for the first-born son, Simeon and Anna recognised the LORD'S CHRIST, and "spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."² Then came "the wise men from the East"—

Other ways of reconciling the two pedigrees have been suggested, but it seems clear that one of them belongs to Joseph in right of his marriage, and that Mary was by birth, as both the evangelists imply, of the house of David (Matt. i. 16; Luke i. 27—32).

¹ Probably not what is now called by this name, which would hardly be provided in such a shed. The Greek speaks only of the shed itself: the Holy Child was probably laid on the floor, cradled in His mother's arms, or cushioned on a bundle of fodder.

² Luke ii. 38.

those mysterious witnesses of a primitive revelation—those first Gentile worshippers of the Son of David. The evangelist calls them *Magi*;¹—an order of men who had not all sunk into magicians—the true successors of those whom Daniel ruled,² and to some extent instructed in the ancient Scriptures. They appear to have heard of Balaam's "Star out of Jacob,"³ and, led by a supernatural luminary, they repaired to Jerusalem, asking "Where is He that is born king of the Jews?"⁴ The question startled Herod, and he resolved to slay the young child. The Divine vigilance, however, provided Him a refuge in Egypt, which was but a few days' journey from Bethlehem, by a road frequented by regular caravans.

Then a second Joseph visited the deserted streets of Heliopolis. A second time the word of God was to be heard—"Out of Egypt have I called my Son."⁵ The evangelist reads in these Divine arrangements a "fulfilment" of ancient prophecy; but as no such prediction occurs of the Messiah, we understand him to refer to the whole history of the typical Israel, as prophesying of the true Son of God. In Egypt it was first said, "Israel is my son, even my first-born."⁶ The first-born of Egypt were slain for his redemption, and the memory was kept alive by the feast of the Passover, and the continual voice of the prophets.⁷ To Egypt, accordingly, the Great

¹ Matt. ii. 1.

² Dan. v. 11.

³ Num. xxiv. 17.

⁴ Matt. ii. 1. An attempt has been recently made by Kepler and Ideler to identify this "star" with a conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, which took place B.C. 7. This hypothesis is examined and refuted in *Smith's Bib. Dict.* ii. 1375.

⁵ Matt. ii. 15.

⁶ Ex. iv. 22.

⁷ Hos. ii. 15; xi. 1.

Antitype was borne, to find a shelter from the sword, as Jacob from the famine; to come out of it to His promised heritage, and to open to His spiritual seed "a better Canaan, even a heavenly."¹

Egypt was now no longer a house of bondage, nor her idolatry aggressive. The holy family might readily find protection and support among the flourishing communities of Jews in Heliopolis and the region of Onias's temple. Their first halting-place is fixed by tradition at Matarieh, where a spreading sycamore shades a well, of which they are said to have changed the salt water to fresh. The credulous villagers believe it retains a healing virtue from the Infant Saviour having been bathed there. Would that all of a wiser creed were more effectually washed in the fountain for sin and for uncleanness, opened in that Saviour's blood!

We are ignorant how long the Holy Child tarried in Egypt. The recall was probably given not long after Herod's death, which took place the same year; but when they approached Judea, and found that Archelaus had succeeded to the southern half of Herod's kingdom, Joseph was afraid to risk a return to Bethlehem. Turning to the right, and passing up the eastern side of Jordan, he crossed over into Galilee, where Herod Antipas was "tetrarch," and took up his residence in Nazareth.²

After this we read of no personal intercourse between the Saviour and any native of Egypt. Some knowledge of His life and teaching, however, probably reached the banks of the Nile through Jewish sources. The Alexandrians had a synagogue in Jerusalem,

¹ Heb. xi. 16.

² Matt. ii. 22, 23; Luke iii. 1; Mark vi. 14.

and some of them went up to the feasts, at which times our Lord taught openly in the Temple. The "dwellers in Egypt" are mentioned among those who were present on the day of Pentecost, and saw the power of the Holy Ghost sent down on the apostles.¹ We may reasonably suppose that some of them were among the number of those who were "pricked in their hearts" at the discourse of St. Peter. Not being hardened by a personal rejection of the Saviour's teaching and miracles, and having had no hand in His death, they would be more open to conviction; and when convinced, they would be eager to spread the good tidings among their own people. The synagogues of Alexandria would be not less interested in the report than were those of Rome;² hence we may well conclude that many in Egypt were led to "search the Scriptures daily whether those things were so."³

Nor are we without more particular indications of the early propagation of the truth among the Egyptian Jews. They belonged to the class called in the Acts of the Apostles *Hellenists* or "Grecians" as distinguished from the *Hellenes* or "Greeks," who were Gentiles; of this class there was evidently a considerable number of Christians before the first dispersion of the church at Jerusalem.⁴ Among the teachers of the church at Antioch, where "the disciples were first called Christians," was Lucius of Cyrene, and Simeon called Niger; the latter was, probably, the same who bore the cross after Jesus, and a native of the same place.⁵ These men of Cyprus and

¹ Acts ii. 10.

² Acts xxviii. 22.

³ Acts xvii. 11.

⁴ Acts vi. 1.

⁵ Acts xiii. 1; Mark xv. 21. The three former evangelists all mention the name and country of the person who so remarkably shared in

Cyrene—places always closely connected with Egypt—were so zealous in the faith, that they first, after St. Peter, preached the gospel to the Gentiles.¹ They would hardly have neglected the celebrated capital of the Mediterranean, and the temple of Onion.

One distinguished missionary can be traced through Egypt itself. The treasurer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopian Arabs, who went up to Jerusalem to worship, was probably a Jew; on his return he encountered the evangelist Philip, and was made, to his unspeakable joy, a true partaker of the hope and expectation of Israel.² He was the first Christian who passed up the valley of the Nile; in him first Ethiopia began to stretch out her hands unto God.³ The tradition of the Coptic church is, that, having converted the queen, he obtained her assistance in propagating the gospel in Ethiopia, till, meeting the apostle Matthew, he crossed the Red Sea with him into Arabia, and thence into Persia and India, finally sealing the truth with his blood in the distant island of Ceylon. Such traditions are not always trustworthy in detail, especially in the names of countries imperfectly known in the infancy of geography; but there is enough to sustain the belief that this primitive convert was active in his Saviour's cause, and abundantly realized the blessing foretold by the prophet Isaiah.⁴

With the gospel thus spreading on every side, we cannot doubt its early penetration into Alexandria, then, the Saviour's Passion. St. Mark adds the names of his sons, one of whom is greeted by St. Paul (Rom. xvi. 13) as "chosen in the Lord." This is consistent with St. Mark having been the founder of the Alexandrian Church.

¹ Acts xi. 20. The English version reads "Grecians," *i.e.*, Hellenists; but the true reading is *Hellenes*, "Greeks."

² Acts viii. 27—39.

³ Ps. lxxviii. 31.

⁴ Isaiah lvi. 4, 5.

more than even Rome itself, the emporium of trade. The Hellenist Jews occupied an intermediate place between the more rigid inhabitants of Palestine and the Gentile world. Their language, education, and social habits, qualified them, as by a special preparation, to be the avenue for distributing to mankind the revelations hitherto locked up amongst the chosen people. Hence the fitness of St. Paul, who was "a Hebrew of the Hebrews," "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers,"¹ choosing the learned and eloquent Alexandrian, Apollos, for his associate. Alexandria, again, was the port from which the two vessels sailed which conveyed St. Paul to Malta, and from Malta into Italy. Lying thus in the track of the apostolic travels, and connected by so many ties with Jews on one hand, and with Gentiles on the other, it would seem highly probable that Alexandria was visited by one of the Twelve. Its large Jewish population would be likely to attract the apostle of the circumcision, and many eminent critics support the tradition of the Coptic church, that the "Babylon," from which St. Peter's first epistle is dated, was the fortified town so called, opposite Memphis, and in the heart of the temple district.

Ecclesiastical history unanimously ascribes the foundation of the Alexandrian church to the evangelist Mark, the disciple and attendant of St. Peter, mentioned in the same epistle by the endearing appellation of "son."² According to Eusebius, it was in the second year of Claudius [A.D. 42 or 43] that a Jew, who had probably walked by the usual route to Pelusium, and along the river to Babylon, might have been seen

¹ Acts xxii. 3.

² 1 Peter v. 13.

entering the Mareotic lake in one of the Nile boats, and stepping out upon the crowded quays of Alexandria. Making his way to the Jewish quarter, he encountered a shoemaker of his faith, named Ananias, who, after Jewish usage, gladly received the stranger into his house. There he imparted his mission. He was the chosen assistant of Peter, the first apostle of the crucified Jesus, who was then preaching His Resurrection at Jerusalem. He was sent to proclaim the glad tidings in Alexandria, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. The evangelist's name was Mark. Ananias listened, searched the Scriptures, and believed. Then he guided the evangelist to others who believed also. As they threaded the crowded streets, they would hear a cry, "Sinners, away! keep your eyes upon the ground!" and every one fell back while the priestesses of Isis swept by, carrying the basket too sacred for impure eyes, and gathering close their white robes for fear of pollution. When they came under the Serapeum the priest would shout from the top of the hundred steps, "All ye that are clean of hands and pure of heart come to the sacrifice." Hundreds passed careless and unheeding: a few looked wistfully up to the marble portico gleaming cold and white in the air, but recoiled, conscience-stricken, from the arrogant invitation. Then was the time for Mark to seek out the wounded soul, and whisper, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Then would he stand and repeat the gracious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."¹ All true missionaries know the power of

1 1 Tim. i. 15; Matt. xi. 28.

such preaching. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called,"¹ but many burdened souls were brought to the cross of Christ, and led through faith in his atoning blood to realize a blessed justification, and by the power of the Holy Ghost to grow in sanctification and peace.

Learned men have tried hard to prove that Philo's *Therapeutæ* were disciples of St. Mark.² Eusebius assigned them to St. Peter, whom he fancied Philo may have met at Rome. But we have yet two centuries to wait before we shall find a Christian monk. No city, indeed, ancient or modern, was more likely to originate such a form of piety than Alexandria. Its dissolute morals and constant brawls would often cause a devout spirit to exclaim with the psalmist, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness."³ But the salt of the earth is appointed to abide amidst its seething corruptions.⁴ Amid the many exhortations of the New Testament to works of active and social duty, it contains not a single recommendation to a life of celibacy or solitude. The Greek verb from which the word asceticism is derived occurs in one place only in all its pages; and there it describes the true object of self-discipline in these memorable terms, "Herein do I *exercise* myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."⁵ Solitude is not always the fittest training for this attainment. The corruption of nature follows the hermit to his loneliest retreat, and works out its bitterness apart from external temptation. The heathen poet

¹ 1 Cor. i. 26.

² Neale, *Pat. Alex.* i. 5.

³ Psalm lv. 6, 7.

⁴ Matt. v. 13.

⁵ Acts xxiv. 16.

could see that change of scene was not change of mind;¹ and in the history of Christ it is remarkable that Satan chose, for his fiercest assault, the very hour when the Son of Man was alone in the wilderness, exercised with fasting and self-communion. Retirement and prayer are indispensable to acquaint us with God and with ourselves; but it is in the active charities of a godly life that the principles, so acquired and strengthened in meditation, are to bear fruit to the Divine glory and the benefit of mankind. It is in going about, like Christ, doing good, that the soul, justified by the blood of His atonement, and sanctified by grace, is enabled to purge out its old leaven, and become conformed to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

It needs but a glance into the Gospel of St. Mark, and the Epistles of his master St. Peter, to know that neither ever countenanced the monastic life. The success by which the evangelist roused the indignation of the idolaters, was achieved in the streets of Alexandria, not in the Mareotic deserts. The church which in after times bore his name, and exhibited his tomb, stood by the side of the Great harbour, where he probably loved to labour among the poor mariners, trusting their lives to the mercies of Castor and Pollux.²

The number of his converts excited the indignation of the Jews and idolaters. At a feast of Serapis, when the inflammable mob was rushing and roaring along the streets, some one proposed an attack on the new preacher. The evangelist was followed, seized and dragged through the city by a rope. He

¹ *Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.*—*Hor. Ep.* i. xi. 27.

² *Acts xxviii. 11.*

was thrown bruised and bleeding into prison.¹ He passed the night in adoring communion with the gracious Saviour, who counted him worthy to suffer for His name; and while enduring similar ill-usage the next day, he breathed out his life with the words, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." The day of his death was traditionally Sunday the 25th of March, A.D. 62.

This account of the ecclesiastical historian is perfectly consistent with the Holy Scriptures, and with the unvarying tradition of East and West, which makes St. Mark the founder of the Alexandrian church. It is scarcely possible, however, to harmonize his labours with two opinions which have found a wide reception, though on no adequate evidence.

The first is that the evangelist wrote his Gospel at *Rome*, from the lips of St. Peter, and went to *Alexandria* after that apostle's death in the imperial city.² A legend, received on the authority of Eusebius and Jerome, makes St. Peter go to *Rome* in the second year of Claudius [A.D. 42], and continue there twenty-five years.³ But this is contradicted by St. Paul's being with St. Peter at Jerusalem and Antioch,⁴ during that very period, and by the absence of any allusion to St. Peter in the Epistle to the Romans, written A.D. 61, and in all the subsequent epistles from that city.⁵ The common opinion is that St. Peter and St. Paul suffered in the last year of Nero,

¹ Euseb. *Chron.* and *Hist. Ecc.* ii. 15, 16; Neale, *Pat. Alex.* i. 9. The miracles attributed to the evangelist are omitted in our account, not as denying their possibility, but as having no sufficient evidence of the fact.

² Eus. *Hist. Ecc.* ii. 15. ³ *Ibid.* ii. 14. ⁴ Gal. ii. 9—11.

⁵ See especially 2 Tim. iv. 11—16.

A.D. 67 or 68;¹ but St. Mark had then been dead five or six years, according to the Alexandrian history. On any theory it will be very difficult to bring the apostle and the evangelist to Rome at one time, and certainly not before the year in which Eusebius places St. Mark's death.

After all, there is really no evidence that St. Peter was ever at Rome. The proof is only the general belief of the fathers, and a tomb in the Vatican shown as St. Peter's in the third century.² But the belief of the fathers rested on an opinion, now quite discarded, that the "Babylon" of 1 Peter v. 13 was Rome, and the tomb might have been the creature of that belief. Certainly all the early writers who undertake to *date* the apostle's journey to Rome are contradicted by the Scriptures, or by each other.

It is equally impossible to reconcile St. Mark's labours at Alexandria with the hypothesis that the evangelist was the same with John Mark, "sister's son" to Barnabas, and his companion with St. Paul in the journeys related in Acts xii. 25; xiii. 5; and xv. 37. Their identity is contended for to show the evangelist summoned to Rome just before St. Paul's death,³ and so to support his contemporary attendance on St. Peter. On the other hand, it introduces the new and startling improbability that the apostle of the Circumcision and the apostle of the Gentiles should be attended, in their widely different fields of labour, by the same "minister."

On the whole it seems more likely that there were two Marks; and if we may further believe that the

¹ Le Clerc. i. 447; Alford, *Prol. to Peter's Ep.*

² *Hist. Ecc.* ii. 26.

³ 2 Tim. iv. 2.

First Epistle of St. Peter was written at Babylon *on the Nile*, the evangelist will then be found in the country always connected with his labours, and the apostle in the midst of the Egyptian Dispersion, where he could most expeditiously proceed to Rome. It may be added, that the ministry of St. Peter in Egypt would supply the best reason for its being passed by in the voyages of St. Paul, who went over all Cyprus, was twice on board of Alexandrian ships, and by his connexion with Apollos would naturally be solicited and willing to extend his labours to Alexandria.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARK.

Obscurity of the Primitive Church—Early Alexandrian Succession—Hadrian's Letter—Gnostic Philosophy—Basilides—Æons or Pleromata—Abraxas—Theory of Creation—Transmigration—Gnostic Gems—Pantheism—"Patriarch"—Church Organization—Character of the Alexandrians—Troubles in Judea—Bar-cocheba—Final Destruction of the City and Temple.

FROM the close of the New Testament to the end of the second century, little is known of the history of the Church, and still less of the lives of individual Christians. The labours even of inspired apostles are for the most part wrapped in obscurity. Secular history had no eyes for them, and Christians were too intent on having their names in the book of life to care for a place in the perishable annals of earth. We know little more than that "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,"¹ were dismissed by a martyr's death, from the toil and conflict of earth to the peace and joy of heaven.

In the obscurity which thus rests over the history of the Church at large the church of Alexandria is involved. A few records and traditions of duty faithfully discharged, sufferings cheerfully borne, and death fearlessly encountered, make up the sum of our

¹ Rev. vii. 9—14.

knowledge of the church of Christ in Egypt during this period. The believers formed "a sect everywhere spoken against;" they were specially hated and despised by the mocking Greeks of Alexandria, as a section of their old enemies the Jews. Insult and injury were their daily portion, and so the early pastors and people went their way.

Primus, a layman, was called to the perilous charge on the death of the last of St. Mark's fellow-labourers, "on account of the angelic purity of his life." After him followed Justus, the last of the converts baptized by the evangelist's hand; then Eumenius, Marcian, Celadion, Agrippinus, and Julian, bring down the catalogue to A.D. 189. Of these names there is nothing to be said save that, with the exception of the layman Primus, they are all numbered among the "Saints" of the oriental church.

Some account of the people peeps out in a letter from the emperor Hadrian, who visited Egypt in the episcopate of Eumenius, A.D. 134. He found the inhabitants of Memphis and Heliopolis in arms for the possession of a sacred bull, whose marks left it open to question, whether he were an Apis or a Mnevis. Hadrian, who, if not an idolater, was certainly a polytheist,¹ saw little to admire in the superior pretensions of the learned classes. "This Egypt (he wrote to the consul Servianus), which you so extolled to me, I find utterly frivolous, wavering, and flying after every change of rumour. They who worship Serapis are Christians, and some who call themselves bishops of Christ are devoted to Serapis.

¹ He erected a number of temples without idols;—a peculiarity at one time supposed to indicate a Christian intention: the probability is that they were designed to receive his own image.

There is no Jewish ruler of synagogue, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, who is not a mathematician,¹ an augur, or a soothsayer. The very patriarch himself, when he came into Egypt, is maintained by some to have worshipped Serapis, by others Christ. It is a most seditious, vain, spiteful race of men; but the city (Alexandria) is opulent, rich, and prosperous. No one there leads an idle life. Some blow glass, others make paper, and others linen; every one professes and practises some business. The lame have their work, the blind have their work, even those who have lost the use of their hands do not live in idleness. That one God of theirs is no God; him the Christians, him the Jews, him even all the Gentiles venerate. I could wish, indeed, the city were better mannered and worthy of its importance, since for magnitude it holds the first place in Egypt. I have granted them everything, restored old privileges and added so many new ones, that they give me great thanks while I am here; but the moment I am gone they will speak against my son Verus, as I believe you know they did of Antinous.² I wish them nothing more than to feed on their own chickens, which they hatch in a way too ridiculous to be mentioned.³ I have sent you some parti-coloured

¹ This word then commonly denoted an astrologer.

² Antinous was a favourite of Hadrian's, who was drowned in the Nile on their voyage to Thebes. Some writers say that an oracle had foretold a great danger, only to be averted by the immolation of what was most dear to the emperor, whereupon this youth threw himself in the river. Hadrian built a city and temple at the place, called Antinoopolis, and established "prophets" and sacred games to his honour. The Alexandrians would appear to have made merry with the new demigod.—Eus. H.E. iv. 8.

³ A curious instance of the permanence of custom in Egypt, where eggs are still hatched by being taken into the beds of the natives.

cups¹ which one of the temple priests gave me ; they are a present to my sister and yourself. Use them with your guests at festivals, but be careful that our Africanus does not indulge too freely in them.”²

It appears from this letter, ignorant and superficial as the imperial “explorer of all curiosities”³ shows himself, that Christianity had already penetrated into the Alexandrian schools, where the favourite tenet was that all religions worshipped the same God. The emperor was scandalized at the notion of a universal Deity under a variety of names, “Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.” He ridicules it by pretending that the Serapians worshipped Christ, and the Christians Serapis. This unholy alliance was actually attempted at Alexandria by the Gnostics, or men of “science falsely so called,” against whom the apostle warned his son Timothy at Ephesus,⁴ and it is not impossible that Hadrian had heard of this vain philosophy. Basilides, who taught here in this century, endeavoured to graft the gospel of Christ on the old Egyptian philosophy. He pretended that God the eternal Father, who was beyond the reach of all human conception, had evolved out of himself seven *Æons*, or *Pleromata*,⁵ of whom two were named Wisdom and Power.⁶ From these proceeded the chief angels, and by successive descents,

1 “*Allasontes*,” having the property of *changing* colour.

2 Vopiscus, *Vita Sat.* viii.

3 *Tert. Ap.* v.

4 1 Tim. vi. 20.

5 It is doubtful whether the heathen and their Gnostic disciples meant these names to indicate Divine *persons* or Divine *attributes*. Both words occur in the New Testament. In Heb. i. 2, *æon* is translated “world;” and in Eph. ii. 7 ; iii. 5, “age.” *Pleroma*, “fulness,” is applied to Christ in Eph. i. 23, and Col. i. 19, in a way to show that it properly belongs to no other.

6 Compare 1 Cor. i. 24.

three hundred and sixty-five orders of angelic beings, each of inferior degree to its predecessor.¹ All were subject to a Prince of Heaven named *Abraxas*, who under the guidance of the *Æon* Wisdom, and with the assistance of the lower angels, created the earth out of matter pre-existent and eternal. Man was constituted of a body and two souls, one taken out of the "soul of the world," and another, wise and rational, given him by the special gift of God.² The angels who took part in the creation presided over the different nations, the prince *Abraxas* ruling over the Jews, and being the author of the Mosaic law. The other angels were the deities of the Gentiles, but all properly under the eternal Father, who, from time to time, sent prophets upon earth to assert his claim against the powers of the senses. The souls of those who accepted the heavenly message would be released from their bodies at death, and ascend to celestial felicity. The disobedient would migrate into other bodies, human or animal, till made fit for the heavenly regions.³ Such was the wisdom of the Egyptians: to adapt it to the Gospel, *Abraxas* (whom the idolaters probably identified with the sun),⁴ was supposed to be Christ; and a number of gems have been found in Egypt, engraved with this name, of which

¹ Compare the "endless genealogies" of 1 Tim. i. 4; also Col. i. 16; and Eph. i. 21.

² Compare 1 Thess. v. 23.

³ Compare Col. i. 12. All these philosophers imagined matter to be necessarily evil, and the body the prison of the soul. It is the Bible only that teaches that "every creature of God is good" (1 Tim. iv. 4), and in the Resurrection of Christ reveals the "redemption of the body" (Romans viii. 23; 1 Peter i. 3).

⁴ This appears to be the meaning of 365, as the number of the angelic orders.

it is hard to say whether they were the work of the heathen or of their Christian imitators.¹

Deceived by these extravagant speculations, men who called themselves disciples of Jesus Christ thought it indifferent whether they joined in the rites of Serapis, the Jewish synagogue, or the Christian church, pretending that all adored the same Being under different manifestations. This notion is often found in the writings of the Alexandrian divines, and the frequent condemnatory allusions to it in the New Testament, show that it troubled the primitive Church in other parts of the East. It was always regarded with horror by the genuine Christians, who recoiled from idols as an abomination, and preferred to give up their lives in torture, rather than burn a grain of incense on a heathen altar.

The most perplexing part of Hadrian's letter is the allusion to the "patriarch" who occasionally, and it would seem periodically, "came into Egypt." Casaubon was of opinion that it might be some Jewish or heathen functionary: the date is far too early for a Christian ecclesiastic.² Neither can the terms "bishops" and "presbyters" be pressed into an argument on the then constitution of the Alexandrian church. They are usual scriptural designations; having originally the same signification.³ All we can

¹ Mosheim de Rebus. ant. Const. Sharpe, xv. 24.

² The first Christian patriarch was the bishop of Antioch. Cyril, in the fifth century, was the first who bore the title at Alexandria.

³ Presbyter, or "elder," was borrowed from the Jewish synagogue, and was most common in the early period, when the Church consisted chiefly of Jews. Bishop (episcopus) was a secular title of office among the Greeks, and occurs in the Septuagint for various functionaries, priestly and otherwise: Numb. iv. 16; xxxi. 14; Ps. cix. 8; Is. lx. 17. It was adopted by the Greek Christians as equivalent to presbyter (Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1). The same persons are

infer is, that there was an organized church with a number of ministers, and consequently that a very great extension of Christianity had taken place in the seventy years since the death of St. Mark.

The industry of the city was, no doubt, to a great extent, due to those who had been thus taught to "study to be quiet, and do their own business." The Alexandrians generally bore a very different reputation. Hadrian's account of their fickle, passionate temper is confirmed by all other writers. Dionysius Chrysostom, one of themselves, describes them as interested in nothing but their dinners and the races.¹ They were grave, quiet, and listless at the sacrifices, but in the theatre or stadium every one boiled with excitement. The streets were the scenes of continual brawls, which were often not suppressed without bloodshed. In the public assemblies, the speaker's voice was constantly drowned in tumultuous clamour. Ridicule and scurrilous jests were the favourite forms of attack. With little faith in anything great or good, they set the fashions to imperial Rome in dress and dissipation. Juvenal describes the Alexandrian fop, with his scarlet mantle slipping off his shoulders, cooling in the air his hands glittering with summer rings of gold, in place of the too burdensome jewels of winter.² Martial tells us that the smart young Romans hummed an Alexandrian

spoken of under both appellations, in Acts xx. 17 and 28; Titus i. 5 and 7; it is universally allowed that the modern use of the word *bishop*, as an overseer superior to the elders, is of ecclesiastical and post-scriptural origin. In granting this, Episcopalians concede nothing in regard to the origin of episcopacy itself.

¹ It was the same at Rome:—

——— "duas tantum res anxius optat
Panem et Circenses."—*Juv. Sat. x.* 80.

² *Juv. Sat. i.* 26.

tune as they sauntered down the *Via Sacra*.¹ The clown of the Roman circus was the Alexandrian *retiarus*, baffling the armed gladiator and capturing him in his net. The finest fighting-cocks were from Alexandria.² Such being the general character of the people, we may fairly assign to the believers in Revelation the commendation which qualifies the emperor's censure. These were the leaven and the salt of the giddy crowd among whom they lived and toiled. Though their religion was despised and ridiculed by the masters of the Roman legions, it could change not only the face of the world, but what is more difficult to be reached, the hearts and inner life of mankind.

Soon after Hadrian's departure the Alexandrians were again involved in the troubles of Judea. In despair of keeping the Jews in subjection by other means, the emperor conceived the idea of converting their holy city into a Roman colony. The people instantly flew to arms, became masters of Jerusalem, and attempted to rebuild the temple. Their leader was one of the so-called "princes of the captivity," named Bar-cocheba, "son of the star." He was crowned king of the Jews, and by many regarded as the Messiah. An army of Jews went to his support from Egypt and Libya. Hadrian recalled his best general, Julius Severus, from Britain, to conduct the war; but so fierce was the resistance that two years elapsed before the Romans recovered Jerusalem, and even then the fight was maintained in Bether.

Five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are said to have perished in this last insurrection. At its termination Hadrian determined to obliterate the very existence of the city. The towers spared by Titus

¹ Mart. ii. 24.

² Sharpe, xv. 6.

were demolished, and the plough was passed over the site of the Temple. A temple to the Capitoline Jupiter rose in its place. The emperor's statue stood where the Holy of Holies had been, and a Roman city was erected around it, which received the name of *Ælia Capitolina*, from Hadrian's family name *Ælius*. Mount Zion was outside the walls, and so completely was the ancient city obliterated, that its very name fell into disuse. None but Christians and Pagans were allowed to reside in it. The worship of Serapis was introduced from Alexandria, and no Jew was permitted to set his foot within the gates. It was not till the middle of the fourth century that they obtained leave to assemble once a year at the west wall of the Temple, to bewail the desolation of the forsaken habitation. The scriptural name was revived by Constantine when he built his Church of the Martyrs on the supposed site of the Crucifixion. Hence, at the Nicene Council, though the name of *Ælia* is retained in the canons, Macarius subscribed as bishop of *Jerusalem*.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EVANGELICAL SEE.

Demetrius bishop—The “Evangelical See”—Catechetical School—Athenagoras—Pantænus—The Pull—Indian Mission—Hebrew Gospel—Jews of Cochin—Persia and Great India—Clement—Eclectic Philosophy—Defective Views of Grace—Apocryphal Writings—Canon of Scripture—Lord’s Day—Severus’s Persecution—Origen—Courageous Conduct—Scriptural Labours—Doctrines of Grace—Philosophical Corruptions—Emperor Caracalla—Alexander Severus—Excommunication of Origen—His Reply to Celsus—Death—Heraclas—Pope—Julius Africanus—Dionysius—Decian Persecution—Paul the Hermit—Novatianism—Great Plague—Valerian’s Persecution—Siege of Alexandria—The Three Popes.

THE history of the Egyptian Church commences with the accession of Demetrius to the chair of St. Mark, A.D. 189. He was a married man, a lay-peasant, who could neither read nor write. Like Primus, he presents a singular contrast to the monks and doctors, whom a later age deemed the glory of the Church. By applying himself, after his elevation, to the study of the Holy Scriptures, he attained the reputation of one of the most learned prelates of the age. He ruled his church for forty-two years, during which time three other bishops were created under him at different towns. The mother church was called, from its founder, the “Evangelical See,” but this was perhaps a title of later date.

The advanced condition of the Alexandrian See is seen in the high reputation of its “Catechetical School;”—an institution fondly ascribed to St. Mark, and which grew to be the most flourishing theological seminary of the Eastern church. Its earliest known master, Athenagoras, was an Athenian philosopher,

who, after his conversion, wrote an apology for Christianity, and an argument for its great doctrine, the Resurrection of the Body.¹ His successor was the celebrated Pantænus, a Sicilian Jew, and a philosopher of the Stoic school. This designation was not thought at all inconsistent in a Christian divine; Pantænus retained with it the *pallium* or cloak by which the professed philosophers were distinguished, and many of the bishops of that age followed the same usage. At a later date the pall was elevated into a robe of state for Christian emperors, and descending again to ecclesiastical uses, it became the mark of metropolitan dignity, both in the Eastern and Western churches.²

There is too much reason to fear that, even thus early, the simplicity of gospel truth began to be corrupted at Alexandria, with the subtleties of human speculation. The one incident, however, recorded of Pantænus is highly to his credit, as well as of the church to which he belonged. An application was brought to Demetrius from certain Christians in India, praying him to send them a missionary to aid their efforts to propagate the gospel among the idolatrous natives. It speaks well for the Evangelical See, that while itself encompassed with idolatry, it accepted joyfully a call to

1 This doctrine is warmly contended for by Josephus in his Discourse to the Greeks concerning Hades. He uses the very figures of St. Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 37, and 2 Cor. v. 4; distinctly asserting that God the Father hath "*committed all judgment to God the Word*" (compare John v. 22), "*whom we call Christ.*"

2 It is by bestowing the pall that the Roman pontiff asserts his superiority over other primates. But there was a "pall of St. Mark" at Alexandria as well as of St. Peter at Rome. The Roman pall superseded the Gallican at the synod of Mentz., A.D. 742 (Collier's *Hist. of England*, book ii.) It was ordered to be sent to the Eastern patriarchs at the council of the Lateran, A.D. 1215; but the patriarchs were then beset with heresies and incapable of resistance. None of the Eastern churches admit the Papal claims.

enlarge the Saviour's kingdom in a distant country, and even committed the work as an honourable distinction to its principal divinity professor. Pantænus left his books and academical delights to preach the gospel to barbarians: but he was not the first to evangelize the country he went to; for at his return he brought with him a copy of St. Matthew's gospel in the Hebrew language, said to have been left there by the apostle Bartholomew. This is all the account which history (preserving so many narrations of little worth) has vouchsafed to give us of a great attempt for the salvation of souls. Nothing is told of the extent or duration of Pantænus's labours; it is not even certain what was the scene of his mission. In the then imperfect state of geographical knowledge, the name of India was given to parts of Ethiopia and Arabia, as well as to the regions on both sides the Indus; and the mention of a Hebrew version of the gospel (implying that the applicants were of the Jewish nation) has been thought to denote that Pantænus went into Arabia or Abyssinia, where many Hebrew settlements are known to have been established. The native sages, however, are called *Brahmans* by Jerome,"¹ and their description sufficiently accords with the Gymnosophists, whom Alexander found on the banks of Indus.² A regular communication is now known to have existed between Alexandria and the coast of Malabar, where many Jewish colonies were anciently planted; and their descendants (black and white), still exist in the vicinity of Cochin. It is probable, then, that India Proper was the true scene of this mission, and commerce was thus early advanced to be the hand

¹ *Ep. ad Magn. Orat.* ii. 327.

² Arrian vii. 1—3. Author's *India*, p. 57.

maid of the gospel. From their distant factories (which afforded a refuge from the troubles or the ungodliness of the times), the believing traders called on their own bishop to help them in winning new territories to Christ. Pantæus probably sailed in the fleet which annually quitted Myos-Hormos [lat. 27° 24'] for Malabar, and the pearl fisheries of Ceylon. Other missionaries—whether the apostles Matthew and Bartholomew, the Abyssinian eunuch, or names unknown to tradition—may have taken the same course before him. Certain it is that, at the council of Nicæa [A.D. 325], a bishop subscribed as “Metropolitan of Persia and Great India,” a title which undoubtedly denotes an extensive and long-established Christian community. All that meets us of its rise and progress are these flashes out of an obscure antiquity, of which the mission of Pantæus is the clearest and most decisive.

He was succeeded in the chair of the Catechetical School by Clement, a native, as some think, of Athens, but distinguished from his namesake at Rome by the city of his choice and principal labours. Clement is the first Alexandrian divine whose writings have come down to us, and they are not without some suspicion of interpolation. They prove him to have been a man of great and varied learning, educated, as he expressly states, under the first teachers of Greece, Italy, Assyria, and Palestine, till he found in Egypt a wisdom which left nothing to be sought after or desired. He ascribes his conversion to the fervent preaching of teachers who had learned from St. Peter, St. John, St. James, St. Paul, and the Holy Apostles. The language may refer to the writings rather than to the oral preaching of the first evangelical messengers; still it proves that

Clement was only one degree removed from apostolic times, and a competent judge of their mission.

It must be confessed that the advantage derived to the evidences of Christianity, by the submission of this learned philosopher, is qualified by some of the tenets he imported into the gospel message. Clement held to the old heathen notion of an inner and outer circle of disciples. He boasted of not limiting himself to any particular sect, Stoic, Platonic, Epicurean, or Aristotelian, but culled from each what was most consonant with truth. This "eclectic" system, as it was called, had been professed at Alexandria by Potamon, a name which seems to indicate a native of Egypt. Clement, with some allusion perhaps to the inundation of the Nile, compared its operation to that of water preparing the ground for the reception of the seed of God's word. The freedom with which he exposes the idolatrous rites, shows they no longer enjoyed even a simulated respect from the educated classes. He laughs aloud at the beast or the reptile cushioned on purple in the Egyptian sanctuaries; but he assumes a very different tone towards those of whom St. Paul says, "professing themselves to be wise they became fools."¹

He insists that the heathen worshipped the same God, though not in the same manner, with the Jews and Christians. His illustrations are drawn almost indiscriminately from heathen learning and the sacred Scriptures. He recommends the gospel as a truer *gnosis* sent down from heaven, rather than as God's message of salvation to perishing sinners. Philo had so ingeniously united Platonism with Judaism, that the Greek philosopher was supposed by many of the Christian fathers to have borrowed from the books of

¹ Rom. i. 22.

Moses. Clement wished to perform the same office for the gospel. He dilates with much fervour on the mystic powers of *seven* and *ten*, and proves the doctrine of the Trinity from the metaphysics of Plato. Such attempts were by no means disagreeable to philosophers, so long as the discussion was limited to the Divine nature, the dignity of man, and the existence of an unseen world of spirits. The fallacy became apparent when the preacher of the Cross approached his true business—the personal guilt of sin, the justification of the believer by the blood of the atonement, and the sanctification of the new creature by the transforming power of the Holy Ghost. These were truths equally offensive to Greek and Jew, to the one foolishness, as to the other a stumbling-block.¹ In the eyes of a self-sufficient philosopher, the Christian glorying in the symbol of shame and death was not less superstitious than the Egyptian who adored a bull or a cat. They insisted on leaving these husks to the vulgar, while they explored for themselves the inner kernels of knowledge.

Hence we read comparatively little in Clement of repentance, conversion, and grace. He acknowledges, indeed, the corruption of human nature, and the necessity of a Divine power to overcome sin, which is the true cause of man's ignorance.² He expressly states that Jesus Christ has become a victim incomprehensible, inexplicable, and that by his death on the Cross, he conquered death.³ But he does not explain how this power came from the death of Christ, nor how it works in the soul a justification through faith. We may hope that under the word *faith*, he

1 1 Cor. i. 23.

2 Strom. i. 28.

3 Pæd. i. 11; ii. 3; Strom. iv. 10, 13, &c.

included all evangelical requisites ; but his language is more of imitating Christ than of trusting in His redeeming merits. He exhorts "the true Gnostic to step forward from faith through love to knowledge, from being a slave to become a free servant, then a son, and at last, a God walking in the flesh." This was, doubtless, considered fine preaching at Alexandria ; let us hope that either the city possessed less learned preachers, or that the learned had their times for more evangelical discourses.

The principal work of Clement now extant is entitled *Stromata* (Miscellanies). He likens it to a forest rather than a garden, where cypress and plantain, laurel and ivy, apples, olives, and figs, grow promiscuously and untrained. It may be questioned if some of these glittering fruits ever grew on the tree of life, yet this father was undoubtedly orthodox in the Divinity of Christ ; and we are indebted to his pen for quotations which show the Alexandrian canon of the New Testament to have been substantially the same with our own. He cites the four evangelists, with the Acts of the Apostles, which he ascribes to St. Luke ; expressly distinguishing between their authority and the numerous unauthorized writings then in circulation. In disputing against the heretical doctrine of celibacy, for which a pretended sanction of Christ was adduced, Clement has these words :—"First, I observe that we have not this word in the four Gospels delivered down to us, but in the Gospel according to the Egyptians."¹ This was an apocryphal book drawn up in all probability by some of the Egyptian recluses, who were early engaged in adulterating the Scriptures. The common practice of that age was to father a favourite tenet on

1 *Strom.* iii. 465.

some sacred person, with a "saying," which passing from mouth to mouth became what any one pleased. Such corruptions were the more easy when few were in possession of the entire text of Scripture. It was a practice not confined to heretics; the orthodox were often weak enough to allege fictitious authorities in support of the truth. Hence the famous Sibylline verses, the books of Mercurius Trismegistus, and other pious forgeries, filled with prophecies which were certainly written after the event. A work of this sort called the "Preaching of Peter," is quoted by Clement,¹ but it is observable that he never calls it by the name of Scripture, though his unhappy method of fetching proofs from every source has invested the forgery with a very undeserved appearance of authority.

The temporary prevalence of these apocryphal writings was due to the yet limited circulation of the inspired books of the New Testament. To those who really believe in Revelation, the standard of faith can only be the revealed Word of God; hence among both Jews and Christians, the collected Scriptures were called the *canon*, or rule. The canon of the Old Testament was settled by Ezra; and having been recognised by Christ himself, it descended upon His authority to the evangelical Church; but there was no one to perform the same office for the Scriptures of the New Testament. Its inspired books were published separately, and in different places; those who first received them had to verify them to others, and some time must unavoidably have elapsed before the whole were authentically collected. On this point the authorities of each church were properly very

1 Jones on the Canon, i. 319.

jealous ; since it was only by their public recognition that the majority of converts could know the true Scripture from the false. One of the principal objects of the early synods was to compare the lists of the several churches, in order to correct and complete the entire canon. A catalogue of the canonical books received in the church of Sardis, one of the seven addressed by St. John,¹ was published by its bishop, Melito, about the year 177 ; but the earliest list now extant is that of the Alexandrian church, drawn up about the year 210 by Origen, a disciple of Clement. It omits the Epistles of James and Jude, which are recognised, however, in other writings of the same father. A second list by Athanasius, a century later, agrees exactly with our own canon.

A vast number of spurious writings, claiming the authority of Christ or his Apostles, are referred to by different fathers, but their entire exclusion from the authorised canon shows how faithfully the Church ever guarded the Word of God from corruption. It is another proof of this care that the later books, even of the genuine Scripture, were in some places exposed at first to suspicion. The Epistles of James, 2nd Peter, 2nd and 3rd John, with Jude and the Apocalypse, are occasionally omitted by early writers. It is satisfactory, therefore, to know that in Alexandria, where critical scholarship had flourished for centuries, and where the canon was first authentically completed, all were included. The same church (as we learn from Clement) gave public testimony to the historical truth of the sacred narrative by the days appointed for special observance. In addition to the Lord's day,²

¹ Rev. iii. 1.

² So also at Carthage : " We indulge in gladness on the Sunday,

two great feasts of Easter and Pentecost commemorated the Resurrection, and the outflow of the Holy Ghost; while the weekly fasts of Wednesday and Friday (days which the idolaters dedicated to Mercury and Venus) attested the Christian's faith in the betrayal and crucifixion of the Lord of glory.

At the opening of the third century, the emperor Severus visited Egypt, and inscribed his name among the idolaters at the foot of the Great Sphinx. It was a visit fraught with misery to the Alexandrian church. Philip the prefect, who had embraced the faith of Christ, was deprived of his government, and secretly put to death; this was followed by the fifth general persecution, which began in the tenth year of this reign [A.D. 203]. Cruelties which the unanswerable arguments of Tertullian's *Apology* had temporarily restrained, were now renewed with greater vigour than ever. Victor of Rome, and Irenæus of Lyons, fell victims to the emperor's fury. At Alexandria the sufferers were numerous. Clement, after largely discussing a question which no man's conscience can decide for another, judged it better to fly than to fall. He took refuge at Jerusalem, and there continued his labours for the instruction and extension of the church, till Alexander the bishop was cast into prison. Thence he escaped to Antioch, and, as some say, finally returned to Alexandria, but the close of his life is unknown.

His place in the Catechetical School was supplied by *Origen*, a pupil more renowned than his master, and who carries on the history to the middle of the third century. Born about the year 185, he was the son of

but for a very different reason from the worship of the sun.—*Tert. Ap.* xvi.

Leonidas (by some accounted a bishop), who fell in the persecution which Clement avoided by flight. The manner of his death by beheading, and the confiscation of his property, seem to indicate a person of some consideration. Origen, who was then only seventeen years of age, was so far from approving his master's sentiments, that he enthusiastically desired to accompany his father to the block. He entreated him by no means to be deterred from confessing Christ, through compassion for himself or his mother, and it was with difficulty that the latter restrained him, when the fatal day arrived, from rushing to the tribunal, and demanding the crown of martyrdom for himself.

Being appointed, even at that early age, to the charge of the Catechetical School on account of his wonderful knowledge of Holy Scripture, Origen continued to manifest the same intrepid contempt of danger. Many of his disciples laid down their lives for the truth, among whom was Plutarch his first hearer, apparently a person of consideration, and Potamiæna, a native slave girl, with her mother Marcella. Her death enlisted another in the noble army of martyrs. Basileides, the officer whose terrible duty it was to see her cast into a cauldron of boiling pitch, was himself, with many other pagans, among the hearers of Origen. He soon after declared himself a Christian, and being hurried to prison and to the block, ascribed his conversion to Potamiæna, who had appeared to him in his dreams holding out a crown for his reception.

In these trying moments, Origen came boldly forward in support of his friends. He visited them in their dungeons, stood beside them at the tribunal, and accompanied them to the place of execution, blessing and dismissing them with the kiss of peace.

Exposing himself to the fury of the heathen in every possible way, it is surprising how he escaped the death which he seemed to be so persistently courting. On one occasion he was seized by the mob when returning from the martyrdom of a friend. Having shaved his head, like the Egyptian priests, and placed him on the steps of the great temple, they offered him palm-branches, insisting on his distributing them in the accustomed manner. In such a crisis Clement might have preached his favourite doctrine, that all were worshippers of the same God though not in the same way. Origen chose to Christianize the rite rather than the idol. "Take the branch (he exclaimed), not of the idol Serapis, but of Christ the Tree of Life."¹

At a maturer age, when Origen had experienced the privilege of serving God in his generation, he learned to moderate his ardour for the crown of martyrdom, and was content to abide his Master's summons. He profited by the calm which ensued on the death of Severus at York [A.D. 211], to visit Rome; but soon returning to Alexandria, he made three journeys into Arabia, where his assistance was requested to examine some of the many "foolish and unlearned questions" which disturbed the peace of the early Church. He was accounted by all, the most learned man of the age. Many pagan philosophers attended his lectures, and not a few were won by his eloquence to the faith which he preached. The larger part of Origen's writings which survive, consists of Commentaries on the Holy Scriptures, to the study of which he devoted the greater portion of his life. From childhood he had been accustomed daily to commit

¹ *Epiph. Hæres.* lxiv. 227.

some portion to memory. He acquired the Hebrew language, little cared for by the Greek and Alexandrian Christians, in order to collect and collate the several editions and versions of the sacred text.

These labours resulted in the publication of his famous works, the *Tetrapla*, *Hexapla*, and *Octapla*, showing the original text of the Old Testament, with the several authentic Greek versions, in parallel columns. The *Octapla* contained the Hebrew text, both in Hebrew and Greek letters, with six Greek translations—the Septuagint, the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, a fifth by an unknown writer found in a cask at Jericho, and a sixth found by one of Origen's scholars at Nicopolis. The *Hexapla* omitted the last two (which are no longer extant), and the *Tetrapla* was without the Hebrew texts. This was the first of the many labours which have consecrated learning and scholarship to the elucidation of the sacred text.

In this noblest and most enduring study Origen so pre-eminently distinguished himself, that Jerome, while justly condemning his allegorical expositions, frankly declares he would gladly bear all the odium they had acquired, if he could but inherit with it Origen's skill and knowledge in the Holy Scriptures.¹ His Commentaries and Homilies extend over nearly all the books of the Old and New Testaments; he employed seven short-hand writers and transcribers at once; dictating with a rapidity which could hardly fail to hurry him into some error. It was the subject of his daily and hourly conversation. When visiting his wealthy cousin Ambrose, at his villa near Alexandria, the table-talk was ever of some part of Scripture: the theme

1 Pref. in quest. in Gen.

was renewed in their walks and recreations ; a large part of the night, and all their morning studies were given to the holy exercise, and every night and day were ushered in by prayer and reading. So exalted, in the estimation of this highly educated divine, was the knowledge of God's holy and inspired Word ! His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in His law did he meditate day and night.¹

As the natural fruit of such studies, we find in Origen a far clearer perception of the system of grace than in his predecessor Clement. His views of the Divine nature of Jesus Christ are founded on a true perception of His work of redemption. The title *Logos* (Word), of which so large a use was made by Plato, he observes is only one of the names of Jesus Christ. He is called also the Light of the World, the Truth, the Way, the Resurrection and the Life ;—names which can only belong to one who is truly God. He is King in virtue of His Divine nature, and Christ by reason of His humanity. In Him God and man are essentially united ; without which it would be impossible for man to be reconciled to God.² In commenting on the Epistle to the Romans, he remarks that “ He whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,”³ is the same of whom the Baptist said, “ Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”⁴ “ He has given remission of sins to all by the shedding of His blood, but the propitiation is attainable only through faith.” “ He became the ransom by delivering Himself to the enemies. He gave them His blood for which they thirsted.” “ He is ‘ righteousness ’ because the faith

¹ Ps. i. 2.

³ Rom. iii. 25.

² Commentary on St. John.

⁴ John i. 29.

of one who thoroughly believes in Him is imputed to him for righteousness. The apostle has well said, in respect to the remission of sins, that faith shall be imputed for righteousness, even to him who has not yet done works of righteousness and that solely because the sinner believes on Him who justifies (or makes righteous).¹ For the beginning of righteousness (justification) with God is faith, which puts its trust in the justifier. And this faith is planted in the innermost being of the soul, it is like a root receiving the rain; being made fruitful by the law, it puts out branches which bear fruits, and these fruits are good works.² The root of righteousness does not spring from works, but from the root of righteousness spring forth the fruits of works, viz. from the root of that righteousness by which God imputes righteousness without works.”³ Of grace he says, “How could Jesus Christ be our Advocate (1 John ii. 1) and Mediator, without the power of God annihilating our infirmity, and diffusing itself into the soul of the believer reconciled by Jesus? For He was before our infirmity inasmuch as He in himself is the power of God. By Him it is that we can say, ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’”⁴

Origen is equally clear on sanctification. “I know not how it can be pretended of any one that he is reconciled with God by the blood of Jesus Christ, when he is resting in the works which God hates. How can he be reconciled who continues to act as an

¹ The English language is deficient in a *verb* to correspond with the *noun* “righteousness.” In Greek and Latin both are derived from the same root, as *justice* and *justify*.

² In Epist. ad Rom. l. 3, and liv. 4.

³ Compare Article xii. of the Church of England.

⁴ Phil. iv. 13; Orig. ad Rom. l. 4.

enemy? St. Paul was right when he said of himself and of those who were like him, 'When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;' ¹ but it would be very shameful that, after having obtained such a reconciliation,—after the enmity between God and men had ceased, not by the word of a sinner, but by the blood of a Mediator,—we should fall back again into enmity, and do the things which He abhors, to whom we have been reconciled by the shedding of holy blood." ²

With respect to the Holy Ghost, the immediate Author of sanctification in the believer, Origen teaches that all the Divine qualities are in Him, as in the Son.³ He compares the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to three Days eternally existing beside each other.⁴ "The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son,⁵ and in that respect may be called inferior to the Son, as the Son for the same reason is called inferior to the Father,"⁶ but the Three are "an indivisible unity dwelling in the faithful;"⁷ the Sovereign, Adorable, Trinity.

While thus clearly enunciating the doctrines of grace, Origen did not fail to refute the erroneous inference of the Mystics. "The only-begotten Son of the Father, our Saviour, is Son of God by nature, not by adoption. Our God is One. He only possesses immortality. He alone dwells in the light inaccessible.⁸ He only is the true God, a name which we are not to believe can belong to many. They who receive the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father,⁹ are

¹ Rom. v. 10.

² Or. Ad Rom. l. 4.

³ In Johann. 36.

⁴ In Matt. 20.

⁵ John xv. 26.

⁶ John xiv. 28.

⁷ Hom. viii. in Jerem.

⁸ 1 Tim. vi. 16.

certainly also the children of God, but not as the only begotten Son. For He is Son by nature: He is ever and inseparably the Son; others have only received power to become the sons of God, from receiving the Son of God in themselves. The latter truly are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;¹ still they are not born in the same manner as the only begotten Son; the difference is great between the true Son, and those of whom it is said, "Ye are all the children of the Most High."²

It must be confessed, that in other passages this learned writer exhibits the common failing of the Alexandrian divines, in mixing the simple truths of Holy Scripture with the speculations of the schools.

He had studied under Ammonius Saccas, who, uniting the views of Plato and Aristotle, may be called the founder of Alexandrian philosophy.³ This extraordinary man, whose surname is said to be derived from his having once carried sacks as a common porter,⁴ would appear from his other appellation to have been a native Egyptian. He was a Christian, and, according to Eutychius (an unsafe authority), a bishop. Porphyry and Plotinus were among his auditors, and from these studies was derived the passion for allegorical interpretations, which so unhappily obscured the scriptural labours of Origen. It was here he imbibed the fanciful tenet of the transmigration of souls, which Tertullian ridicules as an idle fable.⁵ Pythagoras was

¹ John i. 13.

² Ps. lxxxii. 6. In *Evang. Johan*, tom. v.

