

one ascribe Mt 11<sup>25ff.</sup> = Lk 10<sup>21ff.</sup> to the authorship of John?

The Englishman<sup>1</sup> J. P. Mahaffy has lately written very sensibly about the whole literary *character* of the Gospels in a book called *The Silver Age of the Greek World*.

'There was, indeed, another literary work going on, during this century, of the first magnitude, as the result has amply proved; but it was in a remote corner of Hellenism, unknown, moreover, to the most learned and curious of the Greeks, to Dion and to Plutarch. For there, where Hellenism had to struggle with the force and ability of Judaism, teaching and learning with the interest of hate and the relish of antagonism, there, among the common people, were springing up those books on the life of Jesus which touch the hearts of men with a directness and force very foreign to the flowery and rhetorical arguments of a Philo or a Josephus. The simplicity, the natural vigour, the unconscious picturesqueness of these narratives are so remarkable that, even had they never laid any claim to inspiration, sound judges must have condoned their faulty grammar and poor vocabulary, and acknowledged in them at least the voice of honest men speaking from the heart, and thus endowed with one of the highest literary qualities. Whether these writers were indeed "Israelites" or not, they were, as writers, "without guile," and the fact that they all chose Greek for their medium has been one great cause of the persistence of Greek studies to this day. . . . What was more obvious, what more certain, than that such pictures as the opening scenes of St. Luke's Gospel or the Sermon on the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Blass is here unconsciously furnishing an illustration to his argument about 'the Jews,' as Dr. Mahaffy, we believe, is an Irishman.—M. D. G.

Mount would be despised by the critics as the work of late-learning and self-taught people, who knew nothing of the art of expression or of the laws of composition? And yet the world has judged differently; the idyll of Bethlehem lives, while the idyll of Euboea lies buried in Dion; Herod the tyrant lives, while as the polished Hellenist he is forgotten; the metaphors on the mount, the parables by the way, have outlived the paradoxes of the Stoic, the rhetoric of the schools.'

This expresses powerfully what is true and weighty. The ignorance and neglect of the civilized world with regard to Judæa and Judaism was really surprising, and, behold, what was despised and contemptibly small has become world-renowned and gigantic, so that all that then seemed great, even Imperial Rome with its glory, has become small in comparison. There is not a village in Europe where Peter and John are unknown, and their names, the names of humble fishermen, are given to children as their best names. But why should I speak of Europe? All broad America must be added, and Australia, and much more. Even three centuries after the appearance of these books the contrast between former and present times was enormous. It is also remarkable what a mountain of literature has been heaped up over these small writings; first, their translation into 300 languages and dialects; then the expository and critical writings, the former from many centuries. It would be interesting, but not very easy, to estimate its extent here and there, and verify its proportion. There is nothing else like it in the whole world, and whoever does not know that, and has no eye for it, is decidedly wanting in education.

## The Pilgrim's Progress.

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### Vanity Fair—The Persecution.

'THEY that were appointed to examine' the pilgrims began their examination by beating them and besmearing them with dirt. This auspicious beginning was an excellent prophecy of the end.

Evidently this examination would not largely contribute to the world's information upon any subject except the state of the examiners' minds. An ancient Board of Examiners began their investigation into a case of reported resurrection from the dead by a resolution 'to put Lazarus to death.'

Dr. Dods has compared that resolution to the conduct of a Hindoo Pundit who smashed the microscope which had showed him that his theory of the universe was absurd. So far as eliciting truth goes, it is a senseless method. From the examiner's point of view, even in *Vanity Fair*, the beating was a mistake. The besmearing of them with mud was a much more clever policy. To impute motives, to raise slanders without authentication, to mingle the names of the men with the general idea of hypocrisy, was an effective policy. The populace soon tires of the spectacle of strangers being flogged; but the mud-throwing saves it the trouble of thinking, relieves it from the responsibility of judging upon evidence, and by rendering the victims contemptible sets it free to enjoy the lust of cruelty.