³ This combination of different systems was called, in the jargon of the New Platonists, a reuniting of the mangled limbs of Osiris.

⁴ Theod. Serm. vi. de Provid.

⁵ *Apol. adv. Gent.*, cap. xlviii.

supposed to have acquired this conceit from the ancient Egyptians, and it was always a favourite article of popular belief in that country. Origen supposed the souls of men to have been all created at one time, and to be successively infused into different bodies, human or otherwise. From this notion he argued, like the Brahmins of India, to a final return of all to the bosom of God; hence he was afterwards quoted as denying the Scriptural doctrines of the resurrection of the body and everlasting punishment.

It is only fair to bear in mind that Origen himself often distinguishes between his private speculations (some of which he complains were published without his permission, and others perverted by heretics), and the truths derived from Holy Scripture. He invariably asserted the inspiration and Divine authority of the sacred volume, to the exposition of which his life was devoted. The later fathers further distinguished between his errors and the pernicious heresies grafted on them by his followers. As in many similar cases, ancient and modern, there was a wide difference between Origen and the Origenists. Six thousand volumes were attributed to his prolific pen,—a report which could hardly have arisen, save in the land of the papyrus,—while his controversial successes obtained him the names of *Adamantine*, the *Composer*, the *Man of Brass*. Such honours are seldom purchased but at the price of much that had better not have been written.

The emperor Caracalla visited Alexandria about A.D. 215, on which occasion the inhabitants suffered a dreadful requital for the miseries they had inflicted on the unoffending Christians. The tyrant affected the name

and dress of Alexander, and paid his vows at the altar of Serapis, to whom he dedicated the sword with which he slew his brother Geta. This infamous oblation was followed by a bloody holocaust. Pretending a solemn festival, after publicly visiting the tomb of Alexander, the tyrant assembled the youth of the city without the walls, where, at a given signal, his soldiers encompassed them unawares, and massacred all without mercy. Other troops had been left to complete the bloody work in the city. The number of the slain was never known, "nor did it matter (wrote the inhuman monster to the senate) how many had actually suffered, when all deserved to die." ¹

From these bloody scenes Origen retired into Palestine, where he was received with much distinction by the bishops of Jerusalem and Cæsarea. Mammœa, the mother of the emperor Alexander Severus, sent for him to Antioch, to explain the doctrines of the gospel. She was a woman of great devotion, if not actually a Christian; and as the emperor was then in the city, he may have taken part in the inquiry. Alexander is known to have been favourably disposed towards the gospel. Among the images in his private oratory

¹ This prodigy of vice had only attained the twenty-ninth year of his age when he was put to death (A.D. 217). Five years before he stabbed his half-brother Geta in the arms of his mother Julia, whom Caracalla afterwards married, after poisoning his own wife Plautina. He beheaded the famous civilian Papinian for telling him it was easier to commit fratricide than to justify it. Above 2000 officers suffered for no other crime than being appointed by his brother, and many thousands perished by indiscriminate massacres, such as that of Alexandria. At his death he was found to have expended 220,000 crowns *in poison*. Such was the astounding profligacy which Christianity was called to confront, and in rebuking which it had to endure all the violence of a spirit who "knew that his time was short," Rev. xii. 12.

were placed figures of Abraham and of Christ, and he caused to be inscribed on the courts of justice a sentence which he had learned from a Christian—"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."¹

Demetrius was offended by the honours bestowed upon Origen by the eastern bishops. They requested him to preach before them, though as yet only a layman; and when this was complained of as a breach of the canons, they committed the further offence of ordaining him, while subject to another bishop.² On his return to Alexandria, Demetrius assembled a synod, which censured some of Origen's writings, and forbade him to teach any longer. He retired to Cæsarea, leaving the Catechetical School to Heraclas, brother of Plutarch the martyr. Soon after he was deposed and excommunicated in another Alexandrian synod, and the sentence was repeated at Rome.

It is admitted that envy had more to do with these censures than orthodoxy. The most serious accusation brought against Origen was that, in refuting the heresy of Sabellius, who denied the three persons of the Godhead, he had asserted a degree of distinctness which impaired the coequal Divinity of the Eternal Son. This is a common charge, and it must be allowed a common danger, in all explanations of the Divine mystery. Bishop Bull has fully acquitted Origen; and it is certain that Athanasius finds no fault with his expressions, but, on the contrary, quotes

¹ Luke vi. 31.

² Another canonical objection to the ordination of Origen was connected with a characteristic exercise of mistaken zeal, which has been often adverted to.—See Neale, i. 27.

the "labour-loving Origen" as substantially at one with the decisions of the Nicene council.¹

Origen's great erudition found fitting employment in answering Celsus, the first of the heathen philosophers who now began their systematic attacks on the gospel. The works of Celsus being lost, his sentiments are only known from Origen's reply. Celsus seems to have been a genuine type of the rationalist, or educated infidel, in every age and country. Believing in one God, he thought it unimportant whether He was called Amun, Jupiter, or Adonai. The pagan divinities might be honoured as manifestations, agents, or angels, of the Most High. He ridiculed the Scriptures for ascribing a *form* to the invisible God, and treated the notion of any Revelation of the Infinite as chimerical. It is remarkable that, writing at that early period, Celsus never questioned the facts of the gospel history, or even of the gospel miracles, but endeavoured to dispose of them as not more wonderful or convincing than those of heathen legend. For the Hebrew Scripture, he showed so much respect as to admit the appeal to the prophets in support of the mission of Jesus Christ. Men of science had not then prescribed limits to the laws of nature, nor made their own experience and information the measure of credibility in the operations of God.

In his reply, Origen appeals to the incontestable superiority of Christian morals as evidenced in Alexandria and every other city of the empire; to the universal spread of the gospel in spite of persecution and the opposition of kings and emperors; to the patient endurance of the church, out of which he says no one ever died a martyr for the truth; and to the manifest

¹ Nic. Def., 27.

fulfilment of prophecy in the mission of Jesus Christ. These are arguments which will never lose their force; they serve to evidence the general soundness of the writer, and the church of which he was the ornament; while they prove the great extension of Christianity, they show that it was founded, then as now, on the basis of the entire Bible. The church of Alexandria was ignorant of that unhappy distrust of Revelation which now leads the wise in their own eyes to deny the predictive element in prophecy, and, by weakening the authority of the Old Testament, to undermine the foundations of the New.

Origen was above sixty years old when he wrote his reply to Celsus: he died nine years later at Tyre (A.D. 254), and his marble tomb in the church of the Holy Sepulchre was long one of the sights in that fallen mart of nations.

Demetrius was succeeded (A.D. 231) by Heraclas, the former friend and colleague of Origen, but who nevertheless renewed the sentence of excommunication against him. Heraclas is said to have created twenty new sees—a clear proof of the rapid extension of Christianity in Egypt; but little else is known of his life or labours. A tradition, related by Eutychius, connects him with a title which was destined to attain a very undue significance in another age and country. Going to visit Ammonius,¹ one of the bishops under his authority, he was saluted in the usual form as *Abba* (father). The people hearing this title given by their bishop, whom they were accustomed to address by the same appellation, argued that Heraclas must be to them a *grandfather*; and so styled him *Baba*, which

¹ The same person, according to this writer, with Ammonius Saccas, but the philosopher's bishopric is highly apocryphal.

was afterwards corrupted into *Papas* or *Pope*. This title, however, was in use at an earlier period, and given, not to bishops only, but (as it still continues in the Greek church) to parish priests. It became the official style of the bishop of Alexandria, as *patriarch* was of the bishop of Antioch, "where the disciples were first called Christians." These were the two prelates of chief authority in the Eastern church: when the bishops of Rome and Carthage were addressed as Popes in the West, it was in imitation of their brother primate in Egypt.

The reputation of pope Heraclas was high enough to gain him a visit from Julius Africanus, the celebrated Christian chronographer; and it is probable that he consulted the Alexandrian prelate in his arrangement of Manetho's dynasties. With the Egyptian historian's entire work in their hands, and the monuments from which it was compiled before their eyes, these learned men had means of information, the absence of which can never be supplied by guess-work. The temples were standing in all their glory; and Africanus mentions that he obtained as a precious gift a copy of one of the sacred books written by the royal founder of the Great Pyramid. The schools of Alexandria were the acknowledged seats of critical inquiry. Yet no Greek writer is known to have attached the smallest authority to Manetho's "Tales of the Monuments:" they were not even of sufficient interest to survive the wreck of time. Africanus adopted as much of them as he thought reliable, or useful to his purpose, and the rest was allowed to perish. Africanus little thought that he himself should, in our day, be cast into the alembic of historical criticism, in order to evaporate from his few

unconscious relies the brilliant phantom of a restored Manetho of more authority than Moses!¹

The pope being advanced in years when called to the episcopate, had confided a portion of its duties, together with the charge of the Catechetical School, to Dionysius, a man of family and one of Origen's pagan hearers. He was deeply skilled in astrology; but a poor Christian woman having one day lent him the Epistles of St. Paul, he was so affected by the contents that he purchased the book, and, inquiring after more, was directed to the clergy, by whose instruction he was brought to embrace the truth.

On the death of Heraclas, Dionysius was elected to the chair of St. Mark [A.D. 247]. Like Demetrius, he was a married man; a fact which the advocates of celibacy know not how to meet in a church pretended to be instructed in the "angelical life" by St. Mark himself.

Dionysius was a person of universal learning, sound judgment, and unquestionable orthodoxy. He was not free, however, from the taint—or, to speak more in accordance with his own sentiments, he delighted in the study—of pagan philosophy. He dived deeply also into the writings and traditions of the heretics; thereby, as he confesses, polluting his own soul for the moment with their vile devices.² There are some among ourselves who think a course of infidelity the best preparation for receiving the truth; that "free inquiry," rather than the faithful preaching of the word of God, is the highest privilege of the clergy. Dionysius, however, inquired only to reclaim the unbeliever, and his labours were crowned with nume-

¹ See Bunsen's *Egypten Stelle*, in *Ancient Egypt*, ch. x.

² See his "Letter to Philemon," Euseb. *Hist. Ecc.* vii. 7.

rous conversions. Still they tended to strengthen the hold which speculation always maintained on Alexandrian divinity, and to foster the polemic spirit which in a later age rendered Egypt at once the admiration and the reproach of the Church.

The new pope was hardly settled in the episcopate when he was called to suffer tribulation. The accession of Decius to the empire was the signal for the eighth general persecution; and the storm burst heavily on Alexandria, where luxury and worldliness had eaten into the habits of holy living, and a contentious spirit had weakened the faith which is needful to holy dying. Some who had made a high profession in the church ran eagerly to the altars, exclaiming they were no Christians. Others, urged on in the crowd, sacrificed, pale and trembling, as conscious of the sin which they dared not deny. Some, more constant, confessed their Lord and were thrown into prison, but there yielded to menaces and apostatized from Christ. There remained a faithful few, with the bishop at their head. He was imprisoned and sentenced to exile, but rescued on the road by his son. Still he proceeded to his appointed exile in the desert of Libya, and there continued till the violence of the storm had passed over. Others, among whom were several women, suffered death in a variety of hideous forms. They were stoned, burnt alive, beheaded, and grievously tortured. Some were torn in pieces by the populace; some fled to the hills, and perished of hunger; some were caught by the Arabs, and sent into slavery. The bishop of Nilopolis fled with his wife, and was never heard of after. In the midst of these terrible scenes we meet again with the phenomenon of persecutors suddenly converted by the

patience of their victims, and confessing Him whom a moment before they blasphemed. They shared their fate, and were joined to the Church by a baptism of blood.

During this persecution a young man, flying from the Lower Thebais into the desert, took up his residence in a cavern, shaded by a palm tree, and liked the retirement so well that he would never quit it. This was Paul the hermit : he dwelt in his cave for ninety years, eating the dates and clothing himself with the leaves of his friendly palm, while a fountain at a little distance supplied his other wants. He was the father of the Christian monks of Egypt.

Decius dying in the year 250, the persecution abated, and Dionysius was enabled to take an important part in the internal controversies by which it was immediately succeeded. Fabian, bishop of Rome, had died by martyrdom [A.D. 250], and the following year Cornelius was elected to the see. He was opposed by Novatian, who procured an irregular consecration to himself, and became the head of a sect called *Cathari* or Puritans. They maintained that after baptism the Church had no power of reconciling an apostate ; consequently, that all who had lapsed in the persecution must be for ever excluded from communion, and left to the uncovenanted mercies of God. The question had been before discussed at Carthage, where Cyprian was charged with harshness by Novatus, a bishop or priest of that province. Yet this man, having fled to Rome, now joined Novatian on the opposite ground. The dispute exceeding the power of Cornelius, Dionysius and Cyprian came to his help. The former had considered the question very carefully, and determined that all penitents might be readmitted to com-

munion after sufficient penitence and probation. All sins, he said, were forgiven on repentance; the lapsed, therefore, were to be restored to communion on satisfactory proof of repentance, and, in the hour of death, on their simple desire. Cyprian and Cornelius took a more rigid view; they withheld the sacrament at the point of death, unless due repentance had been manifested in the time of health. Dionysius wrote letters to Novatus himself, and to several leading bishops on this subject, dwelling on the great doctrine of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Cyprian held a council at Carthage, which determined that apostates might be received after penance, but if in holy orders, only to lay-communion. The united authority of these great prelates encouraged Cornelius to condemn Novatian, and adopt a similar rule in a synod at Rome [A.D. 251].

Fabius of Antioch, however, being still undecided, called a council on the question, which was attended by Dionysius. Fabius died before the meeting of the assembly; under his successor restoration on repentance was admitted, and Novatianism condemned as schismatic and heretical.

On returning to Alexandria the patriarch found his energies tasked by a new misfortune. Egypt was visited by a dreadful plague, originating in Ethiopia, which spread through the greater part of the east. The physician Aretæus describes it under the name of ulcers on the tonsils. The sufferer was tormented by alternate fever and chill. The breathing became painful and offensive; water, though eagerly coveted to allay the burning thirst, was no sooner taken than it was rejected by spasmodic contractions in the throat. The patient could neither lie nor sit, but walked restlessly about till a painful death terminated his suffer-

ings. To add to the calamity, the disease was judged to be highly infectious; men forsook their nearest friends and relations in its grasp, and left them to die as they fell in the streets and roads of the city.

In this calamity the Christians set a noble example. They were seen in the thickest of the danger, ministering to the sick, washing and laying out the dead, and carrying them to the grave soon to be prepared for themselves. Many thus attended recovered, while their benefactors caught the disease and died; happy to have exhibited to the heathen some faint image of One who "himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."¹

Dionysius took occasion in his paschal epistle to exhort the Alexandrians to charity. It seemed, he said, to be again in Egypt as in olden time—"there was not a house where there was not one dead;" and would there were only one! Still, as persecution and tyranny could not hinder the Church's festivals, but the desert, the ship, or the prison became the house of God; so in the midst of sickness and death, he invited them to the same holy rejoicing.

Such unmistakeable manifestations of Christian love could hardly fail to make an impression on the mass of the people. They had little effect, however, on the malice of the persecutors. Under Valerian, the Alexandrian church was so severely scourged, that Dionysius regarded this emperor as the beast of the Apocalypse, "to whom was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."² It is singular that his power endured just three years and a half from the time it was directed against the gospel.

¹ Matt. viii. 17.

² Rev. xiii. 4, 5.

On receipt of the persecuting edict, the bishop was summoned before the prefect Æmilian, and commanded, on pain of death, to sacrifice to the gods whom all adored. He answered, with a courage worthy of the occasion, that all men did not adore the same divinities, and Christians worshipped none but the only true God. He was banished to Kephro, a miserable village in the wilds of the Libyan desert, and strictly interdicted from holding any religious assemblies. Undeterred by the prohibition, the good bishop immediately began to preach the gospel to the rude tribes of the desert. He was joined by many fugitives from Alexandria, and, in his own words, the Lord opened a great door for the word. Persecution produced its usual fruit; through the blood of the martyrs, and the preaching of them that were scattered abroad, the numbers of the disciples were multiplied. At last the author of these cruelties fell into the hands of Sapor king of Persia, who kept him in chains for seven years, daily insulting the Roman purple by using him as a footstool to mount his horse. The barbarian finally flayed his captive alive at the age of eighty-three.

On the capture of Valerian, Macrianus, who commanded the army in Syria, proclaimed himself emperor of the East, and was acknowledged in Egypt. After his defeat and death, the Alexandrians submitted to Gallienus, son of Valerian, who had been invested with the purple at Rome; but soon after their own prefect Æmilianus was saluted emperor by his soldiers, taking the name of Alexander. The city was besieged by the troops of his rival, and famine began to prevail within the walls. The Christians were again seen going about doing good. Some of the clergy

went out to the besiegers to implore permission for non-combatants to depart; others within the walls tried to persuade the rebels to surrender. When the place was reduced and the usurper slain, they had certainly a strong claim on the gratitude of the victors.

Moved by their loyalty, or by his father's fate, with other presages of Divine judgment, Gallienus did in fact rescind the late orders against Christianity, and command a general toleration throughout the empire. An edict, addressed to "Dionysius, Pinna, Demetrius, and the rest of the bishops," expressly guaranteed them against any further molestation in the enjoyment of their religion. Dionysius returned to find his city desolate by the sword, the famine, and pestilence. The plague had never entirely left since the great irruption from Ethiopia. A dense and murky atmosphere brooded over the ruined city. The middle of the town was a complete waste. The streets were choked with ruins and dead bodies. The Nile, fetid and discoloured, seemed to the unhappy bishop as if it were again turned into blood. "What water (he wrote) can wash the stream itself? when will the clouded air become clear and serene?"¹

Other clouds were gathering round the Church which it required all his moderation and good sense to dissipate. The churches of Rome and Carthage, so lately united against Novatian, were almost in open schism on a question of very similar bearing. The Africans, in their zeal for the orthodox faith, held that no grace could be conferred without the pale of the Church, and required those who had been baptized in heresy to present themselves again at the font before being received into communion. This prac-

¹ Euseb., *Hist. Ecc.* vii. 21.

tice was ratified in two synods at Carthage under pope Cyprian, in the years 255 and 256. It gave offence at Rome, where the rule was never to repeat the sacrament if the *form* had been duly observed in the first administration. Pope Stephen threatened the African prelates with excommunication, but they adhered to their decision, and a rupture was imminent, when the Alexandrian pope interposed to throw oil upon the troubled waters. Agreeing with Stephen in the point at issue, he yet entreated him to moderate his tone, and respect the peace of the Church. The two combatants became martyrs under the sword of Valerian about the same time, and were united, we may trust, in that place where there is no controversy. Dionysius pursued the subject with Sixtus of Rome, manifesting his own opinion and the custom of his church to be adverse to the iteration of baptism, but chiefly contending for the liberty of the churches against the arrogant attempt to legislate for all at Rome. From this controversy it is clear that neither in Africa nor Egypt was the voice of the bishop of Rome of greater authority than that of any other foreign primate.

CHAPTER IX.

EARLY TROUBLES.

Rise of Trinitarian Controversy—Theodotus, Artemon, Praxeas, Noetus—Sabellius—Paul of Samosata—Council of Antioch—"Consubstantial"—The Millennium—Controversy in Arsinoë—Authenticity of Apocalypse—Death of Dionysius—Zenobia—Ejection of Paul—Probus—Siege of Alexandria—Pompey's Pillar—Diocletian Persecution—Peter saint and martyr—Melitius—Abdication of Emperors—Election of Constantine—Miserable Death of Galerius—Canons of Peter—The Labarum—Battle of the Milvian Bridge—Fall of Maximin—And Licinius—Triumph of Christianity.

ECCLESIASTICAL history is seldom more than a history of persecution, heresy, and schism. Being collected from the writings of the sufferers, it is naturally occupied by the topics which most strongly excited their hopes and fears. The daily work of the ministry, the propagation of the gospel, the conversion of sinners, and the believer's growth in grace, were not subjects of contention, and are therefore little spoken of. Let us trust that, as in our own time, they occupied the lives and labours of numbers who never appeared in the arena of debate. They were, perhaps, the chief employment of some whose zeal and learning are known to us only from polemical writings. Works of controversy have a tendency to survive the evidences of practical and spiritual religion. Hence, when we are longing to know how the gospel sped in the salvation of souls, we are disappointed to find nothing but the conflicts of theologians, and the acts of the martyrs,

The Church had rest from persecution for forty years

after the capture of Valerian; but it was grievously agitated by the unhappy disputes which prevailed within itself. The twofold nature of Christ, and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, gave rise to speculations which it is difficult to state without irreverence. They involve, however, the meaning of many of our blessed Saviour's discourses, and a right view is essential to a sound belief in His saving offices, and the work of the Holy Spirit, in the regeneration and renewal of the believer.

From the day that the disciples worshipped the ascending Jesus at Bethany, Christians learned to honour the Son even as the Father, and the Holy Ghost as One God with the Father and the Son. In this Name they were baptized. That each is truly God, and yet that the Lord our God is one God, were truths firmly rooted in every Christian heart, long before divines began to speak of the persons of the Holy Trinity, and the unity of the Divine substance. In like manner it was believed that Jesus Christ was both God and Man, before any attempt had been made to define the idea of the incarnation. The depth and universality of the faith is shown by the agitation occasioned by every innovation. The Gnostic heresy sought to evade these mysteries by separating the Divine Christ from the human Jesus. With the same object in view Theodotus and Artemon denied the Divinity of Christ; and, as one extreme produces another, Praxeas and Noetus asserted His entire identity with the Father. This heresy was revived by Sabellius within the jurisdiction of the Alexandrian see.¹ He affirmed that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were but three names for One Divine Person, who manifested

¹ He was bishop or priest of Ptolemais in the Libyan Pentapolis.

himself, in the Old Testament as Father by giving the Law; in the Gospels as Son incarnate for man; and at the day of Pentecost, as Holy Ghost descending on the apostles. The mystical tendency of the Egyptian mind occasioned this doctrine to be favourably viewed by many of the clergy, and still more of the laity. Dionysius set himself to refute it as full of impiety and unbelief. He wrote from Kephro a number of letters urging the scriptural distinctions between the Father and the Son with so much force, that alarm was taken on the other side, and he was accused of asserting the Son of God to be a creature, and denying His essential unity with the Father. At a later day his expressions were much insisted upon by the Arians; but Dionysius cleared himself in a letter to the bishop of Rome, and afterwards published a refutation and apology which sustained his reputation as the first living divine of the Church.

He had yet to argue the other side of the case: Paul of Samosata, who obtained the see of Antioch about the year 261, supplemented the teaching of Sabellius by the Gnostic tenet, that the Son of Mary was a mere man, sanctified and made the Christ by a more than usual participation in the Wisdom or Word of God, but not always or essentially inspired by the Divine Spirit. This was the occasion for the remainder of Dionysius's argument; a council being called at Antioch on the question, he wrote a letter from his death-bed fully maintaining the Divinity of that Saviour to whom he shortly after yielded up his soul.

The most noticeable point in Dionysius's writings was the omission, or rejection, of the term *consubstantial*, afterwards deemed indispensable to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The omission was complained of

at the time ; but Dionysius replied that it was not a scriptural word, and its meaning was fully contained in his other expressions. The absence of scriptural authority might be equally pleaded against many other terms of theology ; still Dionysius was sustained by the council at Antioch which condemned Paul, for they also declined this term, as being abused to the Sabellian hypothesis. In these unhappy disputes the seeds were undoubtedly sown which bore deadly fruit in the later errors of Arius.

Next to the person of Christ, the nature of His kingdom has ever been the question most anxiously debated among His followers. In every century since the Revelation of St. John was written, the realization of his visions has been impatiently expected. The successive failures of bygone commentators do not prevent new prophets from exclaiming—"Lo, here is Christ ; or, lo, there."¹ The check which Christ placed on the curiosity of His disciples² the apostles found necessary to reimpose on their disciples ;³ yet every age has been told of a day close at hand, and a kingdom about to be immediately established in the world.

This expectation was supposed to be encouraged by the terms in which St. John describes his vision of the first resurrection.⁴ Most of the primitive Christians were *Chiliasts* or *Millenaries* ; that is to say, they expected the saints to live and reign literally with Christ a thousand years. But there were many different expositions of this millennium. The Gnostics Cerinthus and Marcion, taking an absolutely literal

¹ Matt. xxiv. 23.

² Acts i. 8.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 1—3 ; 2 Peter iii. 8. 9.

⁴ Rev. xx. 5.

view, affirmed that the saints would rise in the same bodies, and live on earth for the time prescribed in the free enjoyment of every natural pleasure. Papias and Tertullian, followed by many others, were shocked at the grossness of these views; and relying on our Lord's words in Matt. xxii. 30, they excluded *marriage* from the New Jerusalem. They admitted eating and drinking, with music, beautiful prospects, and other bodily enjoyments, but placed the chief bliss in spiritual blessings. Origen, on the other hand, had learned from his philosophy to regard the body as the prison of the soul, and could not endure the idea of any return to its sensations. Seizing on St. Paul's expression, a "spiritual body," he pronounced the resurrection of the flesh to be altogether a Judaizing tenet. The soul once released was to rise through the celestial orbs, and rejoice in an intuition of the Divinity, to which the bodily senses were not a help but a hindrance. He therefore rejected the idea of the New Jerusalem being on earth, and explained the thousand years as allegorical.¹ These conclusions were shared by many who were not Origenists, but confidently relied on the resurrection of the body at the last day.

Dionysius was a pupil of Origen, and largely imbibed his opinions; but Nepos, bishop of Arsinoe, produced a book entitled a Confutation of the Allegorists, which seems to have upheld the exposition of Papias. Nepos was a poet, whose psalms and hymns were sung throughout Egypt. His millennial views would appear not to have been shared by the other Egyptian bishops, nor by the town clergy, but prevailed in the country villages, and chiefly in the

¹ Mosheim, *De Reb. Christian. ant. Const.*, Sæc. III. xxxviii.

province of Arsinoe. There his book was received as the manifestation of a glorious mystery. All other Scriptures were neglected for the study of the Apocalypse; no other doctrine was listened to but the millennium. A schism was forming, when Dionysius went into the province, and having invited the presbyters and teachers to a conference, discussed the question for three days in succession. The meeting ended more happily than is usual: the Chiliasts, convinced by the bishop's arguments, frankly promised to preach no more on the subject, while Dionysius put out a tract in which, fully admitting the inspiration of the Apocalypse, he ventured to question its being written by St. John.¹ He seems to have thought it the work of John the Presbyter, whose tomb was shown at Ephesus, near the apostle's. But his reasons are not powerful enough to raise a serious question on the subject. The Apocalypse is expressly assigned to the apostle by Origen,² and the objections, consisting chiefly of critical notes on the style and grammar, have been carefully examined and dismissed by scholars not inferior to Dionysius.³ The bishop was unquestionably a man of great and varied learning, but, like all controversialists, he was too eager to weaken the authority of a sacred book, which could not easily be reconciled with his own philosophy.

Dionysius died in February 265, and was succeeded by Maximus, of whom nothing is known but that to him and the bishop of Rome, as the two other great

¹ Euseb. *Ecc. Hist.* vii. 35.

² Ibid. vi. 25.

³ See Dean Alford's *Prolegomena*. He points out that, whereas all the apocryphal books were doubted at their first appearance, and afterwards obtained authority, the Apocalypse was generally received in the earliest age, and only called in question when controversy had arisen on its contents.

patriarchs of the Church, the council of Antioch addressed the synodical epistle notifying the deposition of Paul. The latter refusing to submit to the decree, retained possession of the episcopal residence, and was protected by the temporal power, then in the hands of the celebrated queen Zenobia. She was the widow of Odenathus, king of Palmyra, who had made himself so useful in arresting the Persian arms that Gallienus acknowledged him as his colleague in the purple. Her husband falling by assassination, Zenobia declared war upon Rome, and seizing Syria and Asia Minor, despatched an army of Arabs into Egypt. To this country she laid claim as a descendant of Cleopatra, whom in many points she closely resembled. She was remarkably beautiful, though of a dark complexion, endowed with extraordinary abilities and masculine vigour. Besides Syriac, her native tongue, she spoke Greek, Latin, and Coptic. Some accounts make her a Jewish proselyte; but the names of her husband and son seem taken from the idols of Syria. What she knew of Christianity does not appear, but she chose to protect Paul, and the bishops had no power to dislodge him.

In Egypt she defeated the Roman legions, and taking possession of the country, annexed it to her empire as queen of the East. Her reign lasted four years in Palmyra, and only a few months in Egypt, yet in that brief period she ornamented her Syrian capital with eight columns of red porphyry thirty feet high, and these spoils of some Egyptian temple, defying time, still astonish the traveller, who discovers them rising solitary and majestic from the sands of the desert. Claudius, who succeeded Gallienus, was prevented by his Gothic wars and early death from any

attempt against Zenobia ; and Aurelian, on his accession, saluted her as colleague with the title of Augusta. Soon after, however, he marched into Syria, defeated her troops, and taking the queen prisoner, compelled her to walk, loaded with jewels, in his triumph at Rome.

Aurelian listened to the bishops who addressed him against Paul, and compelled him to submit to the deposition pronounced by the council of Antioch. He did not enter into the religious question, but, taking the council as the supreme authority recognised by the Christians themselves, he gave effect to their order, much as a court of equity might do in this country in the case of a religious denomination not established by law. Aurelian's death, followed in six months by that of Tacitus, enabled Alexandria to give an emperor to Rome in the person of its prefect Probus. His election was owing to a *pun* : the legions being assembled, and required in the accustomed formula to make choice of a ruler eminent for courage, honour, piety, clemency, and probity, some one broke in at the last word with a cry of — "*Probus.*" The joke took, and Probus was vociferated from every mouth. The new emperor was really not unworthy of the name, but he perished by the hands of the army, who elected him ; and it was but a dull jest when the *equivoque* was repeated on his tomb.

The fourth year of Diocletian [A.D. 289] inaugurated a rebellion in Egypt, in which Achilleus seized the purple at Alexandria, and held it six years. War was the normal condition of the Arabs in Upper Egypt and Nubia ; and the Romans, after destroying Coptos and Busiris, fixed the southern limit of their province at Elephantine, relinquishing the territory above the cataract to the Nobates.

Diocletian blockaded Alexandria, and took it after a siege of eight months [A.D. 296]. The inhabitants being unexpectedly spared the horrors of sack, erected to his honour the column which now bears the inexplicable name of Pompey's Pillar.¹ It consists of an elegant shaft seventy-three feet in length, with a capital and a pedestal, all apparently portions of older monuments of different dates. The total height is ninety-eight feet nine inches, and it probably supported a statue of the emperor. It is inscribed in Greek to "the most honoured emperor, the preserver of Alexandria, the invincible Diocletian, from Publius the eparch of Egypt." It stands on a lofty mound, considerably to the south of the present city, and, according to the Arab historians, was originally one of the four hundred columns in the Serapeum. Others, however, place this celebrated temple in the neighbourhood of the Rhacotis basin. The pillar was in the most conspicuous part of the city, which then covered the entire space between the sea and the lake.

This rebellion lasted nine years, during which Egypt suffered more than at any period since the Persian conquest. The pope was Theonas, of whom an interesting letter is still extant, but we know nothing of his labours, save that they were embittered by the breaking out of the last and most terrible persecution.²

¹ Some derive the name from *Pompaïos*, a landmark, and others from Publius, the author of the inscription. In the absence of any historical notice, it is obvious that the pillar may have stood there before, and only the inscription and statue have been added for Diocletian. Many travellers have remarked the superiority of the shaft to the other portions. Sir Gardner Wilkinson observed the hieroglyphic of Psamaticus II. on the substructions.

² The tenth general persecution is usually reckoned to commence in the year 303, three years after the death of Theonas, but there is evidence of earlier troubles at Alexandria.

Diocletian, though a zealous idolater, was actuated by no particular dislike to Christianity, till his son-in-law Galerius, whom he had created Cæsar, persuaded him that the troubles of the empire arose from the indignation of the gods at the spread of the new religion. He then issued an edict commanding the churches to be destroyed, the Scriptures to be burnt, and all Christians to be deprived of civil rights. Many refusing to surrender their Bibles were punished with death, while those who gave them up were stigmatized among the faithful by the appellation of traitors (*traditores*). A second edict sentenced the bishops and clergy to imprisonment; and a third ordered that they should be compelled by torture to worship the idols. This was followed by a fourth, extending the same penalties to Christians of all ranks.

This cruel persecution was mitigated in the western parts of the empire by the humanity of Constantius, who governed, with the authority of Cæsar, at York; but throughout the east [A.D. 304], exile, slavery, and death were furiously denounced on all who presumed to disobey the emperor's orders. This was the tenth and severest of all the persecutions.¹ The Christians dated from it as the "era of the martyrs," and nowhere was the designation better deserved than in

1	The First	was under Nero	..	..	A.D.	64
	The Second	„ Domitian	..	..	„	95
	The Third	„ Trajan	..	..	„	100
	The Fourth	„ { Antoninus Philosophus }	..	..	„	161
	The Fifth	„ Severus	..	..	„	197
	The Sixth	„ Alexander	..	..	„	235
	The Seventh	„ Decius	..	..	„	249
	The Eighth	„ Valerian	..	..	„	257
	The Ninth	(brief and partial) Aurelian	..	..	„	274

Modern historians object to this arrangement, as technical and inaccurate.

Egypt. The prefect Hieraclas, who had previously entered the lists against the gospel with his pen, now gladly followed up the assault with the sword. Eusebius, after losing his friend Pamphilus by martyrdom at Cæsarea, fled into Egypt, where he relates that vast numbers, both of men and women, suffered death in a variety of horrible forms. They were tortured, beheaded, famished, crucified, drowned, torn to pieces, and burned alive. Inhuman devices were resorted to, to increase their torments, and these atrocities were continued through several years. The victims were destroyed in batches of from ten to fifty; even a hundred men, women, and little children were known to be slaughtered at one time. Numbers had an eye torn out, their ears, hands, and noses cut off, or their legs dislocated; in that maimed and mutilated condition they were condemned to the mines.

These terrible sufferings led to numerous apostasies: many escaped by flight, but of those who remained, the greater part stood firm. The tribunals were thronged with Christians of both sexes offering themselves freely to suffer for Christ's sake. The hearts of the judges melted, and the very executioners were tired with the number of the martyrs. They besought them to remember their wives and families. All that was demanded was to cast a few grains of incense into the fire before an idol; and had not the apostle taught them that an idol was "nothing in the world?"¹ It was a mere ceremony, leaving them still at liberty to believe as they pleased, and to pay a true spiritual worship in secret to God. These arguments prevailed with some, but the better part saw that that simple ceremony was to *deny Christ*; they chose death in its

1 1 Cor. viii. 4.

most horrible forms rather than be denied by Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.¹

In this steadfast confession of Christ, the church was encouraged by the preaching and example of Peter, the first of the Alexandrian bishops who attained to the crown of martyrdom. He succeeded Theonas in the closing year of the third century, and was immediately involved in a difference with Melitius bishop of Lycopolis, and apparently the second prelate in Egypt. He was charged with having renounced the faith by sacrificing to idols ; on this ground he was deposed by Peter in a council at Alexandria.² Melitius, instead of submitting, declared himself independent, and began to ordain bishops as a primate. To rebut the charge of apostasy he affected extraordinary rigour, and complained of Peter as too lenient to the lapsed. His followers styled themselves the "Church of the Martyrs." Both bishops were at one time, it is said, thrown into the same prison for the cause of Christ, but even community in suffering could not reconcile the rival prelates. The contention continued to divide the Egyptian church for several years, and prepared the way for a still greater and more dangerous controversy.

The fierceness of the persecution was abated for a moment by the abdication of Diocletian. He had issued his edicts with the determination of finally rooting out the faith and worship of JESUS CHRIST. Before a year had elapsed he retired himself, worsted and dispirited, from public affairs, and laying down the imperial ensigns, fled to his native village to occupy his old age in planting cabbages. As he compelled his colleague Maximian to abdicate at the

¹ Matt. x. 28—33.

² Neale, i. 91.

same time, the two Cæsars succeeded to the empire, which they divided between them. Egypt, falling to the share of Galerius, gained nothing by the change. The persecution was continued with unmitigated rage by this bloody prince, and his nephew Maximin.

New commotions ensued on the death of Constantius at York. The army in Britain saluted his son Constantine emperor in his room, but Galerius proclaimed his own Cæsar Severus; and at the same time the ex-emperor Maximian and his son Maxentius appeared in arms as competitors for the purple. All these having perished, Galerius nominated an officer named Licinius, but was prevented from rendering him any assistance by his own death. In the sixth year of his reign he was smitten with the terrible malady which overtook Herod, and which has been observed to befall many other persecutors of Divine truth. He became a burden to himself and to all around him. At one time he would attempt to end his torments by suicide; at another, he sent his physicians to death for affording him no relief. After languishing a year in indescribable torment, his conscience or his superstition broke into a wild remorse for his persecution of the Christians. He sent for some of the despised sect into his chamber, and entreated them to pray for him. He recalled all his edicts against them, sending orders throughout the east to cancel all proceedings, and release those that were in prison. He expired A.D. 311, the last and most wretched of the imperial rulers who attempted to quench the light of Christianity in the blood of its disciples.

The amnesty reached Alexandria too late to save the life of its faithful prelate. Four other Egyptian bishops—Hesychius, who published a new edition of

the Septuagint, Phileas, Pachymius, and Theodorus—had already suffered in Alexandria; two had been burnt in Palestine; Paphnutius, a bishop in Upper Thebais, had been sent to the mines with the loss of an eye. As many as six hundred persons are said to have laid down their lives for the truth, among whom are named Asclas; Apollonius, an eminent monk; Theodora, a young lady of high rank; and Philoromus, a Roman magistrate. The latter, being present at the examination of Phileas, had the courage to ask the governor why he endeavoured to render the bishop faithless to his God? and how he could hope by the persuasions of earth to allure him from the eternal weight of glory to which he was pressing forward? His question only involved him in the same sentence, and the two were beheaded together, calling on “Him who sitteth between the cherubim, the First and the Last.”¹

The bloody list was closed by Peter, who was beheaded in prison, and was styled in the Alexandrian church the seal and end of the martyrs. He composed a work on the Divinity of Christ, and another on His future coming. Though accused by the Melitians of over-lenieney to the lapsed, his regulations, which were afterwards adopted into the canons of the Eastern Church, will hardly be thought to err in defect of rigour. The strictness of the Church's discipline in this particular was, doubtless, very conducive to the greater constancy which distinguished the sufferers at this time, as compared with former persecutions. Laymen who had lapsed after enduring severe torments were to be *mourners* for three years, and fast the forty days of Lent, before they were admitted to

¹ Neale, *Pat. Alex.* i. 101.

communion. To yield under imprisonment only, without torture, entailed an additional year's penitence. If any yielded without either imprisonment or torture, the term was eight years. One who escaped sacrificing by substituting a heathen in his place, was subjected to three and a half years' penance; but if the substitute were a Christian slave, the master was sentenced to six years, and the slave to four. Those who presented themselves voluntarily at the tribunal are blamed as not considering the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," and the command of Christ, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another;" accordingly the canon exonerates those who fled or bought themselves off. Clerks who had lapsed could only be received as laymen, never to be restored to their ministry.¹

While this storm was raging in the East, Constantine had declared himself in the West the friend and champion of the long persecuted religion. His father, without being a Christian, was one of those "devout soldiers" of whom the centurions in the gospels are well-known examples: his piety was shown by a kind and considerate treatment of those whose only crime was religion. He recommended somewhat more to his son on his death-bed. The young prince was surrounded by Christians from the first; and when he resolved to march against Maxentius, he presented himself before the walls of Rome with the monogram of Christ upon his banner.² After

¹ *Canons of St. Peter of Alexandria.* At the date of these provisions the lapsed had already mourned three years, which are included in these periods.

² This banner, called the *Labarum* (a word of unknown origin), was made by the emperor's own direction, in obedience, as he alleged, to a command received from Christ himself in a dream. It was long

defeating the usurper at the Milvian Bridge [A.D. 312], and receiving the salutations of the senate as the deliverer of the empire, Constantine caused an inscription to be set on the statue raised in his honour, ascribing his triumph to the power of the "victorious cross." In further honour of Him who suffered on the tree, the emperor abolished that form of capital punishment throughout his dominions. Having then come to terms with Licinius (to whom he gave his sister in marriage), orders were issued in their joint names to stay the persecution throughout the empire, and restore the Christians to their civil rights. Maximin, still governing as Cæsar in the East, reluctantly complied; and the church of Alexandria was enabled to assemble and elect Achillas for their

preserved as a sacred relic, and is minutely described by those who saw it. It consisted of a spear supporting a transverse bar, from which hung a square curtain of purple silk, embroidered with gold and precious stones. In the flag was a representation of the emperor supported by his two sons. The spear was surmounted by a crown, within which were the Greek characters χ and ρ (the first letters in the name of Christ) intersecting each other. The same monogram was inscribed on the shields of the soldiers. The existence of this banner is proved beyond a doubt by its being found (with the monogram) on some of Constantine's coins, where the lower end of the staff pierces a dragon. The account of its origin is more questionable. Eusebius had it from the emperor's own mouth, confirmed by an oath, without which he confesses the story would be incredible. Constantine declared that he was in prayer to the "God of his father," when he saw in the heavens a brilliant cross with the inscription, "*In this, overcome;*" and that in the following night our Lord appeared to him in a dream, with the same cross in His hand, commanding him to make a royal standard like it, to be carried in all his wars as an ensign of victory.

The legend is universally received in the Greek and Roman churches, but though attested by an imperial oath, the objections are obvious. No pagan author mentions the cross in the heavens, though alleged to have been seen by the whole army, and pronounced an evil omen by the augurs. The ecclesiastical writers differ whether the inscription was in Latin or Greek, and above all *the banner itself repre-*

bishop, who dying in a few months, was succeeded by Alexander. The calm, however, was of brief duration. Maximin, considering himself his uncle's rightful heir, assumed the Augustan purple, and declared war upon Licinius. His accession was signalized by a fresh renewal of the persecution; but after being defeated in a great battle with his adversary, he changed his policy, and again issued edicts of toleration. His repentance, like his uncle's, was too late to effect its object. He was driven from place to place, till he came to a miserable end by poison at Tarsus.

These revulsions of policy, on the part of tyrants like Galerius and Maximin, show the numbers and influence of those whom they sought by turns to destroy and to conciliate. It was a point of religion with the

sented no such thing. The carrying of a flag from a spear dependent from a cross-bar was an ordinary usage long before Christ. Neither the cross nor the inscription appeared upon the flag, and the words we find round the staff on Constantine's coins are neither *In hac vinces*, nor *εν τούτῳ νικᾷ*, but *Spes publica Cons.* : "Constantine the public hope." The only Christian device in short is the monogram, which of course was added to the standard after the emperor had embraced Christianity.

It may be added that no trace of this famous legend appeared on the statue of Constantine, raised at Rome immediately after his victory; we are only told that the figure carried a long spear in the form of a cross, and the base had an inscription to the following effect: "By this saving sign, the proof of true courage, I preserved your city free from the tyrant's yoke, and restored the liberated senate and people of Rome to their ancient glory." (Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* ix. 9.) The cross is here referred to as an emblem of Christ, but the miracle was reserved for the private ear of Eusebius, and only published after Constantine's death. It is on the coins of his son Constantius that we find the Labarum with the monogram occupying the field of the banner and the legend round it, "*Hoc signo victor eris.*"

The impiety of a story which makes the Saviour of the soul appear to a military commander, promising victory for an earthly crown, but saying nothing of repentance and faith, is well remarked upon by Mosheim, *De Reb. ante Const.* pp. 984-5.

Christians not to resist persecution: their lives were yielded to the command of the magistrate when, by standing on their defence, they might have crushed their opponents, and brought about a revolution. But when it was a contest between two emperors, and the Christians had to take their side like other subjects, their support was worth purchasing; and Maximin was seriously alarmed at the extent to which it had been secured by Constantine.

Similar apprehensions disturbed the mind of Licinius. He perceived that throughout the empire the eyes of the Christians were directed to his colleague, and thought nothing was left but to rally the forces of paganism round himself. Undeterred by the failure of all similar attempts, he began a fierce persecution in the east, which only hastened the crisis he sought to prevent. Constantine, readily unfurling the banner of the cross, marched against his brother-in-law, and meeting in Thrace, each put his cause on the issue of the field. Constantine gathered the bishops and presbyters, who always formed part of his retinue, to implore the God of the Christians for victory; while Licinius summoned the pagan priests and diviners to sacrifice in a forest. There, after slaying the victims and lighting the torches, he called upon his officers to remember the gods of their country and their ancestors, against whom, more than themselves, the enemy uplifted his infamous standard. He concluded by declaring that victory would show every man that day which God he ought to worship. The appeal so rashly uttered was decided in favour of the cross. The banner of Constantine triumphed in every part of the field: Licinius fled discomfited to Nicomedia, and there sur-

rendering, left his rival sole monarch of the Roman empire.

From this time forward the powers of government were devoted to promote the religion which they had hitherto been employed to suppress. The property of which the different churches had been despoiled was restored, and compensation made from the public exchequer for the losses, imprisonment, and torture, suffered by their members. The principal fabrics were re-edified at the emperor's cost; new churches were built and endowed; Christianity was declared the established religion of the empire. So completely were the tables turned, that succeeding emperors confiscated the revenues of the pagan temples, coined the gold and silver idols into money, and had others dragged through the streets in derision. At Alexandria Theodosius dismissed the priests of the Nile, and removed the graduated pillar, which marked its overflow, from the temple of Serapis to a Christian church. To the idolaters, who complained that the god would withhold his blessing, he replied that the fertility of Egypt was not to be purchased by an act of infidelity, and the next year a more than usual rise amply justified his confidence.¹ Diocletian had pronounced the extirpation of Christianity, and Licinius had committed the cause of his gods to the issue of arms. The Roman empire soon perceived that a mandate had gone out for the overthrow of polytheism and idolatry.

¹ Milman's *Christianity*, iii. 8.

CHAPTER X.

THE COUNCIL OF NICEÆA.

Alexandrian Church—Latin Sympathies—Easter—Trinitarian Controversy—Noetus—Sabellius—Paul—Arius—Dispute with Alexander—Thalia—Excommunication—Appeal to Constantine—First Ecumenical Council—Its significance, place of meeting, and opening—Presiding Prelates—Condemnation of Arius—The Creed—The two bishops Eusebius—Homoousios—Artifice of Homoiousians—Meaning of the terms—Exile of Eusebius of Nicomedia—Recall of Arius—Subdivisions of Arianism—Fatal nature of the Heresy.

IN the new arrangement of the empire which followed upon the victories of Constantine, Egypt stood in an exceptional position. The natives had never ceased to regard the Greek race with distrust and hatred. The Alexandrians, though boasting their Macedonian descent, and using the Greek language, resented their position in the eastern empire. They had long disputed with Antioch the title of first city of the east. The foundation of Constantinople reduced them to the third. On this point the Church was especially jealous. The Alexandrian popes would hardly brook the claims of their brother of Antioch, the patriarch of the east and successor of St. Peter: they could never be brought to acknowledge the precedency of Constantinople. It seemed easier, both to Egyptians and Alexandrians, to tolerate the pre-eminence of Rome than of nearer rivals. Hence, while using the Greek language, the Alexandrian church often showed¹ its sympathies on the side of the Latin

¹ Letter of Pope Julius, Athanas. Apol. adv. Ar. ii.

communion. The two popes were generally friends; and the Roman see claimed a particular prerogative in the case of complaints against his brother of Alexandria.

The first occasion for the exercise of Constantine's ecclesiastical prerogative came from Egypt. The Christians were divided on the proper observance of the annual feast of the Resurrection. In Asia it was mostly kept on the day of the Jewish Passover, the fourteenth day of the month beginning with the vernal equinox. This was defended as the true anniversary, sanctioned by the authority of St. John at Ephesus. The Roman custom, supported by the name of St. Peter, was to defer the feast to the Sunday after the full moon, in order to mark the abolition of the Jewish Passover, and combine the annual with the weekly commemoration of the resurrection. The Alexandrian church agreed with that of Rome, and its bishop was in the habit of issuing an annual letter throughout Egypt and Libya to give notice of the proper day. The fame of that city for mathematical and astronomical science gave a high repute to these *paschal* or *festal* letters, and they were extensively circulated among the churches which followed the Sunday rule.

A vastly more important controversy was swelling into alarming dimensions, which involved the very notion of the Divine Being and his relations to the Church.

The first Christians believed and taught, in the plain words of Holy Scripture, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the God in whose name they were baptized, was one God. They believed also that the Son, being the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God,¹ was made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, and

¹ John i. 1.

by his divinity gave an infinite value to his atonement for the sins of the world. They made no attempt to explain these mysteries; they did not undertake with the pagan philosophers to reason on the nature of God; they would not measure the amount of distinction between the adorable THREE, nor define the infinite unity in which they are eternally ONE. Neither did they pretend to describe the process by which God was made man. They were content to assert the facts revealed in Holy Scripture, and in matters necessarily beyond the reach of reason, to believe and worship.

This wise simplicity was broken, not by the defenders, but by the assailants, of scriptural truth. Noetus maintained at Smyrna, that the Word incarnate in Jesus Christ was the Father himself, other than whom there could be no God. Sabellius, in the Libyan Pentapolis, devised the semi-Gnostic explanation that not God himself, but a certain influence or virtue of the Father, was united to Jesus and constituted his divinity. Paul of Samosatena denied, from the patriarchal chair at Antioch, that Christ was God at all, though, as abundantly endued with his grace, he might (in a secondary sense) be so called. The title "Son of God" he ascribed to His miraculous birth of the Virgin, maintaining that he was merely man till the Holy Ghost descended on him at his baptism.

These revolting conclusions followed from the attempt to explain the Christian mystery in a manner more intelligible to human reason. They were met by alleging other doctrines and Scriptures inconsistent with such explanations; but there was no attempt on the part of the Church to define the truths called in question. The early synods kept strictly to the nega-

tive; condemning the new speculation, but asserting no counter hypothesis of their own. It was the negative character of their decrees which left room for so many successive heresies to arise.¹

The Alexandrian schools had long been discussing the mystery of the Holy Trinity,² when a theory was propounded which startled and perplexed the whole Christian world. Its author was named Arius, born in Libya, the son of Amon, and probably therefore of native blood. Originally one of the Melitian sect, he was ordained deacon by Peter, but suspended for contumacy. The martyr was entreated to grant him absolution before his death, but refused, alleging that he had been shown in a vision what evil the Church was to suffer from this man. Achillas not only received his submission, but ordained him presbyter, and appointed him to the church of Baucalis, the oldest and most honourable in Alexandria. Being a man of considerable powers, and strict demeanour, he acquired great influence among the wealthier and influential classes; and his preaching attracted large numbers of females. On the death of Achillas he was put in nomination for the bishopric, but the choice falling on Alexander, Arius employed his talents to discredit the new prelate, and draw followers to himself.

It was the practice of the bishop to propound portions of Scripture to his presbyters at their synods, for mutual discussion and edification. In one of these conferences Arius exclaimed against the bishop's doctrine as Sabellian. He proceeded to argue that if the Father begot the Son there must have been a time

¹ Mosh., *De Reb. ant. Const.*

² See Theognostus, Origen, and Dionysius, cited by Athanasius, *Ep. Nic. Def.*, s. 25.

when the Son had no existence, and God was not a Father. This was one of those "carnal reasonings" which are ever carping at things beyond their province: limiting the Eternal by the conceptions of time and place, and binding God to the conditions of humanity. Alexander reproved the impiety on the spot; but Arius persisting, the dispute extended itself to the clergy, and was greedily taken up by the quick-witted disputatious people. Several presbyters, with a considerable number of their hearers, including some hundreds of ladies, enthusiastically espoused the intellectual heresy. It was put into a ballad called *Thalia*, which Arius composed in the metre of a low scurrilous poet, and the deep things of God were in the mouth of every artisan and domestic.

Arius had the support of several eastern bishops; but on the question being brought before the Alexandrian synod he was excommunicated, and the sentence was confirmed by a council of nearly a hundred bishops of Egypt and Libya. The Syrian prelates still maintaining his cause, Alexander called a second council, which confirmed the decree of the first, and put out a circular letter giving an account of the entire controversy. In this letter two bishops and eleven presbyters, besides Arius, are included in the censure.¹ The new tenets are fairly stated, and refuted by the Scriptures still commonly adduced.² The letter is signed by seventeen presbyters and thirteen deacons of Alexandria, and by sixteen presbyters and sixteen deacons of the district of Mareotis. Like other orthodox writings of this early period, it makes no attempt to explain the Trinity, but simply

¹ Soc. i. 6.

² John i. 1, 3, 18; x. 30, 38; xiv. 9; Heb. i. 3; xiii. 8, etc.

asserts it on the authority of inspired Scripture, and denounced the new teaching as an impious heresy, the forerunner of Antichrist.

Arius being deposed from his ministry, fell under the penalty of banishment from Alexandria, in virtue of the legal sanction accorded to the decrees of the Church. He carried his complaints into Syria, where the bishops were always inclined to rationalism, and found numerous supporters. The controversy spread, and Constantine was called upon to interfere for the tranquillity of the Church and the empire.

At first he was disposed to treat the question with the contempt which men of the world usually exhibit for the mysteries of revelation, when not connected in their eyes with practical obligations. He wrote a letter to Alexander, blaming both him and his presbyter for discussing the question at all, and wished it to be henceforth buried in the silence proper to so inexplicable a mystery. Finding this impossible, the emperor determined to convene a synod of the entire Church to declare the truth. This was a natural development of the existing constitution of the Church. Every bishop had his synod for the examination of local controversies. Metropolitans called their bishops together when the matter was of common interest; still larger assemblies had been held for questions of more general importance. The Church was considered as an undivided corporation, of which the bishops represented the several parts. Elected by their flocks, and ruling in close intercourse with the clergy and people, they were the natural representatives of their communities. Nor was it the bishop only who found place in these higher synods. The prelate was accompanied by some of his clergy, and

the voice of the laity was not excluded from the councils of their pastors. It was in the bosom of the Christian church, derived from the authority of Christ,¹ and the example of the apostles,² that the representative system grew up which has since entered so largely into the civilisation of the world.

To this great principle the Roman empire was always a stranger; but in assuming the external government of the Church, Constantine felt called upon to give expression to its own polity. To convene a representation of the entire Christianity of his dominions³ was only the recognition of an institution already partially in use, and a natural result of his position; but this step was attended by results which no one could foresee, and which still powerfully affect every denomination of Christians.

The assembly of the First General Council was the most important event in the Christian church, since "the apostles went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."⁴ It proved that the fierce battle with the temporal powers was at last won, and Christianity was henceforth to enjoy the protection of those who had devoted it to extinction. But this was the least important aspect of the meeting; it was the first mutual recognition of the scattered fragments of the Christian church. Hitherto all had been labouring in their several fields with little knowledge of each other's proceedings. Each had dealt

¹ Matt. xviii. 17.

² Acts xv. 2, 6, 23; 1 Cor. v. 4.

³ The Greek phrase *œcumenical* (now equivalent to *catholic* or *universal*) originally signified *imperial*. It was a council of the *empire*, hyperbolically called the world, *οικουμένη* (Luke ii. 1).

⁴ Mark xvi. 20.

with its persecutions and controversies by its own light. The Holy Scripture was the only universal bond. It was now to be seen how far the isolated efforts of three centuries had so conformed to the sacred standard, as to result in a common confession of the faith. It is remarkable that no one seems to have doubted of such a result. There must have been a singular trust in the Divine origin of the common deposit, when delegates could be summoned from such widely differing nations, in the belief that a mere comparison of their respective creeds would issue in a general agreement in the truth.

The place of meeting was a town in Bithynia, on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont, and communicating with its waters through the Ascanian lake. Twenty miles away was Nicomedia, which Diocletian had made the capital of the East, and where Constantine chiefly resided before a new capital, called from himself, was built on the opposite shore. At Nicæa, in the month of May or June, A.D. 325, arrived "the most eminent among God's ministers of all those churches which filled Europe, Africa, and Asia; Syrians and Cilicians, Phenicians and Arabians, Palestinians and Egyptians, Thebans, Libyans; and those also who came out of Mesopotamia. There was a Persian bishop, nor was the Scythian absent; Pontus also, Galatia and Pamphylia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Phrygia, sent their divines; Thracians and Macedonians, Achaïans and Epirotes were present."¹ The enumeration seems designed to recall the assembly at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, the anniversary of which was being celebrated at the opening of the Council. All hearts must have felt the change which

¹ Euseb. Vit. Const. iii. 7.

the Word then preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven had effected on the face of the world in the three intervening centuries. The mustard-seed had grown into a tree, and the fowls of the air were lodged in the branches.

The place of assembly, now marked by a solitary plane-tree growing on its ruins,¹ was then the great hall or basilicon of the emperor's palace. The bishops were seated on benches ranged along the walls; a copy of the Gospel lay on a throne in the centre, and at the upper end was the gilded chair of the emperor. Constantine took his seat, crowned with the imperial diadem, and wearing the embroidered purple and scarlet shoes of the Roman Augustus. He was a man of lofty stature and piercing eyes, which his flatterers compared to an angel's.² His vanity was excessive: at one moment he coveted the honours which the idolaters paid to the sun; at another he was discussing with Christian bishops the deepest mysteries of their faith.

By the emperor's side sat the patriarchs, to whom Eusebius gives the title of "presidents." The Church of Rome pretends that the chief place was assigned to Hosius, bishop of Cordova, as legate of the pope; but Hosius was not among the presidents, and the Roman bishop was represented by two of his presbyters, to whom no particular place was assigned. Theodoret assigns the right hand of the emperor to Eustathius, the patriarch of Antioch, which in the east was called the see of St. Peter. According to the Alexandrian annals, that place was filled by their own pope Alexander; and their statement seems to be confirmed by the council itself, since the synodical

¹ Stanley's *Eastern Church*, p. 121. ² Eus. V. C. iii. 10.

epistle describes this prelate as "chief author and actor of all their proceedings." It is probable that these two chiefs of the Oriental church sat on either hand of the imperial chair facing the assembly; while Hosius and the metropolitan Eusebius of Cæsarea, both friends of the emperor, headed the lateral ranks on either side.¹

Arius was called in. He was an elderly man, tall and thin, with the dress of an ascetic, and a wild look, which, coupled with a strange contortion of the limbs, gave him at times the appearance of being out of his senses. His opponents, indeed, termed his teaching the *Ario mania*—a double pun, which may be translated the *Arian* or the *war frenzy*.² He was undoubtedly a man of eloquence and power, since he had a considerable following at Alexandria, in spite of the censure of two bishops, and appeared at Nicæa with the avowed support of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and eighteen other bishops. His speculations, however, like those of the so-called "free inquirers" in our own day, were audacious rather than profound. He pretended to be gifted with higher powers of thought than orthodox believers. In the doggerel verses which disseminated his heresy, he styled himself "the *illustrious* sufferer for the truth—one who had learned wisdom and *gnosis* from God."³ Puffed up with this conceit of intellect, he was sadly wanting in the loving faith which realizes the Saviour, in the dignity of His person and the fulness of His atonement, as the light and trust of the heart.

¹ There is an ambiguity in the use of the words "right" and "left," from its not being certain whether the writer meant the right of the hall, or of the emperor.

² From *Ares*, the Greek Mars.

³ Ath. cont. Arian, i. 25.

He discussed the Divine nature and attributes in a hard external way, using the Scripture as a means of dialectical triumphs, more than as the channel of saving truth. He showed little concern for the consequences of his teaching on the faith or morals of the Church. The libertines, with all who thought scorn of religion, professed themselves Arians, and loudly denounced the intolerance and bigotry of the orthodox side. One of his maxims was, that religious truth is a question for every man's conscience; implying that nothing certain was revealed from without, but all depended on the verifying faculty within.

These opinions found favour at the imperial court, where many pagans had embraced the emperor's religion without genuine conversion. His sister Constantia, a professed Arian, neglected no opportunity of influencing her brother. Constantine himself little cared to maintain a religious mystery against a popular advocate. He had been all for a compromise; but when Arius came before the Council, it was impossible to conceal the unchristian nature of his tenets. The bishops stopped their ears in horror, and at once condemned his positions as heretical. On his refusal to recant he was excommunicated, and by the emperor ordered into exile. The Council then drew up a statement of the true faith, which, with some explanations added at the subsequent council of Constantinople, is still universally received as the *Nicene Creed*. Translated into English, it ran as follows:—

“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is, from the substance of

the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; one substance (*homoousios*) with the Father; by whom all things were made, both in heaven and earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was made flesh, was made man, suffered and rose again the third day, ascended into heaven, and cometh to judge quick and dead; and in the Holy Ghost. But for those that say, once He was not, and that He was not before His generation, and that He came to be from nothing, or that He is of any subsistence or other substance (*hypostasis*, or *ousia*), or created, or alterable, or mutable, all such the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematize."

This was the first and only standard adopted by the Church universal. It was reasserted at the Second General Council [A.D. 381], with an explanation of the article on the Holy Ghost, stating that He "proceeds from the Father." To this the Western Church, in the eighth century, added *filioque*, "and from the Son;" but this innovation, though unquestionably expressing the truth, mainly occasioned the schism with the Oriental communion. With this exception, the Creed of Nicæa is still retained in the Liturgies, both of East and West; the decree of those 318 fathers expresses, at an interval of more than fifteen centuries, the faith which all orthodox Christians derive from the Holy Scriptures.¹

This result was not arrived at without much dissension. Eusebius of Nicomedia, who stood forward as the champion of Arius, proposed a confession

¹ The Creed assumed its exact form (with the exception of the *filioque*) at the Fourth General Council [A.D. 431], when any further change was strictly forbidden.

which was indignantly torn to pieces as unworthy of discussion. A draft by his namesake of Cæsarea was accepted as the basis of deliberation; but, sorely against the author's will, it was amended by the insertion of the word *homoousios*, "of one substance," to express the unity of the only begotten Son with the Eternal Father. In a letter to the people of his charge, Eusebius declares that this word was proposed by the emperor himself; deeming it, perhaps, more honourable to his position and talents to submit to the imperial pleasure than to the arguments of his fellow-bishops.¹ But there is no doubt that the term was brought forward from ancient writers, and deliberately adopted, as best calculated to oppose the novel and dangerous speculations of Arius. The honour of finally drawing up the document seems to belong to Hosius, the oldest and most venerated of the assembled fathers.

Though seventeen of the bishops are said to have been more or less favourable to Arius, when required to sign the confession only two had the courage to refuse, and share the penalty of excommunication and exile. Eusebius of Nicomedia resorted to the subterfuge of inserting an *i* into the disputed word, so changing it to *homoiousios* (of "a like substance"); from this artifice his followers were afterwards called *Homoiousians*, as the supporters of the Creed were termed *Homoousians*. This distinction gave occasion to the infidels to remark that the Christian world was divided on a single *iota*; but the sneer was as misplaced as it would have been to count the grains of incense which a confessor was required to burn in sacrifice to the idols. The two words, it is true, differed

¹ Soc. E. H. i. 8.

only by the smallest of Greek letters, but their meaning involved all the difference between Christianity and Polytheism. That which is like is clearly not the same. If the Son were truly God, and yet not one God with the Father, it followed of necessity that Christians must acknowledge more Gods than one: this Arius did not scruple to allow. If, on the other hand, the unity of the Godhead were upheld, the true Deity of Christ must be denied; to this alternative the two Eusebius's clearly tended.

To the objection that the word "substance" suggested a *material* notion, it was replied that such was not the meaning. The Greek word properly signifies simple *being* or *existence*, and "consubstantial" was nothing more than "co-existent." A better objection was found when it was urged that the term was unscriptural.¹ It was replied, however, that neither was the language of Arius consistent with the letter of Holy Scripture, while it was wholly antagonistic to its spirit. Our Lord himself had said, "I and my Father are One:" but no Scripture sanctioned the assertion that any being was *like* the Most High. Moreover, the word *ousia* was introduced as equivalent to *hypostasis*, which is expressly applied to the Deity in Holy Scripture.² At a later period it is true that *hypostasis* (in Latin *persona*) was used to express the Divine distinctions, and *ousia* (*substantia*), the unity; whence the orthodox phrase came

¹ The word *ousia* occurs in Luke xv. 13, and is translated "substance" in the sense of "living," or means of subsistence. Other derivatives from the same verb are frequent.

² Heb. i. 3 and xi. 1. It shows the nicety of the Greek language, and the difficulty of expressing Divine mysteries in human words, that our translators have rendered it in one of these places *person*, and the other *substance*.

to be Three Persons in one substance. But in the time of the Nicene Council, *person* was more generally expressed by the words *prosopa* and *physis*, while the other two were indifferently used for *substance*.

The artifice of the bishop of Nicomedia was so little relished by his two companions in error, that one of them plainly told him he had subscribed only to avoid the penalties of refusal, which he heartily trusted would yet overtake him. The prophecy was quickly fulfilled, for Eusebius no sooner disclosed his real sentiments than Constantine, in spite of his friendship, deprived him of his see, and ordered him into exile. The emperor was not the man to suffer the peace of the Church to be disturbed by respect for the rights of conscience. Caring little, and perhaps understanding little, about the vital truths involved in this discussion—for this imperial defender of the faith was not yet baptized, or even admitted a catechumen in the Christian church—he was not slow to exact submission to a decree obtained with so much trouble to himself, and sanctioned by his own authority. He commanded the writings of Arius to be burned, and publicly stigmatized his followers as *Porphyrians*.¹ In a little time, however, finding that men could use their tongues and pens in one place as well as another, Constantine veered about to the policy of comprehension. Recalling Arius, he received from him a new confession of faith, which he pronounced to be orthodox, and thereupon commanded him to be readmitted to his ministry at Alexandria.

The bishop of Nicomedia was also restored to his see

¹ Porphyry was the disciple and successor of Plotinus in the New Platonist school of Alexandria. The emperor designed by this epithet to signify that Arianism was founded on human and heathen philosophy instead of the Word of God.

and the court favour, and became the foremost adversary of the Nicene faith. His views were called semi-Arian, and his followers Eusebians and *Homoiousians*, the Arians proper being *Heterousians*, assertors of *another* substance. In the disputes which distracted the Church for many years, further subdivisions took place. The Acacians, so called from Acacius, the disciple and successor of Eusebius of Cæsarea, dropping the *ousia* altogether, took for their symbol *homoion*, or "like;" while a fourth party were termed *Anomæans*, from maintaining the Son to be "unlike" the Father.

These discordant parties were united only in opposition to the Homoousian creed and the vital truths involved in its critical word. By the orthodox the question was never viewed as a speculation on the nature of the Divine Being, but as an essential portion of saving truth. The Arian tenets introduced a new Being between God and men, more like the *Demiurgos* of the Gnostics than the Mediator of the Gospel. They deprived the Atonement of its Divine value, and the Christian of his reconciliation with God. They subverted the very foundations of Christianity, the corruption of man's nature by sin, justification through faith, sanctification by the Spirit of God; in a word, all the doctrines and means of GRACE disappeared with the Divinity of Jesus Christ. If God himself did not come to seek and to save, then indeed it may be said, "Christ has died in vain, we are yet in our sins." The Arians had no SAVIOUR to offer; they could only preach the example of a great and perfect Being, with whom men were to be united by their own moral works. Christians justly felt that such a union would leave them still immeasurably distant from God.

CHAPTER XII.

ATHANASIUS.

Egyptian Origin—Appearance and Influence—The Melitians—Nicene Canons—Celibacy rejected—Election to the See—Abyssinian Church—Synod of Tyre—Appeal to the Emperor—First Exile—Death of Arius—And Constantine—Return to Alexandria—Constantius—Second Exile—Gregory—Semi-Arian Creed—Visit to Rome—Council of Sardica—Return—Constantius sole Emperor—Third Exile—George—Persecutions—Macedonius—New Semi-Arian Confessions—Emperor's Death—Julian the Apostate—Death of George—Return and Synod of Alexandria—Golden Canon—Fourth Exile—Attempt to Rebuild the Jewish Temple—Death of Julian—Return to the See—Jovian—Valentinian—Fifth Exile prevented—Death and Character—Athanasian Creed.

THE person who most distinguished himself at the Council of Nicæa on the side of the truth, was a young man then a simple deacon from Alexandria, but destined to become by far the greatest person of the age, and to exercise an influence on Christianity only second to the inspired writers themselves. ATHANASIUS has left no record of his family, or of the happy prescience which bestowed on him a name signifying "Immortal." Its first authentic appearance is among the signatures to the Alexandrian council excommunicating Arius.¹ He attended his bishop to Nicæa, where, on account of Alexander's age, he was permitted to sustain the accusation. His ability, eloquence, and learning, charmed his auditors, and made a considerable impression on the emperor. He was small in stature and of a slender spare figure, but with a bright, serene countenance. He had a hooked nose, hair inclining to red, with large whiskers, and a short

¹ The fable of his boy-priesthood is unworthy of serious notice.

beard.¹ This description, coupled with his unbounded popularity in Egypt, makes it probable that he was of Egyptian rather than Greek descent. But whatever his earthly lineage, he was undoubtedly of the family of Jesus Christ. His writings exhibited a deep-seated tender love for the person of our Lord. He comprehended from the first all that was involved in the assertion of His true Divinity and Oneness with the Father.² All the powers and sufferings of a long and noble life were given to the defence of the creed which he knew to embody the revealed word of God. Yet he was so far from seeking merely verbal triumphs that he incessantly laboured for reunion in the church of God, and never failed to meet every honest advance on the part of the seceders. These qualities, with the station to which he was soon raised, placed him in the van of the orthodox confession, and drew on him the united hostility of its opponents.

The Council of Nicæa did not limit its labour to the promulgation of the Creed. Other matters connected with Alexandria claimed its attention. In order to ensure uniformity in the observance of the great festival of the Resurrection, it was determined by common consent to suppress the quartodeciman practice, which assimilated the Christian passover to the Jewish, and exhibited one portion of the Church fasting while another was feasting. The custom of the great sees of Rome and Alexandria was enjoined universally, and the Alexandrian prelate was formally

¹ Stanley's *Lectures on the Eastern Church*, p. 223. Gregory of Nazianzen, in his panegyric discourse, speaks of his "angelic countenance" (Acts vi. 15). *Orat.* xxi. 9.

² This has been well perceived by Möhler in his "Athanasius the Great."

invested with the duty, which he had previously discharged, of giving yearly notice of the day on which the festival would fall.

In the remaining question—the Melitian schism—the council exhibited a leniency which Athanasius, who had observed or prognosticated its tendency to Arianism, never ceased to regret. His aged chief, however, being of less uncompromising spirit, was satisfied to have his jurisdiction admitted, and Melitius restrained from further ordinations. The latter was allowed to retain the title of bishop without the functions, but he was ordered to give in a list to Alexander of the persons ordained by him, and they were placed under suspension till the primate should see fit to reordain them. The list was found to comprise eight bishops and as many clergymen.

A whole code of ecclesiastical laws are attributed to the Council of Nicæa by the Eastern church, but its authentic canons are only twenty in number. The sixth is interesting, as providing for the ancient jurisdiction, which Melitius had disregarded, and unmistakeably disclosing the true authority of the Roman see. "Let the ancient customs (it says) prevail; the bishop of Alexandria to have power over the bishops in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, since the same is customary for the bishop of Rome.¹ Likewise, in Antioch and other provinces, let the privileges be secured to the churches."²

A proposition to enforce clerical celibacy was defeated by the hermit bishop Paphnutius, who insisted

¹ *i.e.* in the district of the civil præfect or vicar of Rome, called the *Suburbicarian* Provinces, comprising the south of Italy, with Sicily, Sardinia, etc. The north of Italy was under the primate of Milan.

² Nic. Conc. Can. vi.

that the rule already adopted (and still prevailing) in the Eastern church was enough. The clergy were not to marry after ordination; but to separate them from wives previously wedded would be tyrannical and unscriptural.

The council being ended, the emperor gave a grand farewell banquet to the bishops, and dismissed them to their respective sees, in the fallacious hope that the truth being now cleared, and the creed of the Church declared by the joint consent of its representatives, contentions would disappear, and its future government be a labour of love.

Alexander died shortly after his return to Alexandria, and all eyes were turned upon Athanasius. He was absent at the moment on a mission to the emperor connected with the Melitians, who still maintained the schism. One of that party was hastily intruded into the vacant see, but died in a few months, when the bishops assembled to the number of fifty for a more regular election. The deacon being now returned, the people besieged the church in crowds, shouting "Athanasius for bishop! Athanasius the ascetic,¹ the true Christian!" His own unwillingness, and the objection of his youth, were peremptorily overruled. The enthusiastic Egyptians refused to leave the church, or allow the bishops to do so, till their demand was granted. After several days and nights spent in this way, the election was formally declared, and Athanasius was duly consecrated to the Evangelical See.² The election took place on the 8th

¹ It is doubtful whether he were ever actually a monk; but he was a single man, and always expressed a warm admiration of the monastic state.

² Apol. cont. Ar., § 6.

June, 328, when the new primate was probably under thirty years of age.¹

One of his first acts was to give a new territory to his church by the consecration of Frumentius to the first Ethiopian bishopric. Frumentius had been shipwrecked when a youth in the Red Sea, and appropriated as a slave by the king of Abyssinia. Released by the king's death, he was prevailed upon to remain as guardian and regent for his infant sons. In this capacity he threw open the trade to foreign merchants, and especially favoured the introduction of Christian settlers, whom he assisted to build churches. On the prince attaining his majority, Frumentius repaired to Alexandria, and besought the new pope to provide for the interests of the gospel. Athanasius, who was then sitting in his provincial council, at once accepted the founder of the mission as chosen by the finger of God, and consecrated Frumentius to be bishop of Axum, the capital city. Returning to the scene of his labours, the new bishop was gratefully received by the two monarchs, Abreha and Atzbeha, and by their countenance and assistance "Ethiopia began to stretch out her hands unto God."² The bishop of Axum was constituted metropolitan (Metran or Catholic) of the Abyssinian church; but to prevent its becoming independent of the chair of St.

¹ The difficulties attending the chronology of Athanasius's history are reviewed at length in the Preface to the 13th volume of the Oxford "*Library of Fathers*." They were then insuperable; but the subsequent discovery of the *Festal Epistles* in a monastery of Nitria has supplied an authority which must overrule all others. The chronological Index prefixed to these Epistles (vol. 38 of the Library) exhibits a regular succession of each year of Athanasius's episcopate, agreeing with the chronology of Mansi more nearly than of other critics. Our dates are taken from this Index.

² Psa. lxviii. 31.

Mark, an unworthy jealousy prescribed that he should always be a native of Egypt, and that his dependent bishops should never exceed the number of seven.¹

Athanasius proceeded [A.D. 330] on a visitation up the Nile as far as Syene, and was everywhere received with the greatest enthusiasm by the hermits, who flocked from their convents and desert cells to greet him as he passed. The Arians, however, were not extinguished, and having effected a union with the Melitians, to whom their leader originally belonged, they turned their united indignation on the champion of the Nicene Creed. From this time the history of Athanasius is the history of the Church.

His first trial was in braving the anger of Constantine, by refusing obedience to his command to restore Arius to his ministry. The emperor menaced him with deposition. The discontented parties eagerly fanned the flame, and at last succeeded in bringing him to trial before a synod at Tyre, A.D. 336.

Forty-nine Egyptian bishops attended their primate to this assembly, and were met by sixty of the Eastern sees, among whom Eusebius of Cæsarea took the lead. The count Dionysius appeared with guards as imperial commissioner. Athanasius conceived it to be a secular court rather than a synod; the charges in like manner appeared to be of a criminal rather than an ecclesiastical character. The first was nothing less than a murder, aggravated by sorcery. The Alexandrian pope was accused of having put a bishop named Arsenius to death, and cut off his hand to be used in magical incantations. This charge had been previously investigated by the emperor's brother, Dalmatius, and dismissed as absurd. It was now re-

¹ Neale, i. 156.

iterated with force and circumstance; the dead hand was actually produced in court as unimpeachable evidence. Athanasius, who had privately prepared for the crisis, inquired if any one present was acquainted with the deceased. Several bishops answered in the affirmative. "Look well, then," cried the accused, drawing back the hood of a muffled figure by his side, "is this the murdered man?" It was Arsenius himself! The identity was beyond a doubt. But the hand at least was amputated. Athanasius raised the bishop's cloak, and showed his hand. "It must be the other." The other was in turn revealed. "And now," cried the triumphant primate, "if Arsenius had a third hand, let the prosecution show the place where it was cut off!" The rage of Eusebius, at this dramatic exposure, was so violent that Athanasius would have been torn in pieces but for the prompt interference of the count.¹

On another charge, though equally groundless, the accused was not so easily acquitted. Macarius, one of his presbyters, was brought in chains before the court, accused of having assaulted one Ischyrras, a priest in the Mareotic district, while in the act of celebrating the Holy Communion, thrown down the altar, burnt the sacred books, and broken the chalice. This heinous sacrilege was laid at the door of Athanasius, by whom Macarius had been sent to summon Ischyrras to his presence on a charge of schism. This complaint had been already heard and dismissed by the emperor. Macarius denied the facts. Ischyrras had signed a paper declaring the charge untrue, and was not now present to support it. The Egyptian bishops testified that he was not a priest, and that

¹ Soc. E. II. i. 29.

neither church, altar, nor chalice, ever existed in the place alleged. Notwithstanding all this, the Eusebians insisted on sending a commission to take evidence on the spot. Six of the most determined opponents of Athanasius were despatched for this purpose, Macarius being kept in prison till their return. Against the injustice of this proceeding, the bishops from Egypt unanimously protested in writing, and some of them were not very moderate in their language. "What!" exclaimed Potammon to Eusebius of Cæsarea, "are you among the judges, and Athanasius a criminal? You, who were in prison with me during the persecution. I lost this eye for confessing Christ; how you escaped unharmed your own conscience best knows."¹

Athanasius deeming his person unsafe at Tyre, withdrew from the council, and secretly quitted the city. When the commissioners returned with the result of their inquiry—conducted in the absence of the accused, and to the exclusion of the clergy of the district who came forward to testify to his innocence—he was pronounced to have absconded from justice. The charges were declared proved, and sentence of deposition was pronounced. The sentence was subscribed among others by Arsenius, whose part in the former drama had been extorted from him by Athanasius. Thus, "what was very strange" (observes the historian) "he that was reported to have been murdered by Athanasius, being alive, deposed Athanasius."²

The synod removed to Jerusalem, on the emperor's summons, to dedicate the church which his mother

¹ Epiph. Hæres. ix. 8. Eusebius was suspected of apostasy.

² Soc. i. 32.

had built over the Holy Sepulchre. After completing that solemnity they examined the explanation of Arius, and pronouncing it satisfactory, restored him to communion. Athanasius in the meantime had taken refuge at Constantinople with the bishop Alexander, a firm adherent of the orthodox confession. On the emperor's return to the city, Athanasius threw himself in his way as he passed on horseback, and succeeded in relating to him what had taken place at Tyre. Constantine, whose desire was to bring about a general reconciliation, was greatly displeased at the violence and injustice of the Eusebians. He was especially moved at the charge against a bishop of murdering a man who was actually alive. He readily agreed to Athanasius's request to have the trial removed to his own audience, and despatched letters accordingly to the council still sitting at Jerusalem.¹ The bishops at once broke up in alarm, the greater part returning to their sees. Eusebius, with five others (of whom two had gone on the commission to Mareotis), repaired to Constantinople, but abandoning the whole proceeding at Tyre, they brought a new accusation, that Athanasius had presumed to obstruct the supplies of corn from Alexandria to the imperial city. This was touching the emperor in a tender point. Athanasius asked how it was possible that a poor bishop should be able to exercise such an influence? but Eusebius affirmed that the wealth and power of the pope were enormous; and Constantine alarmed at the greatness of his subject, gave sentence that he should be banished to Treves, where the eldest of the Cæsars was then keeping his court. After eight years of incessant struggling against enemies

¹ Soc. i. 34.

incensed only by his constancy in the truth, the champion of the Nicene Council was sent into exile by the very prince who counted its assembly the proudest moment of his life.

Nor did the emperor's inconsistency stop here. Though he refused to fill the see of Alexandria, as not recognising the sentence of deposition passed at Tyre, Arius was permitted to proceed thither with the view of resuming his ministry. He was resisted with so much determination by the clergy and people, that Constantine, whose fate it was to be always attempting reconciliations without appreciating the points in dispute, recalled him to Constantinople, to be again satisfied of his orthodoxy. Here the emperor was persuaded to waive the critical term adopted on his own proposal at Nicæa, and sent a mandate to the bishop of Constantinople to admit Arius to communion. Again he had to learn that conscience is stronger than royalty. The aged prelate, then ninety years old, respectfully declined; the Church had pronounced Arius a heretic, and there was no recantation. The emperor insisted; he named a day, and would hear of neither argument nor entreaty. The Christian city was in commotion, the people flocked to the churches, and prayers were offered up as in the times of the persecutors. Alexander spent the night before the appointed day in the church of Irene, fasting and prostrate before the holy table. "Lord, let me or Arius die to-morrow," was the burden of his prayers. The morrow came, Sunday morning, but no day of rejoicing to the sorrowing prelate. Arius was led in triumph through the city; the bishop continued instant in prayer. The procession was on its way to the church; it had

reached the Constantine square and the Porphyry pillar, when Arius was suddenly smitten with a strange disease, and falling down died on the spot. "The place," says the historian, obviously moved at the awful catastrophe, "is to be seen at this day behind Constantine's forum and the shambles in the Piazza; every one points with the finger as they go by, and the manner of Arius's death will never be forgotten."¹

Tidings of these events reached Athanasius in his exile, where he was treated with kindness by the younger Constantine. In vain, however, had the Alexandrians petitioned the emperor for his recall. The old hermit Anthony sent again and again to the same effect, but Constantine protested they were asking for the destruction of their own peace, and sternly rejected the request.

The year 338 put a period to the life of Constantine the Great. He was baptized on his death-bed by the bishop of Nicomedia; for, notwithstanding the pretended miracle of his conversion, the prince who had sat among bishops, determining the deepest mysteries of the faith, was not even a christened man; and he who had been fierce in his zeal for the Trinity, was indebted to a semi-Arian for the initiatory sacrament of the gospel. The delay is one of many proofs, which show how extensively the first Christian emperor was under the influence of superstition and paganism. He postponed his baptism in order not to exhaust the forgiveness of sins, which he imagined could only be imparted by that rite. He refused to touch purple after assuming the baptismal garment, as if the imperial state, which his life had been devoted to create and maintain, were inconsistent with Christianity, and

¹ Soc. i. 38.

the whole policy of his government an impiety. He died with the language of charity on his lips, but leaving, if his will were not a forgery, an awful legacy of suspicion and revenge to his heirs. The emperor had not acquired his ecclesiastical authority by the apostolical canon of ruling well his own family. Crispus, his eldest son, died by his order on suspicions afterwards acknowledged to be unfounded. Fausta, his second queen, was put to death to gratify the revenge of his mother Helen. His own death was attributed to poison; and his will, which the bishop of Nicomedia placed in the hand of the corpse till his sons should arrive, charged the crime on his brothers Julius and Dalmatius.

The first of the Cæsars to reach the palace where the dead emperor lay on a golden couch, attended with the same state as in life, was the second son Constantius. He opened the scroll and read it; but, concealing its contents, he pledged his word for the safety of his relatives; and then, allowing the secret to transpire, gave them up to the excited passions of the soldiery. The two imperial brothers, with seven of their children, were massacred without trial, and, to aggravate the horror, a daughter of Julius was married to her father's murderer.¹

The empire being now divided between the three Cæsars, Egypt and Asia had the misfortune to fall to the share of Constantius. Constantine, the eldest, reigned to the west of the Alps, and Constans over the remainder of Europe and Africa. Constantine, who had always befriended Athanasius, immediately sent him back to Alexandria, with a letter alleging that such was his father's intention. His return was

¹ *Decline and Fall*, c. xviii.

hailed with every demonstration of joy by the clergy and people. They conducted him into the city with acclamations, which were long remembered as the proudest triumph of the age. Anthony, the venerable chief of the monks, came to visit him, and a synod of nearly a hundred bishops put out a circular declaring his innocence of all the offences laid to his charge.¹

The tables were again turned by the death of Constantine, who fell in invading the dominions of Constans [A.D. 340]. Constantius, who was so completely in the hands of the Eusebians that Athanasius calls him "emperor of heresy," immediately gave away the see of Alexandria, assuming its vacancy under the sentence of the Council of Tyre. The person selected for the dignity was Gregory of Cappadocia, who when a student in the schools of philosophy at Alexandria, had received many kindnesses from the bishop, and was even entrusted with his confidence without even the form of an election, and apparently without consecration.² Gregory, in the midst of an armed force, took possession of the see while Athanasius was keeping Lent. The bishop was sought for in the church where he held his vigils; but escaping his persecutors, he lay concealed through the night, and fled in the morning, after baptizing several catechumens. Four days after, Gregory was placed on the episcopal throne by the prefect Philagrius, an apostate to heathenism. He was stoutly resisted by the clergy and monks; but the emperor having called a council of his own bishops at Antioch,

¹ Soc. ii. 3. Ath. Ap. cont. Ar. 3, 87.

² The Index to *Fest. Ep.* dates his entry in March 339, two years before the Council of Antioch, at which Socrates (E. H. ii. 10) reports his ordination.

for the dedication of the Golden church commenced by his father, they confirmed the appointment of Gregory, and put out a new confession of faith, which, while disclaiming Arius, omitted the word "consubstantial," and defined the Trinity as Three in Person and One in *consent* [A.D. 341].

Gregory kept possession for six years, during which his conduct was that of a wolf rather than a shepherd. Churches were burnt, the sanctuaries plundered, and even heathen sacrifices offered on the holy table. Several bishops were scourged and imprisoned; some who had won the title of confessors in heathen times were banished. Potammon, one of the fathers of Nicæa, died of the injuries he received; monks and nuns were beaten and killed, and the Christians throughout Egypt groaned as under another Diocletian.¹

Meantime Athanasius had escaped to Rome, where Julius the bishop summoned a council to hear his complaint. The Eusebians refused to attend, alleging that all bishops being of equal authority, the decrees of their synods could not be re-examined and overruled at Rome. Julius replied that it was they who had reversed the decrees of the Council of Nicæa, and lighted up the flames of discord throughout the world; that having called on him to refuse communion with Athanasius, they ought to show a canonical ground for his exclusion, but that, in fact, they had themselves transgressed the canons in proceeding at all against a bishop of Alexandria without the Roman see. He asserts it to be the custom that all complaints against the bishop of that see should be made to the church at Rome, whose prerogative it was to

¹ Athan. *Ep. Enc.* § 5.

call a council for their decision. Julius had never heard of the modern dogma, which makes the Roman pontiff head of the universal Church, as vicar of Christ, and successor of St. Peter.

The Roman synod acquitted Athanasius, and the emperor Constans sent for him to Milan ; after which he urged his brother to submit the whole question to a second general council. Constantius having consented, Sardica in Illyricum was appointed for the place of assembly, as being equally convenient to the Eastern and Western churches. Here 170 bishops arrived, before whom Athanasius offered to defend himself ; but when the Eusebians found that Hosius of Cordova was to preside, and they could expect no assistance from the secular power, they fell back on their former objection to reopen a question already decided, and refused to appear. Sitting apart in the imperial palace, they proceeded to excommunicate Hosius, Julius, and other bishops, for communicating with Athanasius, and then returned to the East. The remainder, disregarding this secession, proceeded to hear Athanasius. The Tyrian sentence was cancelled, Gregory was pronounced to be no bishop, and the Alexandrian clergy were directed to receive Athanasius again with all honour. These decrees were coldly received by Constantius, but hearing of Gregory's death, and dreading the interference of Constans, who threatened to restore Athanasius by force, he invited him to return to his see, and commanded the past to be buried in oblivion.

When the archbishop approached Alexandria, after a six years' exile, the people came out 100 miles to meet him, and the churches were too small to contain the congregations who flocked to his ministrations.

He was obliged to permit their assembling in the Hadrianum, an imperial building already granted for a church, but which had not yet received the customary dedication. This was afterwards complained of as an invasion of the emperor's prerogative, and the peace was of no long duration. The death of Constans, and the defeat of the usurper Magnentius [A.D. 353], left Constantius sole master of the reunited empire, and the Eusebians found it easy to rekindle the flame against their formidable opponent. New edicts issued against Athanasius, who was condemned unheard in two synods before the emperor, at Arles and Milan. The remonstrances of the Western bishops were met by a declaration that the will of the emperor was the law of the church; the only alternative was submission or exile. The tyrant brandished his sword in the face of a bishop who sought to put him in mind that he had a Master in heaven; and having failed in his endeavours to bend Liberius, now bishop of Rome, to his purpose, he banished him to Beræa. Still he unaccountably delayed the order which Athanasius was prepared to obey. The pastor refused to leave his flock, save by the formal sentence of his sovereign. His scruples were overruled by an unparalleled scene of violence. At the instigation of the Arians, Syrianus the duke in command of the forces, at the head of five thousand soldiers, burst into the church of Theonas at midnight, and commenced a murderous onslaught on the congregation. Javelins and arrows flew through the air, naked swords flashed in the lamps, before the eyes of the defenceless Christians. Some of the consecrated virgins were slain; numbers, trampled under foot, perished of their wounds. Athanasius, sitting

undismayed on the throne, commanded the deacon to give out the 136th Psalm; the response of the people rose above the shouts of their assailants—"For His mercy endureth for ever." The psalm ended, the bishop was borne away by the clergy, who carried him half dead through the tumult, and conveyed him to the desert, where he lay concealed among the monks for six years. Meantime the churches were forcibly given over to the Arians, and for several months Egypt was a prey to military rapine, in the name of a Christian bishop.

The Arian party again dispensing with canonical election, nominated another Cappadocian named George to the Alexandrian see. This man had been degraded, when a presbyter, by Alexander, for profligate conduct. Joining the Arian party, he became bishop of Laodicea, and with this spiritual dignity he united the lucrative office of contractor for bacon to the army. There was a report that he had apostatized to idolatry, and all authorities agree that he was a man of savage disposition and infamous morals. Such was the prelate whom the prefect Sebastian placed on the episcopal seat in the name of the emperor. His conduct was worthy of his character and supporters. In the capital, and throughout the provinces, churches were broken open and fired, bibles were burned, communion tables overturned; clergy, monks, and nuns, were stripped and scourged, and numerous lives sacrificed to the lust of rule. Ninety bishops were driven from their homes, and their cities plundered.

Athanasius had a price set on his head, and was preserved only by constantly shifting his quarters to escape the emissaries sent in quest of him. The

hair-breadth escapes related by his admirers, and the savage atrocities imputed to his persecutors, suggest a hope that some exaggeration mingles in the excited relations of the time. Yet the history of the Inquisition, and the fires of Smithfield, too painfully attest that no passions are more violent than those which spring from religious contentions. A zeal which calls itself Christian, when released from the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and raging in its own unsanctified power, can steel the heart not only against the dictates of gospel love, but against the common sense of humanity. How rare is the spirit which, enduring all things rather than betray its own conscience, still regards opposition to the truth as an offence against God more than itself, and, after the example of the Redeemer, can pity and pray for the transgressor!

The Arian controversy continued to devastate the Church throughout the reign of Constantius, whose violent endeavours only multiplied expositions which he had neither learning nor patience to understand. Aspiring to be thought a theologian, he proved only a barbarian. Paul, who had succeeded Alexander in the see of Constantinople, was imprisoned and murdered by his ministers to make way for Macedonius, a semi-Arian, and the author of a new heresy which denied the coequal Divinity of the Holy Ghost. Above three thousand persons lost their lives in the tumult which attended his inauguration, and the city which boasted its never having been defiled with idolatry saw its streets swimming with Christian blood. Constantius not only published a sentence of deprivation and exile against all who refused to communicate with this wicked bishop, but ordered the civil and military powers to assist him in enforcing

the penalties. Women and children were torn from their friends, and baptized by force. The mouths of others were forced open by wedges, while the consecrated bread was thrust down their throats. Tortures were inflicted without mercy. In Paphlagonia a body of four thousand troops marched against the people; towns and villages were laid waste, and thousands massacred under the orders of their spiritual pastor.

While the bishop was thus slaughtering his flock, the emperor was holding synods to correct their theology. New forms of confession were promulgated at Sirmium, Rimini, Seleucia, and Constantinople, all omitting the obnoxious *Homoousion*, though otherwise professing to adhere to the Nicene Creed. Liberius, the exiled bishop of Rome, was at last induced to purchase his return by subscribing one of these attempts at compromise; a still greater authority was gained in Hosius, the father of the Christian bishops, who was universally regarded as an example of faith and holiness. The good man was not reduced to compliance without the application of torture (at a hundred years of age), and on his death-bed he solemnly abjured all complicity with Arianism. Other bishops who followed these authorities subsequently retracted their subscription, and no general agreement had been arrived at when Constantius was withdrawn from the struggle by death [A.D. 361]. Like his father, he was baptized in the last extremity, and the baptism was performed by Euzoius, a pure Arian.

The next emperor was Julian, the youngest son of Julius, brother of Constantine the Great, who, with his half-brother Gallus, had escaped the sword of Con-

stantius. Gallus, after being created Cæsar, and married to his cousin Constantina, fell under the jealousy of Constantius, and was beheaded in prison [A.D. 354].¹ Julian was preserved by the patronage of the empress Eusebia,² and after a rigorous confinement was permitted to retire to Athens, where he gave himself up to the study of philosophy. The intercession of the empress having recalled him to court, he espoused the princess Helena, another daughter of Constantine the Great, and was created Cæsar. Being invested with the government of Gaul, he signalized himself by the defeat of the Germans in a great battle at Strasburg [A.D. 357], and carried the Roman eagles in three successful expeditions beyond the Rhine. He was scarcely less renowned for the civil administration of his subject provinces. The cities of Gaul were re-edified under his auspices; his favourite winter residence, on a small island in the Seine, laid the foundations of the present capital of France.

The fears and envy of Constantius had already designed his disgrace, when the legions suddenly proclaimed Julian emperor at Paris. He sent ambassadors to treat with his kinsman for a partition of the empire, but the reply demanded instant submission to the benefactor of his orphanage and the author of his honours. Julian retorted by calling Constantius the assassin of his family, and prepared to defend his title.

1 Constantina was a daughter of Constantine the Great: she bears in history the character of a fiend rather than a woman. For a pearl necklace, presented to her by an abandoned woman of Alexandria, she procured the execution of Clematius, an innocent nobleman of that place, for the crime of fidelity to his marriage vows.

2 If Gibbon is correct in the statement that Constantius was married to his uncle's daughter, the empress must have been Julian's sister.

The war was arrested by the opportune decease of the emperor. Julian entered Constantinople, to walk as chief mourner in his cousin's funeral, and filled the vacant throne at the early age of thirty-two.

The resentment which he had never ceased to cherish against the inhuman Constantius extended itself to the religion which he disgraced. When drawing the sword in Gaul, he publicly committed his cause to the "immortal gods" dethroned by the Christian emperors; he commenced his reign with the determination of restoring their altars, and suppressing Christianity. Educated by Eusebius of Nicomedia, and baptized in early youth, Julian continued till his twentieth year a Christian in profession, though secretly scorning the theological subtleties of his instructors. The fictions of Greek and Roman mythology, on the other hand, enjoyed his passionate admiration. At Ephesus he was secretly initiated in the mysteries of Eleusis, and ever displayed a credulity in the wonders and omens of paganism, which, however inconsistent, is by no means uncommon in philosophers who scoff at the evangelical miracles. His character has been portrayed with evident partiality by a writer who has no mercy on the frailties or vices of Christian rulers;¹ but even Gibbon cannot conceal the apostate's vanity and presumption, the passionate resentment with which he pursued his opponents, nor the dissimulation which enabled him to join for ten years in Christian rites, till the moment arrived when he could throw off the mask without injury to his worldly prospects.

Julian was actuated by an ever rankling malice against the religion to which he had made this unworthy sacrifice. His pride ascended from Constan-

¹ Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*.

tine to Him whom Constantine adored ; the rebellious mortal ventured to proclaim himself the personal enemy of the Redeemer of mankind ! He tried to efface his baptism in the blood of an immolated bull, and he is not free from the suspicion of the darkest rites of divination. He commenced his reign by artfully proclaiming equal toleration to every creed, hoping that, in the divided state of Christianity, the free dissemination of opinion would effect its speedy downfall. The exiled bishops received a general amnesty, and were permitted to return to their abodes with an injunction to cultivate peace with their neighbours.

To the pagans he issued a command to reopen their temples, and restore the long-suppressed rites of the idols. Reassuming the old title of Pontifex Maximus, the emperor officiated in person at the inspection of the entrails, and sacrificed with a zeal, which made the wits express their apprehensions for the preservation of the breed of horned cattle. The army was bribed by liberal donations to replace themselves under the protection of the gods ; the populace ran willingly to hecatombs, which supplied at once a sacrifice to the deities and a supper for the worshippers. Idolatry was re-established as the religion of the state ; the philosophic emperor gravely promulgated the doctrine that the Creator had committed the earth to the administration of inferior deities, who derived gratification and nourishment from the fumes of broiled flesh on their altars. He strove, however, to put a new face on paganism by reforming some of its impurities. In the hope of rivalling the moral excellences of Christianity, he appointed vicars to superintend the conduct of the priests, and enjoin them to a decent and religious demeanour. They were for-

bidden to appear in theatres, taverns, and other resorts of licentiousness. The magistrates were commanded to enforce justice, humanity, and good morals as the most acceptable oblations to the gods. He instituted schools, lectures, forms of prayer, monasteries, hospitals, and almshouses; quoting Homer to prove that the Galileans (as he commanded the Christians to be styled) had borrowed these works of piety and charity from the ancient pagans.

Julian's court was crowded by philosophers, on whom he lavished public honours and emoluments. To Christians, he altogether forbade the study of any kind of learning; alleging that by their religion it was enough to believe and be saved. The men who refused to adore the gods of Homer and Demosthenes should be content with expounding Matthew and Luke. He delighted to inveigh against the apostles as illiterate enthusiasts, and composed a refutation of their writings in seven books. The Christians were excluded from every honourable office in the state, and harassed by frequent fines and confiscations. Boasting that he was too magnanimous to gratify their morbid passion for martyrdom, the emperor took care not to inquire too closely into the acts of his officers, or the outrages of pagan mobs. On one occasion, when a deputation from Egypt had gained access to his presence at Constantinople, he bade them to retire, and expect his answer at Chalcedon; having thus transported the complainants across the Hellespont, he sent them no further reply, but interdicted the ships from again bringing an Egyptian to the capital. Julian was guilty of a still deeper crime against Mark of Arethusa, who had secured his life from the fury of Constantius's soldiers by concealing him in the

sanctuary of a church. This aged bishop was required by the pagan magistrates to reimburse the value of a temple which had been removed under the edicts of the Christian emperors. On his refusal, they seized his person, scourged him, tore his beard, and then suspended him naked in the Syrian sun, with his body anointed with honey to attract the flies and wasps. The heathen orator Libanius expressed his horror at this inhumanity, but the malicious Julian thought it redress enough to spare the old man's life.

Demands for restitution were now constantly urged against Christians, whose churches had in former reigns supplanted idolatrous temples. Julian was not content with depriving them of the endowments of the state; he required them to account for acts lawfully done whilst in their enjoyment. The clergy were the especial objects of his ridicule and injustice. He not only withdrew all secular honours, but tried to make them despicable by compelling them to serve in derogatory offices. In addition, they were often banished or imprisoned on the tyrant's charge of inciting their people to disaffection. "I show myself the true friend of the Galileans (he wrote) when I relieve them of their temporal possessions, and forward them on their way to the kingdom which their admirable law has promised to the poor." In short, if human power, aided by talent, wit, eloquence, and the most unscrupulous malice, could have vanquished "the foolishness of preaching," Julian the Apostate would undoubtedly have exterminated Christianity.

His accession was accompanied by the frequent incident of a riot in Alexandria. An old temple to Mithra¹ had been given by Constantius to bishop

¹ The Persian sun-god.

George, to be rebuilt for a church. On clearing out the sanctuary, a number of skulls were found, the relics of human sacrifices, or of some secret incantations. These the Christians publicly exposed in proof of the character of heathenism. A tumult ensued, in which the bishop was seized and cast into prison. The next day the populace dragged him out in the streets, and after parading him on a camel, burned him alive by the water side, casting his ashes into the sea, lest his followers should build a church over them, as had been done with former martyrs.¹ Dracontius, the prefect of the Alexandrian mint, perished in the same tumult. The only notice the emperor took of these outrages was to reprimand the people for their violence (which he pardoned out of respect to their god Serapis), and to seize the bishop's valuable library for himself.² The importance attached to these books seems to indicate that George was at least a man of some learning; he was afterwards canonized by the Arians, and by some strange confusion his fellow-sufferer has been converted into a *dragon*. The Arians recognised in this monster the symbol of prostrate orthodoxy. Still their saint crept into the Greek calendar, and so passed unsuspected into Russia. It is hard to imagine by what process he was converted into the patron of

1 Soc. iii. 2. The Index to the Festal Epistles, however, says that George was driven out of the city, but makes no mention of his death.

2 By a similar affectation of lenity he encouraged the idolaters at Antioch, who had revenged the injuries of the gods by destroying the sepulchres of the Galileans, and dragging the living through the streets, where they were bruised by clubs, pierced by spits, and finally thrown mangled and lifeless on the dunghill. The emperor applauded the loyalty and devotion of the people, only regretting they had not exhibited a trifle more of moderation. (Misopogon, 361.)

“merry England,” or installed protector of the most noble Order of the Garter.¹

Athanasius no sooner heard of the death of his enemy, than he resolved to return to Alexandria in reliance on the imperial amnesty. He was received with another popular ovation, though the Arians were still strong enough to elect Lucius their bishop. The primate restored order in the city, and then calling a synod of the bishops of Egypt, with some delegates from Antioch and Italy, he reaffirmed the Nicene Creed, exhorting all who worshipped Christ to unite in that authorized confession, but to refrain from inflicting the penalties of lapse on those who had been seduced into a different subscription.² This moderation in so keen a controversialist strongly contrasts with the conduct of his adversaries as de-

¹ Georgius is not unlike *Gregorius*, and the two Cappadocians certainly seem to be confounded in some accounts of the troubles at Alexandria. By a second confusion pope Gregory of Alexandria may have been mistaken for his namesake of Rome, whose share in the conversion of this island might well entitle him to the honours of its patron saint. (*Sharpe*, ii. 315.) The fight with the Dragon seems to be copied from the old church pictures of the Archangel casting down Satan, and it is curious that St. Michael is joined with St. George both in the Garter and in other orders of chivalry (e. g., St. Michael and St. George of the Ionian Islands). In Upper Egypt, St. George on his white horse slaying the green dragon is still the favourite saint of the Copts; even the Moslems make pilgrimages to the church at Bibbeah to pray before his picture as a disciple of the Koran! Neither class of devotees can be persuaded to believe that the same image hangs on the breast of queen Victoria and of her most honoured peers. (Wilkinson's *Handbook of Egypt*, 283.)