The cage into which the prisoners were next thrust, brings us back to one of the primitive methods which were fashionable in the 'good old days' for dealing with crime. Victor Hugo, in his *Notre-Dame*, vividly describes the rat-hole and the pillory of a still earlier century. *Pickwick* reminds us how recently the village pound was in use. Dr. Whyte, identifying the cage in modern times with the newspapers, gives us an all too-suggestive and convincing reminder that it is the forms rather than the essences of things that have changed in these enlightened days. The mingled impertinence and indecency of this method of dealing with persons or views which happen to be obnoxious to us, is sufficiently evident. Emphasize the fact that your victim is in your power, and quench pity by rendering his situation ridiculous, and you may go great lengths in gratifying your thirst for revenge. There are still such cages, set up in homes, workshops, churches, theatres, and, indeed, in all public and private places. David Scott, in his picture of this scene, has reminded us of the variety of types of human nature to which such an opportunity for malice as the cage affords may appeal. The philosopher is there—a modern Diogenes in his tub—the fop, the monk, the mother with her child. It is a sad account of poor human nature! One thing, however, must be added. There are cages like this which man constructs for his brother man, and there are other cages which a man constructs for himself. The man in the iron cage was a still more pitiable spectacle than those two. But he had put himself on exhibition.

The essential element in the punishment of the

cage is enforced publicity. But that is always a dangerous weapon to use against a man. By degrees, the good as well as the evil in him will become conspicuous and impressive, and if there be much good in him there will certainly be a reaction of public feeling against those who encaged him. Daniel Defoe, in the pillory, found himself a hero enthroned rather than a martyr or a victim—so thoroughly had he won the favour of the English public. These pilgrims, whose crime was actually their innocence of crime, were bound to win in the end. They are a standing testimony to the fact that evil may be overcome with good. If a persecuted and slandered man will be brave enough to keep on his way, and to preserve his magnanimity, and watch for chances of helping his maligners, he is sure to have the best of it when truth comes to its own.

So it happened here, and without meaning to do it these men won a party in *Vanity Fair*, of men who began to reflect that there were some in the Fair more worthy to be put in the cage than these. The silent testimony of consistent character is bound to have its effect. The consciences of such as have consciences are on the side of character, and the intelligence of such as have intelligence. From the days of Nicodemus and Gamaliel until now, Christianity has had friends to protest against its persecution in the Sanhedrim.

The paragraph beginning 'Here, therefore, they called again to mind what they had heard from their faithful friend Evangelist,' does not occur in the First Edition. With time, the importance of Evangelist and his interventions increased in the view of John Bunyan, and with time also there seems to have come a greater tendency to dwell more upon the advantages of death over life for those who believe, for in this paragraph we also read that 'each man secretly wished that he might have that preferment'—*i.e.* of martyrdom.

This is touching, although it is not a very safe or wholesome line of thought to pursue. In *Grace Abounding*, we find sometimes the expression of a longing to die at once, that he might be out of danger. In other Christian lives it has run to a far greater extreme, and if any one is repelled by morbidness here, let him read the epistles of Ignatius, that he may see how much reserve Bunyan has after all been exercising. These epistles, in which the craving for martyrdom has come to be of the nature of a monomania, show us noble courage

degenerating into a sentimentality, and even threatening to become a kind of inhuman and unclean passion. It is never safe for the spiritual balance of any man to go out of his way to meet an enemy, a trouble, or a temptation. Bunyan, however, was saved from such excess by his natural sanity and the fine instinctive balance of his mind and spirit. And this touch, in which the shadow of death falls so unmistakably upon the story before the trial has begun, has the power of a great unconscious artistry in it. The story is one of heroic courage, and faithfulness unto death, and we hear it with the laughter of *Vanity Fair* in our ears. It reminds us of the famous English story of Captain Douglas going down in the Thames with the ship which the Dutch had set on fire, while at Whitehall, King Charles II. was chasing butterflies with his ladies. It reminds us of an older scene, where Jesus fasted and fought out His battle against the world and its ideals on the mountain of Quarantana while below, almost within earshot, the Court of Herod feasted with wild revelries at Jericho.