² In this synod a question arose about the word *hypostasis*, which the Nicene confession used as equivalent to *ousia*. It appears, however, to have been also used in its modern sense of *person*; whence some contended for one *hypothesis* and others for three. Athanasius pointed out that both parties were really agreed, and recommended no further attempt at definition.

scribed by himself. "When any man differs from them he is dragged before the governor or the general; those whom they cannot subdue by reason and argument, they endeavour to convince by stripes and imprisonments, which is enough to show that their principles are anything rather than religion; *for it is the part of religion not to compel but to persuade.*"¹ This golden canon, too often overlooked in the disputes of all ages, was thus broadly enunciated by the much persecuted bishop of Alexandria. He has been charged with forgetting it in raising his voice against the recall of Arius; but that recall was a command to restore the heretic to spiritual functions. A good shepherd may surely desire to keep the wolf from his flock, without being suspected of cruelty.

Athanasius was now universally recognised as the champion of the orthodox faith. His preaching and moral influence were so persuasive, that the priests informed the emperor no one would be left to attend the sacrifices, or respect the omens, unless Athanasius could be taken away. Julian, incensed at his courage and influence, pretended that, in giving leave to the bishops to return to their homes, he had never authorized the resumption of their churches. On this ground, he issued an edict denouncing Athanasius as the enemy of the gods, and commanding his immediate expulsion from Egypt.² Athanasius retired to

¹ Hist. Ar. 67. Athanasius often reiterates this noble protest. Tertullian had urged the same against *pagan* persecutors. "Take care that you do not convict yourselves of irreligion in taking away religious liberty and interdicting the free acknowledgment of God; that I am not to worship Him whom I will, but to be compelled to worship whom I would not. No human being can be made to worship against his will."—*Apol.* xxiv.

² The emperor's language, instead of the philosophical contempt

Thebes, and the Christians were again dissolved in lamentations; but before the sentence could be fully executed, the apostate emperor was called away to give an account of broken vows and perverted talents at the judgment-seat of God.

His last device against the religion he had abjured was an attempt to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem [A.D. 363]. He perceived that no encouragement of paganism, or persecution of Christianity, could so disturb the foundations of the gospel as a reinstatement of the institutions which it claimed to have superseded for ever. With this object in view, he assembled the Jews out of every province on Mount Moriah, and the work was commenced with the utmost enthusiasm. The labourers, however, were interrupted by earthquake and tempest, accompanied by horrible eruptions of fire from below, and strange appearances in the heavens. These phenomena were repeated every time the attempt was renewed, scorching and dispersing the workmen, and consuming their materials, till the undertaking was finally abandoned. The facts are recorded on indisputable authority,¹ and

which he affected, betrays the malice of a defeated rival. "I swear by the great Serapis," he wrote to the Egyptian eparch, "that unless Athanasius, the enemy of the gods, shall be wholly expelled from Egypt before the calends of December, I will impose a fine of a hundred pounds of gold on the troops under your command; and you know that if I am slow to condemn, I am still slower to remit my sentence; for it does exceedingly afflict me that all the gods should be contemned through his means: nor is there anything that I would so willingly behold or hear accomplished by you as the expulsion of Athanasius from the regions of Egypt;—a wretch who has dared, and in my reign, to urge some distinguished Grecian ladies till they submitted to baptism."—*Jul. Ep.* vi.

¹ Soc. iii. 20. The miracle was publicly affirmed the same year by Gregory Nazianzen (*Orat.* iv. p. 110.); by Ambrose, in a letter to the emperor Theodosius (*tom.* ii. *Epist.* xl.); by the contemporary

have been generally regarded as miraculous. The mountain not being volcanic, and no similar convulsion having been known before or since, it was certainly not a natural commotion. An explanation was suggested by Michaelis, which would assign the marvel to an explosion of gas, accumulated in the subterranean excavations by which Jerusalem is known to be extensively tunnelled.¹ But this plausible conjecture is far from satisfying the statements of the historians; and it is hard to imagine that so simple a circumstance would remain undetected by the imperial officers, or be allowed to baffle the determination of the emperor.

Shortly after this defeat, Julian set out on his expedition against the Persians. The Christians witnessed his departure with little enthusiasm, persuaded that, if victory crowned his arms, he would return to revel in unrestrained persecution. In marching out of Antioch his friend Libanius, the heathen sophist, is said to have demanded of a Christian who stood by, "what the carpenter's Son was then about?" "Making your master's coffin!" was the indignant reply. At Carrhæ, a city of Mesopotamia (perhaps the ancient Haran),² he halted to perform a secret divination in the temple of the moon; and the Christian historian affirms that after his departure the body of a woman was found within, who had been slain and cut open to supply the detestable auspices.³

Having here made his military preparations, Julian crossed the Tigris, burnt his ships, and plunged into

pagan historian Ammianus Marcellinus (xxiii. 1); and never disputed by any one of that time. Gibbon is sadly perplexed how to get rid of such testimony. (*Decl. and Fall*, c. xxiii.)

¹ Milman's *History of the Jews*.

² Gen. xi. 31.

³ Theod. iii. 23, 26, 27.

the interior in quest of the enemy. Unprovided with guides or sustenance, the invasion soon changed to a retreat, and the retreat to a hopeless struggle against an enclosing army. Julian had quarrelled with Mars, and sworn never to sacrifice on his altars again. In a meteor which now shot across the sky he seemed to recognise the angry countenance of the god of war. The next morning he was mortally wounded by a javelin, and expired about midnight. The heathen historian Ammianus puts into his mouth an elaborate encomium on himself, which makes the dying man say that he accepts an early death as the reward of his piety, and dies without remorse because he had lived without guilt. He reflects with pleasure on the innocence of his private life, and lauds his own courage in exposing himself to the dangers of war, when he had acquired by the arts of divination a clear foreknowledge that he was destined to fall by the sword. He conjured the spectators not to disgrace by their tears a prince who was soon to be reunited to the heavens and the stars.¹

This unnatural rhapsody may have been composed by Julian in the pride of his philosophy; but that it was ever spoken in the actual view of death and eternity is most improbable. The emperor's ruling passions were superstition and vanity; the sudden defeat of every hope was more likely to recall the memory of a time when he "went into the house of God with the voice of them that kept holy day," and read the Holy Scriptures to the assembled congregation. Sozomen and Theodoret say, that on perceiving the mortal character of his wound he caught the blood in his hand and flung it in the air, exclaiming,

¹ Amm. Marcell. xxiii. 5.

"Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" His despairing conscience might well recall in that moment the defiance he had so often hurled against the Son of God. It was so notorious, that when his death was announced in the theatre at Antioch, the people exclaimed with one voice, "God and his Christ have overcome!" The conviction was shared by pagans and Jews throughout the empire, and the newly raised hopes of the heathen fell to revive no more.¹

The family of Constantine being now extinct, the army elected Jovian emperor; and asked him to extricate them from the consequences of Julian's imprudence, by concluding a necessary but ignoble peace with the Persians. The new emperor had shown his fidelity to the gospel by openly refusing to conform to Julian's idolatry. He now declined to accept the imperial ensigns till the legions had promised to return to the faith of Christ. His first act was to restore the public worship of the Church, with all endowments and privileges of which it had been deprived by Julian. The yearly allowance of grain, called the *corn-canon*, which Constantine had assigned to the clergy, having been altogether withheld, Jovian immediately made good a third of it, and promised the remainder when the existing dearth should have passed away. The rites of the pagan temples were suppressed, but the imperial edict permitted every one to serve God as he thought best in private.

To Athanasius and the Egyptian church the change of rulers brought immediate relief. Jovian had no sooner extricated himself from the Persian campaign than he applied to the primate of Alexandria to

¹ The dean of St. Paul's accepts the pagan and rejects the Christian accounts, but without reason.—*Hist. Christianity*, iii. 6.

know which, amid the crowd of synodical formulas, enunciated the true creed of the Church. Athanasius assembled a synod, in which the emperor was referred to the Nicene confession, as subscribed not only by all Eastern churches (except a few known to be Arian), but by those of Italy, Achaia, Gaul, Britain, Spain, and the whole Christian world. At the request of the synod, the primate made himself the bearer of their epistle, and the emperor was deeply impressed by his venerable appearance and religious conversation. Lucius and his party, who repaired to the imperial audience in the hope of reviving their old accusations, were dismissed in disgrace, and the Nicene Creed was solemnly subscribed in a council at Antioch itself, the metropolis of the Arian cause.¹

It was but a short time, however, before the sky was again overclouded. Eight months after, Jovian, being found dead in his bed, was replaced by Valentinian, who chose his brother Valens as his colleague in the East. The two emperors began their reign by proclaiming equal freedom to all religions, and the toleration was consistently carried out by the elder. Valens, however, having received baptism from Eudoxus, the Arian patriarch of Constantinople, proved himself a true disciple of that persecuting creed. By commanding the bishops to be everywhere reinstated as at the death of Constantius, he again subjected the orthodox to imprisonment and exile. Athanasius, though not included in the letter of the edict, was too formidable an adversary to be left unmolested. The menaces of the prefect compelled him to withdraw to

¹ This council being composed of Melitians, Athanasius again showed his Christian spirit by proposing a reconciliation; but the Melitians hung back.—*Basil, Ep.* 371.

a hiding-place in the tombs;¹ but the people took up arms in his behalf, and the intimidated officer, having referred the decision to the emperor, Valens had the prudence to submit to their demands. The aged primate returned to his duties, and died full of years and honours on the 2nd of May, 373, in the forty-sixth year of his episcopate, and the seventy-fourth of his age.²

The life of this great man was a succession of crosses and controversies, which, even when sanctified to edification, seldom fail to impart some bitterness to the current of thought as it flows. Theological discussions, which in all ages have generated the most unloving tempers, were then raging in their first flames among the most excitable races of mankind. It would have required the inspiration, which ruled the ardour of St. Peter and St. Paul, to preserve Athanasius from the spirit of all around him; yet his character comes out of the fire singularly unblemished. With a constancy which no suffering could shake, he united a meekness and sweetness of temper more convincing than many arguments. The apology made by his panegyrist, Gregory of Nazianzen, for his slender acquaintance with philosophy, is one of his best recommendations to the modern student. His divinity is

¹ "The garden of the new river." *Fest. Ep. Index.* A.D. 365.

² The index to the Festal Letters gives 8th June, 328, as the date of Athanasius's consecration; A.D. 331 his first summons to Constantinople; 336, the Council of Tyre and his exile to Treves; 338, his return to Alexandria; 339, the arrival of Gregory and second flight of Athanasius; 346, death of Gregory and return of Athanasius; 356, attack of Syrianus and third withdrawal; 358, George driven away by the multitude, Athanasius being concealed in the city; 362, Athanasius re-entered his church; 363, driven to Thebes; 364, return; 365, withdrawal to the new river garden; 366, attack on the Cæsareum by the heathen; 367, attempt of Lucius to gain possession of the church; 369, 370, building of Athanasius' church.

purely Christian, drawn exclusively from the Holy Scripture, and devoted to the vindication of the person and offices of Jesus Christ. It is true that the melancholy controversies of the day left but little opening for the more attractive aspect of the Saviour's sufferings; but the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is indispensable to that of the Atonement, and whichever is assailed, the other will never be long unaffected. It was no unfrequent argument with Athanasius, that if the Son of God were such as Arians and Sabellians dreamed of, He could not have redeemed the world. He recognised in His cross the one sacrifice for sin,¹ our reconciliation with the Father, and our ransom from death. The curse of sin thus taken away, he beheld in the Holy Ghost a living principle shed abroad in the heart, freeing men from corruption, and enduing them with immortality.² These blessed gifts required that He who died to purchase them should be truly God as well as truly man; it was with this perception clearly in view that Athanasius so immovably resisted every artifice for the corruption of the truth. In vain his opponents objected to words and letters; he was unmoved by pretences which deceived and wearied out all beside. At one time it was Athanasius against the world, yet Athanasius stood firm, and the world came over to his side.

His fidelity and renown occasioned the orthodox doctrine to be known as the *Athanasian Creed*, in contradistinction to the Arian; but the formula which now bears his name was drawn up after his death, and in all probability by Hilary of Poitiers, the great opponent of Arianism in the west.

¹ Cont. Arian. i. 49. See the present Abp. of York's Essay on the Death of Christ, in *Aids to Faith*, p. 340.

² *De Incarn.* 20.

CHAPTER XII.

FALL OF IDOLATRY.

Decay of Ancient Religion—Osirian Rites—Animal Worship—Translation of the Scriptures—Opposition to Idolatry—Power of the Gospel—Decay of Superstition—Orthodoxy of the Monks—Persecution of Valens—His death—Theodosius the Great—Baptism—Second General Council—Marcellus, Macedonius, Apollinaris—Gregory, patriarch of Constantinople—Resignation—Timothy, president—Creed—Episcopal Organization—Theophilus—Demolition of the Serapeum—Removal of Nilometer—General Destruction of Idols—Alexandrian Codex—Evangelization—Monks and Hermits—State of Society—Superstition—Magic—Relics—Pagan Imitations.

FROM the actors in these troubled scenes we turn to notice what can be traced of the effect of their labours in the religious condition of Egypt. The gods of the ancient Pharaohs, Amun, Khem, Phthah, Neith, Ra, etc., whose images are found sculptured on the temple ruins, seemed to have died out without coming into contact with the gospel. As early as the Ptolemies we read of a ruined temple of Pasht, on which the temple of Onion was erected. The native worship was concentrated on Isis and Osiris, afterwards known under the Alexandrian form of Serapis. Towns and temples had their local rites, and the animal creation enjoyed an absurd veneration in its different representative forms, but the chief national rite consisted (as in the time of Herodotus) in the annual procession of Isis in quest of Osiris. The priests shaved their heads, beat their breasts, and tore the skin off their arms in honour of the widowed goddess. After some days' seeking, the scattered limbs of Osiris were found by Isis, and with the help of her sister Nephthys and the dog-

headed Anubis they were carefully buried. The royal widow was then exhorted to restrain her tears, and the delighted spectators were promised a repetition of the drama at the proper time the next year.

The Osirians never wearied of this lugubrious festival. Like the solemnities of Hindus and Moslem, it united extravagant lamentations with the most indecent levities; the degraded population were always glad to escape from the dull pressure of pauperism into any kind of sensual excitement. In Alexandria the festival was embellished with singing, which attracted the educated Greeks, by whom the myth was identified with the loves of Venus and Adonis.¹

Strabo, who visited Egypt about A.D. 14, describes the Alexandrians as a different people from the native Egyptians, whom he yet considered a keen and civilised race. The temple of the Sun, with its avenue of stone-sphinxes, was still standing at Heliopolis; and the houses were pointed out in which Eudoxus and Plato had studied mathematics, but the sciences and their teachers had migrated to Alexandria.

At Memphis, the second city in size to Alexandria, and almost as full of foreigners, the temple of Phthah was standing in full splendour with the dromos in front, where bull-fights were held, and the hall of Apis, "who is the same as Osiris," close by. The bull was yet in possession of its ancient honours; and not far off was the grove, and the lake across which the dead were transported to the Necropolis adjoining the Pyramids. A sacred white cow was kept at Aphroditopolis; a tame crocodile in the city of the Lake Mœris was fed with cakes and wine. Basis, the white bull, was honoured at Hermonthis; and other temples

¹ Theocr. Idyll. xv.

had their beasts or reptiles, as Clement describes them, couching on purple in the veiled sanctuary.

We find no mention, however, of the older worship depicted on the ancient monuments. The temples were considered under the protection of the triad deities sculptured on their walls, and probably occasional rites were offered to their images; but similar honours were also paid to the deified Ptolemies. The practical and popular superstition centred in the Osirian rites, and the sacred animals.

The steps by which these deep-rooted prejudices retreated before the beams of the gospel are hid in deplorable obscurity. Either none of the voluminous controversialists chose to write the history of their religion, or time and the Saracens have robbed us of their most valuable productions. It is known that the New Testament was early rendered into the Egyptian vernacular. From regard to their own alphabet, or disdaining the hieroglyphic and enchorial characters as tainted with idolatry, the translators adopted the Greek letters, with the addition of a few native characters to express sounds unknown to that language. This translation had the effect of revolutionising, not the religion only, but the literature of Egypt. The hieroglyphics, which were in use as late as Clement, afterwards fell into neglect, and containing nothing but idolatrous traditions, became an unknown mystery. The recent recovery of the long-lost key seems to prove that the language was substantially the same with the ancient Coptic; but the collation is as yet too imperfect to convince the sceptic, and many words certainly defy identification.¹

¹ Sir G. C. Lewis holds the evidence on this point to be essentially defective. See *Ancient Egypt*, p. 227.

It is a remarkable evidence of the inherent force of truth, that the very period in which the Church might appear to be exhausting her strength in theological controversy, was that in which the gospel overthrew the altars of polytheism, and drew the civilised world into its fold. Little justice is done to this greatest of revolutions by the professed writers of history. Filling their pages with the sound and fury of a few, they permit changes, which embrace nations and descend to the latest posterity, to take place unobserved.

It is certain that, from the first, Christians everywhere resolutely opposed themselves to *idolatry*. This was the crowning sin of the heathen; it not only violated the first and second commandments, but the Christians believed the pagan deities to be actually *devils*.¹ Idolatry, in every shape and form, was to them the great apostasy. In the long struggle with their heathen persecutors, resistance to the idols was the test of Christian integrity. In this faith, and with the Word of God in their hands, the first missionaries opened the preaching of the gospel in Egypt.

The trumpet seems to emit a more uncertain sound in the doctrine of Clement that the Gentiles worshipped the same God, though not in the same manner, with the Christians. This, however, was a philosophic distinction, intended for the higher school of native catechumens, and not at all relaxing the war against popular superstition. Clement was as severe on the follies of idolatry as the more simple missionaries; and the Christian argument, reinforced by the whole current of educated opinion, could not fail to produce a powerful effect on the popular superstition. In Syria, where idolatry had reigned triumphant ever

¹ See 1 Cor. x. 20, 21.

since the Exodus, Julian found it quite impossible to rekindle its ashes. When he proclaimed a feast to Apollo in the laurel groves of Daphne, the most elegant and licentious temple of the heathen world, instead of the pompous train of white-robed virgins and youths, the crowd of priests with victims, libations, and incense, and a concourse of multitudes eager to gratify their passions and compliment the emperor, one old priest, the solitary inhabitant of the deserted fane, came forth to meet the Apostate, with a single goose for the sacrifice. The miles of cypress and laurel which encircled the secluded shrine had been penetrated by the feet of the missionary; a church was erected in its centre, and a Christian bishop lay buried under the pavement. It was in vain that Julian urged the populous city to retrieve this disgrace; the inhabitants laughed at his lustrations, and rejoiced in the impotence of his gods.

In Egypt, also, idolatry had received too mortal a blow to be recovered by all the power and patronage of the heathen emperor. Julian restored the bulls Apis and Mnevis, with the other sacred animals, as of old; but he could not bring back the ardour of the people. Harassed by Roman tax-gatherers, and overrun by Arabs, Egypt had no confidence either in kings or gods. Julian's efforts only proved how completely the life of the old worship was extinct. In the reign of Ptolemy, the influence of the king and the fear of the Romans were all too little to prevent the populace from massacreing on the spot a stranger who had accidentally killed a cat, but now the most open affronts were offered with impunity. In Alexandria, always riotous, they occasioned some commotion; but the population of Egypt generally seem to

have acquiesced with little regret in the decay of their once cherished superstitions, and frequent mention occurs of deserted temples given over to the Christians.

The labours and sufferings of Athanasius seem to have completed the moral extinction of idolatry. The Serapis, indeed, still stood in Alexandria, and the influence of heathen superstition lingered among the Egyptians to the last. But the deserts were swarming with monks, who, if they did little else for Christianity, were zealous opponents of idolatry; and the time was not far distant when its last visible supports would be withdrawn.

Athanasius, being entreated on his death-bed to nominate his successor, recommended Peter, who was immediately elected and consecrated by the neighbouring bishops. But Valens, being released from his fears by the removal of the great primate, sent Euzoius, the Arian patriarch of Antioch, to instal Lucius, and throw Peter into prison. The persecution was renewed. Athanasians were denied the toleration freely accorded to Jews and idolaters; the monasteries were broken open, and their inmates dragged away to serve in the army. A party of three thousand troops, conducted by the Arian clergy, ravaged the desert of Nitria, to make soldiers of the monks; but the recluses offered so determined a resistance, that a considerable slaughter ensued.

The monks and the vast majority of Egyptian Christians were ardent opponents of the Arian tenets, and every bishop of that heretical persuasion held office only by the aid of the secular arm. Euzoius entered Alexandria amid the shouts of the mob: "Welcome to the bishop who does not acknowledge

the Son!¹ Welcome to the bishop the beloved of Serapis!"² but the triumph was as short as it was disgraceful. Peter, having escaped from prison and repaired to Rome, reappeared in Alexandria with commendatory letters from pope Damasus, and was instantly replaced on the episcopal throne. Lucius fled to Constantinople, but Valens was no longer in a condition to support his pretensions.

The barbarians had been long ravaging the frontiers of the empire, and daily drawing nearer both to old and new Rome. The two emperors were hard pressed to withstand their approach. Valentinian, falling dead in the excitement of passion at Presburg in Hungary, was succeeded by his youthful sons Gratian and Valentinian; while Valens, deprived of his brother's genius, was unable to cope with the difficulties of his position. The Goths, whom he had imprudently admitted into the heart of the empire when flying from the Huns, made common cause with their pursuers, and threatened the safety of Constantinople. Valens marching out to give them battle fell at Hadrianople, with two thirds of his army. The empire was only saved by the arrival of Gratian, fresh from the defeat of the Germans. A chief of more than ordinary ability was now indispensable to the government of the East. Gratian made choice of Theodosius, a Spanish general, son to that Theodosius who, landing in Kent [A.D. 367], chased the Picts and Scots out of Britain into Caledonia, and scattered the pirates of the distant Orkneys. The elevation of Theodosius was closely followed by the revolt of Maximus in Britain, and the defeat and

¹ Compare 1 John ii. 23; v. 12.

² Neale, i. 201.

death of Gratian. His youthful brother Valentinian was replaced on the throne of Italy by the arms of Theodosius, but being afterwards murdered in his palace, the entire empire was finally consolidated under Theodosius and his sons.

This emperor accepted the purple with the ambition of becoming another Constantine, both in Church and State. Instead of deferring his baptism like the first Christian emperor to the hour of death, his profession was made in the opening year of his reign, and accompanied by an edict for the re-establishment of the orthodox faith, as professed by Damasus of Rome and Peter of Alexandria. The two popes were regarded as the representatives of the catholic Church, and when Gregory of Nazianzen had been established in the see of Constantinople, which had been forty years in the hands of the Arians, the downfall of heresy as well as idolatry seemed to be at last ensured. Unhappily Peter had not the temper or the integrity required to preserve the unity of the Church. Though he had himself inducted Gregory, in virtue of the jurisdiction claimed by Alexandria over Constantinople, he unjustifiably attempted to supersede him by a creature of his own. The people were indignant, and Peter died under a cloud of displeasure [A.D. 380]. He was succeeded by Timothy his brother, who was summoned the following year to the Second Œcumenical Council.

The Arian controversy had borne its bitter fruits in a crowd of dangerous and subtle disquisitions, which were now eating like a canker into the peace and spirituality of the Church. The Sabellians still denied the distinction of the Divine Persons, quoting largely from the gospel of the Egyptians, and other apocry-

phal writings. Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra, and at one time a prominent supporter of Athanasius, gave his name to a kind of Gnosticism, which taught Christ to be a temporary emanation from God, whose kingdom was to cease at the day of judgment. His disciple Photinus bishop of Sirmium had revived the exploded impieties of Paul of Samosata, while Eunomius bishop of Cyzicum, exceeding his master Aetius as much as Aetius had gone beyond the Eusebians, touched the lowest depth of Arianism by asserting the Son to be only the most eminent of creatures; the servant and minister of the Father, but utterly unlike Him in nature and essence.

All these theories trenched more or less on the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, in respect of whom nothing was defined in the Nicene Council. The name most conspicuous for error in that particular is Macedonius, a former prelate of Constantinople. Wavering from one extreme of Arianism to the other in respect of the Son, he openly declared the Holy Ghost to be an inferior minister, little differing from an angel. After his death [A. D. 319], his followers formed a considerable sect in the provinces of the Hellespont, bearing a high character for morality, and leading often a severe and monastic life.

On the mystery of the Incarnation, also, a new heresy had sprung up among some who sincerely believed in the Trinity. Apollinaris, once bishop of Laodicea, and a friend of Athanasius, taught that the Second Person had clothed himself with humanity only in respect of the body, that His Divine nature supplied the place of the mind or soul, and that even His flesh was not formed of the substance of the Virgin Mary, but had been essentially united to the Son

before all time. These strange opinions compelled him to maintain that the Godhead suffered on the Cross along with the flesh; that the Divine Being in fact died, and had no existence till again revived by the Father.

So extravagant were the conceptions which found admittance to minds accustomed to the legends of heathen mythology. The idea of gods in human shape, suffering for a time the pains of mortality, was familiar to the popular traditions. The poets, and even the philosophers, peopled heaven with beings compounded of human passions and imaginations; and to many it was easier to think "the gods had come down in the likeness of men,"¹ than that a Divine Person was "made of a woman"² perfect man, without ceasing to be perfect God.

Theodosius, wishing to complete the endeavours of Constantine by eradicating this new outgrowth of heresy, convened a second general council at Constantinople [A.D. 381]. It was composed of one hundred and eighty-six bishops, thirty-six of whom avowed the Macedonian tenets. The first question treated of related to the see of Constantinople, which, in the absence of the Egyptian bishops, was adjudged to Gregory, who thereupon took his seat as president of the council. On the arrival of Timothy he impugned the decision, and Gregory put an end to the contest by resigning. The council then proceeded, under the presidency of the Alexandrian prelate, to ratify the Nicene creed, and to condemn the heresies which infringed on its teaching. With this object in view, some passages in the older formula received a further explanation, and the creed was finally promulgated in

¹ Acts xiv. 11.

² Gal. iv. 4.

terms which (with one exception) have been since maintained, without alteration, in all orthodox churches east and west.

The chief enlargement in this formulary, as compared with that of Nicæa, is in the article of the Holy Ghost, directed against the Macedonians. The Apollinarians were met by the explanation that Christ was incarnate "of the Virgin Mary," and the Marcellians by the addition that "His kingdom shall have no end." Against the others the old creed was thought sufficiently explicit. The emendations, indeed, however important in relation to the disputes of the day, were all virtually included in the elder definitions, and the formula still goes by the name of the *Nicene*, rather than the Constantinopolitan creed. No subsequent council has secured the same amount of consent from the universal Church; the addition made in the Latin Church, at a later date (though implying no real difference in doctrine), was resented by the separation of the whole oriental communion,¹ and the new creed of the so-called Council of Trent is the peculiar symbol of the Roman schism.

The council of Constantinople was the first to provide against the confusion arising from the indiscriminate exercise of the episcopal power. Though each bishop had his proper diocese, yet, as common rulers of the catholic Church, all were equally entitled to sit in synod, and decide controversies without respect to the locality where they arose. Hence a council in one place disagreed from a council in another, while

¹ A brief account of the dispute between the Eastern and Western churches on the *procession* of the Spirit, is given in the author's *Russia Ancient and Modern*, chapter vi.

each claimed universal authority. A bishop might be excommunicated in one, and absolved in another. The bishops even exercised ordinary episcopal functions wherever they went; ordaining, for instance, in the diocese of another. It was now determined that every bishop should keep to his own church, and every metropolitan to his own province or *diocesis*. The bishop of Alexandria was to rule Egypt. The bishops of "the East" (*i.e.* Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, with their dependencies) were to be under the primacy of Antioch. The provinces of Asia Minor, Pontus, and Thrace, were in like manner committed to their respective bishops, each with its own provincial synod,¹ but under the primacy of Constantinople.² The greater primates assumed the title of patriarch,³ Constantinople, or New Rome, being placed next in rank to old Rome.⁴

This last decree was hurried through before the arrival of Timothy, and while Antioch, as well as Alexandria, was unrepresented in the council. The canon was never allowed in Egypt, and the patriarch was so offended at its adoption, that he refused to assist in the consecration of Nectarins, the successor of Gregory. Timothy died [A.D. 385], and was succeeded by Theophilus, who had been secretary to Athanasius. Under this prelate the Alexandrian see attained its greatest eminence. Theodosius was not satisfied to establish the orthodox Christianity as the religion of the state, but he inflicted severe penalties on every form of faith and worship. Heavy fines were imposed on heretical ordinations and assemblies for worship public or private. The sectaries were disqualified from

1 Conc. Const. Can. ii.

3 Soc. v. 8.

2 Conc. Chalced. Can. xxviii.

4 Conc. Const. Can. iii.

holding office in the state ; the Manichees were threatened with death. At Alexandria it was not always easy to execute these laws without affronting a populace ever ripe for sedition. Theophilus, while clearing out the ruins of a temple of Bacchus, gave dire offence to the idolaters by exposing some relics of their secret rites. They flew to arms ; and after killing some of the Christians, the rioters shut themselves up in the temple of Serapis, which they fortified against the magistrates. The tumult being reported to Theodosius, he commanded that no one should be punished for the death of the Christians, who were honoured in falling martyrs to the faith, but that all heathen temples should be destroyed, as the cause of the crime.

The pagans reluctantly quitted their stronghold under Olympius a philosopher, and Helladius the priest, who boasted he had slain nine Christians with his own hand. He was permitted to retire to Damascus, while Olympius and his followers moved away to found a school of sorcery at Canopus.

The Serapeum was delivered up to be demolished. It was the centre and fortress of Alexandrian idolatry. The heathen were firmly persuaded that the least affront to the god would lay the city in ruins, and cause heaven and earth to relapse into chaos. This superstition was not entirely extirpated from the Christians themselves, and it was regarded as a service of danger to assail the edifice. Theophilus willingly undertook the execution of the decree, but the massive structure long resisted his efforts, and the foundations retained their place after all. When the huge idol was exposed to the light of day, many trembled with horror. A soldier climbing up by a ladder

smote off its cheek with a battle-axe. No thunder following, he redoubled his blows ; he smote it on the knee, and it fell. He chopped off its head : then, at last, the sacred inhabitant bestirred himself. Strange sounds were heard within, and presently an army of *rats* fled out at the neck, and hurried in quest of new hiding-places ! All was now derision and mockery. The wooden trunk was stripped of its plates of gold, which Theophilus was allowed to convert into vessels for his church ; it was then hacked and haled through the streets, till the last fragments were consumed in a bonfire. One relic, perhaps, is still in existence in the shape of a marble foot of colossal dimensions, which is preserved in the British Museum.

In levelling the foundations of the Serapeum some hieroglyphics were discovered, and among them the figure of the cross, which the Christians heard with astonishment was the Egyptian emblem of *life*. It was doubtless the *crux ansata* always seen in the hand of Egyptian divinities, which, from this time, has been traditionally interpreted as the sign of immortality.¹ The statement is remarkable, as showing how completely the Christians had lost the knowledge of the hieroglyphics since the time of Clement.

This was the crowning blow to idolatry in Alexandria. The priests consoled themselves by prophesying a failure of the inundation the next year ; and some of that sagacious class of statesmen, who till lately made *poojah* in British India under the direction of the Brahmans, in order to procure rain, advised Theodosius to make some concession to the popular superstition. The emperor, however, commanded the

¹ *Ancient Egypt*, p. 132.

Nilometer to be removed to a Christian church, and the Nile proved more than usually propitious the following year.

The idols and their temples now underwent a general demolition, and we hear of no opposition out of Alexandria. One image, a huge hideous ape, was preserved in a conspicuous place, that the people might not deny their ancient gods; the rest were utterly destroyed, the materials being appropriated to Christian uses. A stately church was raised on the site of the Serapeum, and remains of similar edifices are found in the courts of other ruined temples throughout Egypt. In some the Christians were content to inscribe their own emblems on the ancient buildings. The figure of our Saviour is still seen on the roof of a rock temple at Kneph, opposite Abou Simbel; and at Asseboua, in Nubia, the traveller beholds St. Peter with his key, having supplanted one of the old gods, receiving the oblation of Rameses the Great!¹

The cities and villages of Egypt had been long preparing for this transformation. Rufinus, a student of Aquileia, who made a tour in the Thebaid during the reign of Valens, has left an account of his travels; he found Oxyrinchus with twelve churches, the sacred animals gone and their temples turned into monasteries. Ten thousand monks and twice as many nuns had replaced the Osirian hierarchy. The island of Tabenna held three thousand monks, contemplating the ruins of Thebes. Near Hermopolis the pagans had made a stand, and were carrying on a desultory

¹ "Two thousand years before the bishop of Rome pretended to hold the keys of heaven and hell, there was an Egyptian priest with the high-sounding title of *Appointed Keeper of the two doors of heaven* in the city of Thebes."—Sharpe, ii. 302.

warfare against the monastery. Every town along the river possessed similar establishments. In the Arsinoite nome nearly all the population seemed to have taken the vows. Memphis and Babylon were full of monks, who showed the pyramids to their visitors as the granaries where Joseph stored his corn! Throughout Egypt idolatry was disappearing, and Christianity was firmly planted in its place. Gregory of Nazianzen remarks that Egypt was the most Christ-loving of countries; after so lately adoring bulls, goats, and crocodiles, it was instructing all the world in the worship of the Holy Trinity.¹

Among the instruments by which this happy change was effected, an important place must be assigned to the translation and diffusion of the Holy Scriptures. No other rule of faith had as yet been heard of in the Christian church, and no other is admitted in the eastern communions to this day. In all the controversies about the Creed, the appeal was always to the written Word, of which Alexandria long retained the privilege of supplying the authentic text. It was to Athanasius that Constans applied for the authorized Greek version on behalf of his subjects at Rome, and the intimate connexion between the two churches was founded (as observed by Jerome²) on their joint agreement in the faith taught by the apostles. The three most ancient manuscripts of the Bible now in existence, at the Vatican, the Paris Library, and the British Museum, are the work of Alexandrian penmen. The last was presented to Charles I. by Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople, who had it from Egypt with a superscription purporting that it was written by Thecla, an Egyptian lady of rank, soon after the

¹ Orat. in *Ægypt*.

² Hier. Ep. 58, 61.

council of Nicæa. The copying of the Scripture was a favourite occupation of the educated monks and nuns, and it is known that they were translated into the three principal dialects of the Egyptian vernacular.¹ Egypt had long been the abode of letters; but the disappearance of the very knowledge of hieroglyphics, before the alphabet introduced by these translations, shows how entirely the streams of native learning were diverted into the new channel.

In Egypt too, as in every other country converted from idolatry, "when the Lord gave the word, great was the company of the preachers."² We have already noticed the missionary spirit of the early Alexandrian church. The mission of Frumentius, whom Athanasius sent into Abyssinia, was extended to Arabia by the deacon Theophilus, and accompanied by a translation of the Bible into Ethiopic.

With so much concern for the evangelizing of the neighbouring countries, it cannot be doubted that many gospel heralds went about Egypt itself, preaching Jesus and the resurrection. The number of bishops implies a much larger number of inferior ministers; and the monks and hermits, whatever else they did, unquestionably laboured in the propagation of the faith. When we read of the entire population of the Fyoun being under religious vows, while at the same time they cultivated the soil and carried rich harvests to the market, it is clear they were not all bound to celibacy or the restraints of the cloister. The monks, in fact, were a lay brotherhood under

¹ The Coptic version is supposed to be older than the Greek MS. of Thecla.

² Ps. lxxviii. 11.

ecclesiastical direction, but not relinquishing the vocations of ordinary life.

Still it is beyond doubt that a large proportion of the early Christianity of Egypt assumed the monastic form. It was a kind of devotion familiar to the genius and traditions of the nation, recommended by the example of some of the purest characters of heathenism, and encouraged by the dissolute state of morals in Alexandrian and Egyptian society. The traditions which ascribed its origin to St. Mark, prove how early Christians began to tread in the steps of pagan and Jewish recluses. Paul was followed into the Arabian desert by Anthony, who at a very advanced age¹ enjoyed the friendship of Athanasius. Under his patronage colonies of monks multiplied on either bank of the Nile. They were acknowledged as ecclesiastical corporations by the laws of the empire. The monasteries assumed the appearance of fortresses, while many anchorites still tenanted their solitary cells in the desert. Pachomius, after living thirteen years in a cave, removed with his followers to found an order in the island of Tabenna, which numbered six thousand members in Upper Egypt. Anuph, Hor, and Serapion, names once belonging to Egyptian divinities, presided over other bodies. Five thousand anchorites practised mortification on the mountains of Anthony. Mount Nitria, which gave its name to the nitre springs, was riddled with the cells, and resonant with the psalms, of an equal number. Among these recluses was Macarius the Egyptian (so called to distinguish him from Macarius the Alexandrian), whose well-known homilies and treatise on Christian perfection, breathe a real love of God and man.

¹ He was said to be 105 years old.

One thousand obeyed Isidore in the Thebais, and twice as many were under Dioscorus at Antinous. The city of Oxyrinchus was thought a heaven upon earth. It contained neither heretic nor pagan. The twelve churches stood always open. The convents contained ten thousand male and twice as many female recluses. The police were occupied in looking for strangers to be lodged and fed by the citizens.¹

The Roman satirist said of idolatrous Egypt, that it was easier to find a god there than a man. Constantius was not less angry when he asked soldiers of Christian Egypt, and found only monks. One reason which contributed powerfully to fill the monasteries was the low social state of the native under his foreign masters. The Egyptians retained their dislike and contempt for the fair-haired races; they dreaded to be torn away from their families to serve in the imperial army; yet they were scarcely better than serfs in their own country. The Alexandrians lorded it in the capital, and the soldiers in the interior. All complaints were heard by the military tribunals, where few witnesses were bold enough to speak against a soldier, and no peasant could expect justice.² In this condition the Egyptians flocked to the monasteries, as the only refuge from slavery. The monks were exempt from the conscription, exempt from any discipline but their own, free to enjoy their property, self-governed and unmolested. These privileges more than compensated the loss of an independence, which the native never possessed, and the existence of a mental bondage which little galled his servile disposition.

It cannot be supposed that such large accessions

¹ Cassian. ap Neale, i. 129.

² Juvenal Sat. xvi.

to the faith and institutions of the Church were always the result of genuine conversion. With the heathen, religion was so essentially a state question, that numbers went over at the word of command without thinking for themselves. Others followed from political, social, or domestic reasons. They carried their former notions into their new religion, and the Church was largely infected with the credulities of her converts. One superstition, which is general throughout the East to this day, was a firm belief in divination and magic. To the idolater these were the responses of his gods, and to the primitive Christian the delusions of devils; they were proscribed with the horror due to the immediate presence of Satan. Yet the passion for diving into futurity is so persistent, that private sorceries continued after the oracles were suppressed, and the vigilance of the Church was unable to exclude them from her own communion. Egypt was always pre-eminently the land of magic. The school of Jannes and Jambres is not extinct there at this day, and the popular superstition was largely prevalent when it was found necessary to forbid the monks from using magic and incantations in support of their prayers.¹

In another point the Egyptian church was more openly given to polytheistical views. The veneration of the martyrs grew rapidly into invocations of saints and worship of relics. Churches were called by their names and sanctified by their tombs. Soon no altar was without a relic. Egypt, always famed for reverence to the dead, took the lead in this superstition, and supplied from her catacombs the wants of distant

¹ *Ad monach. exhort.*, erroneously imputed to Athanasius. The famous Anthony thought the study of astrology the only learning to be valued beside the Bible.

churches. Cargoes of relics were shipped to Constantinople; and many a head or arm worshipped as apostolical came from some old heathen mummy.

In other respects, too, the Egyptian church was in more than usual danger from the customs of antiquity. The old priesthood enjoyed a reputation for learning and sanctity far above the venal ministers of Greek and Roman idolatry. Their education, garb, and demeanour were appropriate to the sacred office, and secured the respect of the people. The monks were evidently inclined to copy these external recommendations, since the *pseudo*-Athanasius prohibits their shaving the head and beard,¹ and checks the disposition to vain-glorious fastings. Yet this heathen tonsure grew to be the badge of Christian priesthood, and the annual fast of Lent, which lasted at Rome for three weeks, was extended at Alexandria to six. Garlands and incense were allowed to be imported from the ancient temples, but the love of imitation did not extend to the frequent ablutions, or spotless linen, of the ancient priesthood. Bathing was thought indecent, and pagan writers inveigh bitterly against the monks for their black clothing and dirty linen. Such external badges are easily transferred from one form of religion to another. The real difficulty—that which is only possible with God—is to cleanse the heart in the fountain of a Redeemer's blood, and clothe the believer with the sanctifying graces of the Holy Spirit. These only are the conversions which constitute the true Church of Jesus Christ; where these are wanting outward idolatry may fall, and yet leave the people a prey to superstitions and imaginations hardly less fatal to the permanence of Gospel truth in the land.

¹ See Lev. xix. 27, 28.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NESTORIAN CONTROVERSY.

Power of the Alexandrian See—Character of the Popes—Theophilus—Origenism—Chrysostom—Synod of the Oak—Recall—Imprudence—Exile and Death—Synesius—Cyril—Parabolani—Attack on the Jews—Murder of Hypatia—Images in Churches—Nestorius—"Mother of God"—Council of Ephesus—Mutual Anathemas—Exile and Death of Nestorius—Fatal Schism.

THE Alexandrian see maintained its claim to the highest position in the Oriental church by much the same means as those which exalted the Roman chair to the supremacy of the West. The Egyptian pope was even more absolute than the Roman; he was the sole metropolitan in his extensive province, and no bishop could be ordained without him. The heresies which prevailed at Antioch and Constantinople gave additional lustre to the church which was consecrated by the sufferings and triumph of Athanasius. The quick passionate temper of the native race was ready at every moment to rise in defence of their primate, and the numbers and enthusiasm of the monks placed a formidable army at his command. The Arian emperors had been worsted in every attempt to dictate to this church, while the orthodox ones were glad to obtain its alliance in the temporal government of the country. The influence which alarmed the jealousy of Constantine was accepted and utilized by Theodosius. Great civil powers were added to the

ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and in the East, at least, the words of Gregory Nazianzen were hardly too strong, that "to be bishop of Alexandria was to be bishop of the world."

The exaltation of the see, however, did not tend to raise the moral character of its occupants. The Alexandrian popes may be matched with the Roman on the darker as well as the brighter sides of their character. Theophilus, though a man of learning, was arrogant, avaricious, and deeply tainted with intrigue and perfidy. Being called to Constantinople on the death of Nectarius to consecrate a successor, he made an effort to secure the see for one of his own creatures. The imperial nominee was no less a man than John Chrysostom, yet Theophilus refused to consecrate him, till he was offered the alternative of a public trial on the complaints made to the emperor of his own conduct at Alexandria. Theophilus then hesitated no longer, and Chrysostom was consecrated in due form; but the pope never forgave the new patriarch, and his dislike was fully reciprocated by the pious and eloquent but imprudent Chrysostom.

At this time the writings of Origen were creating much division in the Church. Theophilus, not inaptly, described them as "a great meadow, full of all sorts of herbs and flowers; when I find anything good and wholesome, I gather it for my own use; when I meet with thorns and thistles, I let them alone." The same liberty was used by Chrysostom, and there are few theologians in any age of whom similar treatment would be out of place.

This wise discrimination, however, was unknown to the illiterate, passionate monks of Egypt. The mystics delighted in theories which peopled their dreary

desert with unseen spirits, and unfolded the essences of the stars that nightly lighted up its wide horizon. The less imaginative read their Bible so literally as to believe the Supreme Being endued with the bodily form of a man; these hated the very name of an allegory, and held Origen in the utmost detestation. The two parties branded each other as Origenists and Anthropomorphites.

Theophilus having in one of his paschal letters exposed the folly of the Anthropomorphite superstition, was immediately denounced as an Origenist. Paphnutius, the abbot of Scete, could not prevail on his monks to hear the epistle read. One of the oldest, on being assured that the whole Eastern church approved of its contents, burst into tears, exclaiming, "They have taken away my God, and I know not what to worship." A frantic army crowded into Alexandria to take vengeance on the obnoxious author. Theophilus was obliged to promise these muscular controversialists that he would anathematize Origen in his next epistle; this humiliation he endeavoured to turn to account in the quarrel with Chrysostom. Other disputes, too, had arisen at home. A priest whom he had excommunicated for being better treated than himself in the offerings of the people, took refuge on Mount Nitria; whereupon Theophilus brought down his civil forces on the community, and drove the monks, to the number of three hundred, out of their retreat. Some of them escaping to Constantinople, implored the patriarch's assistance to bring their wrongs to the notice of the emperor. Chrysostom wrote to Theophilus, who roughly replied that he was master in his own province, and, fired at the interference, determined to effect the patriarch's ruin.

He began by holding him up to suspicion as an Origenist. Having called a synod at Alexandria, which for the first time affixed the stigma of heresy on the writings of the former master of the Catechetical School, he induced the bishops of Cyprus to follow his example, and forward the decree to Constantinople. Chrysostom, as was expected, paid no attention to this crusade against an author who had been two hundred years in his grave; but the golden-mouthed patriarch had a more formidable danger to deal with in his own city. The eloquence which captivated his hearers by passing over theological subtleties, and addressing itself simply and boldly to the human heart, was not always under the control of a chastened judgment. He was naturally hasty and impatient. Torrents of bitter rebuke would sometimes flow from lips which, in order to be apt to teach, should have been gentle to all men. Fiery indignation scathed the consciences which a more apostolic wisdom might have probed and healed. His ardent denunciations of vice assailed all ranks of society; there was no escaping his merciless eloquence. He preached against the gay apparel and false hair of the ladies, in terms directly levelled at the empress Eudoxia. Her displeasure emboldened his adversaries to attempt the expulsion of their unwelcome monitor, and Theophilus, being at court to answer for himself on the complaint of the monks, eagerly fanned the discontent. Articles of accusation were prepared, on which he convened a synod at Chalcedon,¹ and the patriarch, refusing to appear, was deposed for contumacy.

The party spirit of the times is shown in the charges on which such a sentence could be passed upon such a

¹ Called *Synodus ad Quercum*, from an oak tree near the place.

man. As in the case of Athanasius, the first bishop of a Christian city was thought not incapable of using personal violence towards the priests engaged with himself in the celebration of Divine service. He was accused of striking one of them at the Holy Table so violently that the blood gushed from his mouth; of selling the church plate, and appropriating it to his own use; of leading a luxurious intemperate life. The falsehood of these libels is demonstrated by all that is known of the patriarch's character. His liberality in alms-giving was profuse; and his bodily mortifications were so severe as to weaken his health, and, indeed, hasten his death. Such charges only prove what his accusers were capable of believing in a brother bishop. They curiously contrast with the first article, which accused Chrysostom of dismissing his archdeacon for only beating his servant.

There was probably more truth in the articles which complained of the harsh language and treatment experienced by some of the clergy. Chrysostom had rebuked and deprived several bishops; he spoke of the Lord's table as being surrounded by furies; he had punished three deacons for stealing his pall; the fact, it seems, was not denied, but the patriarch insinuated that the stole was "taken for some unlawful use." Now the culprits were simply thieves, and could not endure the aspersion of aiming at an ecclesiastical function above their degree.

Among the charges was one of deeper interest, and more to the honour of the accused than all his eloquence. It was said that Chrysostom gave encouragement to sin by saying in his sermons, "If thou sinnest repent, and if thou sinnest again, repent again, and as often as thou sinnest come to me and I will heal thee."

The passage has not been discovered in any of the extant homilies, but there can be little doubt of its being levelled at the Novatian heresy, which denied forgiveness to sin after baptism. The words are recorded by Socrates, a constant bearer and admirer of Chrysostom, and who, being a Novatianist himself, regrets the expression as inconsistent with the rigid morality of the patriarch's life and doctrine.¹ The evangelical reader rejoices to light on this green spot in the weary waste of imperial Christianity. It is refreshing to know that the golden lips of the greatest eastern preacher, if though at times too unbridled for his own peace, were melodious with the gospel for the remission of sins. He was not ashamed to insist upon the Saviour's words—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This was plainly not the doctrine of his persecutors.

The emperor Arcadius accepted their sentence, and banished Chrysostom into Asia; but the same night Eudoxia was terrified by an earthquake, and the people beginning to exclaim against the emperor, he immediately recalled the patriarch and reinstated him in his functions. Nothing could now check the ardour of the impetuous preacher. He inveighed with the utmost vehemence against the games which were celebrated before the empress's silver statue, near the church of St. Sophia, and being again called to account, he began his sermon with the words, "Herodias rages again; she is again disturbed, again she dances, again she demands the head of John in a charger."² This insulting parody exasperated the emperor as much as his wife.

¹ *Hist. Eccl.* lib. vi. 21. See Valesius's note.

² *Soc.* vi. 18. The sermon is in *Chrysos. Op.*, tom. vii. p. 545. Ed. Sav. Still Photius doubts if it was ever delivered.

He withdrew from the patriarch's church till he should purge himself of the charges formerly brought against him. A synod was assembled in the imperial city, which, avoiding the original charges, pronounced Chrysostom guilty of a violation of the canons in returning to his episcopal chair after sentence passed against him in a synod, without it being cancelled by another synod. For this offence he was again deposed, and banished to a desolate place named Comana, in Pontus, where he died three years after¹ [A.D. 407].

In this second condemnation Theophilus had no part, having fled to his home on account of a riot which threatened his life at Constantinople. There he employed himself in writing against Chrysostom, whose cause was warmly supported by Innocent of Rome. The latter urged the Western emperor Honorius to demand of Arcadius a full and impartial synod, with power to investigate also the conduct of Theophilus; but the letters miscarried, and the controversy ended with the death of Chrysostom, which was quickly followed by that of Arcadius.

Theophilus did not long survive; one of his latest acts was to consecrate Synesius, a married man, and a constant foe to the monks, to the dignified see of Ptolemais. The new prelate was better known for his love of the chase than of literature or theology. He considered himself scarcely sound in the faith, but he proved a good man of business, and his letters exhibit a tender and affectionate heart. Theophilus died A.D. 412, exclaiming with his last breath, "Happy wert thou, abbot Arsenius, to have had this hour constantly before thine eyes."² It was an hour to disclose the

¹ Soc. E. H. vi. 21.

² Arsenius was a deacon at Rome, and tutor to the young Arcadius.

bitterness of the character which his own life had been wasted in acquiring—that “he possessed most of the requisites for a good bishop, except the most important of all—personal piety.”¹

The same remark ought in justice to be applied to his successor, whose polemical triumphs have secured a more favourable verdict from the ecclesiastical historians. Cyril, the nephew of Theophilus, was ordained by him after five years’ study on Mount Nitria, where it was always thought that his heart was more in the world than the desert. His family-interest gained him the episcopal chair in preference to the archdeacon Timothy, who was backed by the prefect. He entered on the see with the ambition of carrying its power to a higher pitch than his predecessors, and he succeeded in arrogating to it a yet larger portion of temporal jurisdiction. In this he was greatly aided by a numerous guild or fraternity, who bore the name of *Parabolani*. They were professedly devoted to visiting the sick and burying the dead, but they formed a body of episcopal retainers, capable of any outrage, and, in company with the monks from the neighbouring deserts, they were ready at any moment to do battle for the honour or interest of their superior.

Cyril’s first act was to shut up the churches of the Novatians, and seize the property of their bishop. Next he fell upon the Jews, whose numbers and commercial importance rendered them a more formidable enemy. In this dissolute city the favourite day

Having inflicted corporal punishment on the prince, he fled to the desert of Scete, and after living in solitude forty years, withdrew to a still more lonely retreat, where he survived fifteen more.

¹ Neale, i. 225.

for stage dances was Saturday ; when, released from business employment, and little heeding the Divine restriction, large numbers of the Hellenized Jews flocked to the theatre. Even Christian clergymen were not ashamed to be seen in these licentious assemblages ; sometimes behaving so riotously, that one of Cyril's priests was arrested and publicly flogged, by order of the prefect, for sedition. The magistrate was not unwilling, perhaps, to gratify his resentment at the defeat of his candidate for the episcopal chair. Cyril was indignant at the insult, and finding that the complaint had been laid by the Jews, he sent for some of the Rabbis and threatened vengeance on the disciples of the synagogue. The Jews anticipated him by falling on the Christians in the night, and putting large numbers to death. Cyril instantly summoned his Parabolani, and at their head attacked the synagogues, drove the Jews out of the city, and burned and pillaged their houses.

The prefect, incensed, not so much by the riot, which was a common occurrence in Alexandria, as by the injury to the trade of the city, sided with the Jews and complained to the emperor, but the sturdy monks of Nitria poured in to the support of their patriarch—Cyril was the first who usually bore that appellation at Alexandria—and the magistrate was wounded by a stone as he sat in his carriage. The offender was seized and executed. Cyril had the unparalleled audacity to canonize the wretched monk as a martyr. Encouraged by this irreligious act, Peter, one of the Scripture readers, at the head of another band of ruffians, attacked Hypatia, a beautiful Greek lady, who taught philosophy, and enthusiastically devoted her talents to the restoration of paganism.

Dragging her from her chariot, the villains carried their victim into the church of the Cæsareum, and there stripped and murdered her; they then tore her body in pieces, and burned them in the Cinaron.¹ Cyril is more than suspected of personally instigating this horrible crime;² the sacrilege covered his church with odium, and justly provoked an imperial rescript to reduce the numbers of the Parabolani, and deprive the patriarch of the right of nomination. So stormy a beginning augured badly for the episcopate of the new prelate. Nor are we more favourably impressed at finding the zeal which revelled in the blood of an idolatrous maiden employed in setting up idols in the church of Christ. Cyril enjoys the unenviable reputation of being the first to erect images in the churches, and to institute "festival stations," at Alexandria.³

Little else is known of his episcopal government; but the appearance of a new heresy opened a fresh channel for his turbulent spirit, and, if we listen to his admirers, exalted him into a second Athanasius. Pope Sixtus III. goes so far as to say that "he surpassed all persons in all things."⁴ One would fain hope that in the thirty-two years, during which the patriarch filled the most prominent place in the eastern church, he learned much of which he was lamentably ignorant at the outset. Truth, however, looks in vain for either prudence or charity in his conduct of the Nestorian controversy. To compare him with Athanasius is to confound the broadest distinctions in the subject, conduct, and results of their respective labours. Athanasius contended in the spirit of an apostle for

¹ Soc. E. H. vii. 15.

² *Damasc. Vit. Isid.* "Valesius's Note to Socrates."

³ Neale i. 277, note.

⁴ *Ibid.*

the fundamental verities of the gospel; he succeeded in establishing for the whole church east and west a form of confession, and a unity in the truth which have never been departed from. The contest in which Cyril won his fame, was the first of those purely theological conflicts, which brought about the permanent disruption of the oriental communion, and the decline and fall of the Egyptian church. Originating in the cause of superstition more than of truth, it was carried on with a disregard of decency and justice which makes orthodox Christians ashamed of their advocates, and enlists the sympathy of the general reader on the wrong side.

The battle began at Constantinople, where the patriarch Nestorius, a man of piety and eloquence, but according to Socrates unlearned and self-sufficient, was only less intemperate than Cyril himself. He took exception to the title *Theotokos*, "Mother of God," commonly bestowed on the Virgin Mary; contending that to say "God had a mother" was a pagan expression, directly contradictory of the apostle who says, "without father, without mother, without descent."¹ A human creature (he argued) brought not forth Him who is uncreated, for Deity cannot be born of humanity; God was neither born nor put to death."²

Hereupon a clamour arose that the patriarch was impeaching the Divinity of our Lord, and the whole of Christendom was speedily involved in the controversy. Cyril at first held aloof, and spoke of it with a mildness and discretion very creditable and with him very rare; but hearing that certain Alexandrians who had proceeded to Constantinople to complain of his conduct

¹ Heb. vii. 3.

² Neale, i. 236.

had been favourably received by Nestorius, he wrote him a violent letter, to which Nestorius sent a moderate reply. The contest now grew fiercer and more embittered, and after much bandying to and fro of anathemas and denunciations, a council was convened at Ephesus, known as the Third General Council [A.D. 431].

Cyril attended at the head of about fifty bishops. Before the whole number of bishops had assembled he preached a sermon, in which he denounced Nestorius as a "blasphemer," "an inventor of wicked madness," and "a spouter of atheism." Impatient at the delay caused by the continued absence of the Syrian prelates who were detained by the badness of the roads, he insisted upon the council proceeding to business forthwith. Nestorius refused to appear until the whole number had arrived. In this he was supported by sixty-eight members of the council. But Cyril, deaf to remonstrance, presided over an assembly, numbering a hundred and fifty-eight members, which at one sitting deprived and excommunicated Nestorius as a heretic. Five days afterwards the absentees arrived; and after an indignant protest against the unseemly haste which had been displayed, they, with the dissentient members already present, formed a separate council.

It does not come within the scope of this history to follow the proceedings of these rival assemblies. Each anathematized and deposed the leaders of the opposite party. The confusion was increased by the arrival of commissioners from Constantinople, bringing with them the emperor's decision, by which he confirmed the sentences pronounced by *both* parties. Cyril, Nestorius, and Memnon of Ephesus,

were all deposed, and the patriarch of Antioch left supreme. In the end, however, Nestorius was the only victim. He was exiled to the Great Oasis, and afterwards wandered about Egypt in great misery, till he died, at an advanced age, at Panopolis. The refinement of cruelty which confined him among a people who were his bitterest opponents, is testified by the tradition, still current among the Copts, that the dews of heaven refuse to fall on his grave. But his followers continued numerous in Syria, and impartial historians now admit that his heresy was imaginary rather than real. Cyril and Memnon were restored to their sees, and long continued the controversy with the church of Antioch. Eventually a compromise was effected, in which Nestorius himself would willingly have concurred, but the schism in the Church was unhappily never healed. The Chaldean dioceses separated from the eastern communion, and have maintained a Nestorian succession to the present day. Alexandria itself fell into worse heresy under Cyril's successor, and in great measure from Cyril's extreme language. These melancholy results were mainly due to the intemperate and uncharitable proceedings of the Alexandrian patriarch.

Cyril died 27th June, 444, the last of the great popes under whom the Alexandrian see reigned paramount in the eastern church. He was sainted of course, but Egypt had little cause to boast of the polemical honour. The next patriarch carried his opposition to Nestorianism into downright heresy, and the Evangelical see continued reeling from one error to another, till it fell to the dust under the feet of the Saracens.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MONOPHYSITES.

Dioscorus—Eutychianism—Condemned by Flavian—The Den of Thieves—Dioscorus president—Acts of Violence—Monophysite Decree—Deposition of Flavian—All the Patriarchs Excommunicated—Synod at Rome—Fourth General Council—Trial and Deposition of Dioscorus—Final Definitions—Canons of Chalcedon—Resistance in Egypt—Schism—Subdivisions—Jacobites—Melchites—Incorrupticola—Imperial Definitions—Justinian—Three Chapters—Vigilius—Fifth General Council—Monothelitism—Sixth General Council—Rival Chairs of Alexandria—Eulogius—Gregory of Rome—John the Almoner.

CYRIL was succeeded by the archdeacon Dioscorus, a man who added notorious immorality to the religious corruptions already tainting the Evangelical see. No greater misfortune can befall a church, than when profligates are allowed to assume the lead in contending for the faith which its Divine author committed to the saints. An unsanctified zeal for formal orthodoxy had already brought the Alexandrian theology to the verge of heresy. It was now driven over the precipice by a ruler whose impure life was a standing affront to the Holy Being whose nature he undertook to define. In a blind hatred of Nestorianism, Dioscorus plunged into the depths of heresy on the opposite side. The abbot Eutyches had been lately excommunicated at Constantinople for asserting not merely one person, but one nature in Christ, compounded of God and man, in opposition to the received doctrine of two natures in one person. This was in fact a revival of the Apollinarian heresy, and, like it, maintained the passion of the Godhead.

In this constant recurrence of exploded errors we read the fate of Christianity, whenever the guidance of the inspired Word is exchanged for the vaunted lights of human intellect. The "substance of things not seen" is faith, and "faith cometh by the Word of God."¹ The word of man, which is again claiming the supremacy among ourselves under the guise of "free inquiry," can only lead us back to the restless controversies of Alexandrian subtlety.

The new heresy was even more pernicious than that which it so relentlessly persecuted. If Christ were neither wholly God nor wholly man, but a compound being between the two,—like the demigods of heathen mythology,—it would be impossible that He should have truly reconciled God and man in the atoning sacrifice of the cross. This was always the grand touchstone of the primitive church. Not attempting to define the secret things of God, she could not admit definitions incompatible with the foundation truth of the gospel. If it were difficult to explain to the Nestorians how two natures could subsist in one Person, it was still more difficult to admit their explanation of two persons in the one Saviour Jesus Christ. And if Eutyches found it equally hard to fathom the mystery of God and man in one Christ, the Church could not gratify his logic by the surrender of either nature. The Godhead of Christ is the link that makes Him one with the Father; the manhood is no less essential to His unity with ourselves. An intermediate being partaking partly of both, and wholly of neither, would be not only another Gospel, but another CHRIST.

Clearly perceiving this result, Flavian, who was then

¹ Heb. xi. 1; Rom. x. 17.

patriarch of Constantinople, condemned the teaching of Eutyches, and finally excommunicated him. Cyril, however, had undoubtedly let fall expressions very nearly to the same purpose, and at Alexandria the lightest word of Cyril was deemed infallible. Dioscorus, ignorant or careless of evangelical truth, warmly espoused the cause of Eutyches. Flavian was accused of Nestorianism, and the whole Eastern church was again in a flame.

There is little to please or instruct in this melancholy story. Leo of Rome tried to define the mystery in a letter to Flavian; and as Eutyches complained loudly of the injustice of his sentence, the emperor Theodosius convened another œcumenical council at Ephesus, to review the proceedings and declare the true faith. Dioscorus presided, and to him the Roman legates Julius and Hilarius presented Leo's letter, desiring that it should be read. The Alexandrian pope replied that the council had no need of further definitions, since the creed was already settled at Nicæa and Constantinople. He called upon Eutyches to justify his teaching by that standard, but when Flavian demanded that he might be answered by the bishop who accused him at his own tribunal, Dioscorus replied that the council was not to reopen that investigation, but to judge the conduct of those who presided in it. In the president's mind it was plain that sentence was already passed. Cyril was quoted as having said, "We must not imagine two natures, but one incarnate nature of God the Word." These were in reality the words of Apollinaris, falsely attributed both to Athanasius and Cyril.¹ They imposed on Dioscorus, and he now loudly maintained this here-

¹ Neale, i. 294.

tical proposition, threatening deprivation and exile to all who should reject it. The emperor was known to be on his side. The Parabolani waited his orders at the door. The imperial troops surrounded the church, and the Syrian abbot Barsumas, who sat with the fathers, had brought a thousand monks in his train ready for any act of violence. Flavian tried in vain to be heard. Cries of anathema rung from the Egyptian and Syrian bishops. Eutyches was absolved, and the *Monophysite*, or single nature heresy, was proclaimed as the faith of the church.

Dioscorus then demanded the condemnation of Flavian. In vain that patriarch exclaimed, "I appeal." In vain his bishops demanded a hearing. In vain the legate Hilarius had the courage to enter his *contradicitur*. Dioscorus called in the troops. Barsumas gave the word to his monks. The vote was signed amid threats and blows; Flavian was cast into prison, and others ordered into exile. Hilarius escaped by flight. The patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem, with the metropolitans of Ephesus and Cæsarea, were among the subscribers. Yet, three days afterward, Dioscorus had the first excommunicated, together with Theodoret, the ecclesiastical historian, Ibas of Edessa, and many others. Finally, on his way home, the Alexandrian pope hurled an impotent anathema at his Roman brother, and the ten comprovincial bishops who accompanied him to the council subscribed it at his orders.

On receiving intelligence of these extraordinary proceedings, Leo assembled a synod at Rome, which not only condemned all the acts of the Ephesian council, but stigmatized it by the name of *Latrocinium*, or "den of thieves." All Leo's complaints,

however, failed to move the emperor. Flavian was replaced by Anatolius, and died in exile from the effects of the injuries received from the monks. No redress was obtained till the death of Theodosius, whose sister Pulcheria gave her hand to Marcian, and raised him to the purple with herself. The new emperor had a council called at Constantinople, which anathematized Eutyches and all his adherents. Flavian was canonized as a martyr, and his body translated to his church with the honours of a saint.

An imperial edict then went out for a fourth œcumenical council at Nicæa, which removed to Chalcedon to be near the emperor. There Dioscorus was brought to answer, at once, for his conduct and his faith. It was the most numerous synod yet assembled, numbering six hundred and thirty members. Nineteen magistrates were seated in front of the altar on the part of the emperor. The patriarch of Alexandria took the place of honour on the right, but on the demand of the Roman legates, who occupied the left, the magistrates directed him to withdraw and stand in the midst as a party accused.¹ Theodoret, who was present by the imperial command, occupied a similar position as one of the accusers.

The acts of the pseudo-council being produced, many of the prelates declared they had subscribed on blank papers under fear of violence, and now wished to retract. The Roman legates complained that their master's letter had not been read. With the marvellous unanimity which distinguished these eastern synods, when once the imperial will was made known, all was reversed in a single day. Dioscorus was at least no coward; he steadfastly refused to recant. "You are

¹ Evag. ii. 18.

condemning the fathers," he exclaimed ; " Athanasius and Cyril are with me." But the oriental prelates cried as one man, " Anathema to Dioscorus : let the deposer be deposed." Night coming on, Dioscorus proposed to adjourn, but the magistrates, imitating his own conduct at Ephesus, reserved the declaration of the faith till the next day, and calling for torches, put the question that Dioscorus be deposed. It was carried amid clamours of approval and dissent. Juvenal, with five other prelates who had been active at Ephesus, were included for form's sake, with an understanding that the sentence would be remitted in consideration of their recantation.

Dioscorus was now placed in custody : being summoned to attend the council some days after when the magistrates were not present, he sent word that he was ready to come, but the guards would not permit him.¹ In spite of this very sufficient impediment, the fathers gravely repeated the canonical citation ; and the prisoner not appearing on the third call, they proceeded in his absence to hear complaints of his conduct at Alexandria. He was charged with appropriating the church revenues to his own pleasures, with oppressing the clergy, and with openly leading a licentious life. Even homicide was imputed ; while Cyril's executors had the effrontery to complain that Dioscorus had compelled them to disgorge some part of the church treasure acquired by his predecessor.

¹ Evagrius, who records this reply in his *Epitome of the Acts* (lib. ii. c. xviii.), adds that Dioscorus put in as his final answer that he would come when the magistrates were present, and when he had recovered from a distemper, provided his colleagues, Juvenal and the others, were also cited. This in no way affects the undoubted fact that he was a prisoner, and could have been brought in if the magistrates had chosen to order it.

This ridiculous accusation provokes a smile, but there is too much reason to believe the others to be true. The patriarch was doubtless a coarse bad man; the more is the pity that he was ever elevated to such a station in the Church; that his accusers were silent till he was already fallen; and that his judges gave sentence behind his back.

Having disposed of Dioscorus, the council proceeded to determine the faith. Leo's letter was read, but failed to produce immediate assent. Some parts, when translated into Greek, seemed to many hardly removed from Nestorianism. Theodoret, whom Dioscorus had recklessly charged with that heresy, hesitated to commit himself to the Roman prelate's words, "that to pay the debt of one nature, the Divine nature was united to a nature passible, that one and the same mediator, the man Christ Jesus, might be able to die by one, and might not be able to die by the other;" and again, "From us He hath humanity which is less than the Father, but from the Father He has the Divinity which is equal with His Father." There was still the old difficulty of clearly distinguishing between the nature and the Person; however justly Dioscorus was detested, his sentiments were widely disseminated in the Egyptian church.

The dissentients were silenced by the production of passages to the same effect from the infallible Cyril, and after some days the Roman legates were gratified by a general approval of their pontiff's letter. Juvenal, and the five bishops degraded with Dioscorus, were then restored to their office, not without loud cries for the same measure of indulgence to Dioscorus himself. There was still considerable difficulty in agreeing to a definition of the faith.

Some contended that Dioscorus had been deprived for excommunicating Leo; for contumacy more than heresy. Many were for avoiding a new definition altogether. The magistrates, however, insisted that the council should decide whether the church was to believe with Dioscorus, "that Christ consisted of two natures," or with Leo, "that two natures subsisted in Christ." The emperor came in person to the council, and exhorted the bishops to concord before this knotty point could be settled. The whole question of the unity of His person would really have remained undetermined without it.¹ A decree was at last unanimously agreed to, which, approving the letters both of Cyril to Nestorius, and of Leo to Flavian, excommunicated those who should say that the Deity was passible, or that the two natures of Christ are mixed or confused in one compound nature. Christ was declared to be one and the same Person, truly God and truly Man, consubstantial with the Father as touching His Deity, and consubstantial with ourselves as touching His humanity; in all things like unto us, sin only excepted, the propriety of each nature being preserved in one Person and hypostasis. It was further declared that Christ was born *according to his humanity* of Mary the Virgin-mother of God; thus at once avoiding the error, and sanctioning the title, to which Nestorius objected.

¹ The Greek prepositions "of" and "in," differing only in a single letter, it was again said that Christians were divided about nothing. Evagrius (ii. 5) argues that the one of necessity implied the other; but though there is often a difficulty in detecting Nestorianism, there can be none in distinguishing between the Monophysite assertion that of two natures a third was compounded, from the orthodox position of one Person in two unmixed natures.

The council passed thirty canons against simony¹ and other clerical irregularities; priests or deacons were not to be ordained without a title to some church or monastery,² nor to remove from their place without the bishop's license,³ nor to undertake military or secular employments.⁴ Pluralities⁵ were forbidden, as also the ordination of deaconesses under forty years of age,⁶ and the marriage of nuns and monks, which was originally free. The 28th canon enacts that the bishop of New Rome (as Constantinople was called) should enjoy the same precedence as the bishop of Old Rome, and preside over the bishops of Pontus, Asia, Thrace, and the Barbarians. This provision passed, like the similar canon of Constantinople, in the absence of the Alexandrian patriarch; and being always repudiated in Egypt, it did not tend to facilitate the reception of the council in that province.

The Egyptian bishops were filled with dismay when called upon to subscribe the decrees including Leo's explanation of the Incarnation. To refuse was to incur the immediate penalty of deprivation and exile; to comply was to expose themselves to the scarcely less rigorous hostility of their own countrymen. In this dilemma they pleaded the injunctions of the canon which forbade them to act without their archbishop. Let the vacant see be filled, and they would subscribe after their primate, but to do so without their proper head would cost them their lives on returning to Egypt. It is hardly credible that the populace or the bishops themselves could attach much weight to a mere point of canonical discipline. It was agreed that they

¹ Canon ii.

³ Canon iv.

⁵ Canon vii.

² Canon vi.

⁴ Canon vii.

⁶ Canon xv.

should remain at Chalcedon, while orders went to Alexandria for the election of a new patriarch;¹ and the result showed that the fears of the bishops were not unfounded. The decisions of the council were resisted with the utmost fury in Egypt. The people protested that no other patriarch should rule in Alexandria while Dioscorus lived. When an election was at last accomplished, in obedience to the imperial mandate, they broke out in open sedition, routed the troops, and besieging the magistrates in the Serapeum set fire to the building and burnt them alive. The emperor despatched two thousand troops from Constantinople, by whom the city was subjected to all the horrors of storm. The new patriarch Proterius was never able to appear in public without a military guard, and he was finally seized in the baptistery on Good Friday, and torn to pieces in the street [A.D. 457]. The Monophysites installed their own patriarch, who bore the name of Timothy the Cat;² from that time two rival successions claimed the see of Alexandria, and the bulk of the Egyptians adhered to the heretic.

It was now that the mischievous controversy between Nestorius and Cyril bore its deadly fruit. Many of those who concurred in the condemnation of the former showed themselves heretics of a still deeper die. If the unguarded expressions of the patriarch of Constantinople had made it necessary to assert the unity of the Saviour's person at Ephesus, the language of the other, and its development by his followers,

1 Conc. Chalc. Canon xxx.

2 So called from his nocturnal visits to the cells of monks, to whom he called from without, pretending to be an angel sent to exhort them to forsake Proterius.

rendered it no less imperative to restore the balance by affirming the truth of the Divine and human natures at Chalcedon. Without this the fundamental verity of the atonement, for which Athanasius contended, might have disappeared in the theological conflict. The result of all, in the providence of God, was to establish more distinctly the great mystery of salvation, in the union of God and man in the one Mediator, Christ Jesus; His manhood, the sacrifice for our sins; His divinity, that which gave infinite value to the oblation. It had been better for the peace of the Church, and possibly for the extension of the truth, if the controversy had never arisen; but amidst the unholy strife of man's perverted ingenuity, it is consoling to know that neither side was permitted to extinguish the light of Divine truth, or permanently to affect the faith enunciated at Nicæa.

The new heresy divided itself into an extraordinary number of sects, each with its own shade of opinion, and sometimes as much opposed to one another as to the orthodox communion. The extreme *Eutychians* held the divinity to be the only nature in Christ; reducing His humanity to a mere form or appearance of manhood, whence they were called *Phantasiasts* and *Docetæ*. The followers of Dioscorus, or the *Monophysites* proper, asserted a compound nature, which was strictly neither God nor man, but a mixture of both, like the heathen demigods. The latter was the opinion that prevailed in Egypt; the other in Armenia. The province of Antioch wavered between the two, being at first Eutychian but afterwards Monophysite. The change is attributed to the labours of Jacobus Baradæus, or Zanzalus, bishop of Edessa a century

later, from whom the series of Monophysite patriarchs in the east took its rise. From this prelate they are still commonly called *Jacobites*, though some writers of the sect derive the appellation from James the Lord's brother; while others say that Dioscorus bore the name of James before his elevation to the episcopate.¹

The decrees of Chalcedon were universally received in the province of Constantinople, where the emperor's influence was strongest. On this account their opponents called the orthodox in derision *Melchites* or Royalists, an appellation never objected to by the Catholics, though it involved them in much trouble with the Mohammedan caliphs, and tended to invest the heretics with the character of the popular and national party.

A new cause of dissension was started in Egypt by a Eutychian sect named Julianites or Gaianites,² who denied the *corruptibility* of our Lord's body; meaning that it was not subject to hunger or thirst, pain or death. This opinion seems to have been generally held by the Monophysites in Egypt, though it quite extinguishes the consolation designed to the suffering, from knowing that He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." To these heretics the Lord's fasting and temptation in the wilderness must have been entirely unreal, His agony incomprehensible, and the crucifixion itself a mere ceremony.

¹ Neale, ii. 7.

² Julius was the Eutychian bishop of Halicarnassus, who fled to Alexandria on being deposed by the emperor Justin. He was opposed by Severus of Antioch, a Monophysite refugee. At the same time Gaianus was the popular candidate for the see of Alexandria (A.D. 536), when Justinian seated Theodosius, a disciple of Severus, from whom the *Corrupticolæ* obtained the name of Theodosians.

The patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch or "the east," with Armenia, became eventually Jacobite; but the Armenians are not in communion with the other two, and all three have been often at issue.¹

Several attempts were made by the emperors to restore unity to these contending theologians; but without any permanent effect. Marcian steadily upheld the definitions of Chalcedon. His successor Leo, being requested to summon another œcumenical council, preferred to take the opinions of the several metropolitans in their provincial synods; and finding them unanimous in support of the council of Chalcedon, gave his adherence to the orthodox side.²

The next emperor, Zeno, having fled from Constantinople, the purple was assumed by Basiliscus, whose wife was a determined Eutychian. He published a circular letter upholding the three œcumenical councils, but rejecting that of Chalcedon. Though this document was repudiated by Simplicius of Rome and Acacius of Constantinople, it received the signatures of the patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, with nearly eight hundred bishops. It was recalled, however, by its author, terrified by a sedition at Constantinople. Zeno having returned to power, published a decree for unity, termed *Henoticon*, which equally rejected the Council of Chalcedon, but anathematized all, whether Nestorians or Eutychians, who should either divide or confound the two natures of Christ. Such a compromise might have been possible

¹ The Jacobites excommunicate the Eutychians, who are also expressly repudiated in what is called the liturgy of Dioscorus.

² Thirty-six of these replies are preserved, but Egypt was not included, and looking at the known extent of the opposite views, it is impossible not to suppose that the reclamations of the dissentients have been suppressed.

before the condemnation of Nestorius, but it was now manifestly too late. The Melchites would hear nothing against the Council of Chalcedon; their opponents nothing against Eutyches or Dioscorus; at Rome no reflection could be suffered on the treatise of pope Leo. Consequently, though the four eastern patriarchs accepted the Henoticon, the result was but to alienate the more zealous controversialists from their communion, and these *Acephali* carried on the war with less restraint than before. The entire Eastern church was out of communion with Rome, till Jerusalem relinquished the Henoticon and submitted to the decrees of Chalcedon. At another time Alexandria was in like manner separated from every other church.

The next emperor, Anastasius, though of the sect of the *Acephali*, was more anxious for the tranquillity of the empire than for any article of belief. He wished all parties to maintain their own views without troubling others, and ejected the bishops who made innovations, whether for or against the creed of Chalcedon. The consequence was a greater discord than ever, till Severus, a zealous Monophysite, becoming patriarch of Antioch, obtained the emperor's favour, and writing largely in defence of his opinions, so extended their reception that he is regarded as next in authority to Cyril and Dioscorus. One of his disciples was Jacobus Baradaeus, from whom the name Jacobite was derived. To confirm the belief in the single nature, Severus induced Anastasius to have the words "who wast crucified for us" inserted in the Trisagion hymn after the Divine name. This occasioned so violent a sedition at Constantinople, where the decrees of Chalcedon were firmly adhered

to, that the emperor offered to resign the crown before the people could be pacified.¹

The Melchites rose again under Justin and Justinian. Severus and his party were expelled from their sees, and the two rival Monophysite patriarchs being exiled from Alexandria, the chair of St. Mark was again filled by an orthodox prelate. The people, however, were not converted, and the new patriarch was deposed in two years, for having anticipated a design against his life by the secret murder of the principal conspirator.

The next emperor fared little better. Justinian, like our own Henry VIII., was a firm believer in the infallibility of the crown. More than once he published his own opinions on religious questions, requiring the universal church to accept them as the true faith of Christianity. The emperor's theology, however, was not so convincing as his law; for while the code, pandects, institutes, and novels of Justinian² constitute the civil law of Christendom to the present day, no one reveres his authority in religion, or cares to know that, after prescribing the orthodox creed to all the bishops of the empire, he died himself a heretic of the worst form of Eutychianism. The code was the work of his lawyers, the theology was all his own.

One of these imperial edicts anathematized a large body of divinity accepted for orthodox in the Council

¹ Evag. iii. 44.

² The *Code* of Justinian is an abridgement of the previous Roman codes, published in the second year of his reign, A.D. 528. The *Pandects* are a collection, in fifty books, of cases decided in the twelve previous centuries, analagous to our own Reports; they were published three years after the Code. The *Institutes* are the principal elements drawn up for the use of students of civil law. The *Novellæ* were the new laws or statutes made by Justinian himself.

of Chalcedon, yet the emperor, as usual, demanded the subscription of all his prelates, and was obeyed by the eastern patriarchs. Vigilus of Rome being summoned to Constantinople for the same purpose, was found less tractable. Afraid to refuse and unwilling to comply, the pope hit upon the expedient of publishing a paper termed *Judicatum*, in which the "three chapters" (as the writings were called)¹ were condemned according to order; but a clause was inserted to the effect that the censure was without detriment to the Council of Chalcedon. For this concession the pope was excommunicated in a council at Carthage; while another at Illyria repudiated his judgment. Vigilus was obliged to retract his *Judicatum*; but consoling himself by excommunicating the eastern prelates, Justinian became so angry that the pope fled to a church, out of which the emperor ordered him to be dragged from the very altar. It was long before Justinian was induced to guarantee his personal safety, and allow the pope to quit his sanctuary. This affair led to the assembly of a synod at Constantinople [A.D. 551], called by Justinian at the pope's request, and regarded as the Fifth General Council. It followed the contradictory *Judicatum* of Vigilus in condemning the Three Chapters, and at the same time upholding the authority of the Council that had received them with honour. The decrees of this synod were rejected by many of the western churches, as by all the Jacobite sees of the east.

The contest continued to rage unabated till the

¹ They consisted of Theodoret's reply to Cyril's anathemas, of a letter from Ibas bishop of Edessa to one Maris a Persian, and of the whole writings of Theodore bishop of Mopsuestia. The two former were expressly recognised at Chalcedon, and the last mentioned with honour.

emperor Heraclius gave it a new feature by proclaiming two natures, but only one *will*, or operation, in Christ. This was in effect another phase of the Monophysite heresy, and is said to have been suggested by a bishop of that persuasion. It acquired, however, a distinct name as the *Monothelite*, or single-will heresy, and as such was formally condemned in the Sixth General Council [A.D. 680].

While Christians were wasting their strength in these mischievous subtleties, the Koran and the sword were converting the idolaters of Arabia. Before the sixth council had issued its fiat, the patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem had fallen under their dominion, and the province of Carthage was on the point of undergoing the same fate. The chair of St. Mark was alternately seized by Catholic and Monophysite patriarchs, whose history, if it were less obscure, would be wholly without interest. Only two names rise to distinction. The abbot Eulogius, elected in A.D. 579, was accounted the most worthy occupant of the see since the days of Cyril. He wrote against the Eutychians, and had the reputation of being learned in ecclesiastical history. The English reader regards him with special interest as the intimate friend of Gregory the Great, who in one of his letters acquaints him with the conversion of the Angles by Augustine, and the baptism of ten thousand pagans in England at the feast of Christmas, 597.¹ It is consoling to be reminded, amid the decay of Christianity in the seats of eastern learning, after five centuries of conflict with philosophy, that the enlivening ray was already kindled in the barbarous islands of the west, which by God's distinguishing

¹ Greg. Ep. v. 43.

mercy is now shining out, pure and unclouded, to the utmost parts of the earth.

Eulogius was one of those who objected to the title of œcumenical bishop, assumed in his time by the patriarch John of Constantinople. To him and to the patriarch of Antioch, Gregory addressed his well-known protest, denouncing this novel exaltation of one patriarch as the degradation of the others, and pointing out that a universal bishop might involve the whole Church in his own error or fall.

Eulogius, having replied that he had refused to allow the title as "ordered" by the pope, the other rejoined by entreating him never again to employ that word. "I know," wrote this celebrated bishop of Rome, "who I am, and who you are; my brother by position, my father in character. I ordered nothing, I only advised, and even that advice you have not strictly followed. I requested you to give that title neither to the see of Constantinople, nor to any one else, and you have applied it to myself. Away with all terms that excite vanity and wound charity."¹ The two prelates continued their correspondence, accompanied by the interchange of friendly presents, till the death of Gregory, who in one of his letters details his sufferings from gout. He was quickly followed by Eulogius on the 13th of February, 607.

The other name to be rescued from the obscurity, which is the merciful refuge of the declining church of Alexandria, is that of John the Almoner, the last patriarch under whom the Evangelical see can be said to have retained any vitality. He was not more active in the repression of heresy than of simony, which he found extensively practised in his church.

¹ Greg. Ep. viii. 30; *Russia, Ancient and Modern*, p. 242.

His alms were so abundant that, though four thousand pounds of gold were in the treasury at his accession, he had expended it all at his death, besides immense contributions received from the faithful. It must be owned that his charity was not always judiciously applied, if it be true that he exercised no discrimination, and even gratified mendicants who came with ornaments of gold on their persons. "If the whole world (he said) were to ask alms at Alexandria they would not exhaust the infinite riches of God's goodness." His bounty was more worthily employed in establishing hospitals for the sick, visiting the dying, and providing necessaries for the convalescent.

A great occasion for the exercise of his favourite grace was presented by the incursions of the Persians, who in his time ravaged Syria, took Aleppo, Antioch, and Damascus, and finally besieged and captured Jerusalem. Ninety thousand Christians were massacred, chiefly by Jews, who bought them of the captors to glut themselves with their blood. The churches were burnt, and the patriarch Zacharias, with a multitude of the inhabitants, carried into captivity; but what occasioned the greatest grief was, that along with them the "true cross" fell into the hands of the infidels, and was borne off in triumph to Persia!

In this extremity numbers of every rank sought refuge at Alexandria. The patriarch received and relieved them all; not content with this, he sent large sums to Jerusalem to redeem the captives and rebuild the churches. Seven thousand five hundred poor were daily fed at Alexandria. For the rebuilding of Jerusalem he sent a thousand Egyptian workmen, each provisioned with a tub of dried fish, a skin of wine, a pound of iron, a piece of gold, and

two sacks of grain. This enormous expenditure produces a high idea of the revenues of the Alexandrian see. Its temporal authority was illustrated by the patriarch confiscating to the poor the goods of all who used false weights and measures. Every Wednesday and Friday he sat in the church, with the principal men of the city, for the redress of grievances; it was his maxim to despatch all complaints on the spot, for "how can we expect God to hear us (he would say) if we do not pay immediate attention to our brethren?" Though not a monk, he held the monastic orders in great respect, imitating their simple fare and lodging in his own house. Having been presented with a costly bed, he declared he could not sleep in it for thinking of the poor who were lying in cold and misery.

If in some respects his profuse charities were not distributed with needful discretion; and if in other respects his asceticism had in it something of superstition and will-worship, we cannot withhold from such a man the tribute of our admiration. St. Paul, in his enumeration of the qualities of a good bishop, says that he should be "given to hospitality . . . not greedy of filthy lucre . . . not covetous."¹ In these qualifications John offered a noble exemplification of the apostolic description.

The Persians extending their conquests, John was at last obliged to fly from the scene of his devotion, and ended his days at Amathus, his native town, in the island of Cyprus, A.D. 620. His body was afterwards translated to Constantinople, whence it was removed to Buda, A.D. 1460, and thence to Posen, A.D. 1530. There it still reposes under a magnificent

1 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3; Titus i. 7, 8.

shrine, erected by George, bishop of the Five Churches, A. D. 1632. He is commemorated not only by the Greek and Latin churches, but by the Jacobites also ; and the Knight Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem derived their appellation from the charitable patriarch of Alexandria, as much as from his namesake John the Baptist, to whom their chapel was dedicated.¹

¹ Neale, ii. 59.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SARACEN CONQUEST.

Origin—Shepherd Kings—Primitive Races—Cross the Red Sea—Inrade the Empire—State of Egypt—Mecca—The Temple—Religious State of the Arabs—Mohammed—The Koran—The Hegira—Submission of Mecca—Pilgrimage—Death of Mohammed—Betrayal of Bosra—Siege and Capture of Damascus—Jonas and Eudoria—Slaughter of the Fugitives—Accession of Omar—Capitulation of Jerusalem—Flight of the Emperor—Conquest of Syria and Persia—Invasion of Egypt—Submission of the Jacobites—Fall of Memphis and Alexandria—Burning of the Library—Demolition—New Capital of Cairo.

THE origin of the Saracens and the meaning of the name have not been rescued from obscurity. It was a general appellation with the Greeks and Romans for the Arabian tribes, but whether taken from any native designation or imposed by foreigners is uncertain.¹ In Arabic the appellation has been referred both to the *oriental* situation of the country, and to the *thievish* character of its inhabitants. Either etymology would have found ready acceptance in the schools of Alexandria. Egypt had the Arabs for her eastern neighbours, and from time immemorial her rich meadows had been subject to incursions from their predatory bands. The monuments, depicting land and sea fights from the beginning of the Coptic monarchy, sufficiently explain why "every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians."² The mythic story of the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, originated in some Bedouin invasion; and the fear of their being joined by their kinsmen the Israelites, was the tyrant's plea for reducing the latter to servitude.³

¹ The Arab historian, Elemakin, gives *Sarac*, the name of a chief province. *Saraca* is also mentioned by Ptolemy.

² Gen. xlii. 34.

³ Exod. i. 10.

Some have thought that Typho, the red demon of the Osirian idolatry who dwelt in the sea, typified these hated descendants of Shem ; at all events the Red Sea was probably the sea of the red men or Arabs.¹

The oldest appellation of Arabia was Sheba, a name given in the book of Genesis to three heads of families, whose descendants may be presumed to have led colonies into that peninsula. The first were probably the posterity of Sheba, the grandson of Cush,² who are believed to have settled on the shores of the Persian Gulf, and were the authors of the massive buildings whose ruins everywhere indicate a Cushite origin. Next were the descendants of Sheba, the tenth son of Joktan.³ They founded the kingdom of Sheba, comprehending the greater part of the Yemen, or Arabia Felix. The capital was called Seba and Ma-rib ; from this region came the "queen of the south," who visited Solomon to behold his glory and listen to his wisdom.⁴ In later times this kingdom was designated by the name of the Himyer-

¹ Himyer is derived from *ahmar*, red, and the same meaning is found in *Phaniz*, the Phœnician.—Smith's *Bib. Dict.*, *Red Sea*.

² Gen. x. 7 ; 1 Chron. i. 9.

³ Gen. x. 28 ; 1 Chron. i. 22.

⁴ 1 Kings x. 1 ; Matt. xii. 42. Josephus, following the Jewish Rabbis, calls her the queen of Egypt and Ethiopia (Ant. viii. 6), mistaking Sheba for the Cushite settlement, afterwards ruled by "Candace, queen of the Ethiopians" (Acts viii. 27) ; and his view is still held by the Abyssinian church. It is true that Seba was an ancient name of Ethiopia (Isa. xliii. 3 ; xlv. 14), derived probably from Seba, the eldest son of Cush (Gen. x. 7), and uncle of the Sheba who settled in Arabia. But the queen who visited Solomon was of the Shemitic race, i.e., of the line of Joktan ; her country is mentioned in Isa. lx. 6, 7, in conjunction with Midian, Ephah, Kedar, and Nabaioth, all in the Arabian peninsula ; the same appear to be meant in Psalm lxxii. 10 ; in other places the similarity of name leaves the country doubtful. Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, *Seba* and *Sheba*.

ites or Homerites, who seem to have become the ruling tribe. The third Sheba was the son of Jokshan, and grandson of Abraham by Keturah.¹ He was probably the father of the nomad tribes, who fed their flocks on the western frontier, and convoyed the commerce of their Cushite namesakes through the desert to Palestine. This trade is mentioned by Ezekiel.² The predatory bands of the Keturahites were the true prototypes of the modern Bedouin: we find them in full possession of the robber character as early as the days of Job.³

The Arabs early crossed the gulf that separated them from Africa, and formed settlements in Ethiopia under the names of Troglodytes and Blemmyes. Here they adopted the language and worship of the Copts. They were the camel-drivers and carriers of the Theban merchants in the trade across the desert;⁴ and were so numerous that Strabo found half the population of Coptos to be Arabs. In the time of Augustus they were masters of Ethiopia, and made frequent inroads upon Nubia and Upper Egypt, fighting for booty and retiring rapidly with the spoil. The faces of their chiefs were stained with red, like the images of their gods.⁵

The Romans were obliged to keep a large force at Syene to protect the Thebais.⁶ On one occasion, when these troops had been weakened, a body of ten thousand Ethiopian Arabs attacked the outposts with clubs and axes, and overpowered the garrisons. They were the subjects of Candace, queen of Napata, and probably no longer attached to the Coptic idolatry. The large

¹ Gen. xxv. 3.

³ Job i. 15.

⁵ Plin. vi. 34; xxxiii. 36.

² Ezek. xxvii. 22, 23.

⁴ Sharpe, xiii. 16.

⁶ Strabo, xvii.

number of Jews settled among them from the time of Solomon's commerce with Adule and Axum, had tended to shake their confidence in gods that were "made with hands," and to prepare the way either for the Bible or the Koran. In the reign of Pertinax, A.D. 194, the Roman cohort at Syene was again routed by these troublesome neighbours, who already bore the name of *Saracens*.¹ The same appellation is given to the followers of Zenobia, queen of the East; and on the overthrow of her family these barbarians, uniting with the native Egyptian population, attempted to give an emperor to the Roman world in the person of Firmus, a native of Syria. On his execution Aurelian, alluding to the character of his supporters, remarked that he had rid the world of a *robber*.²

The Saracens continued to threaten the Roman empire in the east even more formidably than the Goths in the west. The emperors were reduced to bribes and treaties to stay their incursions. Under Valens they ravaged Palestine and Phœnicia, took possession of Petra, and advanced upon Egypt to the head of the Red Sea. Christianity had now found its way into Arabia. By an article of the treaty concluded with Valens, the Saracens were to have a bishop for their church, and Moses was sent to Alexandria to be ordained to that function. Finding the see in possession of Lucius the Arian, the candidate refused to receive imposition of hands from a heretic, and had recourse to some of the Athanasian prelates in the Thebaid.

When the patriarch John fled from Alexandria, at the approach of the Persians, who had already captured Jerusalem, Egypt was left to the enemy. The natives

¹ Sharpe, xvi. 18.

² Ib. xvii. 28.

accepted a new master with the facility learned by repeated subjugation. The first act of the Persians was to recognise the communion most hostile to the emperor, by installing the Jacobite Benjamin in the patriarchal seat; and the Egyptians preferred their own opinions, under infidel protection, to the hated orthodoxy of the Byzantine Court. The Persians held Egypt for ten years, during which the Jacobites enjoyed undisturbed supremacy, and their faith was embraced by a majority of the natives. The revolt of the Arabs, who were the chief strength of Chosroes, then enabled Heraclius to recover Syria and Egypt. Benjamin had to retire, and George was enthroned as the orthodox successor of the Almsgiver.

Such was the state of Egypt when, in the twelfth year of Heraclius [A.D. 622], a new era and a new empire dawned on the Saracens in the Hegira, or flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medinah.

These were both ancient settlements on the west coast of Arabia. The former possessed a temple of unknown antiquity, called the *Caaba*, or cube; though the structure did not exactly correspond with the mathematical appellation. It is twenty-four cubits long, twenty-three broad, and twenty-seven high, having a single entrance, and a window, not unlike the sanctuaries of Hindu temples. Into one wall is built the famous black stone, doubtless an aerolite, like the Palladium of ancient Troy, and the "image that fell down from Jupiter" at Ephesus.¹ The quadrangle which enclosed it was crowded with images of men, eagles, lions, and antelopes, the symbols, or the spoil, of the numerous religions which had retired at different periods into the Arabian desert. On the top of the

¹ Acts xix. 35.

temple was the god Hebal, made of red agate, holding in his hand the instruments of divination, the headless shafts of seven arrows.¹ He is thought to have represented the sun, and the three hundred and sixty images the days of the year. Among them, strangely enough, stood a Virgin with the infant Saviour in her arms, the plunder of some convent or church.²

This temple was an ancient place of pilgrimage from all parts of Arabia. The Koreish tribe, who had the guardianship of it, claimed a doubtful descent from Ishmael;³ they pretended that it was founded by Adam, and restored by Abraham and Ishmael. Gibbon suggests that it may have been the sanctuary mentioned by Diodorus Siculus,⁴ which a king of the Himyarites covered with a veil seven centuries before Mohammed.

No explanation has been given of the reason that originally selected so unpromising a place of concourse. Mecca stands in a barren plain, at the foot of a rocky mountain; the water of the holy well Zemzem is brackish and bitter; the pastures are remote; fruits are brought above seventy miles from the mountain gardens of Tayef, and it is forty miles distant from the port of Jedda.⁵ Its only recommendation seems to have been that, lying half-way between Arabia Felix and Palestine, it formed a place of meeting between the caravans and merchants who brought Indian produce up the Red Sea. It is now in every sense a penance to approach it; numbers of those who make the attempt annually fall on the dusty road, and are

¹ Ezek. xxi. 21. The practice of divining by arrows, called *El Meysir*, is forbidden in the *Koran*, ch. ii. and v.

² Macbride, p. 15.

³ Decline and Fall, cap. l.

⁴ Lib. iii. p. 211.

⁵ Malte Brun, xxx.

carried forward by their fellow-pilgrims to die by the holy well.

This unpromising spot was the resort both of Jews and Christians, when driven by the spirit of trade, or the distractions of the church, to sojourn among the Arab idolaters. The name and faith of Abraham challenged the attention of his supposed descendants. At one of the idol feasts four men avowed their dissatisfaction with the customary rite: "We are corrupting the religion of Abraham," they exclaimed, "by worshipping and walking round a stone which can do neither harm nor good." They separated, and went in search of the true faith. Two of these afterwards became Christians, one of whom, Waraka by name, was a kinsman of the youthful Mohammed, and exercised considerable influence over his early reveries. Convinced of the vanity of idols, Mohammed burned to find and proclaim to his countrymen the true God. Unhappily he had no access to the Holy Scriptures; and the legends of the Rabbis and heretical Christians justly moved his contempt. He came forward as the prophet of the Arabs, pretending that a new scripture was revealed to him by the angel Gabriel.

His revelations were not delivered all at once, but produced from time to time to meet the difficulty of the moment. They were written down by his secretaries (for the prophet was unable to read or write) on skins and pieces of bone, and collected into the *Koran* (or book) after his death; the volume was of course largely indebted to the caliphs its editors, and all various readings were destroyed.¹ This book, which now enjoys the reverence of nearly a third of

1 India : its Natives and Missions, p. 140.

the human race, was artfully contrived to attract the ignorant disciples of the various religions then professed among the Arabs. The Christians, who had several episcopal sees on the Persian and Syrian frontiers, besides Nagra on the Red Sea, were conciliated by the acknowledgment of our Lord as the greatest of prophets, though not the Son of God, "who has neither partner nor offspring." The Jews were won by the respectful mention of Moses and the patriarchs, with the observance of circumcision, ablution, and other ceremonial rites. The idolaters were propitiated by the retention of the Caaba and its heathen rites; and the Chaldeans by the mediation of the angel Gabriel and the scheme of the seven heavens.¹ The Zendavesta of the Persian magi also contributed to this miscellaneous repertory.²

Its highest doctrines are the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. With these the impostor joined, as the first duties of believers, an implicit resignation to the will of God, to which his religion owes its name,³ and the propagation of its creed by force, to which it was undoubtedly indebted for its extension. "The sword (he taught) is the key of heaven and hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, or one night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months in fasting or prayer. Whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion and odoriferous as musk, and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim."⁴ He

¹ Neale, ii. 68.

² India: its Natives and Missions, p. 149.

³ *Islam*, i.e., "resignation." ⁴ Macbride, p. 33.

offered his followers the lands and lives of unbelievers. Under the standard of God they were to invade all countries, put the infidels to death or tribute, and take full possession of their wealth and their women. The strongest passions of our corrupt nature were granted indulgence under a few restrictions; heaven itself was to be an everlasting enjoyment of sensual gratifications.

These were exactly the terms to attract the freebooters of the desert. The restraints of the new religion were little in comparison with its license. The simplicity and superiority of its creed gratified pride without imposing the burden of repentance; and in that wild confidence in the favour of heaven, which so often kindles the fanaticism of the ignorant, the Arabs threw themselves on the civilised world with the shout, "There is no God but one, and Mohammed is His prophet."

Mohammed had collected but a few followers, and was only commencing his marvellous revolution, when he was obliged to fly from Mecca, to save his life from the hands of Abu Sofian, the head of the idolatrous Koreish. He escaped in the dead of night, accompanied by his father-in-law Abubekr.¹ "We are but two," said the trembling chief, as they shrank into a cavern to avoid their pursuers. "There is a third," answered Mohammed; "it is God himself." With difficulty they reached Yatreb, thenceforth denominated *Medina Alnabbi*, "the City of the Prophet." He was met and conducted in triumph by five hundred of the citizens. An umbrella was reared over his head, and a turban unfolded before him for a standard. He assumed at once regal and sacerdotal

¹ i.e., "the father of the bride;" a title which displaced his proper name, now unknown.

functions, deciding causes in person, and praying and preaching in the public assembly. Friday was fixed on for the sabbath, as the day on which Adam was created, and to mark his separation both from Jews and Christians. A new revelation was forthcoming upon every difficulty, and it was declared to be the height of impiety to resist or question the inspired sovereign of the Arabs.

The Mussulman period of the *Hegira*, or Flight of Mohammed, dates from Friday 16th July 622. He at once declared war against the infidel Koreish, whose enmity had driven him out of Mecca. Raising a band of scarce three hundred Moslems, he attacked and routed a caravan of nearly a thousand strong, under his old enemy Abu Sofian, in the valley of Beda. In a second battle near Medina, the standard of Allah was put to flight by three thousand idolaters, singing the praises of Hebal. Seventy martyrs fell on the field, and the prophet himself was severely wounded in the face. Notwithstanding this check, he levied an army of ten thousand men the next year, and the Koreish, despairing of subduing him, were compelled to conclude a ten years' truce, with permission to Mohammed and all his followers to visit the Caaba on pilgrimage, but without arms.

On these occasions the false prophet zealously observed the idolatrous rites which had awakened the indignation of his early instructors. He shaved the hair of his head and sacrificed it along with animal victims, according to the years of his age. He made the accustomed circuit of the Caaba, and kissed in adoration the black stone in the wall. He declared "that a Mussulman who should neglect the pilgrimage when in his power to perform it might

as well die a Christian or a Jew." And this heathen rite continues to the present day, to proclaim the inconsistency of the Mohammedan reformation. It secured to its author, however, the adherence of many in Mecca who would not have endured the abrogation of the privileges and prosperity of their Holy City.

Before the expiry of the ten years, Mohammed accused the Koreish of breaking the truce by attacking a tribe in alliance with himself. At the head of ten thousand men he suddenly appeared before Mecca, and demanded its keys. They were brought to him by the head of the humbled Koreish. The idols, not excepting the images of Abraham and Ishmael, were ignominiously broken, but the sacrifices and the pilgrimage were again rigidly observed. The execution of his principal foes, followed by the battle of Honain and the capture of Tayef, cemented the sovereignty of the new apostle over all the Arabian tribes.

His ambassadors had already been sent out to invite the neighbouring kings to acknowledge his pretensions, and embrace his religion. The emperor Heraclius, and his rival the Persian monarch, condescended to receive the emissaries without resentment; but one of them being assassinated in the government of Bosra, a force of three thousand Moslems was despatched to take revenge. They were defeated by the Roman troops, and the sacred standard was only rescued by the intrepidity of Khaled, once the victorious opponent, but now the ardent proselyte, of Mohammed. Khaled secured the retreat of the Moslems, and obtained the appellation of the *Sword of God*. Mohammed renewed the invasion in person, but without success; and dying soon after (6th June 632), his authority devolved on Abubekr, with the title of

caliph, or successor to the apostle of God. His short reign of two years was distinguished by the capture of Bosra, only four days' journey from Damascus, where Romanus, the governor, set the melancholy example of betraying at once his allegiance and his faith, by conducting the assailants into the city, and renouncing the name and worship of Christ. Flushed with this success, Khaled determined on the siege of Damascus.

The garrison had been lately strengthened by a reinforcement of five thousand imperial troops, and an army of seventy thousand more was despatched by Heraclius to intercept the invaders. Forty-five thousand Saracens, collected from Persia and the frontiers, met them on the plain of Aiznadin, where, after a series of romantic encounters, the Imperialists were defeated in a general engagement. They fled, leaving a prodigious spoil, and fifty thousand dead on the field. The victors, weakened only by four hundred and seventy slain, pushed on to Damascus. Their van was led by Amrou, at the head of nine thousand horse: the rear was brought up by Khaled, with the standard of the black eagle.¹ Derar, the indomitable knight of Arab tradition, watched the walls with two thousand horse.

The Damascenes beheld the advance with quaking hearts. Thomas, the emperor's son-in-law, endeavoured to reanimate the trembling citizens; the bishop and clergy appeared on the walls, bearing the holy Scriptures, which they laid before a lofty crucifix as a public appeal to the True Prophet and Saviour of mankind. But these exertions were in vain; treason and apostacy again did their deadly work. Jonas, a person

¹ Ockley's *History of the Saracens*, i. 90.

of noble rank, endeavoured to escape from the beleaguered town with a wealthy maiden, whom he had persuaded to elope from her parents. Being taken by the Arab patrol, the lady escaped back to the city, while her unworthy lover saved his life by renouncing his religion; and joined the enemy on the promise of obtaining his bride on the fall of the town. The renegade's hopes were aided by general cowardice within the walls. A Jewish priest, called Josias, came secretly to Khaled, and offered to open the east gate on condition of receiving protection for his own people. At the same time the Christians sent a deputation to make terms with Abu Obeidah, a companion of Mohammed, who was known to be inclined to mercy.

The conditions were settled, and the city was in peaceable possession of Abu Obeidah, when Khaled, ignorant of this transaction, entered on the opposite side, and began putting the Christians to the sword. The two commanders met in a church, where each asserted his title to the town. Khaled, disowning the capitulation, claimed the bloody rights of conquest; but the other, though inferior in command, insisted on the obligation of an oath given in the name of God and his prophet. After a furious debate, Khaled was obliged to yield to a compromise. The part of the city taken by himself was reserved to the final adjudication of the caliph, the lives of the inhabitants being spared in the meantime. That which had surrendered to Abu Obeidah was declared entitled to the immediate benefit of the capitulation. The terms were, protection for those who chose to remain and submit to tribute, and to all others permission to depart with their arms and moveables. The inflexible Khaled insisted that this permission should endure

for three days only, after which the fugitives might be pursued and treated as infidels and enemies.

Under the pressure of this threat, the larger portion of the citizens determined to remain. Thomas, with most of the soldiers, clergy, and more resolute Christians, hastily collected their baggage, and at once began their retreat. Among the women who accompanied them was Eudoxia, the betrothed of the apostate Jonas. She had taken refuge in a monastery, where the miserable lover found her on the fall of the city. On learning the terms on which his life had been preserved, she renounced his alliance, and resolved to flee with the servants of her God.

Khaled, after reluctantly submitting to the oath of his brother commander, would not violate it by detaining the promised bride by force, but he readily accepted the renegade's proposal to guide him with four thousand horse in pursuit of the fugitives. They were overtaken in a valley beyond Lebanon, and fell an easy prey to their savage pursuers. Thomas was slain in the assault, and all the rest, to the number of five thousand, were either killed or taken prisoners.¹ On this bloody field Jonas again found the object of his passion, and again Eudoxia rejected the apostate with horror. On his seizing her by force, she drew a knife from her bosom, and stabbed herself to the heart. The wretched man long mourned the disappointment of his hopes; but his sorrow was not to repentance, for he continued in his apostacy to the last, and fell fighting against the Christians at the battle of Yermuk.

Among the prisoners was the wife of Thomas, whom Khaled sent to the emperor her father with a message

¹ Ockley, i. 151.

that he hoped to take him in her place, and that there should never be peace till all his dominions were subdued to the caliph.

In the meantime Abubekr, dying at Medina, was succeeded by Omar, the first who assumed the style of Commander of the Faithful. Khaled, on returning to Damascus, found himself superseded by Abu Obeidah, whom the new caliph had appointed to the chief command. Omar censured the pursuit of the Damascenes as a rash undertaking, and the release of the emperor's daughter without a ransom as an act of vain prodigality. Though deeply mortified, Khaled continued to serve under his successor, and was permitted to retain the standard of the Black Eagle given him by Abubekr.

The conquest of Damascus was followed by the fall of Baalbac, Emesa, Jerusalem, Aleppo, Antioch, and all Syria. The emperor made an attempt to turn the tide by a decisive battle at Yermuk (Nov. 636); but after a long and bloody encounter, victory declared for the Saracens, and the Roman army no longer ventured into the field. The siege of Jerusalem lasted four months, and was only then successful through a capitulation to which the presence and signature of the caliph himself was demanded. Omar repaired thither from Medina, mounted on a red camel, which carried also his frugal commissariat, a bag of corn, another of dates, and a bottle of water. After signing the capitulation he entered the city and appropriated the site of the temple for a mosque, which still bears his name.

The capture of Aleppo was signalised by the apostacy of the governor Youkinna, notwithstanding which the infatuated emperor entrusted him with the command

of Antioch, his own imperial residence. In this position the renegade lost no opportunity of secretly aiding the enemy till, terrified at their near approach and his own superstitious prognostications, Heraclius privately embarked for Constantinople. His example was followed shortly after by his son Constantine, who commanded at Cæsarea; and Syria and Persia were left to the undisputed mastery of the Saracens.

Abu Obeidah entered Antioch (1st August 638), receiving three hundred thousand pieces of gold as a ransom from pillage. Cæsarea was taken possession of by Amrou [A.D. 639]. Persia had been invaded by Khaled in the first year of Abubekr. Yezdegerd, the grandson of Khosroes and last of the Sassanian kings, fled across the Oxus, and his capital was sacked by Sayd, the lieutenant of Omar [A.D. 637]. The conquest was completed by the defeat and death of the king while attempting to recover his throne by the help of the Turks [A.D. 651].

It was obvious that Egypt must be the next conquest. It had been for centuries the object of Arab cupidity, and was largely impregnated with an Arab population. The Greek empire was odious to the Egyptian race, and the separation was widened by the theological controversies which alienated them from the Greek church. Omar had already commissioned an army under Amrou to commence the invasion, and that commander had no sooner secured Palestine than he marched with only four thousand soldiers to the enterprise. The Saracens meanwhile lost five and twenty thousand men by pestilence in Syria, among whom were Abu Obeidah and other commanders of note. Moved by this disaster or by some other misgiving, the caliph despatched an order to Amrou to

return if he were not already in Egypt, but if actually in the country, to proceed in the name of Allah and rely upon all necessary support. The letter reached Amrou a little within the Syrian border, but suspecting its contents, he carried the messenger with him till he had crossed the Arish, and then calling his officers to a council, he commanded the caliph's letter to be opened and read. After hearing the order he gravely inquired in what country they were, and being answered "in Egypt," he announced his resolution to proceed. He was delayed for a month in the siege of Pelusium, where the garrison was wholly native; on arriving at Babylon he found a more formidable enemy in the imperial troops, who occupied the fortress and covered the bridge of boats which led to the island of Rhoda, in the middle of the river, whence a similar bridge extended to Memphis.

The Saracens were repulsed in several attacks; but the supplies brought by the peasantry enabled Amrou to maintain the siege till a reinforcement of four thousand men arrived from the caliph. Still the invaders were unequal to the conquest till assisted, as in so many other cases, by the disaffection of the subject race. Makoukas, the Egyptian governor of Memphis and a Jacobite, persuaded the Greek commander that Babylon was no longer tenable in presence of the augmented force at its gates. The garrison was withdrawn into the island, breaking up the bridge behind them. The Saracens scaled the walls without resistance, and from the strongest fortification in Egypt summoned Memphis to surrender. The terms were those of the Koran;—Islam, tribute, or death. The Egyptians, who had been tributaries to foreign dynasties for a thousand years, readily consented to the second alter-

native, and Makoukas undertook on their behalf to treat for the surrender of the whole country. A poll-tax of two pieces of gold was imposed on every male within the military age.¹ The natives undertook to furnish provisions, and assist the invaders by throwing bridges across the Nile, with all other requisites for attacking the Greeks. The latter meanwhile quitted the island, and retired upon Alexandria. They were overtaken by Amrou on the western bank of the Canopic river, about forty-five miles below the apex of the Delta, where they bravely defended themselves for three days. Being worsted in every engagement, they retreated regularly for nineteen days with a skill and courage worthy of the pen of a Xenophon, bravely giving battle each day to their pursuers.² Routed at last in a final engagement twenty miles from Alexandria, they still made good their retreat into the city, after a march of a hundred and fifty miles, in the face of a superior force aided by all the resources of the country.

The united imperial forces now prepared for their last struggle in defence of the granary of the East. The Saracens strained every nerve to surmount the last barrier to the possession of their anticipated prey. Daily sallies were made from the gates, and frequent assaults delivered by the besiegers. On one occasion Amrou himself headed a party which penetrated within the walls, but being compelled to retire, the general with a few of his immediate attendants were made prisoners. Being taken before the patrician, Amrou

¹ According to the Arab historian, the number of Copts polled under this article, *i.e.*, between the age of sixteen and decrepitude, was six millions (Ockley, i. 357), which Mr. Sharpe estimates to exceed the entire population of Egypt (xxi. 45).

² Sharpe, xxi. 46.

had the audacity to answer his inquiries by proposing the usual Mussulman alternative—"You must either embrace our religion, or pay tribute to the caliph, or fight with us to the death." Incensed at this insolence, the patrician ordered him to the block; but Amrou's slave, who understood Greek, hearing what was said, instantly slapped his master on the mouth, and bade him hold his peace in presence of his superiors. The general was thus mistaken for the slave, and another of the prisoners, stepping forward, said the Saracens were already thinking of retiring; if the governor would send them back with proposals they would bring about an accommodation, and procure the siege to be raised. The unwary imperialist fell into the snare; his prisoners were released, and on gaining the outside of the city showed the Greeks their mistake, by a joyous shout of "Allah Akbar."

The siege was pressed for fourteen months, when a furious assault put the invaders in possession of the city, after losing twenty-three thousand men before its walls. The Greeks fled to their ships, but large parties having quitted by land, Amrou incautiously hastened in pursuit, and the ships relanding the troops, the place was recovered. The triumph, however, was short; Amrou returned with all speed, and a final assault drove the Greeks again to their ships, where crowding all sail they quitted the harbour, and left the Saracens masters of Alexandria. The catastrophe occurred on Friday, the 22nd of December, 640. The captor wrote to the caliph, "I have taken the great city of the west. It is impossible for me to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauty, and I shall content myself with observing that it contains four thousand palaces, four thousand

baths, four hundred theatres or places of amusement, twelve thousand shops for the sale of vegetable food, and forty thousand tributary Jews.”¹

Alexandria was no longer the magnificent capital of the Macedonian kingdom. Large portions had been reduced to ruins, and the introduction of Christianity had exchanged the temples of the idols for the more modest architecture of the church. Still the city of Athanasius had attractions which have long disappeared under Moslem misrule. “To a traveller arriving by sea the first object to strike his eye was the lighthouse on the low island of Pharos;—that monument of the science and humanity of the first two Ptolemies, which has since been copied in every quarter of the habitable globe. Near it was the Heptastadium, a causeway of three quarters of a mile in length, joining the island to the land, and dividing the enclosed waters into two harbours. There were bridges over the passages which joined the harbours; but the aqueduct which once carried fresh water to the island was in ruins.

“On landing and entering by the gate of the sun, the gate of the moon might be seen at the further side of the city, at the end of a straight street having a row of columns on each side. In this street stood the Soma, the mausoleum which held the body of Alexander, from whose death so many Greek cities and empires dated their rise; of these Alexandria was the last to fall. A second street, crossing the former at the Tetrastylon, ran east and west from the Canopic gate to the gate of the Necropolis; this had also once been ornamented with columns through its whole length, till half ruined by the fortifications and

¹ Gibbon, ch. li.

sieges of the Bruchium. The new Museum, built to replace that of the Ptolemies, had been deserted since the fall of paganism; its schools and spacious halls were empty; but in vain would the traveller seek for the humble building which once held the famed Catechetical School of the Christians, and contributed so largely to the desertion of its prouder neighbour.

“On the outside of the western gate was the Necropolis, whose memorials of the dead, both pagan and Christian, lining the road-side and sea-coast for two miles, harmonized most truly with the faded glories of the city; the Jews had a burial-place of their own beyond the eastern gate. Near the western gate, also, but within the walls, stood the famed temple of Serapis, second to no building in the world but the Roman capitol; a monument of the rise and fall of religions:—once the very citadel of paganism, now the cathedral of a Christian patriarch. In the centre of it stood, and still stands, the lofty column of Diocletian, then having an equestrian statue on the top, raised to record the conqueror’s humanity, and the gratitude of the citizens. Second among the larger buildings was the Sebaste, or Cæsar’s temple, with two obelisks in front; these having, during the last two thousand years, seen the downfall of the Egyptian superstition, had been removed to Alexandria in honour of Greek polytheism, and remained to ornament a Christian church. Among the other churches the chief were those of St. Mark, of St. Mary, of John the Baptist, of Theodosius, of Arcadius, and the temple of Bacchus.

“Along the sea-shore to the east lay the ruined Hippodrome, and on the same side, where the canal from the Nile reached the city, were the fortified

granaries, a little citadel by itself; and not far off were the old mounds that marked out what was once the camp of the legionaries, with here and there an idle column, brought in the time of Augustus for his proposed city of Nicopolis. The Alexandrians were no longer numerous enough to use the whole space which the city with its gardens once covered. The Bruchium with its fortifications, once a city of itself, was in ruins; and the Jews' quarter was nearly a desert, inhabited only by a despised few, from whom their persecutors wrung a tribute: the Jews bought of the Christians that leave to worship the God of their fathers which the Christians were thenceforth to buy of the Moslems."¹

The importance of the conquest was justly appreciated by the caliph. Rejecting Amrou's claim to the spoil for the army, Omar commanded his lieutenant to reserve all the wealth and valuables to the public service, to admit the inhabitants to tribute, and indulge both Jews and Christians with the exercise of their worship, under such regulations as not to offend the Mohammedan supremacy. To these classes a particular dress was enjoined; the turbans of the Christians were blue, of the Jews yellow, of the Samaritans red. A remarkable exception was made to this tolerant policy with respect to the rich store of books and manuscripts for which the Alexandrian library was renowned throughout the civilised world. The Arabian historian, Abulpharagius, relates that Amrou, in sealing up the public property, took no notice of the books; whereupon a Jacobite, named John the Grammarian, petitioned that they might be given to himself, as being of no use to the conquerors. Amrou thought

¹ Sharpe's *History of Egypt*, xxi. 50.

it necessary to ask the caliph's permission, and the illiterate Omar returned the well-known reply, "The books you mention are either in conformity with the book of God or they are not. If they are, the Koran is sufficient without them; if they are not, they ought to be destroyed." Amrou at once distributed the whole collection to the keepers of the baths, to whom it served as fuel for six months before all were consumed.¹

This story, so widely circulated in later days, is not mentioned by the earlier historians, and it has been questioned whether so large a store of literature remained in Alexandria at the date of the Saracenic conquest. The library of the Ptolemies was burnt in the conflagration of the Bruchium, by the soldiers of Julius Cæsar; and the Serapeum, which contained the second, or Pergamean collection, presented to Cleopatra by Mark Antony, was twice injured by fire. Still there were seven hundred thousand volumes when Ammianus visited it in the reign of Julian. But in the fall of paganism, the Serapeum was so thoroughly pillaged that the books were dispersed or destroyed; and Orosius saw the empty bookshelves in the reign of Theodosius II. There were, perhaps, other libraries in the Sebaste, in the Claudian Museum, and, it may be, in private collections. The schools of pagan philosophy, which continued open till the reign of Justinian, and the astronomers, who taught and studied much later, must have left books; and the Christian literature was, undoubtedly, extensive. The conflagration may not have been so destructive as is supposed, but it is not to be doubted that many precious works fell

¹ Oockley, i. 360.

a prey to the illiterate Saracens, and among them copies of the Holy Scripture, with other primitive manuscripts, which might have been of inestimable service to the Christian critic.

The emperor Heraclius, who was suffering from dropsy, was so affected by the loss of Alexandria that he died in seven weeks after. The blow was not less sensibly felt by the population of Constantinople, who daily subsisted from the stores of wheat brought by the Alexandrian fleet. Amron being required to give the caliph a more complete description of his acquisitions, sent the following graphic account:—“O Commander of the Faithful, Egypt is a compound of black earth and green plants, between a pulverized mountain and a red sand. The distance from Syene to the sea is a month’s journey for a horseman. Along the valley descends a river on which the blessing of the Most High reposes both in the evening and morning, and which rises and falls with the revolutions of the sun and moon. When the annual dispensation of Providence unlocks the springs and fountains that nourish the earth, the Nile rolls his swelling and sounding waters through the realm of Egypt: the fields are overspread by the salutary flood, and the villages communicate with each other in their painted barks. The retreat of the inundation deposits a fertilizing mud for the reception of the various seeds: the crowds of husbandmen who blacken the land may be compared to a swarm of industrious ants; and their native indolence is quickened by the lash of the task-master, and the promise of the flowers and fruits of a plentiful increase. Their hope is seldom deceived; but the riches which they extract from the wheat, the

barley, and the rice, the legumes, the fruit-trees, and the cattle, are unequally shared between those who labour and those who possess. According to the vicissitudes of the season, the face of the country is adorned with a silver wave, a verdant emerald, and the deep yellow of a golden harvest."¹

The value of the new province was sensibly appreciated at Medina, when, on a failure of the crops in Arabia, Amrou sent such a bountiful supply of wheat that, according to the oriental historian, the leading camel in the train entered the gates of Medina before the hindmost had quitted the soil of Egypt! This method of transport, however, being too slow for the genius of the Saracen commander, he opened one of the old canals, at least eighty miles in length, from the Nile to the Red Sea, and the exuberant produce of Egypt was thus placed within easy reach of the arid coasts of Arabia.

Amrou had reduced all Egypt under the Saracen yoke, and was making progress in the affections of the people, when his administration was interrupted by the assassination of the caliph Omar [A.D. 643]. His successor Othman transferred the Egyptian command to his foster brother, Abdallah Ebn Said; and the emperor Constantine availed himself of the exchange to make a descent by sea upon Alexandria. He was so far successful that the imperial troops again occupied the fortifications and commanded the harbour; but Amrou, being hastily recalled, besieged the walls, and once more carried them by storm. The Greeks escaped in their ships, and the Saracens dismantled the fortifications, and laying the walls and towers in the dust, consigned Alexandria to decay.

1 Decline and Fall, cap. li.

With oriental instinct the invaders chose their capital above the Delta, and left the sea to their enemies. Rejecting Memphis, however, they fixed on the eastern bank of the Nile, as nearest to their own country, and, destroying the fortress of Babylon, raised their city Misr close to its site. The new capital was called *El Cahireh*, "the Victorious;" but a little later a New Cairo was founded somewhat nearer to Heliopolis.

"The temples of Alexandria, Memphis, and Heliopolis, were one by one pulled to pieces, to make the mosques and graceful minarets and citadel walls of Old and New Cairo. There we may count four hundred Greek columns from Alexandria ornamenting a Turkish mosque. There we may see a slab, carved with praises of Thothmosis, sawn in half to form a doorstep; while another, with an inscription by the sun-worshipping Thaumra, forms part of a garden wall. The door-posts of the mosques are often columns from a temple of Pthah or Serapis; even the streets, in the few places where paving is used, are paved with stones which were once most holy. The granite obelisk of Rameses, and the head stone of the temple portico, carved with the winged sun and sacred asps, together pave the city gateway, and are worn smooth by the busy feet of the Arab's donkey and the silent tread of his camel.

"Thus has been pulled to pieces and levelled with the ground every building of the city of Memphis. The foundations of its walls and the lines of its streets may be traced in the cultivated fields, but little or nothing rises above the plain but the one colossus of Rameses II., so huge that, as it lies with its face upon the ground, its back may be seen high above the

standing corn with which it is surrounded. No works of man's hands now remain to us to prove that on this cornfield once stood a crowded city teeming with life, except its tombs upon the neighbouring hills; there the pyramids still stand, scarcely lessened in size and not the least in grandeur by the loss of the strong stone casing which was carried off to Cairo." ¹ The prophecies are remarkably fulfilled, which foretold that "the images shall cease out of Noph." "Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant." ²

¹ Sharpe, xxi. 54, 55.

² Ezek. xxx. 13; Jer. xlv. 19.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CALIPHS.

Diminution of Roman Empire—Advance of the Saracens—Libya and Africa—Assassination of Othman—Great Moslem Schism—Ali—Muawiyah—Death of Ali—Hassan and Hussein—Omniad Dynasty—Conquest of Africa—Extinction of Christianity—Persecution in Egypt—Apostasy—Despotism—Abbaside Dynasty—Baghdad—Invasion of Spain—Roderick—Abdalrahman—Cordova—Saracen Empire—Magnificence of the Caliphs—Literature—Dissensions in the Church—Image Worship—Decline of the Court of Baghdad—Toulonide—Fatimite Caliphs—New Cairo—Persecutions of Hakim—Jerusalem—Demolition of Churches—Strange Orgies—Simoun—Superstition.

By the middle of the seventh century the Saracens had subdued all Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt; the Roman empire in the east was reduced to the dimensions of modern Turkey and Greece, while in the west it retained but a part of Italy, with the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. The north and east of Europe were in the hands of the Slaves, Huns, and Bavarians. The Goths reigned in Spain, the Lombards in Upper Italy, and the Franks in France; Germany was divided among the various states of the Allemanni. The Saracens carried their ravages to the gates of Constantinople itself, and the Christian capital was only saved by a peace which recognised the caliph's title to his existing possessions, and which was observed no longer than suited his convenience. Rhodes was seized without scruple, and the Saracen incursions into Armenia so alarmed the emperor Constans II. that he resolved to remove the seat of government back to Rome. The Byzantines, however, prevented the embarkation of the imperial family; and Constans,

after visiting Old Rome, withdrew to Syracuse, where he perished by assassination.

In Egypt the services of Amrou did not prevent his being superseded a second time by the reappointment of Abdallah, but the caliph paid dear for his partiality. The new emir had been one of the prophet's secretaries for the transcription of his pretended revelations. Aware of the imposture, he had not scrupled to expose its mistakes, and laugh at the confidence reposed in the ignorant apostle; to escape the wrath of Mohammed he fled to Mecca, and on its conquest his life was only spared at the entreaty of Othman. When Abdallah perceived the unexpected success of his handiwork he became a zealous Mussulman; and being now raised to command, he resolved to emulate the achievements of Amrou, by extending the Saracen arms into Libya and Africa. Forty thousand Moslems marched under his banner from Memphis to Barca; encountering the imperial troops under the prefect Gregory before Sufetula, a hundred and fifty miles south of Carthage, he defeated them with great slaughter, and took the city. The difficulties of the country, however, and the opposition of the natives, compelled a return to Egypt after a campaign of fifteen months.

Meantime, the caliph Othman having rendered himself odious to most of the emirs, deputations were sent from every province to remonstrate at Medina. The employment of the apostate formed a prominent topic of complaint, and six hundred armed Moslems from Egypt demanded Mohammed, the son of Abubekr, in his place. Othman was obliged to yield, but he despatched secret orders to Abdallah to put his rival to death. The treachery was discovered, and

Mohammed, returning in a rage, besieged the caliph in his own residence. At the end of six weeks he succeeded in forcing an entrance into his apartment, and slaughtered him as he sat with the Koran in his lap.

The assassin was encouraged by his sister Ayesha, the prophet's widow, with other Mussulman notables, who resented the state assumed by the caliph,¹ and his claim to dispose of the public treasure by his own order. Long and fiercely was the succession debated by the soldiers who now filled the Arabian capital; the election fell at last upon Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, and, as many still think, his only rightful successor; his claims, in fact, divide the Mussulman world.

A large minority, calling themselves *Adaliyah* (followers of justice), account the first three caliphs usurpers, and reject the traditions compiled by their authority. This party includes the Persians, Moguls, and many of the lower classes of Hindustanis. By the Turks, Arabs, Afghans, and most of the upper classes in Southern India, the *Adaliyah* are stigmatized as heretics (*Shiyah*). Ali is recognised only as the fourth caliph, and the authority of the six canonical collections of traditions is placed on a level with that of the Koran itself. Founding themselves on the prophet's saying, "I have left you two things in which it is impossible to err—the Word of God and my traditions" (*Sonnah*), these orthodox Mussulmans glory in the designation of *Sunnites*.²

Ali began his reign by sending new emirs into the

¹ Mohammed, who preached at first standing on the floor and afterwards leaning on a rail for support, towards the close of his life used to sit in a low pulpit. The first two caliphs preached from its steps, and great umbrage was taken when Othman presumed to occupy the seat of the prophet.

² India: its Natives and Missions, p. 151.

conquered provinces. His appointments were received without opposition in Bussorah, Cufa, and Arabia. Egypt, after some hesitation, accepted Saad, but in Syria the emir Mooawiyah set the new caliph at defiance, and was supported by Ayesha, who bore an inextinguishable enmity to Ali, and her step-daughter his wife. Though herself a prime agent in the death of Othman, she sent his bloody shirt to Damascus, charging the guilt upon Ali; then, assuming the title of "Mother of the Faithful," the prophet's widow led an army of pilgrims from Mecca to Bussorah, and gained possession of the place. On the other hand, the Ansars¹ of Medina, who had the chief voice in the caliph's election, absolved Ali of all complicity in the death of Othman, and raising an army of thirty thousand men, he marched to Bussorah. In the general engagement which ensued Ayesha appeared in person mounted on a camel, animating her followers till the beast fell under her and the day was lost. The prophet's widow was sent prisoner to Medina, with orders to confine her to her own house, and permit no further interference in the affairs of state. In gratitude to the inhabitants of Cufa, whose allegiance mainly conduced to his success, Ali removed the seat of government to that city.

In the meantime Amrou had gone into Syria, incensed at the loss of the Egyptian command, and receiving a promise of its restoration from Mooawiyah, he declared him caliph. The rival sovereigns met in arms on the confines of Syria and Persia [A.D. 656]. The Syrian army had lost forty-five thousand men,

¹ "Helpers;" the title of those who received the prophet into Medina, and assisted him to conquer Mecca. His followers at the latter city bore the designation of "fugitives," as if companions of his flight from idolatry.

and were reduced to the last extremity, when Amrou commanded a party to charge with the Koran on the point of their lances, crying out that "the book ought to decide all differences between believers." This novel argument caused the soldiers of Ali to drop their weapons and retire, in spite of his exhortations. The two caliphs withdrew to their respective capitals; and the next year Abu Musa, on the part of Ali, met Amrou on the part of Mooawiyah, to arbitrate on their claims according to the Koran and the Sonna. Amrou privately persuaded Abu Musa that the only course to peace was to depose both claimants, and proceed to a new election; but no sooner had the other fallen into the snare, and pronounced a public sentence accordingly, than Amrou exclaimed that he agreed with his fellow-arbitrator in deposing Ali, and that obstacle being removed Mooawiyah was the sole and undoubted caliph.

Ali, of course, refused to submit. Hearing that Saad was inclining to the party of his rival, he sent him his recall, and appointed Mohammed, the murderer of Othman, to the government of Egypt. This injudicious step precipitated the loss of the province. Amrou obtaining a force from Mooawiyah, defeated and slew Mohammed, after which he repossessed himself of the conquest which he conceived to be his due. The struggle between the two caliphs continued three or four years, when three devotees, meeting at Mecca, determined to restore peace by taking off at once Ali, Mooawiyah, and Amrou. Each poisoned his sword, and made the attempt; but Ali was the only victim; he was cut down in the mosque of Cufa, and died a few days after, A.D. 660: his sepulchre, near that city, is still a place of pilgrimage to all the

Shiyahs. His son Hassan was inaugurated successor; but distrusting his supporters, he concluded an agreement with Mooawiyah, by which he abdicated in his favour, and died some years after of poison administered at the instigation of the caliph. His brother Hossein, whom the Shiyahs account his successor, was slain in a skirmish [A.D. 680], and his head carried about on a pole. An officer having brutally struck it on the mouth with his stick, an old man, seeing it, exclaimed he had seen the lips of the apostle of God kiss those which were now so dishonourably used.

Hossein's head is the most honoured, and the most contested, relic of Mussulman superstition. The Egyptians firmly believe that it is buried in the famous mosque which bears the martyr's name at Cairo; alleging that the prophet himself appeared in a vision to confute a sheykh who lately ventured to question the authority for the fact.¹ At Medina it is asserted that Fatima deposited the noble relic in the grave of the prophet. Damascus, whither his sister was borne in chains, and Ascalon lay claim to the same distinction; but the Shiyahs make their pilgrimage to Meshed Hossein, near the sepulchre of his father Ali, in the vicinity of the deserted capital Cufa. In India and Persia they still keep the fast of the Mohurrum as an annual commemoration of the "two lords of the youths of Paradise;" when figures of the martyr's head, and of the weapons which slew him, are carried in procession, and the air resounds with cries of "Hassan! Hossein!" mingled with imprecations on their murderers.

The indignation excited by the death of the prophet's grandchildren was strong enough to sustain

¹ Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, i. 271.

for a time a Shiyah caliph at Medina:¹ a descendant of the prophet's uncle Abbas also laid claim to the dignity of Commander of the Faithful, but by the close of the century the Mussulman possessions were reunited under the throne of Damascus. The elective caliphate being at the same time replaced by an hereditary monarchy, the posterity of Mooawiyah furnished fourteen successive Commanders of the Faithful, who are known as the *Ommiad* Dynasty. Their distinguishing colour was *white*; the descendants of Ali chose the prophet's own colour, *green*; while the house of Abbas wore *black*, in mourning for the death of their leader Ibrahim.

Mooawiyah no sooner felt his power safe than he remembered the discontent universally expressed along the northern coast of Africa, at the exactions of the Byzantine court. He therefore despatched an army thither under the emir Akbah, who penetrated into Mauritania, took the capital Tingi or Tangiers, and traversing the western deserts was only stopped by the Atlantic. Spurring his horse into the waves the Moslem shook his sword at the unknown hemisphere beyond, protesting that if the ocean had not arrested his victorious course he would have carried death to all rebellious nations who worshipped any other God but Allah.

Having been joined by the remnant of the idolatrous Moors, Akbah built Cairoan or Tripoli [A.D. 670], for the capital of the new kingdom. Carthage, which was taken by Moslem troops from Egypt [A.D.

¹ The "twelve Imams," whom the Shiyahs acknowledge as their only legitimate governors, are lineal descendants of Hossein; the sovereignty of Mecca and the custody of the temple is still in the line of Hassan.

692], and again recovered by the emperor of the Spanish Goths, was finally burnt by the Saracens. The imperialists were driven to their ships; but the victorious Moslems, unable to stand against the wild Berbers who ravaged the country, were compelled to retreat into Egypt. Being at last subdued by the activity of the emir Musa, thirty thousand young Berbers were enlisted in the Saracen army, and induced to embrace the Mohammedan creed. The Arabs and Moors then became as one people, and Christianity fell a prey to their united assaults, aided by internal divisions. Within fifty years after the expulsion of the Greeks, the African emir, on being called to account for the tribute of the infidels, replied that it had ceased by their entire conversion to Islam; this was probably a falsehood, designed to conceal his embezzlement, but it argues, at least, the rapid and extensive progress of the Mussulman faith.

Northern Africa is the only country in which the light of Christianity, once permanently kindled, has been totally extinguished. The churches of Cyprian and Augustine are no more. Of more than five hundred episcopal sees once included in the province, not a single bishop, priest, or private Christian has transmitted his faith to posterity. So remarkable a catastrophe seems to argue some great deficiency in the African church; and, as its orthodoxy is unquestionable, the fault must be sought in a want of spirituality and love. No attempt is recorded of any missionary exertions on the part of this flourishing church, though so advantageously situated for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom. They were content to enjoy the message of peace without extending it; and

their candle was extinguished by the heathen whom it neglected to enlighten.

In Egypt the church, though not destroyed, was grievously cast down, and her life was again made "bitter with hard bondage."¹ The Saracens, like their predecessors the Persians, regarding the Catholics or Melchites as dependents of the Greek emperor, visited them with the severest oppression. The Jacobites were invested with the miserable honours of an established but tributary church. Their patriarch Benjamin was admitted to the favour of Amrou, who always paid regard to the articles on which the gates of Memphis had been opened to him. After his removal, however, the tribute was doubled, exorbitant fines were imposed, and payment was exacted by torture or death. Jacobites and Catholics were equally a prey to the unscrupulous Moslems. One emir being told that the patriarch had amassed a considerable sum of money, ordered him to pay a hundred thousand pieces of gold into the treasury, and tortured him with fire at the soles of his feet, till a tithe of the sum was actually laid down by his afflicted church. Another insisting on a fine of three thousand pieces of gold, the prelate who then filled the degraded chair of St. Mark was led about the towns and villages of Lower Egypt, in custody, begging his ransom. The next emir, encouraged by the success of this extortion, sent the same patriarch to repeat the experiment in Upper Egypt. The bishop of Wissim was dragged through the streets of Cairo, and scourged at the church doors, till the Christians ransomed him with three hundred gold pieces.

¹ Exod. i. 14.

Bishops and monks were especial objects of confiscation. Gold pieces were demanded of the former at pleasure, and a census was ordered of the monks, with the view of enforcing the tax of one piece a head. They were further compelled to wear an iron handcuff, on pain of being blinded or otherwise mutilated. A leaden signet was to be worn by all Christians; they could not even wander in search of a living without paying ten gold pieces for a passport. A story is told of a poor woman journeying with her son, who carried the costly document, but on stooping to drink of the river he was seized and devoured by a crocodile. The wretched mother was obliged to sell her garments for a new passport, or her hands would have been cut off.

To avoid these miseries, numbers sold their children, others turned Mussulmans; even many of the clergy sought a temporary alleviation of their lot in apostasy. To encourage this disposition, they were offered permission to retain their Christian convictions, only repeating the daily prayer of the Moslems. This single form exempted them from tribute, and made them equal with their conquerors. The few who continued true to their faith were insulted in the tenderest and most sacred points. The emir Abdul ordered all crosses to be broken, and the names of Christ and Mohammed to be inscribed together on the church doors, with the joint title of "Apostles of God." His son Asabah, entering a church, spat at an image of the Redeemer, and vowed to exterminate His worship. These were "the tender mercies of the cruel" to the sect which enjoyed their patronage. Their ferocity towards others was shown in the crucifixion of Theodore the Gaianite, for presuming to

consecrate a bishop for the Malabar church without leave of the caliph.¹

Over the Jacobite church the emirs enforced a vigorous state supremacy. No bishop could be elected without their license. The patriarch was chosen alternately at Alexandria and at Cairo; the priests of St. Mark (who claimed the right of nomination) being obliged to visit the Saracen capital for the purpose. The clergy and people entitled to vote in the election, and the bishops, who watched the process to confirm and consecrate the elect, all met under Moslem authority. Not unfrequently their choice was overruled by the emir, and the dignity sold to the highest bidder.

The Christians of Egypt, in short, experienced under the caliphs much the same fate that the Christians of Greece experienced under the Ottoman sultans, until the powers of Europe exacted some measure of justice and liberty. The Byzantine emperors could lend no aid either by arms or by negotiation. They only harassed their ecclesiastical adherents by new theological decrees. The council at Constantinople [A.D. 691] called the *Quinisext*² and the council in *Trullo*,³ was attended by a representative of the depressed orthodox church of Alexandria, who, though only a presbyter, signed the canons as patriarch, in order to give more weight to his authority.⁴ The Catholics had in fact no patriarch of Alexandria for seventy years, when the chair was filled by Cosmas, a needlemaker, who could neither read nor

¹ Neale, ii. 89.

² Because designed to supplement the fifth and sixth general councils.

³ From the *Trullus* or domed hall in which it was held.

⁴ Neale, ii. 86.

write The Jacobites at the same time elected Chail, and both appeared before the emir, who listened to their claims and divided the churches between them [A.D. 727].

The tranquillity of Egypt was shaken by a renewal of the war with the Abbasides, who had never ceased to denounce the Ommiads as the murderers of Ali and his sons. About the year 749, Abu Abbas set up a rival caliphate in Arabia; and six years after his brother, Almansor Abdallah, advanced upon Damascus in such force that the caliph Mervan II. fled into Egypt. This civil war emboldened the Egyptians to strike a blow for their own liberties. The inhabitants of the Thebaid flew to arms, and the two patriarchs headed the insurrection, but were both taken prisoners by Mervan. Cosmas was ransomed at a thousand pieces of gold, and Chail would have been put to a cruel death had not the savage caliph been afraid of driving the Copts to the side of his adversary. A great battle was fought on the Nile on the 10th of February, 750, in which the Ommiad forces were signally routed. Mervan was taken prisoner and beheaded. Almansor, being universally recognised as caliph, quieted the Christians by reducing the tribute; and their condition thus becoming a little more tolerable the yoke again settled down upon their much-enduring necks.

The colour of the royal banner and pulpit cloth was now changed from white to black, and the throne of the Commander of the Faithful migrated from Damascus to the banks of the Tigris. Here Almansor founded a magnificent capital with the boastful and misplaced appellation of *Medinat al Salem*, "The City of Peace." It is better known as *Baghdad*, the "Garden

of the World ;" but neither name is consistent with the wars and desolation of which it proved the centre and heir.

The White faction was now everywhere proscribed, but one portion of the Saracen conquests still offered a refuge for the last of the Ommiads. Abdalrahman, the only prince of that house who escaped the sword, fled into Africa, and there, by a singular fate, was compensated for the loss of Asia by the offer of a new throne in Europe.

Gibraltar and Ceuta, the ancient "pillars of Hercules," owned the sway of the Goths who ruled in Spain, and a small portion of Mauritania lay in subjection* to the latter fortress. Its governor under Roderick, the last Gothic king, was the Spanish count Julian, who is famed for the betrayal of his trust, and the overthrow of the Christian monarchy. The story runs, that this nobleman, incensed by the humiliation of his daughter, conspired with the Saracens for the destruction of the licentious king. The fortress was surrendered [A.D. 710], and the Mussulmans pouring across the strait seized the opposite coast, where the town of Tariffa still perpetuates their leader's name. A nobler prize fell the next year to Tarik, a soldier whose obscure name passes from mouth to mouth in the appellation of Gibraltar.¹

Roderick met the invaders at the head of a hundred thousand soldiers, but their ranks were corrupted by disaffection; and when the battle was joined at Xeres the Christians, headed by the archbishop of Toledo, sought safety in flight. The monarch left his ivory car to mount a swift courser and flee : he was never seen again. His horse, his diadem, and royal robes were

¹ *Gebel al Tarik*: the mountain of Tarik.]

found on the bank of the river, and he was supposed to have perished in the torrent. In less than three years the invaders had subjugated all Spain, with the exception of a small district in the mountains of Asturia, and Islam gained a footing which was not displaced for nearly three centuries. These conquests were achieved under Walid, the sixth of the Ommiad caliphs, and the first Moslem invader of India.¹

On the fall of that dynasty, the alcaides of the Spanish towns and villages gave but a cold reception to the Abbaside emir. An invitation was despatched to Abdalrahman, who, crossing the strait at the head of only seven hundred and fifty volunteers, drove out his opponent, and established an independent throne at Cordova. The caliphate thus erected continued the Ommiad line in Spain for two hundred and fifty years, and its sway extended from the Atlantic to the Pyrennees.

Thus, at the close of the first century from Mohammed's nocturnal flight out of the rude city of Mecca, his followers had spread themselves to the confines of Tartary and India in the east, and were only stopped in the west by the Atlantic Ocean. They had driven the Roman emperor well nigh out of Asia and Africa, and won for themselves a kingdom in Europe.

Their caliphs were the most powerful and absolute monarchs in the world: uniting in their own persons the whole secular and ecclesiastical prerogative, there were absolutely no institutions to restrain their will. They claimed obedience in the name of God and His Prophet. Of the Koran, the only code of the true believers, the caliph was ever the supreme interpreter and judge. To infidels the sword was the scarcely more

¹ India: an Historical Sketch, p. 67.

arbitrary law. Amassing enormous treasures, they indulged a barbaric magnificence, which, learning taste from the civilisation it subdued, still invests their history with a romantic grandeur. Almansor left thirty millions of money in the treasury of Baghdad, and the lavish expenditure of his children consumed it all in a few years. At the nuptials of his great grandson Almamon, a thousand pearls were showered on the head of the bride. The Tigris was navigated by superbly decorated barges; its waters reflected the marble halls of stately palaces, where the chambers were hung with the richest silks embroidered with gold. The caliph was encompassed by courtiers, eunuchs, and slaves, whose attire glittered with gold and gems. His word was law; a frown or a finger passed sentence of instant death. In Spain the city, palace, and gardens of Zehra were erected for a favourite sultana at a cost of three millions sterling. Twelve hundred columns of Spanish, African, Greek and Italian marble adorned the buildings. The seraglio of Abdalrahman contained above six thousand women and eunuchs, and he rode amid a guard of twelve thousand horsemen, whose belts and scimitars were studded with gold. His forces invading France threatened to overrun Europe, till they met with a decisive defeat from Charles Martel between Tours and Poitiers [A.D. 732].

Nor was it by arms and luxury only that the caliphs won their brilliant reputation. Europe is indebted to their fostering care for much of its literature and science. Greek was unknown in Western Europe till after the fall of Constantinople; but the Arabs early translated into their own noble language the writings of the Greek and Roman philosophers,

mathematicians, astronomers, and poets. The little that Western Europe knew of these productions was from Latin translations of the Arabic versions. The invention of *Algebra* is all their own. Arabic literature attained its Augustan age in the reign of the famous Haroun Al Raschid [A.D. 786], when the nobles of France and England could neither read nor write. It declined under the conquest of the barbarous Turks, as, previously, the Greek had disappeared before their own; and in both cases Egypt was the last home of the learned. What the schools of Alexandria did for Greek learning, those of Cairo have since done for the Arabian. For many centuries they have been acknowledged as the purest fountains of Arabic literature, and of Mussulman theology and jurisprudence. The splendid mosque El Azar continues to attract students from every part of the Moslem world; it is regarded as their principal university, and is said to contain from one to three thousand students of whom several hundreds are *blind*.¹

While the Moslems were establishing new empire on a well-meant, though unenlightened, conception of the Divine Unity, the Christians were ruining both Church and State in a fresh controversy, which resulted in the triumph of a worship hardly to be distinguished from polytheism and idolatry. Nothing so excited the indignation of the Saracens as the use of images in religious worship. Christians, Jews, and even Magians were entitled to indulgence as disciples of a "book;" but the worship of idols was a crime demanding extermination by the sword. These fierce Unitarians held to the letter, and beyond the letter of the Jewish decalogue; they not only abhorred a

¹ Lane's *Modern Egypt*, i. 269.

reverence for images or pictures, but refused them a place in buildings set apart for worship, and where the Koran was strictly followed, prohibited their very existence.

The primitive Christians were as zealous if not as furious as the Mohammedans. For the first three centuries there is no trace of images or paintings being permitted in churches. Gradually their use was introduced amongst other superstitious corruptions, till at length the private heresy received the sanction of ecclesiastical authority and common usage.

The exertions of the emperor Leo II. to check this degrading superstition shook the imperial fabric of Church and State to its foundation. His edict for the removal of images out of the churches [A.D. 726] was resented by the revolt of the whole Latin church under popes Gregory II. and III., and issued in the destruction of his dynasty. The reformers were stigmatized as *Iconoclasts*, and the worship of images was publicly authorized and commanded by the Seventh General Council [A.D. 786].¹

In no part of Christendom was the worship of pictures and images received with more satisfaction than amongst the degenerate Christians of Egypt. Melchite and Jacobite forgetting their feuds, united with equal ardour in hunting down the Iconoclast minority who denounced the idolatrous practice ; and when the celebrated caliph Haroun Al Raschid, who filled the throne of Baghdad, ordered the churches of the orthodox to be given over to the Jacobites, in gratitude for the cure of a favourite concubine by their patriarch Politian, both sects were equally obnoxious to Musulman scorn as blind worshippers of idols.

¹ Russia, Ancient and Modern, p. 262.

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¹ Russia, Ancient and Modern, p. 262.

In the convulsions that followed the death of Haroun, the miserable Egyptians endured all the sufferings of an enslaved and despised people. The Spanish Ommiads invaded their still wealthy country, and carried off thousands of captives. At one time, aided by the Egyptian malcontents, they were masters of Alexandria; but the citizens, provoked by their excesses, rose upon the invaders, and the Abbasides recovering the place commenced an indiscriminate slaughter of Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans. The former were driven into the desert, where the furious Moslems pursued them with fire and sword, burning the monasteries and scattering the inmates. Some years elapsed before the Cordovans were finally expelled, during which Egypt was a prey to anarchy and ravage. When peace at last returned under the caliphate of Almamon, a learned and beneficent prince, the Christians recovered their churches, and resumed their inextinguishable ecclesiastical controversies.

The fate of Egypt was in the hands of the emir more than the caliph; and as the power of the throne decayed by luxury, the lieutenants in the provinces began to aspire to independence. Africa had already thrown off its allegiance, and established an independent kingdom at Cairoan [A.D. 800—811]; at Baghdad the caliphs had surrounded themselves with a guard of Turks for the protection of their persons and harems; but these vigorous barbarians, like other prætorian bands, soon dictated the orders they were engaged to enforce. The once dreaded Commander of the Faithful became a shadow of power; and about A.D. 870, the Egyptian emir followed the example set him in the adjoining province, and proclaimed himself sultan of Egypt and Syria. His family

(known as the Toulonidæ¹) retained the government for thirty years, but were displaced in the next century by a new emir under the caliph Muctadir. Egypt was then retained in subjection by the expedient of a frequent change of emirs, each of whom bought his government, and repaid himself by fresh levies on the natives: the Christians being always the chief sufferers.

During this period, Eutychius the annalist succeeded to the chair of St. Mark as Melchite or Catholic patriarch. His barren "Annals" are enlivened only by ridiculous and superstitious legends; neither facts nor dates can be relied on, and he has no claim to the character of an historian. Still he is our sole authority for the dark period after the death of Cyril, and when he leaves us, the Egyptian church retires into impenetrable obscurity.²

On the death of the caliph Muctadir, the Egyptian emirs again asserted their power; one of them received the caliph himself when driven from the tottering throne of Baghdad, and sheltered him for twenty years as a private person. In the beginning of the tenth century one of the travelling dervishes, who have so often changed the face of Mussulman affairs, began to preach the downfall of the Abbasides, and the speedy reappearance of the last of Ali's family, whom the Persians still expect as the *Meheden*. At the head of his insurgent partisans, he wrested Cairoan from the Aglebite dynasty, and naming it *Mehedia*, compelled his subjects to swear allegiance to the descendants of Ali as the only rightful heirs of the caliphate. This

¹ So called from the emir's father Touloun, whose mosque at Cairo exhibits the earliest specimen of a pointed arch.

² Neale, ii. 182.

pretender was named Obeidallah ; and in him began the line of *Fatimite* caliphs, so called from the name of the prophet's daughter, the wife of Ali.

The third of this line, Moez, despatched an expedition to Egypt ; and having obtained possession of the capital he determined to transfer the seat of the African caliphate from the " caravan " in the desert to the " victorious city " of the Nile. Babylon, where the Arabs first pitched their tents against Memphis, was named by the conquerors *El Kahireh* (the Victorious). By its side arose a Moslem town, called *Fostat* (the Tent), in memory of the original encampment. These places inherited the honours of the decaying capital on the opposite side of the river ; they had even borrowed the ancient names of Misra and Memf. Moez commemorated his dynasty by the erection of a New Cairo, to which he removed his throne A.D. 972. Assuming the spiritual and temporal authority of the Omniads, he restored the white colours to the royal banner, which are retained by the African and Egyptian Mussulmans to the present day.

The Fatimite caliph met with little resistance in Egypt ; his accession seems to have brought some remission of their burdens to the Christians. The son and successor of Moez married a Christian, who was the mother of the caliph Hakem. One of her brothers obtained the Catholic patriarchate of Alexandria ; and another was invested with the same dignity at Jerusalem. The nephew of these dignitaries, however, proved a cruel persecutor to his mother's creed. At first he was content to silence their bells, take away their crucifixes, and condemn them to wear black garments ; but, incensed

at the extortion and crimes of the bishops, he threw the Jacobite patriarch to the lions (who, we are told, miraculously refused to injure him), and commenced a bitter persecution of both communions. His rage extended to Jerusalem, where he threw down the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and seizing his uncle the patriarch, had him carried to Cairo, where he was tortured and beheaded. Several other martyrs are enumerated among the immediate attendants of the caliph.

The persecution was continued through several years, during which, according to the Mussulman historian, not less than 30,000 churches were destroyed in this tyrant's dominions. The open celebration of the Liturgy ceased throughout Egypt; the Christians could only purchase by bribes the privilege of meeting for prayer in private houses, and by stealth. Their invincible perseverance in thus confessing their Redeemer, at last vanquished the implacable Hakem; he released the patriarch, recalled his ordinances, and not only permitted the churches to be re-edified, but ordered restitution of the timber and lands of which they had been robbed.

The caliph was shortly after assassinated in one of the nocturnal orgies which he celebrated to the planet Saturn, on a mountain to the east of Cairo; his memory is as hateful to Mussulmans as to Christians and Jews. He was believed to be an adept in the black arts, and to be in league with Satan, who was supposed to appear to him at his midnight sacrifices in a bodily form. He outraged the feelings of every class of his subjects by commanding swine to be publicly sacrificed; yet his sycophants proclaimed him to be the Messiah, and the Druses on Mount Lebanon still adore the divinity of Hakem.¹

¹ Neale, ii. 200.

Released from the persecution of her enemies, Christianity was torn with far more grievous injuries from the hands of her own pastors and rulers. The awful corruptions of the bishops were the shame and scandal of the laity. Bekir, a Jacobite nobleman, strove in vain to reconcile their quarrels, and keep their hands from simony; bishoprics were openly sold by the patriarch, the purchasers borrowing the price from the Moslem usurers, and recovering it by the sale of the sacraments, and other extortions from their flocks. The patriarch Chenouda replied to the expostulations of Bekir that he had no other means of satisfying the demands of the Alexandrian clergy; and when the layman undertook to raise the requisite revenue by voluntary contributions, the bishops exclaimed against the first orthodox prelate in the world being deprived of a source of income, sanctioned by a long line of predecessors, in order to become dependent on alms. Bekir was even publicly beaten in the synod for maintaining his protest against the infamous traffic. "Such are the men," exclaims an historian, whose fault is certainly not incredulity in ecclesiastical marvels, "at whose election Jacobite writers scruple not to record or to devise miracles." ¹

These traders in spiritual gifts were by no means indifferent to what they deemed the weightier matters of the law. Canons were issued strictly forbidding marriage with a Melchite woman unless a Jacobite ecclesiastic officiated: no one was to receive the communion from any priest but his own, whatever repugnance he might entertain to his ministry: above all, the *corbans* or oblations of the faithful were to be rigidly stamped with twelve crosses re-

¹ Neale, ii. 209.

presenting the twelve apostles, and surrounded with the words "Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Sabaoth," in Greek.¹ Salt and oil, which the Syrians mixed with their cakes, were so odious at Alexandria that the patriarch violently thrust the offerers out of church, and a schism with Antioch was not too dear a price for the assertion of so vital a piece of orthodoxy. On the other hand, the ancient rigour was exchanged for a very tender discipline towards the lapsed. The multitudes who apostatised to Mohammedanism during the persecution of Hakem seem to have been readmitted to the Church without any penance at all. In one great crime from which all Christendom is still suffering, the Egyptian prelates escaped participation by reason of their insignificance. They had no hand in the schism between East and West, perpetrated by the ambition and intolerance of the two rival pontiffs of Rome and Constantinople.²

¹ Neale, ii. 214.

² See Russia, p. 242.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CRUSADES.

Decline of the Caliphs—Greek Victories—Turkish Immigration—Togrul Beg—Created Sultan—Mulek Shah, Commander of the Faithful—Division of Empire—Subjugation of the Christians—Holy Land—Peter the Hermit—Taking of the Cross—Arrival of First Crusade—Siege and Capture of Jerusalem—Godfrey de Bouillon—New Latin Patriarch—French Kingdom—Orders of St. John and the Temple—Treatment of Eastern Church—Second Crusade—Amazons—Perfidy of the Greeks—Disasters—Fall of the Caliph—Saladin sultan—Administration—Disputes on Confession—Mark of Damietta—Blockade of Alexandria—Conquests of Saladin—Battle of Tiberias—Recapture of Jerusalem—Third Crusade—Capture of Acre—Truce with Saladin—Return and Captivity of Cœur de Lion—Carnage—Episcopal Warriors—Death of Saladin—Fourth Crusade—Diversion to Constantinople—Varangian Guard—Restoration of the Emperor—Revolution—Second Siege and Capture by Latins—Pillage—Partition of the Empire—Greek Court—Fifth Crusade—Capture and Loss of Damietta—Francis of Assisi—Sufferings of the Christians—Arrival of emperor Frederic—Recovery of Jerusalem—Struggle between Syria and Egypt—Sixth Crusade—St. Louis of France—Second Capture of Damietta—Fatal Advance—Capture of the King—Ransom—Mamelukes—Assassination of the Sultan—Departure of the French—Sultan Bibars—Seventh Crusade—Death of St. Louis—Edward prince of Wales—Truce with Bibars—Fall of Acre—Final Defeat of the Crusaders—Kingdom of Cyprus—Descent on Alexandria—Subjugation of Cyprus—Titular Crown—Reflections.

THE Saracen empire had not reached the extent and dignity of the Roman, when it began to imitate its decline and fall. At the close of the tenth century it had broken up into several Arab and Turkish dynasties, and the temporal dominions of the caliphs were circumscribed within the walls of Baghdad. They were still acknowledged by orthodox Mussulmans as successors of the prophet, and the chief spiritual authority of Islam; but, like the popes of Rome at the same period, their injunctions were not implicitly obeyed, nor their persons always safe in their own capital. The African and Turkish guards called in to their defence became their greatest danger. The Emir al-

Omra, a military commander who had superseded the vizier, not unfrequently imprisoned or deposed his sovereign; and when the succour of a neighbouring prince was implored, the deliverance was but a change of servitude.

The Greek emperors took advantage of these discords to reconquer some of their lost territories. Beginning with the island of Crete, they passed into Cilicia and Syria, and again crossing the Euphrates, threatened Baghdad itself.¹ These exploits of the emperors Nicephorus, Phocas, and John Zimisces [A.D. 963—975], reunited Antioch, Cilicia, and Cyprus to the Roman empire.

Still the Mohammedan power was but little weakened. New swarms of Turkmans or Tartars poured out of the regions east of the Caspian, to recruit, and eventually supersede; the adventurers who had preceded them from the west. Of these the first to rise to empire was Seljuk, a chief who embraced Mohammedanism and conquered an extensive territory in the regions of Samarcand, about the beginning of the eleventh century. His grandson Togrul Beg ruled from the borders of China to the Hellespont, including Persia, Khorassan, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, and the districts round the Caspian. The caliph Kayem implored his aid against a revolted emir, who had expelled him from Baghdad, and substituted the name of his Egyptian rival in the public prayers. Togrul very readily complied, and the caliph in return solemnly investing him with the two crowns and scimitars of east and west, caused him to be proclaimed in the mosques as temporal lieutenant of the vicar of the

¹ Gibbon, lii.

prophet. The *sultan's*¹ name was inserted in the prayers next after that of the caliph, and though the title of Commander of the Faithful remained with the caliph, the authority passed to his lieutenant.

The Greek empire was not left to enjoy its recent advantages. Armenia and Georgia were conquered by Alp Arslan, the nephew of Togrul, and the emperor Romanus was taken prisoner by the same renowned warrior. His son Malek Shah reigned over the eastern world from China to the Mediterranean Sea, including Syria, Jerusalem, which he wrested from the Egyptian caliph, and Arabia Felix. In him the caliph recognised a fact already completed, and added to the sultan's honours the sacred title of "Commander of the Faithful." The grandeur of this eastern potentate is attested by the tale of his hunting with a train of forty-seven thousand horsemen; but a more honourable memorial was the reform of the Arabian calendar, which took place under his auspices, and brought the Mussulman style to a degree of accuracy exceeding the Julian.²

The greatness and unity of the Turkish empire expired with this sultan. His throne was disputed by his four sons and a brother, who ultimately agreed on a partition of territory. The elder branch retained Persia, with the general suzerainty of the orthodox Islamites. Three new thrones were erected—in Kerman on the shores of the Indian Ocean; in Syria, expelling the Arab princes of Damascus and Aleppo; and in Asia

¹ This title, signifying "lord," was first bestowed on Mahmoud of Ghizni. It implied a claim to represent the caliph or successor of the prophet, and it now carries the religious supremacy at Constantinople.

² Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, lvii.

Minor, which the Turks called *Roum*. The latter kingdom, which had its capital at Nicæa within one hundred miles of Constantinople, already laid claim to the Roman empire.

The western Christians now began to sympathize with their suffering brethren. Of the four great patriarchates of the east, only one remained in freedom; and within its jurisdiction the divinity of Christ was denied and ridiculed from the very spot where the First General Council had defined and promulgated it. Alexandria, the see of Athanasius, languished in a second Egyptian bondage. Antioch, where the disciples were first called "Christians," was in the hands of the Turks; and the place of St. Paul's conversion was again breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Still more intolerable was the fate of the youngest patriarchate Jerusalem, the place of Christ's own teaching, death, and resurrection, which, though hardly less holy to Jews and Mohammedans than to Christians, has been fated to endure the sin and suffering of all. No city ever suffered so many sieges; none ever witnessed more flagrant iniquities, or more tremendous punishments.

The conditions of the capitulation with Omar had never restrained the Moslem insolence and rapacity. Some relief had ensued when the Holy Land passed under the sway of Egypt, but the savage fury of Hakem again desolated the sanctuaries and drove away the pilgrims. They reappeared in fear and trembling when the church of the holy sepulchre had been raised from its ruins by the intercession and contributions of the Greek emperor; but Jerusalem was now held by the sultan of Roum, and the heart of Europe was again

torn by tidings of the cruelties inflicted on the Christians by the Turks.¹

In the year 1095 Peter the hermit, returning from a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre, brought letters to the pope from the patriarch of Jerusalem, setting forth the wrongs daily offered to their common faith, and imploring the assistance of the Western powers. Pope Urban II. took up the cause in person. The council of Clermont pronounced it "the will of God" that Jerusalem should be rescued from the infidels. Six millions of all ranks, men, women, and children, took the vow to assist in the Holy War; they wore the red cross in token of their devotion; some even stamped it with hot irons on the forehead or breast. All classes caught the enthusiasm; princes, nobles, knights, and populace, joined in the enterprise with equal ardour, and pressed on to snatch Jerusalem from the hands of the Turks, under the command of the renowned Godfrey de Bouillon.

Meantime the prize which they had in view fell into the hands of the caliph of Egypt, who took advantage of the distress of the Turks to recover Palestine. The Fatimite sovereign at once opened negotiations with the Latin leaders; affecting to treat them as pilgrims, he offered supplies, with free access to the holy sepulchre, provided they would lay aside their arms and divide into companies more suitable for travelling. The reply was a demand for the instant surrender of the city which the Son of God had consecrated by His blood. The Crusaders arriving

¹ This name properly denotes the natives of Turkistan on the two sides of the Caspian, as *Saracen* was an appellation of the Arabs; but the Crusaders used them indifferently for all Mohammedans, and this use became common in Europe; it is still retained in the Church-collect for Good Friday.

before its walls the 6th of June, 1099, found them garrisoned by forty thousand Turks and Arabs, under Aladdin, the caliph's vizier or sultan. The siege was commenced the next day, and on Good Friday, the 15th of July, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the day and hour of the Lord's death, Godfrey stood victorious in the Holy City. He was unanimously elected king, but declining the name and ensigns of royalty in a place where his Redeemer had been crowned with thorns, he assumed the style of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre.¹

A fortnight after, a new army advancing from Egypt was encountered at Ascalon, and utterly routed. Godfrey hung up the sultan's sword and standard in the church of the Sepulchre, and, disregarding the just claims of the Greek patriarch, who was in exile at Jerusalem, established a new see in the Latin obedience. From this prelate he and Bohemond received investiture, as from a feudal chief, of possessions acquired and to be held by their own good swords. The kingdom of Jerusalem was gradually extended over the coast from Scanderoon to the borders of Egypt, including the greater part of Syria. Antioch remained an independent Latin state, while the Mussulmans retained Damascus, Aleppo, Hems, and Hamah.

The laws and language of the new kingdom were French; the throne was supported by the feudal system, and the church was under the supremacy of Rome. Only a small army was retained on the departure of the bulk of the Crusaders, and the defence of the kingdom against its numerous enemies was mainly entrusted to two celebrated Orders, called

¹ The scruple appears not to have been shared by his successors.

into existence for the purpose, the Knights of the Hospital of St. John, and the Knights of the Temple of Solomon. These Orders, uniting the military with the monastic profession, enlisted the flower of Christian chivalry, and became the most memorable institutions of the Crusaders.

The whole arrangement was in utter repugnance to the views and feelings of the East. The Latin knights and ecclesiastics treated the Greek church with unjustifiable disdain; and, from the emperor to the peasant, all would have preferred the yoke of the Islamites.

In Egypt the new kingdom was a source of alarm at once to the caliphs and the Jacobite church which enjoyed their protection. The caliphs saw a Christian power at their doors more formidable than the Turks, and the Jacobites found themselves excluded as heretics from the holy places which attracted the devotion of all Christian pilgrims. The Melchites alone indulged in hopes of assistance, which were speedily crushed by a bull of Pascal II., annexing all conquests from the infidels to the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem. This aggression was protested against by the new patriarch of Antioch, himself a Latin prelate; but the pope, ever disdaining all ecclesiastical authority but his own, adhered to his determination. Possibly he bore in mind that Antioch laid claim to the chair of St. Peter by an older and more authentic succession than Rome. He was making war on the Eastern churches no less vigorously than the Mussulmans, and this fatal fanaticism left the Crusaders without a friend in the whole East. Sailing under the banner of the Cross for the succour of Christianity against the infidels, the lords and knights of

Europe permitted themselves to become the tools of the papacy for the destruction of Christian liberties which the infidels had respected.

The consequence was that the Latin kingdom, hating and hated by all its neighbours, daily declined, and in less than fifty years a second crusade was demanded for the delivery of the holy sepulchre. The authority of pope Eugenius III. and the eloquence of St. Bernard induced the emperor Conrad and the French king, Louis VII., to head the expedition. The kings of Poland and Bohemia followed the imperial standard; but the most remarkable feature in this army was a troop of *females*, who rode in the attitude and armour of men, under a leader called, from her gilt spurs and buskins, the Golden-footed dame. The followers resembled an emigration rather than an army: the Byzantine agents, who counted them in crossing the strait, reckoned nine hundred thousand, and then gave up the computation in despair. The alarm and jealousy of the Greeks were greater than ever. Manuel, who now filled the throne, was incensed to see a prince in Constantinople bearing, like himself, the proud title of Roman emperor; and who, though his own brother-in-law, would only meet him, as an equal, on horseback in the open air. The German army was perfidiously supplied with false guides, and cut to pieces by the Turks in Asia Minor. The French king narrowly saved his life by climbing a tree in an encounter which destroyed a large part of his forces. The two monarchs met at Jerusalem to bewail the losses sustained from Christian perfidy more than Mussulman valour. Their last effort was a fruitless siege of Damascus. They returned to Europe [A.D. 1149] laden with personal renown, but the shattered relics

of their mighty armies told an awful tale of the cost at which it was purchased.

While the Western world was exhausting itself in fruitless efforts of fanaticism, the time arrived for the fall of the caliphate of Cairo. Like its rival at Baghdad, it was supplanted by the minister charged with its defence. The caliphs entrusted their viziers with the command of the army, the collection of the revenue, and the general administration of government; this high post was usually the prize of a revolution in the palace or the camp; its possessor not unfrequently laid violent hands on the prince at whose feet he prostrated himself as vicar of the prophet and commander of the faithful. Occasionally a Christian vizier was appointed as less to be dreaded, and more easily plundered of the treasure extorted from the people. The drama was brought to an end with Aded, the eleventh and last of the Fatimite dynasty.

A disappointed candidate for the vizirate having fled to Nouredin, sultan of Aleppo, obtained a force which compelled his admission to the coveted post; he would then have been glad to dispense with the presence of his protectors, but the Turks turned upon him at the first attempt and ravaged the country. The vizier sent in haste to Jerusalem, where Almeric, the second of Godfrey's brothers, occupied the throne. This Christian king made no scruple to march to the support of the infidel, but soon making himself more terrible to friend than to foe, the unfortunate vizier raised a large sum of money and bought off Christian and Turk together. The former, however, had learned the detestable maxim of keeping no faith with infidels. Almeric returned, and having captured Damietta, a city which rose on the

ruins of the ancient Pelusium, delivered the inhabitants, Christian and Mussulman alike, to death or slavery. The Turk was the gentler barbarian of the two.

The vizier once more had recourse to Nouredin : succours arrived in time to save Cairo, and Almeric retired on their approach. The Turks had saved the caliphate, but they were in no mood to be trifled with ; seizing the vizier when he came to pay his congratulations, they demanded his death-warrant from the trembling caliph. The vacancy thus created was claimed for their own general, and on his death, two months after, for his nephew Joseph the son of Job. This unknown youth from Koordistan was saluted by the trembling caliph with the title of *Saladin*, the saviour of the faith and throne, which he was, in fact, to subvert.

Aded died soon after, not without suspicion of poison from his new vizier : Saladin had previously expunged his name from the Khotbeh, and substituted the Abbaside caliph's. On his death he received that pontiff's investiture as orthodox sultan of Egypt, and so founded the dynasty called from his father the *Ayubite* sultans. The scruples of his subjects were removed by a judicious distribution of the treasures contained in the palace at Cairo. Vessels of gold and silver, crystal and porcelain, precious vestments, tapestries and carpets, with pearls and emeralds of prodigious size, satisfied the Egyptian nobles of the claims of the orthodox succession. The learned classes were gratified by presents from a library of one hundred thousand volumes, which in Saladin's eyes had little value.

The Christian population were dealt with in a way at once to gratify the Moslems and to protect their own liberties. Under the Fatimites almost

every civil office had been held by Christians or Jews, the most intelligent and the most manageable of the caliph's subjects. Saladin declared both religions incapable of public employ; he enforced the old edicts, which required them to wear a distinctive dress, silenced the bells, or rather wooden clappers, which in Egypt still discharge the duty of bells, ordered the churches to be painted black, and removed the cross from their exterior. He also prohibited the procession on Palm Sunday, and required the liturgy to be recited in a low voice, so as not to offend the ears of the Islamites. On the other hand, the sultan firmly protected all classes from insult and violence, lightened the taxes, and enforced a general respect for the laws of property. These proceedings were so little acceptable to the Christian officials, that large numbers apostatised in order to retain their places, and were mortified to find, after a little while, the restriction removed, and their former co-religionists admitted to office as before.

The sultan's firm administration imparted profound tranquillity to a country long vexed by tyranny and revolution. It throws a melancholy light on the state of Christianity in Egypt to find that this was the period of new disputes, in both communions, as pernicious as any that had yet exercised a mischievous ingenuity. It was a branch of the Confessional controversy which, in some shape or other, has so often troubled the church of Christ.

The apostles proclaimed, as the condition of forgiveness, "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."¹ They taught men to confess their sins to God, and seek absolution, through

¹ Acts xx. 21.

faith in the atoning blood of His Son, from the witness of His Spirit in the heart. Especially they exhorted their disciples to "examine themselves," as the fitting preparation for the holy communion.¹ Remembering, too, their Master's words, "first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,"² they added the injunction, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."³ They said nothing of the intervention of the church or its ministers, but left them to their office as guardians of public morals and pastors of souls. The primitive church was content to reiterate these public declarations, and give utterance to a general confession of sin; leaving the Spirit, who searches the heart, to apply the Word to individual cases, and minister absolution to the conscience. It followed naturally enough that converts, little accustomed to deal with conscience, confided their perplexities to their pastors, and sought their assistance in applying the promises of God to their own souls. Others, whose notorious offences had incurred the censure of the Church, were required to give satisfactory proof of repentance before they were readmitted to the holy table. Hence the clergy were often made the private depositories of spiritual burdens, and comforted the penitent by counsels befitting his case. It was their office, also, to enforce the discipline of the Church by publicly separating offenders, and publicly restoring the contrite. The private ministration was limited to those who voluntarily sought their assistance; the public one was regulated by the canons of the Church. No one was compelled to show his secret thoughts to the priest as a condition of communion.

1 1 Cor. xi. 28.

2 Matt. v. 24.

3 James v. 16.

Nor was the power of binding and loosing, which the Church exercised in the exclusion of offenders and the restoration of the penitent, mistaken for a Divine authority in every priest to remit or retain sins at his private discretion.

Auricular confession and private absolution, as necessary duties, were corruptions of a later age. They were never enforced so rigidly by the married clergy of the Eastern churches as by the celibate dependents of the Roman pontiff; the oriental love of ritual tended rather in another direction. Little versed in the guidance of consciences, they were great masters of ceremonial observances. In the Coptic church the incense burnt at the commencement of the liturgy—a practice derived from the temples of ancient Egypt—was believed to be connected in some mysterious way with the remission of the sins then privately confessed to God.¹ In time it was taken for a sacramental absolution; and, in the difficulties attending public worship under Mohammedan tyranny, confession *before a lighted censer* in a private house came to be considered as of nearly equal value. The ministry of the priest was thought unnecessary, one reason for which, given by the historian, is, that the morals of the priests were so notoriously depraved that more harm than good might be expected from their society.²

Strange and sad as it is that such views should have been countenanced by episcopal authority, yet the absolution of the censer was formally sanctioned by the Jacobite patriarch John V. [A.D. 1147]. His decree was resisted by a priest of Damietta, named Mark, who vehemently insisted on the necessity of priestly abso-

¹ Neale, ii. 262.

² Asseman B.O. ii. 307, ap Neale, ii. 262.

lution. John excommunicated him, but being a man of courage and eloquence, multitudes still flocked to his confessional, and received penance and absolution in spite of the excommunication. The next patriarch, also called Mark, tried in vain to reduce his namesake to obedience. The priest proceeded to deny the propriety of circumcising Christian infants, and when condemned by a synod of sixty bishops, had the audacity to appeal to the sultan for justice. Saladin showed his impartiality by requesting the patriarch to give the denouncer of his own rite a fair trial, according to the canons. This it seems was refused. The patriarch of Antioch being appealed to, wrote to recommend a middle doctrine of confession, between the exaggerated teaching of Mark and the depreciating expressions of the patriarch. The latter, however, stood so stoutly to his text that a temporary schism ensued between the churches. Mark took his confessional over to the Catholics, but was so coldly received that he rushed back again to the Jacobites. The patriarch gave him absolution once, but on repeating the defection, and a second time seeking readmission, he was rejected, and spent the remainder of his life in estrangement from both communions.

While this knotty point was being debated among the Jacobites, the Catholics were gratified by the spectacle of a Christian armament, sent to their relief from Europe. Alexandria was actually blockaded by sea and land by the forces of king William of Sicily ; but the siege was abandoned without result, and the sultan was left to pursue a career of conquest. After the death of Nouredin, Saladin invaded Syria, mastered Damascus and Aleppo, and at last annexed the whole East to his former territories of Egypt and

Africa. The Christian princes of the east, enveloped by this formidable foe, were torn with internal dissensions; violating their truce with the Mohammedans, they kept little faith with one another. Overtures were even made to Saladin himself, who, encouraged by their dissensions and enraged by their perfidy, entered the Holy Land with an army of fifty thousand men in the year 1187.

The Christians were assembled at Acre under Guy de Lusignan, a Frenchman of poor repute, who occupied the throne of Jerusalem in right of his wife Sybilla, daughter of Baldwin III. He was so little worthy of the station that his own brother exclaimed, "They who made him a king would surely have made me a god." His chief vassal, Raymond, count of Tripoli, is charged with being secretly in the interests of Saladin; he fled at the first onset in the battle of Tiberias, and the Latin forces were utterly routed. The king was taken prisoner, but humanely treated by Saladin, and speedily ransomed. The bishop of Acre fell in the battle carrying the "wood of the true cross," a loss more deplored than any other, though so little valued by the captors that they immediately destroyed the idolatrous abomination. Of the two Grand Masters, one was slain, the other taken prisoner; the kingdom was left without a head, and three months after the sultan was at the gates of Jerusalem.

The resistance was feeble and dispirited; the queen, with a long procession of women and monks, walked barefoot to the holy sepulchre, but no resource appeared save to throw themselves on the mercy of the conqueror. The sultan allowed the Franks and Latins to evacuate the city, with a safe conduct to the sea, on payment of ten pieces of gold for every

man, five for a woman, and one for a child ; those who were unable to pay were consigned to slavery. Saladin entered the city with all the pomp of an oriental triumph ; the mosque of Omar, which had been converted into a church, was again reclaimed to the service of Islam ; the golden cross was thrown down from the dome, and the holy sepulchre was once more in the hands of the infidels.

The tidings of this catastrophe were received in Europe with a universal outburst of grief and indignation. Pope Urban III. died of sorrow : his successor had no other expedient but a third crusade, and his summons was readily obeyed by England, France, and Germany. The two former powers tithed their dominions for the expedition, which the monarchs headed in person. The cross was again assumed by bishops, counts, and barons, with a host of the inferior ranks. Acre fell to the united arms of Philip Augustus and Richard Cœur de Lion, July 12th, 1191, and hostages were given for the surrender of the "true cross." This important engagement not being fulfilled, two thousand seven hundred captives were ruthlessly hanged ;¹ a barbarity which Saladin retorted by slaughtering all his Christian prisoners.

The capture of Acre drew after it Cæsarea, Joppa, and a few places of less importance, but Jerusalem was still unattainable. The lion-hearted Richard, the last to lose hope, turned back within a day's march of the holy city, and concluded a truce with Saladin securing the freedom of pilgrimage, without having set eyes upon the object of his dreams. He is said to have veiled his face when its walls might be seen from the spot where the retreat began, ex-

¹ Galfridus Vinesauf, iv. 4.

claiming that "They who were not ready to rescue the sepulchre of Christ were unworthy to behold it." He refused to visit it as a pilgrim, declaring he would never accept from the courtesy of a pagan what God had not vouchsafed to grant him of right. As he looked back from his departing ship he cried with tears, "O holy land, I commend thee to God! if His heavenly grace grant me to live, I hope some day still to succour thee." The hope was vain. The king arrived in Europe only to be betrayed by his fellow-crusaders and cast into a dungeon, where he languished above a year before the loyalty of his admiring subjects could raise the £300,000 demanded for his release. The churches and monasteries of England freely contributed their plate to complete the ransom, and, except from his own brother, one universal shout of exultation hailed the royal crusader's return.

The historians do not tell us whether in his captivity, or his release, Richard allowed his thoughts to dwell on the carnage he had witnessed in the Holy Land. The siege of Acre alone cost the lives of "six archbishops and patriarchs, twelve bishops, forty counts, and five hundred nobles with priests and others, who cannot be counted."¹ Among the clerical combatants were two bishops of the English church. Baldwin the old archbishop of Canterbury, and Hubert bishop of Salisbury, appeared in arms at the head of their retainers. The archbishop was in helmet and cuirass, with a white cross on his breast, and the banner of St. Thomas of Canterbury unfurled before him. He commanded a body of two hundred horse and three hundred foot maintained at his own cost. We have no reason to question the military skill or courage of

¹ G. Vinsauf.

these mailed ecclesiastics, any more than that, with their own hands, they unscrupulously battered and slew the pagans to whom they were commissioned to preach the gospel. The singularity is that this same archbishop had suspended the bishop of Coventry for undertaking the civil office of a sheriff without regard to the dignity of his episcopal rank !

The camp of the crusaders presented a spectacle of licentiousness unparalleled among the Mussulmans. Baldwin himself thought the Lord had forsaken them, and recognised in the miseries they endured His "four sore judgments"¹ on the guilty. "I have remained long enough with this army," he was heard to say in his prayers ; "if it please thy mercy, O Lord, let me be removed."² He died of fever a fortnight after, and was buried in the Holy Land by the bishop of Salisbury.

Saladin survived his defeat at Acre but a year, leaving his name enshrined in a medley of romantic legends, which still give it a lustre in the West conceded to no other Saracen. The great sultan was undoubtedly possessed of many shining qualities ; he was temperate in his pleasures, liberal of his wealth, generous to his captives, and, according to his light, devout in religious duties ; but he was also ambitious, cruel, and ungrateful. His virtues were those of the natural man, when no great sacrifice of self is demanded for their exhibition ; his vices were not less natural to human nature unregenerated by Divine grace. His chief merit was the truth and honour with which he observed his plighted word ; a quality mournfully contrasted with the constant perfidy of the Christians, who, having imbibed the doctrine that no faith is to

1 Ezek. xiv. 21.

2 Vinsauf, i. 63.

be kept with infidels, too often improved it into keeping no faith with each other.

Saladin died at Damascus [A.D. 1192] in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and the twenty-first of his reign. Leaving a large number of sons, he divided the dominions among three. The eldest Melek Afdal succeeded to Damascus and the interior of Syria; to Melek Aziz were assigned Egypt with the Syrian coast and Jerusalem; and the sultanate of Aleppo fell to Daher. The two elder princes were dissatisfied with their respective portions. Aziz, after driving his elder brother from Damascus, was killed by a fall from his horse, and Egypt was seized by his uncle Adel.

The next year Innocent III. ascended the chair of St. Peter, and one of his first acts was to proclaim a fourth crusade. An illiterate French priest, Fulk of Neuilly, tried to blow the trumpet of St. Bernard, but the European sovereigns declined to enlist. The French king instituted a fund for its promotion, but the conduct of the expedition was left to the great vassals of France and Flanders, aided by a fleet from Venice. Dandolo the doge was himself the admiral, and Egypt was again the point of attack.

Their destination, however, was changed by the appearance of an imperial fugitive, who held out a glittering bait to the adventurers. This refugee was no less than the heir of the Eastern empire, the *Valet* of Constantinople, as the Greek prince was curiously termed, who had just arrived with a tale of horror from his capital, which threw all Mussulman atrocities into the shade. The emperor Isaac Angelus had been hurled from his throne by one of those palace revolutions which were indigenous in Constanti-

nople. The usurper was his own brother; and in true oriental fashion he had put out his victim's eyes, and confined him in a dungeon. He made the unusual mistake of permitting his son to escape, and this prince now laid his father's wrongs before the assembled crusaders. He offered a large sum of money for their assistance in recovering his throne, further engaging to accompany the crusaders afterwards to Egypt, or the Holy Land, with such a force as should be agreed upon. To secure the pope, he promised to bring about the long-contested recognition of his supremacy over the eastern church. The terms were accepted, and in that hour the crusade, properly speaking, was at an end. It was no longer the Cross or the Sepulchre, but the Crown of the east, which glittered in the visions of the adventurers. It was not the rescue of the Holy Land, but the subjugation of a free church, that was in view. The expedition, in fact, never reached the Holy Land at all, and many who foresaw the issue withdrew at once from the enterprise.

The Franco-Venetian armament, with young Alexius on board, reached Scutari without molestation from the castles of the Dardanelles [A.D. 1203], and crossing the strait with equal impunity, attacked and carried Constantinople at the first assault. The French Marshal¹ found with a surprise that will be shared by ourselves that the famous "Varangian" guard, which was esteemed the bulwark of the palace, was composed of *English* and *Danes*, armed with battle-axes. The hardy islanders could do little by themselves. The Greek troops fled with their customary pusillanimity.

¹ Jeffry of Villehardouin, to whose original narrative the history of this crusade is greatly indebted.

The usurper made his escape in a boat, and the sightless emperor was replaced on his throne amid the acclamations of the populace.

It was thought fit to associate his son Alexius in the sovereignty, and all promised fair for a brief period. Alexius so far kept his word as to write to the pope acknowledging his supremacy, and promising in a little time to bring the clergy and people to the like obedience. But this engagement was no sooner known at Constantinople than a new revolution ensued. The clergy called on the people to defend the independence of their church. Isaac and Alexius were deposed and put to death. Another Alexius was called to the purple as the champion of the faith, and the Greek capital stood on its defence as if the infidels were at its gates.

The Latins began a second siege with all the fury of a religious war. The emperor being defeated in a sally by night, the imperial standard, an image of the Virgin called the *Gonfanon Imperial*, fell into the hands of the count of Flanders, and was presented to the Cistercian monks as triumphantly as Godfrey suspended the sword of the sultan in the church of the Holy Sepulchre.¹ The bishops of Troyes and Soissons led the attack, and displayed their episcopal banners on the walls. The harbour was forced by two ships called the *Pilgrim* and the *Paradise*. No disciples of Mohammed were ever actuated by a more fanatical sense of doing God service in the slaughter of those who worshipped His Son. The usurper, flying with all his guards before a single knight, escaped by sea; and in the morning the

¹ The banner is now shown at Venice, so that, as Gibbon suggests, the monks were cheated of the genuine trophy by the Doge.

Greeks came in procession, with crosses and images, to supplicate the mercy of the conquerors. Their prayers were disregarded; the city was given up to pillage, in which pope Innocent accuses the soldiers of respecting neither religion, sex, nor age.¹ The churches were profaned by Christians with ribaldry which Mussulmans would have recoiled from in horror. The sacred vessels were taken for drinking cups; pictures and tapestry delineating the most holy subjects adorned the coarse revelries of the soldiers; works of art, the scarcely secondary treasure of the Greeks, were broken up with barbarian violence; precious bronzes were melted into coin; statues and columns defaced without remorse. The Venetians had taste enough to transport the famous horses of the sun to St. Mark's, but the greater part of the sculptures, which formed the glory of Constantinople, perished under the hands of the invaders. The booty brought in for division reached the prodigious value of £2,400,000, equal at that period to the entire revenues of the English crown for twenty years.¹

The captors pushed the rights of conquest to the astonishing extent of partitioning the empire, and placing a Latin prince on the throne of the East. The capital, with the country of Thrace, was assigned for the new empire, to which Baldwin count of Flanders was elected by the delegates of the confederates. The remainder of the empire was shared between the French and Venetians, who erected kingdoms and principalities at pleasure, which yielded a

¹ *Gesta*, c. 94.

² Gibbon reckons only the French and Venetian shares of the prize, omitting the fourth reserved for the new emperor.—*Echard*, v. 4.

nominal suzerainty to the imperial throne. They even proceeded to divide among themselves, by lot, the long lost provinces of the Roman empire. The Nile and the Euphrates were included in their imaginary dominions; the sultan's capital at Iconium was the prize of some deluded "pilgrim." The barons and knights dispersed to take possession of their fiefs, and princes who came out to recover the sepulchre of Christ from the infidels turned their arms against each other on behalf of their own conquests in Greece.¹ A Latin patriarch was appointed at Constantinople; and the pope, severely reproving the "sacrilegious violence which made the Greeks abhor the Latins more than dogs," accepted the arrangement as an accomplished fact, and even came to regard it as a Divine vindication of the primacy of St. Peter.

The Greek patriarch fled from the carnage mounted on an ass, and took refuge in Nicæa, where the remains of the court gradually collected. After some time an emperor was found in Theodore Lascaris, son-in-law of the usurper Alexius. Two other princes of the imperial family established themselves at Trebizond on the Black Sea, and at Epirus on the Adriatic. To these states the Greek nobles and clergy carried the services which the Latin conquerors haughtily refused.

Seeing his crusade thus diverted from its original intention, Innocent procured a new decree from the great Lateran council of 1215, for the recovery of

¹ Greece Proper fell to the share of the marquis of Montferrat, under the title of king of Thessalonica; within three months after the conquest of Constantinople he was in arms against the emperor Baldwin.

the holy sepulchre, but dying the next year, he left the prosecution of the fifth crusade to his successor, Honorius III. The king of Hungary and the duke of Austria proceeded with their united forces to Acre, where the remnant of the kingdom of Jerusalem was ruled by John de Brienne, a veteran crusader to whom the crown had been awarded, together with the hand of the heiress and granddaughter of king Almeric. It was there decided, in concert with the grand masters, to carry the war into the "land of Babylon," the crusading appellation for Egypt; and in May, 1218, two hundred thousand Franks were landed at the eastern mouth of the Nile. The king of Hungary having returned to Europe, the force was commanded by king John of Jerusalem; but on the arrival of a legate from Honorius, the chief authority was claimed for the representative of the holy see.

The first operation was the siege of Damietta, during which the sultan Adel died, and Kamel, his son and successor, was unable to arrest its prosecution. The garrison resisted, however, for above two years, during which the crusaders were visited by Francis of Assissi, the founder of the Franciscan order of Friars. Emulous of martyrdom at the hands of the infidels, this enthusiast passed with a single companion into the Moslem lines, and, being taken before the sultan, announced that he was sent to proclaim the way of salvation. He offered to prove the truth of his mission by entering a fiery furnace in company with a Mussulman divine, and when the latter declined, the monk volunteered to undergo the ordeal alone. Kamel had the good sense and humanity to waive the experiment, and dismiss the mission-

ary with honour. Anxious to relieve Damietta, he offered to restore Jerusalem, with all the Christian captives, the fortresses of Palestine, and the coveted True Cross. The wiser heads among the crusaders were for accepting this proposal, but the spirit of fanaticism which ruled these armies of the Cross refused to relinquish a prize already within their grasp. Damietta fell on the 5th of November, 1219, and the legate said mass within the walls, assisted by the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem. A metropolitical see was at once erected in the Roman obedience, and the papacy could now boast of having planted its schism in all the four oriental patriarchates.

Damietta was annexed to the kingdom of Jerusalem; but its conquest cost the Egyptian Christians dear. They were not only required to assist in the works hastily raised for the defence of Cairo, but compelled either to enlist in the army or to purchase their exemption. The Melchites, being suspected of greater sympathy with the invaders, were treated worse than the Jacobites, though the crusaders themselves made little distinction, plundering Mussulman and Christian, orthodox or heretic, with impartial rapacity. Above a hundred churches were pulled down by the Mohammedan soldiers on their march to Damietta. In Alexandria the great church of St. Mark, with the rest of the suburbs, were levelled to the ground in anticipation of a siege, and the Christians never recovered the blow which they now received.

The loss of Damietta increased their misery by the increased tribute exacted for the expenses of the war; many families were reduced to beggary, and numbers destroyed themselves in despair. On the other hand, the Latin camp exhibited all that fright-

ful licentiousness which so continually exposed the crusaders to the scorn and rebuke of the Mussulman population. The discipline was so lax that many hundreds were made prisoners while straggling about the country. Some deserted and apostatised, but the Turks complained that they made worse Mussulmans than Christians.

Meantime the pope was exerting himself with great ardour to send out reinforcements. With the arrival of the first detachment the legate insisted on marching against Cairo, exhibiting his usual contempt for the resistance of the infidels and the advice of his more cautious companions. Encamping on some low ground near the Nile, they were overtaken by the inundation, while the enemy, keeping the banks and mounds, easily cut off the supplies. They were soon reduced to capitulate without a battle, and Damietta was surrendered on condition of a free passage to Acre and the liberation of the Christian captives. The restoration of the True Cross was insisted upon and conceded; but the prize was an imaginary one, for it was no longer a secret that Saladin had destroyed the original "idol" on its first falling into his hands.

The patriarch Nicolas sent a lamentable account to the pope of the miseries now endured by the Christians, urging the Western emperor to come to their rescue, and pointing out the means of ascending the Nile in safety.¹ Frederick II. was in no haste to fulfil the vow which he had long taken. It was not till the pope had excommunicated him for neglecting his vow that he embarked for the Holy Land, and oddly enough the excommunication was repeated

¹ Neale, ii. 294.

because he fulfilled it. The patriarch, with the grand masters of both orders, avoided him as an excommunicated man, but, paying no attention to their scruples, the emperor came to terms with the sultan Kamel for the surrender of Jerusalem to himself. He consented to leave the Temple in the hands of the Moslems, guaranteeing them the free exercise of their religion, and further engaging to lend no assistance to other Christian states. On these conditions Kamel yielded Jerusalem, Nazareth, Tyre, and Sidon ; and Frederick, hastening to the capital, unattended by any of the prelates, placed the crown on his own head, as heir to his father-in-law John de Brienne, and straightway returned to Europe.

On the death of Kamel [A.D. 1237] Syria and Egypt were divided under his two sons, but Negemeddin the elder having invaded Egypt and dispossessed his brother, Damascus and Aleppo were seized in his absence by two insurgent chiefs, and the sultan was obliged to submit to a treaty of partition. This disposed him to set the greater value on the Frank alliance; and when pope Innocent IV., dissatisfied with the terms accepted by Frederick, wrote to the sultan foolishly and wickedly inviting him to violate the truce, Negemeddin returned an indignant refusal. He was not so scrupulous in his measures for the recovery of his Syrian possessions. At his instigation the Carizmians, a barbarian horde beyond the Euphrates, who had been dispossessed by the Moguls, broke into Syria, and overwhelming alike Mussulman and Christian arms, captured Jerusalem, profaned the sepulchres, and ravaged the city with fire and sword [A.D. 1243]. In the confusion created by this invasion Negemeddin advanced against Damascus. The new

ruler obtained the aid of the Franks, but their combined forces were defeated with great slaughter, and Syria returned under the power of the Egyptian sultan.

A sixth crusade, proclaimed by the unflagging zeal of the Western church, was headed by Louis IX. of France, who took the cross on recovering from a dangerous illness. Egypt, from which the previous expedition had been turned aside by the temptations held out at Constantinople, was again selected for the point of attack. The French king leaped ashore with the oriflamme displayed, and the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem by his side, and immediately assaulted Damietta. The Moslems having abandoned it by night, the crusaders entered barefoot in solemn procession, and celebrated high mass in the principal mosque. A Latin bishop was installed with the usual disregard of Greek pretensions; but, as before, Damietta was the first and last of the Christian conquests.

After a ruinous delay which introduced the seeds of disease into the camp, the crusaders advanced towards Cairo and carried the town of Massoura. The sultan, hastening out of Syria, died on the march; but his son and successor, Turan Shah, lost not a moment in besieging the crusaders in their new acquisition. Sick-ness aiding his efforts, the Christians resolved to return to Damietta, when retreat was no longer practicable. The king might have saved himself by abandoning his followers; but, though enfeebled by disease, Louis refused to be separated from his gallant soldiers, and was finally taken prisoner with his two brothers, while the legate fled with the tidings to Damietta. The king was thrown into prison, where he daily recited the liturgy of his church, and by his constancy and piety won the admiration of his captors. The sultan offered

him his liberty on condition of surrendering Damietta with all the places possessed by the Christians in Palestine, and paying the expenses of the war. Damietta, as Louis knew, was indefensible, and therefore he agreed to the first and last of these proposals; but the second he absolutely refused, though threatened with torture and death. The sultan at last compounded his demands for a sum of 800,000 bezants, or about £200,000, being something less than the sum demanded by a Christian prince for the ransom of our own king Richard, who was not his lawful prisoner.

The treaty was closely followed by the death of the sultan, who fell a victim to the fatal policy, so persistently repeated in the east, of surrounding the throne with foreign guards. The prætorian cohorts of Saladin's descendants were Circassian slaves, purchased from the merchants at a tender age, and carefully educated in the exercises of the camp and the intrigues of the palace. The influence of these *Mamelukes* (so called from a word denoting "slaves") had become so overbearing that the young sultan was suspected of a design to emancipate himself by concluding an alliance with the French king, whose courage and piety had deeply impressed the Mussulman people. The Mameluke emirs anticipated the blow by assassinating their sovereign, and raising his father's widow, one of their own race, to the throne. She was required to accept the Mameluke general Moez Ibeg as her husband; but the same year the sovereignty was restored to the house of Saladin in the person of a child only six years old, and Ibeg was fain to content himself with the regency. When these commotions had subsided the treaty with Louis was carried out. Damietta was given up, and the French king embarked with the

remains of his army for Palestine. Having spent four years at Acre, without being able to succour or even to visit Jerusalem, he returned to France covered with the unprofitable "glory" for which that great nation has been so often content to expend its treasures and its blood.

Egypt now became the prey of the contending factions whose extraordinary rise will be related in the next chapter. Sultan Beybars or Bendukdar, whose renown in Moslem tradition is second only to that of Saladin, having reached the throne after a sanguinary struggle, carried his arms into Palestine, and quickly recovering Cæsarea, Joppa, and Antioch, destroyed the churches, and carried away the bulk of the Christians into captivity. He attempted Acre, but without success; yet it was clear that all would be lost without a renewed effort on the part of the West; and to avert this disgrace the seventh and last crusade was proclaimed [A.D. 1270].

Louis of France was again at its head, supported by Edward prince of Wales, who brought a thousand English soldiers to serve under the illustrious monarch. The king embarked with an army of six thousand horse and thirty thousand foot, but instead of making sail for the east, he delayed on the coast of Africa, deluded by the wild hope of converting the king of Tunis, and obtaining a supply of treasure. Experiencing nothing but deceit from the Moors, he landed his troops to enforce performance of their promises, but had the mortification to see his gallant soldiers fall upon the sands a prey to the climate and disease. Louis himself, smitten by pestilence, expired in his tent; and he was no sooner dead than his son re-embarked the forces, and returned to France.

The prince of Wales, with his bride newly married at Bordeaux, pursued his voyage to the Holy Land, and arriving in time to succour Acre, marched on as far as Nazareth. The name of Cœur de Lion still terrified the Saracens, and his nephew was made the object of an assassin's poisoned dagger. His life was only saved by the skill of his surgeon, for though his sick couch was doubtless cheered by the attentions of his consort the princess Eleanor, the story of her sucking the poison from the wound is unknown to the chroniclers of the time, and first appeared in Camden's *Britannia* more than three hundred years after the event.

Edward concluded a ten years' truce with Beybars, being imperatively summoned to return by the death of his son and the great age of his father, who died before he reached England. He left the cause of the crusaders in a hopeless condition. After seven mighty hosts had been despatched from Europe, of whom only a few broken remnants had straggled back, the Franks were confined in the Holy Land to the colony of St. John of Acre, or Ptolemais, a city which "had many sovereigns but no government."¹ The titular kings of Jerusalem and Cyprus, the princes of Antioch, the counts of Tripoli and Sidon, the grand masters of the Temple, the Hospital, and the Teutonic orders, all held their phantom courts within its walls. The French and English sovereigns, the pope's legate, the republics of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, each exercised a more potent command. The vices and the sufferings of the crusaders in Palestine here culminated and came to an end. Acre was besieged by the mameluke sultan Khalil, and carried by storm, after

1. Gibbon, c. lix.

a siege of thirteen days, on the 18th of May, 1291. Sixty thousand Christians were delivered over to death or slavery. The grand master of the Templars fell, fighting to the last, and only five hundred of the knights escaped alive. The poor discrowned king, the patriarch, and the grand master of the Hospital, got to sea in a few vessels, after losing great numbers of fugitives, and took refuge in Cyprus. The sultan destroyed all the Latin churches and fortifications in Palestine, and the Holy Land has ever since remained uncontested in the possession of the Moslems.

The shadow of a Christian kingdom was prolonged for above a century in the petty island of Cyprus, and in 1365 pope Urban V. attempted a last crusade for its restoration; but Europe, exhausted and despairing, gave but a feeble response. Peter de Lusignan wandered from court to court seeking aid, but without effect. Two galleys and a titular patriarch of Constantinople, as cardinal of the crusade, composed the entire expedition of the titular king. Sailing from Venice, he was met at Rhodes by a reinforcement under his brother, who bore the empty title of prince of Antioch, and a hundred knights of St. John added their welcome co-operation. The expedition having swelled to a hundred sail, conveying ten thousand foot and fourteen hundred horse, it was resolved to make a descent on Alexandria. Sultan Shaban, the same who first ordered the descendants of the prophet to wear green turbans, drew up his Mamelukes on the shore to resist the landing; but from some unexplained cause the defenders retired first into the city, and then to Cairo, after a brief combat in which no Christian was killed. The prize, however, was too great to be retained. Part of the city was still held by the

Mohammedan garrison; a vast army might be expected from the interior, while the invaders had exhausted their whole resources in the first victory. The king and the legate reluctantly yielded to the representations of the Hospitallers and English knights, and after collecting an immense booty by pillage re-embarked the troops and returned to Cyprus. Sixty years later the Mamelukes avenged the affront by a descent upon Cyprus, in which the king was taken prisoner, and ransomed by consenting to pay tribute for his petty kingdom to the Egyptian sultan.

This was the last effort on behalf of the crown presented to Godfrey of Bouillon amid the enthusiastic acclamations of western Christendom. The title of king of Jerusalem and Cyprus continues to our own day among the empty honours of the Sicilian crown; but the sceptre was without a realm, and the crusades must be regarded as the greatest and most disastrous failure in the annals of enthusiasm. The result would be the more to be deplored if there were any evidence of their having been undertaken in a spirit of genuine faith. But amid the passionate lamentations for the Holy Sepulchre, and the rejoicings over the "true cross," which fill the pages of the chroniclers, we search in vain for any spiritual view of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The romance which gilds the deeds of chivalry cannot hide the superstition, and self-righteousness, and gross immorality, with which these "holy wars" were conceived and conducted from first to last. They were pre-eminently of the earth, earthy; we may charitably hope that many individuals, though misguided by the false teaching of the day, still humbly looked to Jesus in their hearts: but the boastful, intolerant, sanguinary spirit in which the whole was

carried out was more worthy of the **Koran** than the Gospel. The true soldiers of the Cross are they who are crucified with Christ, reconciled to God by the blood of His Son, and sanctified by His regenerating Spirit. "The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."¹

¹ 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MAMELUKES.

Extinction of Saladin's line—Sheger-el-door—Recovery of Syria—Sultan Beybars—Fall of the Baghdad Caliphate—Second Abbaside Dynasty—Circassian Sultans—Decay of Christianity—Restrictions—Persecutions—Dissensions in Europe—Siege and Fall of Constantinople—Revival of Alexandria.

FROM the close of the Crusades Egypt disappears from the page of history for nearly three centuries. It was ruled by the most extraordinary government ever submitted to by a broken and degraded nation. The line of Saladin having expired with the youth Ashraf Moosa, who was deposed by the regent Moez Ibeg [A.D. 1254], the usurper found himself engaged in a contest for power and life with the sultana whose hand he had received in marriage. This was the famous Sheger-el Door, a beautiful Turkish slave, who had become the favourite wife of Negemeddin, and on the assassination of his son was proclaimed queen of Egypt. Though obliged to descend to the station of consort to the regent, she retained the practical power during the nominal reign of Moosa, and on his removal Ibeg found her death necessary to his own supremacy. The sultana anticipated his design by causing him to be suffocated in his bath, but his son Almansor, at the head of the Mameluke troops, deprived her in turn both of authority and life. Her

last act was to pound up her jewels in a mortar lest they should fall into the hands of her enemies. The beautiful sultana is still the theme of many a popular legend in Egypt. She is said to have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca on a camel, in a magnificent litter, and for several years after to have sent the empty howdah with the annual caravan, as an act of homage to the prophet. The custom was followed by succeeding princes, and the procession of the *Mahmil*, a lofty embroidered canopy borne on a huge camel, still forms the most prominent feature in the departure and return of the caravan from Cairo.¹

Almansor was deposed in less than a year by another Mameluke, Kotuz, who, after signalizing his reign by recovering Syria from the Mongol Tartars, gave place [A.D. 1260] to Ezahir Beyburs el Bendukdaree, the hero of modern Egyptian romance. The exploits of this monarch form the subject of a work in six quarto volumes, to the recital of which no less than thirty professed story tellers exclusively devote their talents in the streets of Cairo.² He was a Turkish slave purchased in Syria (though according to the legend the son of a king), and adopted by a great lady, who gave him the name of her deceased son Beyburs, whom he strongly resembled. Eventually he rose so high in the favour of sultan Negemeddin, that the latter is said to have designated him to the sovereignty, a distinction renewed by his son and the sultana Sheger-el Door, but opposed by his inveterate enemy Ibeg. The romance abounds with his wonderful adventures in Syria and Egypt, and its recital never fails to convulse the hearers with laughter as it describes how he flogged the

¹ Lane's *Mod. Egypt*, ii. 183.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 126.

sultan himself for drinking wine, which the recreant prince had privately conveyed into his water bottle.¹

Beyburs was the idol of the Mameluke forces; and during the seventeen years of his reign the Egyptian power subdued all opponents, Mongol as well as Christian.

The destruction of Baghdad by the Mongols [A.D. 1258] having extinguished the Abbaside caliphate in the blood of its thirty-seventh possessor, the sultan of Egypt made an attempt to revive a dignity so important to the Mussulman world in his own dominions. A fugitive, whom a party of Arabs brought to the gates of Cairo, gave himself out as the son and heir of the slaughtered Moctadhem. The pretender was of a dark complexion, and in other points suspiciously unlike the princely house of the Abbasides: but, under Beyburs' patronage, an assembly of all the imams and moollahs of Syria and Egypt pronounced his claim to be established, and saluted him caliph. The sultan disbursed a million pieces of gold for his equipment, and after proclaiming him in Syria, despatched him to Baghdad with a force charged to replace him on the throne. The Mongols intercepted the troops, and put the caliph to death; but Beyburs found a new representative of the prophet, whom he established at Cairo, and he was followed by a line of nominal caliphs known as the second Abbaside dynasty. These pontiffs were purely spiritual chiefs, appointed and removed by the Mamelukes at pleasure, and little heeded by Mussulmans in general.

The long and glorious reign of Beyburs enabled

¹ The Koran inflicts the penalty of eighty stripes for this offence, and this punishment, termed the *khadd*, every true believer is entitled to inflict.

him to bequeath the throne of Egypt to his sons in succession; but Damascus was lost at his death till recovered by another of Negemeddin's Mamelukes, Kalaon the father of Khalil, who finally expelled the Christians from the Holy Land.

Kalaon gives his name to a new division or dynasty (if that term can be applied to successions so little regulated by birth), who continued the line of Baharite Mamelukes down to A.D. 1382. An extraordinary pressure then arising from Timur's invasion of the East, the sceptre, or rather sword, of Egypt was seized by a Circassian slave, named Berkook, who twice repulsed the Mongols from Syria.

The Circassian Mamelukes continued to furnish sultans to Egypt down to the Turkish conquest, but there would be little interest in tracing the obscure annals of these barbarous rulers. Slaves in origin, and maintaining their power by continued importations of slaves, the camp and the palace formed their roads to power. The government was purely military; the emirs of the troops were the council of state, and proclaimed the sultan. Hereditary claims prevailed only when there was no rival strong enough to dispute them; not unfrequently the vacancy was created by the sword of the emir, who was ambitious of filling it. The sultan's duty was to fight the enemy abroad, and control (if he could) his emirs at home. The emirs ruled the land in more than feudal lordship; the natives, long inured to bondage, submitted to every master in turn, and were happy only when they could escape the notice of all. History presents no other instance of a sovereignty so ignoble and so lasting.

During this melancholy period large portions of the natives parted with the religion which in earlier

days had defied the power of Roman persecutors, and Christianity dwindled into a despised and prostrate sect. The rival churches continued to make the faith of Christ a burden instead of a consolation; neither showed a spark of morality, patriotism, or prudence. They were torn by contests for ecclesiastical preferments, only valued in proportion as they afforded the means of extorting money. The patriarchs and bishops, who were allowed a great part of the temporal government of their flocks, freely accused one another of simony and extortion. The clergy, sharing the iniquitous profits of their superiors, clamoured against reforms which would lessen their ability to make good the customary payments. The people, steeped in superstition, were further infamous in Moslem eyes for corruption of manners. The ambition both of Catholics and Jacobites was to fill the civil offices of government. They farmed the taxes, regulated the markets, and were the scribes and secretaries of the divan. The Moslems preferred the sword to the pen; like the Moguls in India, they left the work of the desk to the intelligence and ingenuity of the subject race.

The Christians spent the wealth thus amassed in ways little sanctioned by their religion. The Mussulmans were shocked to meet a Christian official in the streets, mounted on a superb charger gorgeously arrayed, and followed by a numerous retinue of Moslem attendants. A crowd of petitioners entreated his favour or deprecated his anger; some were even seen kissing his feet. "What wonder," exclaimed an indignant emir, "that our arms are unsuccessful against the Tartars when the most sacred laws are thus violated in our own capital?" Such complaints

always had their effect. The Mohammedans grew incensed. The laws of Omar were appealed to. The blue turban and the ass were rigorously insisted upon, and all Christians were stripped of their offices. It was well if their churches were not closed or pulled down.

One of these persecutions, which occurred at the opening of the fourteenth century, called forth the intercessions of the Greek emperor and the king of Arragon. Similar complaints, however, were renewed fifty years after. The Jacobites outraged all decency by excess in wine and the possession of female Mussulman slaves. The Mohammedans were at once scandalized and corrupted by their evil example. The splendour of their religious rites, and the wealth of their churches, aggravated the complaints; fifty thousand acres of land were found to be in the hands of the church. The emirs enforced the ancient laws with additional disabilities. It was made unlawful for any Christian to build or repair a church, monastery, or cell, to teach his children the Koran, or to prevent their being taught it by Mohammedans, to refuse to a Mussulman shelter in any church or monastery for three nights, to use the Arabic characters in deeds, to possess a Mohammedan slave, to bury the dead with a public procession, to ride on horses, to use a saddle, or to wear the same garments as Mussulmans. Their worship was to be said in a low voice, and no *hagiosidera*, or clappers, to be sounded. It shows the progress of Arabic knowledge, that Christians were now also prohibited from practising medicine. To prevent escaping these penalties by a fictitious conversion to Mohammedanism, it was enjoined that the convert should separate from his family unless they also forsook Christianity, and that no one who had ever been

a Christian should be qualified for office by changing his creed.

Severe as these laws were, the fury of the Moslem populace often outran them. A general attack was made on all the Christians in Cairo about A.D. 1348, and for a month their lives and property were in continual danger. Christianity suffered as severe a blow at this time as at the Arab conquest. Apostasies were innumerable, churches were destroyed or changed into mosques, and it almost seemed as if the very name of Christianity were about to expire.¹

While the Christians of Egypt were thus justifying and prolonging their bondage, the churches of Rome and Constantinople were vying with each in inviting a similar chastisement. Their insane conflicts, political and ecclesiastical, were the means of introducing the Turks into Europe, and of handing over the last relics of the Roman empire to the Ottoman invaders.

The Turks, profiting by the dissension which distracted Christendom, had steadily advanced westward, and at length invading Europe itself, threatened Constantinople. Constantine, the last of the ill-fated line, in vain implored the assistance of the western princes against the common foe. The catastrophe was inevitable and rapidly approaching, unless succour were afforded, and if the empire fell, what confidence or security could any European monarch feel? The emperor was prepared to make any concession, to accept any compromise. He wearied his fellow-potentates with appeals for help; but not a hand was stretched out to his aid, when Mohammed II. marched from Adrianople to complete his destruction. Of the three hundred thousand soldiers who formed

¹ Neale, ii. 329.

the Moslem host, not a few were Christians; a deserter from the Greek camp, who had constructed a foundry at Adrianople, furnished the enemy of his faith with a gun which threw a stone ball of 600 lbs. weight. This fact, incredible in days when number of pieces was relied upon in preference to weight of metal, presents no difficulty to ourselves, whom recent improvements, reverting to these ancient experiments, render familiar with even heavier projectiles.

The fated city was speedily invested on the landward side; the Turkish galleys swarmed on the eastern and southern seas, and strove to force the massive chain which guarded the harbour to the north. Foiled in this endeavour, the sultan had recourse to a wonderful piece of engineering, also devised by a Christian renegade. Eighty of the galleys in the Bosphorus, being drawn ashore and lifted on a tramway of strong planks smeared with grease, were propelled across the isthmus to the upper extremity of the harbour, where they were launched in the shallow water, out of reach of the ships of war that guarded the entrance.¹ The city was now assailed on every side; the Greeks, too few to man the fortifications, defended themselves with the courage of despair. Constantine, the only hero of his race, showed a valour worthy of his name; but neither conduct nor courage could avail against the immensely superior force of the implacable besieger. After fifty-three days Constantinople was taken by assault; the last Christian emperor, bearing the same name with the first, fell bravely fighting in

¹ The distance traversed by this singular railway is stated at ten miles by Gibbon, and by Knolles at eight; but closer inspection has disclosed a creek which may reduce the land passage to two miles.

the breach, and the Ottoman sultan, riding up to the church of St. Sophia, offered praise to the false prophet from the altar where the last of the Cæsars had just received the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

This catastrophe occurred on the 29th May, 1453. There can be no doubt that it was a direct result of the Latin conquest, accelerated by the unappeasable enmity of the Roman see. Pope Nicolas had presumed to warn the intractable Greeks that unless they submitted to the chair of St. Peter, the unfruitful fig-tree would be cut down. He claimed credit as a prophet when the prediction, which his own heartless pride mainly contributed to bring about, was fulfilled. But the fall of Constantinople was the natural sequel of the policy which opened with the recovery of Jerusalem. Half the zeal wasted in the Crusades, if applied to the maintenance of Christian unity, might have preserved the empire and restrained the Turks to the Asiatic side of the Hellespont. But the powers of Europe had made themselves vassals to the pope. Men who had been anxious for the Holy Land stood aloof while their fellow Christians perished under the scimitars of the Mussulmans. Four centuries of bondage have not exhausted the cup of misery still drained by millions of poor Eastern peasants, in order that the bishop of Rome might reign sole and supreme in the Church of the Redeemer of mankind.

Amid the convulsions of the East the Mamelukes ruled unmolested in Egypt. Berkook, the first Circassian sultan [A.D. 1382], signalized himself by twice repulsing Tamerlane from Syria, but the Mongols returned, sacked Aleppo, and reduced Damascus to

ashes. Furreg, the son and successor of Berkook, met them with a large army, and had nearly repeated their expulsion when a revolt of the Mamelukes recalled him to Cairo. Timour had suffered too much to pursue him, and returning to the Euphrates he vented his resentment on Baghdad. The caliph and his city were ruthlessly destroyed, and a pyramid of ninety thousand heads, erected amid the smoking ruins, proclaimed the triumph of the disciples of Ali over the orthodox Mussulmans. Timour's ravages were inroads rather than conquests, and Syria returned to the sway of the Mamelukes [A.D. 1405]. Twenty years later sultan Borosbai attacked Cyprus, and taking prisoner John III., enforced the regular payment of tribute from the long humiliated kingdom.

The fall of Constantinople seems to have little affected these daring rulers, though its influence was immediately felt by their Christian subjects. The orthodox Church, strengthened by the accession of the Greek fugitives, was at the same time delivered from the divided allegiance which had always involved it in suspicion with the Mussulman masters of Egypt. Being no longer regarded as a foreign communion, the Melchites received equal toleration with the Jacobites. Their patriarchs were chosen without Byzantine interference, and with less political feeling at home; the consequence was a marked accession of influence to the see and city of Alexandria.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TURKISH CONQUEST.

Bajazet—Selim I.—Fall of the Mamelukes—Extinction of the Caliphate—Revival of the Greek Church—Abyssinian Church—Papal Aggressions—Cyril Lucar—European Travels—Protestant Convictions—Authority of Scripture—patriarch of Constantinople—Confession of Faith—Expulsion of the Jesuits—Murder of Cyril—Calumnies—Council of Bethlehem—Decay of the Greek Church.

EGYPT could not long avoid a collision with the new lords of Constantinople. Holding the keys of both seas, they formed a standing menace to East and West, and the two great powers of Persia and Egypt naturally combined for mutual defence. The first efforts of Mohammed II. effected the reduction of the Morea, Epirus, and the Danubian provinces, with some of the Greek islands. Towards the close of his reign his son Bajazet, pursuing the tide of conquest into Asia Minor, was defeated by the king of Carmania, aided by the shah and the Egyptian sultan. This disaster recalled Mohammed from Otranto (where he was on the point of driving pope Sixtus IV. out of Italy) to measure arms with his Mussulman rivals. He died, however, without reaching the scene of action, and the Ottoman power was divided by a contest for the succession between Bajazet and his brother Zisimes. The latter was naturally encouraged by the sultan's enemies; but the knights of Rhodes, afraid to

provoke their formidable neighbour, managed to send the pretender into Italy, where the pope undertook to maintain him for an annual pension paid into the papal exchequer by the great enemy of Christianity. Nor was the office of gaoler the only one which the successors of St. Peter condescended to execute for the destroyer of the East. When Bajazet found it time for his unhappy brother to die, Alexander VI. accepted two hundred thousand ducats as the price of his blood, and had him poisoned in his prison. His ally, the king of Carimania, was finally subdued and his territories annexed to the Ottoman empire, but Egypt maintained the war with unabated vigour and success. Marching rapidly through Syria, sultan Kaitbag met the Ottoman forces near Tarsus, and inflicting a severe defeat, compelled Bajazet to surrender his Asiatic conquests and conclude a treaty of peace [A.D. 1468].

The tables were turned by the next sultan of the Ottomans, Selim I. Succeeding to the throne by poisoning his father [A.D. 1512], he first renewed the war with Persia, and having stripped her of Armenia and Mesopotamia, turned his arms upon Egypt. The sultan El Ghoree was defeated near Aleppo and pursued to the Nile. His nephew and successor Toman Bey was routed with all the flower of the Mamelukes in a great battle at Heliopolis. In a second engagement he was taken prisoner and conducted to Cairo, which had no option but to open its gates to the victorious host. The last of the Mameluke sultans was barbarously hanged in his own capital [A.D. 1517], and Egypt again became a province of the Constantinopolitan empire. The Mameluke nobles were permitted to retain their rank and

property, and to devolve them not only on their sons, but, after their peculiar usage, on adopted slaves. The beys (as they were called) still constituted the council of state, and enjoyed under the Turkish pasha, or viceroy, the practical administration of the country. They were required only to provide an annual tribute for the sultan, to insert his name in the *Kotbeh* and on the coin, and to obey the mufti of Constantinople in questions of faith. Their own nominal caliph was removed to Constantinople, but permitted to return into Egypt after Selim's death. His decease in 1543 extinguished the last shadow of a succession to the Arabian prophet; and the title of caliph, which had so long claimed the spiritual obedience of the Mussulman world, was thenceforward assumed by the Osmanli sultans as part of their military conquests.

Egypt having now sunk into a mere province of the Turkish empire, has no place in the page of history, till it was reproduced in the wars of the French Revolution. Its religious annals are scarcely more inviting. The effect of the Turkish conquest was to deprive the Jacobites of the state-countenance extended to them by the Mamelukes, and to augment the influence of the orthodox church by the accession of new members flying from the ruin of the Greek empire. Its traditional connexion with Constantinople and the communion of that patriarchate, which had so long rendered it an object of suspicion in Egypt, now commended it to the favour of the ruling power; and the church of Athanasius might again have arisen from the dust, if the see of Rome could have tolerated any church but its own.

The existence of the Abyssinian church now begin-

ning to be known in the West, strange stories were told of a Christian monarch in the heart of Africa whose dominions extended from sea to sea. The Portuguese, penetrating into Ethiopia from India, found the realm far narrower than was reputed, and constantly threatened by its Moorish neighbours. Still Axum was the capital of a powerful state which retained the Jacobite profession, under the guardianship of an *abune*¹ consecrated at Alexandria. The Portuguese persuaded the king to propose to the aged metropolitan one of their nation, Bermudez by name, as his coadjutor and successor, and further to consecrate him with his own hands. Bermudez then repaired to Rome to seek the papal ratification, and Paul III. not only joyfully seized the opportunity to "boast in another man's line," but in the plenitude of his supremacy created the new bishop patriarch of Alexandria. Neither Egypt nor Ethiopia were disposed to recognise this usurpation, and a negotiation, opened in defiance of all consistency with the Jacobite patriarch, was equally fruitless. Then commenced the familiar apparatus of Jesuit missions and temporal violence, by which at last a Roman schism was planted in Abyssinia and afterwards extended to the whole East.

During this struggle arose by far the greatest prelate who has appeared in the Oriental church since the Mahomedan usurpation. Cyril Lucar was born at Candia in the year 1752. The island was then under the government of the Venetian republic, who

¹ Abuna signifies "my lord," the Abyssinian style of the metropolitan. Cyril Lucar gives an account of one who came to see him but never spoke, it being a sin in the abuna to speak out of his own house. He was closely veiled, showing nothing but the eyes, and "looking like a ghost in a tragedy." Neale, ii. 380.

had seized it on the partition of the Greek empire, and hitherto retained it against the increasing power of the Turks. The archbishop of Candia was of course a Roman prelate; but the Greek church, being fairly tolerated by the Venetian government, was in a far better condition than in the other islands or on the continent. Cyril, like many other youths, was sent to Venice for his education, which he completed at the university of Padua. Afterwards travelling in Europe for the purpose of acquainting himself with the doctrines of the Reformation, he visited Geneva, Holland, and England, and finally returned to Alexandria, where a relation, Meletius Piga, had been elected to the orthodox chair of St. Mark. By him he was ordained priest, and shortly promoted to the dignity of archimandrite. He was then sent as exarch to Slavonia for the purpose of opposing the papal aggressions on the Greek church, in Lithuania: returning to Alexandria he found the patriarch expiring, and was himself consecrated his successor [A.D. 1602]. Being called to Constantinople, and finding the Jesuits active in preaching papal doctrine in the Greek churches, he publicly opposed their endeavours, and thereby drew on himself a hatred which pursued him to his death.

To the English traveller Sandys, Cyril declared his concurrence with the leading doctrines of the Reformation, adding that the points of difference between the Oriental and the English churches were few and unimportant. At Constantinople he found an old friend in the Dutch ambassador Von Haga, and was induced by him to open a brotherly correspondence with the chief Protestant minister at the Hague. In this correspondence Cyril naturally upholds the cause of his

own persecuted church. He mildly defends episcopacy against the other's assertion of Presbyterian equality; but while explaining and maintaining the doctrine of the two sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist, he entirely agrees that *neither is efficacious without faith*.¹

He freely allows the non-essential character of all merely human institutions, admitting that some of the Greek ceremonies might be altered with advantage. On the controverted questions of free will, predestination, and justification, he somewhat cautiously refrains from writing; remarking that the world is not agreed, but that his own church has always held the same doctrine. He thanks his correspondent for lending him the publications of Arminius, in terms which distinctly reserve his own opinion. On only one point can he be said absolutely to dissent from his church, and that is in the invocation of the saints. He writes, "I call the Lord to witness that, in reciting the public office, it gives me the greatest pain to hear the saints invoked circumstantially, to the dereliction of Jesus Christ and the great detriment of souls."²

Cyril earnestly invited discussion on these and kindred subjects, maintaining the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the right of the laity to their perusal; but he never intimated the slightest doubt of the authority of his own church, or the remotest inclination to depart from her communion. On the contrary, the Greek is always to him the Catholic church; when cleared of a few corruptions inconsistent with its own standards, and animated with a more spiritual devotion, he hoped to

¹ Neale, ii. 370.

² Neale, ii. 400.

see all others united with it in things essential. To the English Protestant the value of this learned man's testimony lies not in his agreement with particular schemes of divinity, but in his abhorrence of the papacy and his assertion of the Scripture as the one rule of faith in the primitive church, and in that large communion which has inherited the language of the New Testament and of the Fathers.

On returning to Cairo, where he ordinarily resided on account of the extreme unhealthiness of Alexandria, Cyril excommunicated the Jesuits, whom he found endeavouring to sow their tares in his field. Painfully impressed with the ignorance of his own clergy, he selected a young priest named Metrophanes, and sent him to England with a letter to archbishop Abbot, which secured him a place on the foundation of one of the colleges at Oxford. The young man continued there five years, and then quarrelling with the archbishop, who complained heavily of his ingratitude, went into Germany, and finally returning to Egypt became patriarch of Alexandria. In that capacity he exhibited still greater baseness by joining in the false aspersions on his original benefactor after he was dead.

In the meantime Cyril was elevated to the see of Constantinople, the chief dignity in the Oriental church, but a seat of cruel thorns to its possessor. The Jesuits, his implacable enemies, first set up an anti-patriarch who had formally submitted to the Roman see; this intruder being removed by the government, they next had recourse to French influence, which, backed by a large bribe to the grand vizier, procured Cyril to be banished on a charge of treason. For this "service to the Catholic faith"

the French ambassador received a letter of thanks from pope Urban VIII.; but James I. having ordered Sir Thomas Rowe to use his influence for the patriarch's recall, Cyril regained his see at a cost to his church of sixty thousand dollars. The Propaganda at Rome then offered twenty thousand dollars to the suffragan bishops to choose another patriarch, but being again threatened by the Porte, they intruded into the Archipelago an anti-patriarch from Rome, with the title of apostolic suffragan, who consecrated Latin bishops in several of the islands. Cyril, throwing himself on English protection, obtained a printing press from this country, and prepared to publish his Confession of Faith with a treatise of Meletius Piga against the Roman supremacy. These works were suppressed by the grand vizier, incited by a representation from the Jesuits that they were opposed to the precepts of Mohammed! but the confession afterwards appeared in a Latin translation at Geneva.

The arts and intrigues of the Jesuits were at last so thoroughly exposed by Sir Thomas Rowe that the sultan expelled them from his territories. Their bribes, however, aroused the cupidity of the Turks; they put the patriarchate up to sale, and after conveying it to a rival for sixty thousand dollars, removed him in a month and resold it to Cyril for a still higher sum. A plot was now laid to seize his person, and carry him off in a piratical sloop to Rome. Finally, during the sultan's absence on an expedition against Baghdad, the Cossacks having seized Azof, Amurath was told that their enterprise had been favoured by Cyril, and in a transport of passion he despatched the patriarch's death warrant to Constan-

tinople. Cyril was hurried into a boat, strangled with the bowstring, and flung into the sea, in the sixty-sixth year of his age [A.D. 1638]. A universal burst of grief among the Christians attested his many excellent qualities, and no name in the Greek calendar is more justly entitled to the appellations of saint and martyr.¹

It was Cyril's misfortune to be in advance of his age. His successor, one Cyril Contari, a creature of the Jesuits, stained with perfidy, simony, and heresy, assembled a council at Constantinople [A.D. 1638], which anathematized the good patriarch, and asserted the infallibility of the Church, the invocation of the saints, the seven sacraments, transubstantiation, purgatory, and the remission of its pains through the alms of the survivors and the prayers of the Church. These decrees were subscribed by the wretched Metrophanes, but the patriarchs of Antioch and Moscow were absent. They are uncontestedly opposed to Greek orthodoxy, and their author Contari being shortly after convicted and banished for enormous crimes, was deposed and anathematized on various charges, amongst which was the false accusation of his predecessor. Cyril's teaching could not be overthrown by such a calumniator.

The task was undertaken in a different spirit by the council of Bethlehem [A.D. 1668]. The memory of Cyril Lucar was there relieved from the stigma of heresy, but the confession imputed to him was pronounced a forgery. This appears to be the general opinion of the Greeks at the present day, but though in parts perhaps

¹ An Arabic Pentateuch, in the Bodleian Library, is inscribed in Cyril's handwriting as a present to archbishop Laud; and his regard for the English was shown in the splendid present to king Charles of the famous Alexandrine Codex of the entire Scripture.

incorrectly printed or translated, the confession is substantially genuine, and its arguments suffer little from the refutations of the council. The Jesuits had now thoroughly troubled the shallow waters of modern Greek theology. At the synod of Constantinople [1641] the patriarch Parthenius sanctioned the *word* transubstantiation, though it was protested against by one of his priests as a novelty of Latin scholasticism. At Bethlehem, transubstantiation was not only asserted in the strongest terms, but attributed to Cyril Lucar himself in an extract which Dr. Neale cannot believe ever proceeded from his pen.¹ This learned writer, notwithstanding his respect for synodical decrees, does not allow that "the Greek church has even yet decided the question."

These dissensions brought little benefit to the orthodox church of Alexandria. Samuel, who was patriarch from 1710 to 1724, rejected the advances of the English non-jurors, though he gladly accepted a supply of Syrian New Testaments from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. His communion seems to have steadily yielded in number and influence to the Jacobite. The hundred bishoprics which obeyed Athanasius had sunk to four—Ethiopia, Memphis, Damietta, and Rosetta—at the time of the council of Bethlehem. These four have since ceased to exist, and the patriarch himself is the sole orthodox bishop. All that is not Mussulman in Egypt seems to have gravitated to the Coptic communion under the Jacobite patriarch.

¹ Neale, ii. 469.

CHAPTER XX.

RECENT EVENTS.

Cairo—Invasion of Syria—Atrocities at Jaffa—Sir Sidney Smith—Siege of Acre—Retreat of Bonaparte—Poisoning the Sick—Turkish defeat at Aboukir—Flight of Bonaparte—Kleber—Menou—Second British victory at Aboukir—Capitulation of Cairo and Alexandria—Expulsion of the French—Baird's Sepoys—Rosetta Stone—Peace of Amiens—Failure of Mackenzie and Fraser—Mohammed Ali—Massacre of the Beys—Regular army—Naval defeat at Navarino—Conquest of Syria—Danger of the Porte—Russian alliance—Renewal of War—Surrender of Turkish Fleet—European intervention—British arms in Syria—Capitulation of Ibrahim Pasha—Submission of Mohammed Ali—Death—Conclusion.

AT the close of the eighteenth century Egypt once more emerged from the obscurity in which it had lain for some generations. The ambition and genius of Napoleon Bonaparte now raised it into new importance. It is not a little remarkable that a country formed by nature for the commerce of the world should have owed its place in history chiefly to war: from Alexander to Napoleon, Egypt's destiny has been conquest. The young French general, whose expedition again fixed the eyes of the civilised world upon the land of the Pharaohs, after making immense preparations for an invasion of England, had begun to despair of the success of his scheme. He proposed to the Directory to assail our country in a more vulnerable part. His project was to occupy Egypt, and using that country as a base of operations to assail our power in India, and wrest that vast continent from our grasp. He believed, in common with the

great majority of the French people, that our Indian possessions supply the source of British prosperity, and that once deprived of that inexhaustible mine of wealth, we should be crippled abroad and impoverished at home.

For some time the representations of the young general were in vain. Dazzled at last with the splendour of his propositions, and perhaps not unwilling to consign a dangerous rival to a perilous undertaking, the French Directory placed an army of forty thousand troops at his disposal, with a fleet of thirteen ships of the line, fourteen frigates, and several hundred smaller vessels and transports. Sailing from Toulon in May, 1798, without revealing their destination to his troops, Bonaparte reached Malta in June, where having previously corrupted the grand master and several of the knights of St. John, he was permitted to take possession of their impregnable fortifications without a blow. Leaving a sufficient garrison to maintain his conquest, the general continued his voyage to Egypt. Meantime Nelson, who had gained intelligence of his design at Messina, eagerly pursued him with the British fleet. Out-sailing the French, he passed them in the night within five leagues, without either being aware of the other's position, and arrived at Alexandria to find no enemy there. Instantly supposing the expedition to have gone to the Dardanelles, Nelson turned in chase to the north, and, two days after, on the 1st July, 1798, Bonaparte cast anchor in the bay of Aboukir, outside the harbour of Alexandria. Landing his troops the same night, he advanced through the sandhills with five thousand men, and captured the city at the first assault.

Alexandria and its population had undergone a mighty change during the eleven centuries of Mohammedan despotism. The French approached the walls through heaps of ruins once forming part of the Macedonian and Roman capitals: within the Saracen fortifications a wide scene of desolation intervened before they reached the inhabited houses. The oriental splendour which had excited the imagination of France had given place to poverty and wretchedness; and the conquerors were hard put to it for food and lodging in the place which Amrou had described as "the greatest city of the west."

The fallen capital of the Ptolemies did but symbolise the humiliation of the population. Egypt, which at the time of the Saracen conquest nourished twenty millions of Christians, was now reduced to two and a half millions in all, of whom not a tenth part retained even a corrupt form of Christianity. So completely was the blood of the Saracens degenerated, that all were ruled by some twelve thousand Mamelukes, constituting the army. These troops were commanded by twenty-four beys, who divided the country between them in a sort of feudal sovereignty, each maintaining his five or six hundred Mameluke retainers.¹ All were mounted, and, priding themselves solely on their horses and arms, they formed the finest body of cavalry in the world. Their numbers, however, were far fewer than formerly, in consequence of the Russian conquests in Georgia having greatly narrowed the sources from which they were recruited.

The beys were nominally under the authority of the pasha who represented the Ottoman Porte, and

¹ The office of bey was not hereditary; the son was often set aside in favour of a more popular officer.

was sustained by two hundred thousand Turks. Only a portion of these, however, actually carried arms as guards of the pasha, the majority were dispersed through the towns in trades and shops, and, like the natives, under the power of the beys.

In this condition of affairs Bonaparte, the better to advance his design upon the country, proclaimed himself an enemy only to the Mamelukes. To the Porte he wrote assurances of amity which blinded the sultan's eyes, while to the Arabs he protested the utmost reverence for the prophet, and his determination, when the foreign power of the beys was destroyed, to raise the disciples of Islam to a state of liberty and happiness hitherto unknown. "People of Egypt," he wrote in his first manifesto, "you will be told by our enemies that I am come to destroy your religion. Believe them not; tell them that I am come to restore the worship of Mohammed, whom I venerate more than the Mamelukes. Tell them that all men are equal in the sight of God; that wisdom, talents, and virtue alone constitute the difference between them. . . . A horde of slaves, bought in the Caucasus and Georgia, have long tyrannised over the finest part of the world; but Allah, upon whom everything depends, has decreed that it should terminate. Cadis, Sheiks, Imams, tell the people that *we too are Mussulmans*. Are we not the men who have destroyed the pope who preached eternal war against the Mussulmans? Are we not those who have destroyed the knights of Malta, because those madmen believed that they should constantly make war on your faith? Are we not those who have been in every age the friends of the Most High, and the enemies of His enemies? Thrice happy

those who are with us, they will prosper in all their undertakings. Woe to those who shall join the Mamelukes to resist us; they shall perish without mercy.”¹

There is reason to think the profession of Islam would really have been made if it had been found expedient. He assured the Sheiks that his troops were ready to embrace their faith, promising to build a grander mosque in Alexandria than the famous Azar at Cairo. His proclamations were headed with the *Bismillah*, “In the name of the merciful God there is but one God, and Mohammed is His prophet;” and he avowed at St. Helena that he might have been induced actually to embrace the faith of Islam if he had got as far as the Euphrates. “Is not the empire of the East (he asked) worth a turban and red trousers? for after all it comes only to that. The army would have joined, and made a joke of its conversion.” Menou, one of his generals, openly apostatised (if he had any faith to apostatise from), and Bonaparte only laughed at the ridiculous appearance of the new Mussulman. The people, he said, liked him the better for it. These professions won many of the sheiks and imams to his side, and their authority had great weight with the Arabs. The French had only to dispose of the Mamelukes, and the country was their own.

The Mamelukes had committed the management of affairs to the two principal beys, Ibrahim and Mourad; the former administering the government, while the latter and younger acted as commander-in-chief of the army. On these two it rested to meet the conqueror of Austerlitz and Lodi: their gallant followers had no doubt of the result. Bonaparte was not long in testing their prowess. Pushing through the desert

¹ Alison, *Hist. Europe*, ch. xxiv.

from Alexandria with thirty thousand soldiers, in spite of incredible sufferings from heat and thirst, aggravated by the illusions of the *mirage*, he reached the Nile early in July, and inflicted a severe defeat on Mourad Bey, who awaited the encounter on its banks. The week after, a second engagement before Cairo utterly routed the Mamelukes, several thousands of whom were destroyed in the field and the river, and compelled the bey to retreat into Upper Egypt, with a mere fragment of his enormous hosts, and the loss of all his artillery stores and baggages. Ibrahim Bey was driven across the desert into Syria, and Bonaparte found himself master of the land of his early dreams. "From the summit of yonder pyramids," he exclaimed to the soldiers, who shared his enthusiasm, "forty centuries are looking down upon your actions." The Arabs spread the fame of his conquest through the desert to Mecca and the farther East. They named him Sultan Kebir, "the lord of fire."

He began immediately to organise the civil government of his conquest, established a representative assembly in Cairo, cleared the frontiers of robbers, and committing the administration of justice to the sheiks and imams, watched over their acts with a solicitude little usual in eastern monarchs. Hearing that a *fellah* had been slain, and his flocks carried away by some marauding Arabs, he immediately sent a force in pursuit of the aggressors. "Was the fellah your kinsman," demanded a sheik, "that you are in such a rage at his death?" "He was more than a kinsman," was the noble reply; "he was one whose safety Providence had entrusted to my care." "*Mashallah!*" rejoined the Mussulman, "wonderful! you speak

like one inspired by the Almighty.”¹ They were equally but less justifiably impressed, when the French general attended the great mosque, in thanksgiving for a more than usually bountiful inundation of the Nile, joined in the Mussulman prayers, and even imitated the bowings of head and body practised by the Mussulman worshippers.

The Ottoman Porte, now opening its eyes to the deception that had been practised on it, sent the French minister to the Seven Towers, and indignantly declared war with France for the piratical seizure of its most valuable province without provocation or complaint. The avenger was at hand. Nelson, after a second time missing the French fleet by his own activity, and ranging the Mediterranean in quest of it, found his prey at length anchored in the bay of Aboukir. “Before this time to-morrow,” he cried in his wonted phrase, “I shall have gained a coronet or Westminster Abbey.”¹ In spite of the strength of the French position, he forced his ships between their moorings and the shore, and attacking the enemy on both sides gained a signal victory. The battle raged from three o’clock on the 1st of August, 1798, till after midnight, illumining the darkness with volumes of flame and lurid smoke which gave the bay the appearance of a volcano. At ten the French flagship *L’Orient* blew up with so tremendous an explosion as to silence the cannon on both sides for an interval of ten minutes. At daybreak not a vestige of the enormous ship remained, and the whole French fleet had struck their colours, with the

¹ Alison, ch. xxiv.

² *Ib.* A similar expression is ascribed to the hero at the battle of Cape St. Vincent the year before (c. xxii.).

exception of two which escaped by flight.¹ Nelson was severely wounded in the head early in the engagement, but though he thought the blow fatal he refused to let the surgeon attend him out of his turn. When informed that there was no danger of his life, he had the joy of knowing that his sailors were more delighted by the good tidings than himself.

The loss of life among the French was six times greater than the English, besides the prisoners, who numbered above three thousand. History affords no other example of so complete an overthrow of so great an armament, and had Nelson been furnished with frigates, or any vessels light enough to enter the harbour, all the French transports must have shared the destruction. The admiral was created Baron Nelson of the Nile, with a pension and the thanks of parliament. The sultan and other sovereigns made him magnificent presents, and it is not too much to say that this victory, under Providence, changed the fate of Europe and Asia. To the French army in Egypt it was a mortal stroke. Bonaparte saw his visions of Oriental empire disappear in a moment; his expedition was exiled, without the means either of advance or return. France had added Turkey to the number of her enemies; Russia, suspending its ancient hostility, rushed to the succour of the outraged Ottomans, and a triple alliance was formed with the English against the Republic.

Bonaparte, however, still pressed his reforms in

¹ Of thirteen ships of the line, nine were taken and two burnt; of four frigates, one was burnt and one sunk. The British squadron consisted of seventeen seventy-fours, carrying 1012 guns and 8068 men, against 1196 guns and 11,230 men. The advantage in guns and men was greatly increased by the superior size of the majority of the French vessels.

Egypt. He established an institute in Cairo on the model of that at Paris. The men of science who accompanied the army pursued those investigations into the antiquities, geography, and natural history of the country, which were afterwards published in the magnificent *Description de l'Égypte*, and proved the most valuable result of the expedition. Mourad Bey was driven out of Upper Egypt into Ethiopia, and the ruins of Thebes taken, like the pyramids, under French protection. Bonaparte in person traversed the desert to Suez, to inspect the line of the ancient canal between the two seas, and plan its reopening. He crossed the Red Sea on the sands, at ebb tide, to the wells of Moses, and was nearly lost in returning during the flood.¹

All his energy, however, could not prevent an insurrection at Cairo, when the French were no longer deemed invincible, which was only quelled by the slaughter of five thousand of the inhabitants, and the conflagration of a large part of the city. For six days after their submission he cut off the heads of thirty chiefs every night, and threw the corpses into the Nile. "Is there any so blind," he cried to the terrified imams, "as not to see that I am the man of destiny? Show the people that my coming is foretold in twenty passages of the Koran; those who become my enemies shall have no refuge in this world or the next." Knowing that the sultan was assembling his forces in Syria, he determined to cross the desert and anticipate the attack. At the same time he wrote to

¹ It is singular that Sir A. Alison should fall into the mistake, intelligible if not excusable in the French, of imagining this was the "identical passage" traversed by the children of Israel. Their passage, in all probability, was at the Wady Tawarik, where the water is now seven miles broad.—*Anc. Egypt*, p. 293.

Tippoo sultan in Mysore, to send a minister to Suez and concert with him the destruction of the British power in India.¹

Putting his artillery on board his three frigates at Alexandria, and placing himself at the head of thirteen thousand men, Bonaparte plunged into the desert on the 11th of February, 1799, and reaching El Arish in six days, surprised the Mameluke camp, and captured the fort: on the 28th he reached the pillars which mark the confines of Asia and Africa, and on the 4th of March appeared before Jaffa, the Joppa of antiquity. The place was taken after a fierce resistance. A portion of the garrison escaped, but afterwards surrendered on a promise of their lives. The prisoners created a difficulty which, it is to be hoped, no other European army would have solved in the same way. The conquerors could not send them to Egypt, from want of men to guard them; they could not detain them in the camp for want of provisions; they would not release them for fear of their returning to the enemy. After debating the question in a council of war for two days, the French officers gave a unanimous verdict for death, and their general signed the fatal order. They were marched in fetters to the sea-side, and slaughtered in cold blood by successive volleys of musketry; one who burst his bonds and threw himself among the horses of the officers was bayoneted at their feet; a few who swam out to sea were beckoned back with signs of forgiveness, but as soon as they came within musket range they were pitilessly shot down. The bones still remain in great heaps in the desert, "a monument of Christian (?) atrocity," which the Arab shudders to approach.

¹ See India: Historical Sketch, pp. 222-4.

At Acre, Bonaparte was encountered by another English sailor, of whom he often said, "that man made me miss my destiny." Sir Sidney Smith, with a little squadron of two ships of the line and some smaller vessels, had entered the bay just two days before the French army appeared. The day after his arrival their flotilla, with the siege artillery from Alexandria, fell into his hands, and the guns were at once mounted on the ramparts against their former owners. Meantime Ibrahim Bey with the remains of his Mamelukes, and a vast army of Janizaries and irregular cavalry, were advancing from the Jordan to attack the besiegers, who turned at once on the approaching enemy, and with only six thousand French veterans, utterly routed the undisciplined mass of thirty thousand Orientals. Bonaparte then renewed the siege with the few pieces of cannon he carried with him, and made the most desperate efforts to carry the walls. Nearly three months had been consumed in these engagements, and the attack was hotter than ever, when an English fleet of thirty sail entered the bay, with soldiers and ammunition in abundance. Bonaparte made a last desperate effort before the reliefs could be disembarked; but it failed, chiefly owing to the valour of Sir Sidney Smith, at the head of a regiment of Janizaries disciplined in the European method. The French silently moved their baggage to the rear, and on the 20th of May, Bonaparte, for the first time in his life, ordered a retreat. He was never so deeply mortified. "If Acre had been taken," he insisted at St. Helena, "I would have reached Constantinople and the Indies. I would have changed the face of the world."

Returning to Jaffa, the horrors of war were aggra-

vated by an outburst of the plague. Bonaparte visited the hospitals, and did all in his power to dissipate the panic of contagion that had seized on his soldiers. There is little doubt, however, that he ordered the sick to be poisoned by the medical officers, and some reports affirm that five hundred and eighty lives were sacrificed to this dreadful policy. Sir A. Alison reduces the number to sixty, and excuses the deed, by the near approach of the Turks, who cruelly murdered all who fell into their hands. The excuse would be hardly valid if the alternative were certain; and the historian, who offers it, is obliged to record with admiration the answer of the French chief of the medical staff, when the proposal was made to him, that his vocation was to prolong life, not to extinguish it.

The army struggled back to Egypt, decimated and discouraged, having accomplished nothing beyond delaying an Ottoman invasion through Syria. Their departure was quickly succeeded by the arrival of the Janizaries from Acre. Transported in the British ships, they disembarked at Aboukir, where Bonaparte attacked them with his usual promptitude, though greatly inferior in force. After a sanguinary combat the Turks, from their own barbarous imprudence in quitting their entrenchments to cut off the heads of the slain, were routed and driven into the sea by the impetuous charge of Murat's intrepid cavalry. Bonaparte could now gratify the French nation with a victory of Aboukir to set against the English triumph. At the same time, however, he received newspapers from Europe which seemed to him of vastly greater importance. He instantly resolved to abandon his unremunerative conquest in the east, and contend again for the prize of European empire. Carefully concealing

his intention from Kleber, his second in command, and the entire army, he stole out of Alexandria with a few personal friends to a solitary part of the beach, and embarking in some fishing boats reached a couple of frigates, which he had ordered to be in readiness, and stood out to sea in the night. The army was left, as Kleber reported, in such a state of destitution as rendered the defence of the country impossible; but its selfish commander, after narrowly escaping capture by the English fleet, succeeded in reaching France, where the people, wearied with anarchy, were sighing for a military deliverer. He was hurried amid acclamations to Paris, charged by his brother Lucien to deliver the Republic from the representatives of the people over whom he presided, and after driving out the deputies with the bayonets of his grenadiers, the conqueror of Egypt was invested with supreme power as First Consul of the Republic in 1799.

Kleber, indignant at being deserted with a failing cause in the midst of his enemies, continued the negotiation for evacuating Egypt, which Bonaparte had himself commenced. The sultan was now in alliance with Russia and Great Britain, and the latter power was determined to agree to no treaty which should not make the French prisoners of war. The grand vizier, however, agreed to permit them to return to Europe with their arms and baggage; and as soon as it was known in London that this condition had been sanctioned by Sir Sidney Smith (though without authority for that purpose) it was acceded to by the English ministry. Meantime Kleber fought and won a great battle with the Turks at Heliopolis, which so changed the face of affairs that he determined to keep possession, and colonise the country with his

soldiers. He was cut off, however, by the dagger of a Mussulman assassin, and was succeeded in the command by the renegade Menou, who had assumed the name of Abdallah. The English government, finding the treaty, which it had accepted, now rejected by the French, determined to effect their expulsion. Sir Ralph Abercromby was ordered from Malta with seventeen thousand men, while eight thousand sepoys were despatched from Bombay under the command of Sir David Baird. Abercromby reaching Egypt first, opened the campaign with a brilliant victory at Aboukir, 1st March, 1801. Menou, like other French generals, underrating British soldiership, had remained at Cairo, confidently expecting the surrender or capture of the whole force; but another battle lost by himself at Alexandria convinced him of his mistake. The English paid dear for their victory in the fall of the gallant Abercromby; but the French were driven back to Cairo, where they capitulated to General Hutchinson on the 22nd May. Menou being in Alexandria at the time, endeavoured to prolong the struggle, in expectation of succour from home, but in three months he was obliged to surrender to his besiegers; and all that remained of the French expedition were transported back to France with their arms and baggage, leaving their artillery in the hands of the victors.¹

The force under Sir David Baird reached Egypt between the two capitulations, after a tempestuous passage, in which two transports were lost, and a memorable march through the desert from Cosseir to Thebes. The sepoys, as they gazed upon the sculp-

¹ The French were 27,500 strong on the landing of Abercromby, and 24,000 surrendered in the two capitulations. The English were reinforced by 3000 men in May, and by 5500 from India in July; so that the French had throughout the preponderance in numbers.

tured ruins of the ancient temples, bowed before the images of the gods with the reverence which idolaters always show to the local divinities. It is possible that they may have found or fancied some resemblance to their own idols; but as they could know nothing of the history or philosophy of either, the incident proves little as to the common origin of the Egyptian and Brahmanical superstitions. General Hutchinson allowed the vanquished enemy to retain the collection of antiquities and drawings made by the French artists; but the Rosetta Stone, together with the sarcophagus of Amyrtæus, which the local tradition connected with Alexander the Great, were made prizes.¹

At the peace of Amiens, concluded March, 1802, Egypt was restored to the Porte, the power which had shown itself least capable of recovering or retaining it.² England would appear to have soon repented of her generosity; for on the renewal of the war, when a fleet was sent to Constantinople to remonstrate against the French influence, an attempt was made to seize upon Egypt before it could again fall a prey to Napoleon. Both expeditions were mismanaged and unsuccessful. The forces under generals Mackenzie and Fraser did indeed capture Alexandria and Damietta (March, 1807), but Rosetta held out, and the British troops were glad to conclude a convention in the

¹ Ancient Egypt, pp. 81, 334.

² The preliminaries of the peace were settled before the capitulation of Menou was known, and the British government were too eager for peace to alter the terms. Egypt, in fact, was ours, yet France, the defeated party, gave up nothing, while England restored Egypt to the Porte, Malta to the Knights of St. John, the Cape of Good Hope to the Dutch, and to France herself, Martinique, S. Lucie, Guadaloupe, Surinam, and Demerara; retaining of all her numerous conquests only Trinidad and Ceylon.

autumn, by which they recovered their prisoners, and, leaving Egypt to the Turks, returned to Europe.

The power of the Mamelukes being now utterly broken, there was nothing but its own incapacity to interrupt the Ottoman sway. The Porte, however, has never learned to govern its provinces by any better expedient than entrusting each to a pasha, who rules very much as he pleases, and is only expected to forward a sufficient tribute to Constantinople.

The Egyptian viceroyalty was now filled by a Turk of no common genius and ambition. The same year that gave birth to Wellington and Bonaparte, in the west of Europe, gratified a Mussulman peasant in the east with a son who received the name of Mohammed Ali. Entering the Ottoman army, he fought as a Bim-bashi in the defeat of Aboukir, and had attained the rank of brigadier-general at the expulsion of the French. Five years after, having purchased the pashalic for a large sum paid to the Porte, he acquired its unlimited confidence by the defeat of the English expedition. The Mamelukes, who still lingered in Upper Egypt, were reduced by repeated encounters with his troops, and at last submitting, incorporated themselves in his army.

The pasha next undertook the subdual of the Wahabces, a sect of devotees who had seized on Mecca and Medina, and were preaching a Mussulman Reformation. He was still afraid to leave Egypt open to a Mameluke rising, and receiving information that the beys were already plotting for his absence, he suddenly returned to Cairo, and ordered a public investiture of his son to the command of the Arabian expedition. The beys were invited to attend this ceremonial in the citadel, and mounting their horses at its conclusion

found the gates closed against their return. A volley of musketry from the walls revealed the treachery of which they were the victims. Galloping furiously round the enclosure, they could discover neither enemy nor egress. Men and horses fell under a ceaseless shower of balls. One bey alone succeeded in leaping his horse over a gap in the wall. Ibrahim Bey and all the rest perished with their retainers, to the number of four hundred. Twelve hundred more were killed in the city and country by the troops, who had free license to kill and pillage for two days. The remainder were driven into Ethiopia, whence a few found their way through Africa to the coast of the Mediterranean, and some fourteen or fifteen embarked for Constantinople, the relics of a gallant host of four thousand white soldiers against whom the pasha began his struggle for power.

This ruthless massacre left him free to prosecute the Arabian war, which terminated in the defeat of the Wahabees and the death or imprisonment of their principal leaders. In 1820 an expedition was sent into Ethiopia under Ismael Pasha, and Ali took advantage of the occasion to organize a military depot at Assouan, where a number of negroes were drilled and instructed in military science under a French officer. This was the foundation of the viceroy's regular army; but the negroes dying off with fatal rapidity it became necessary to substitute native Egyptians, to their unspeakable misery and the great impoverishment of the agriculture. A further drain on the scanty population has been occasioned by the pasha's obstinate introduction of numerous manufactories; in defiance of the clearest proofs that Egypt is more fitted for the export of raw produce.

Mohammed Ali now plainly aspired to sovereignty, and the sultan was glad to employ his forces as an ally, more than a vassal, in the Greek insurrection. An Egyptian fleet and army sailed for the Morea in 1824, when their superiority to those of the Turks was immediately apparent. The valour and patriotism of the Greeks were no match for the disciplined battalions of Egypt, and the capture of Missolonghi would have extinguished the last hope of the Christians but for the intervention of the European powers. By their assistance Greece achieved her liberties, and the Egyptian fleet was almost destroyed in the unequal engagement off Navarino, 20th October, 1827.

Mohammed Ali was not long in recovering from this check. Warned by the fate of the French fleet at Aboukir, he had deepened the entrance to the harbour of Alexandria so as to admit ships of the line, and furnished the arsenal with ample stores for their equipment. He soon possessed again a fleet of seven sail of the line and twelve frigates, and feeling his superiority to the Ottoman power, he determined to seize upon Syria as another door to Constantinople, always the ultimate object of his ambition. The pretext for war was the refusal of the pasha of Acre to restore a few thousand fellahs who had sought refuge in his territories from the conscription and ceaseless exactions in Egypt. The Egyptian forces were immediately put in motion. Thirty thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry crossed the desert under Ibrahim, the pasha's stepson, who had already signalised himself in Arabia, Ethiopia, and Greece. The sultan, indignant at one of his vassals making war on another, without even the form of invoking the supreme authority, proclaimed Mohammed Ali a traitor, and

offered his pashalic to the true believer who should effect his destruction. This firman did nothing to arrest the progress of Ibrahim. Capturing Acre, Tripoli, and Aleppo, he gained the entire coast to the foot of the Taurus, defeated all the forces successively brought against him, and in the decisive battle of Konieh (21st December, 1832), took the grand vizier prisoner, and shook the Osmanli throne to its foundations. Had he marched direct on Constantinople he might have mastered the capital and deposed the sultan. The warlike tribes of Asia Minor were prepared to join this new standard of the prophet, and when Ibrahim Pasha at last advanced to Kutahieh, near Scutari, the Mussulman world expected another occupant in the throne of the Constantines.

In this extremity the sultan had recourse, first to England, his ancient ally, and next to France, his recent foe, but they no longer regarded the affairs of the east with the interest of former times. The Porte was thrown on the protection of Russia, who eagerly accepted the charge; and in April, 1833, its men of war passed the Bosphorus, and an army of twelve thousand men took military occupation of Constantinople. The prize being thus snatched from his grasp, Mohammed Ali listened to the terms he had rejected before, and withdrew his forces, receiving from the Porte the government of most of Syria in addition to Egypt and Crete.

This arrangement was of short duration. Russia exacted concessions from Turkey by the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, which gave the greatest umbrage to England, while France sought a counterpoise in cultivating relations with Mohammed Ali. Recriminations ensued between the sultan and his too powerful

vassal, and the former, incensed by the expulsion of the Turkish guards from the tomb of the prophet, commenced hostilities against the pasha in June, 1839. His forces were greatly superior, but at the first engagement a great number went over to the enemy, and the remainder took to flight. At the same time the Ottoman fleet sailed into Alexandria, and delivered itself up to the man whom they were despatched to subdue. The Porte was again saved by the intervention of the European powers.

Sultan Mahmoud dying the same year, his successor abolished some of the ordinances which had alienated his subjects, and took advantage of an insurrection in Syria, to invite the further intervention of the European powers. By a treaty of the 15th of July, 1840, Mohammed Ali was offered the hereditary viceroyalty of Egypt, with the pashalic of Acre for his life; but relying on France, who was no party to the treaty, he rejected the proposal, and war between England and France seemed inevitable. A fleet, despatched under admiral Stopford to summon the pasha to evacuate Syria, bombarded Beyrout, and hoisted the Turkish flag on its ruined battlements. The French fell into a passion of excitement; but Louis Philippe, fearing danger to himself, withdrew his ships from the Levant, and changed his ministers. The British and their allies proceeded without molestation to capture Sidon, and under admiral Napier completely defeated the Egyptian fleet in a naval engagement. Ibrahim Pasha capitulated and was received on board an English steamer. Other strong places on the coast were successively taken; and on the 3rd of November, the famous fortress of Acre, supposed to be impregnable, once more fell before

English cannon, and was taken possession of by admirals Stopford and Napier. This success was decisive. The Syrian tribes declared for the sultan, and the Egyptians were either destroyed or made prisoners.

Admiral Napier was before Alexandria when the pasha, seeing that French assistance was no longer to be hoped for, delivered up the Ottoman fleet, and consented to evacuate Syria and Crete. The pashalic of Egypt was secured to him in hereditary succession, with a grant for life of Nubia and the interior districts. One fourth of the clear revenue of Egypt was fixed as the tribute to the Porte, and its forces were limited to eighteen thousand men. These conditions were proposed by M. Guizot, then at the head of the French cabinet, and the signature of the five great powers of Europe (13th of March, 1841) confirmed the final arrangements of the sultan and his formidable vassal. No further change has taken place in the political relations of Egypt. Mohammed Ali died, having survived the two great captains of England and France, his contemporaries, and left his posterity to enjoy in peace the principality purchased by his genius and valour.

We have now concluded our survey of Ancient and Modern Egypt. Beginning with the old world ruins, which line the banks of the ever-rolling river, we have endeavoured to rehabilitate their former condition, and people them with monarchs, priests, and warriors,—their tenants in the distant past. The Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, the Cæsars, the Caliphs, the Sultans of successive ages, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Crusaders, Mamelukes, Turks, have passed in procession before us. The Christian church, in its conflicts

and its ascendancy, has cast a radiance, alas! too brief, upon the scene; and now the pageant closes, as it opened, in the darkness of a false religion. The kingly shapes that came "like shadows, so depart." Amid ruins we began, and we return to the ruins again. It is not only the monuments, the monarchy, the priesthood, and the religion, that lie in the dust, but the nation is itself a ruin. The population that swarmed along the valley of the Nile, and spread over the fertile Delta, pouring out armies across the desert, and subjugating two seas to its fleets, is represented by a hundred and fifty thousand Copts, preserving, with much admixture, the lineaments of the ancient Egyptians, and perhaps some remote echo of their speech in the dead language of their liturgies. But they are the most down-trodden of all the "mixed multitude" who inhabit the Mussulman province that once was Egypt.

These, too, are all that remain of the great Egyptian Church of the fourth and fifth centuries. Adhering in great preponderance to the Jacobite name, they have little knowledge of its origin or meaning. Their religious condition is as lamentable as their political, and every year witnesses a further degradation.

Such are the fruits of man's glory and policy; may the review induce the reader to cleave with a more enduring faith to the kingdom which is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" to pray and labour for the spread of the gospel; to seek the restoration of Egypt and Palestine, not in the dreams of Moslem civilisation or Jewish pride, but in the steady advance of the Dayspring from on high, and the coming of the blessed hour when the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters

cover the sea. Then "the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day. And the LORD shall smite Egypt, He shall smite and heal it: and they shall return, even to the LORD, and He shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." ¹

¹ Isa. xix. 21—25.

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