How far John Bunyan was writing his account of this imprisonment and trial with his experiences of English law and justice in his mind, it would be difficult to say. Opinion is divided as to what these actually were, and Mr. Froude takes a much less serious view of his sufferings than Bunyan himself took. This, however, is not very convincing, as Mr. Froude's views on many things are so much less serious than John Bunyan's. Readers will decide for themselves, but it is certainly worth every reader's while to compare chapter vi. of Mr. Froude's *Bunyan* with the appendices to *Grace Abounding*.

### The Trial.

It would not be easy to show that this trial is point by point modelled on Bunyan's own examinations. There is, indeed, the same freedom of repartee between examiner and prisoner, and there is the same boldness of statement in dangerous circumstances. But the model for this passage is almost certainly that of Judge Jeffries' courts, and parts of this account are almost literal reproductions of the trial of Algernon Sidney. The outburst of the judge, 'Sirrah, sirrah, thou deservest to live no longer,' etc., is exactly in the manner of Jeffries. In the history of persecution there have been two kinds of trial. Some have

been (as in the ancient days of 'Diana or Christ') urged to recant, and unwillingly condemned. Others have been, as in this case, tried 'in order to their condemnation.' Witches used to be thrown into deep water by way of ordeal, and the ingenious mind of the times decided that if they were innocent they would sink and be drowned, while if they floated they were guilty and must be hanged. Faithful's trial was one of this latter kind. His condemnation was a foregone conclusion. This must be remembered in judging of his answers to the charges brought against him. His blunt outspokenness, which we have already noticed in his dealings with Talkative, has already the crackle of the faggots in it. It has been argued that 'a prisoner who admits that he has taught the people that their Prince ought to be in hell, and has called the judge an ungodly villain, cannot complain if he is accused of preaching rebellion.' That is true, but besides the fact of Faithful's constitutional directness of speech, it should be remembered that whatever he had said, the end would have been his burning, and that he knew it.

This trial stands in interesting contrast with that reported in *The Holy War*, when the prisoners are the aldermen of Diabolus, Mr. Atheism, Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Lustings, Mr. Forget-good, Mr. Hardheart, Mr. False-peace, etc. That trial is careful in its detail, dignified and constitutional. This one is rushed with indecent haste, the judge being so eager to get to the condemnation that he forgets to administer the oath to a witness, and is only reminded of the omission by the witness's eagerness to ruin the prisoner, leading him to strengthen his assertion by making it 'on oath' without being asked to do so.

### The Indictment.

The indictment here bears a curious resemblance to two others. John Bunyan's own indictment in 1661 was that 'he hath devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service, and is a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the King,' etc. The indictment in *The Holy War* is: 'Thou art here indicted by the name of Haughty, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou didst

most traitorously and devilishly teach the town of Mansoul to carry it loftily and stoutly against the summons that was given them by the captain of the King,' etc. There is one noteworthy omission from the present indictment—that of the word 'devilishly.' The reason for it is obvious. In Vanity Fair the prince and the devil are one.

The first count in this indictment was that Faithful had disturbed trade. This is an old story. From the earliest days of Christianity, persecution has grown acute when commerce was touched by the new doctrines. The first opponents of Christ were (as Professor Ramsay points out) the sellers of hay for the beasts of sacrifice in Ephesus. The image-makers of Ephesus, and the men whose hope of gains lay in the Philippian damsel with the spirit of divination, were the men who first framed this charge against Faithful. Bunyan's lawyers have certainly not been the last to frame it.

The second charge was that of stirring up commotion. The placid life of the Fair, where men lived on such particularly easy terms with one another and with themselves, was now no longer possible. It is a serious thing to stir up strife, and in itself it is certainly no sign of grace. Some dispositions have a positive genius for it, and their religious principles are firebrands in the community, or home, or workshop, until the place is habitable only when they have been got rid of. Enemies may indeed be a sign of righteousness, but they may also be a sign of rudeness, unpleasantness, and conceit. But there is a difference to be observed here between the various qualities of peace which may be thus disturbed. If the peace is that of honest and companionable men, each in his own fashion striving to follow God and righteousness in friendship with his neighbours, then the disturbance of it is a crime, even if it be in the name of Christ. But if the peace be, as in this case it was, nothing better than drugged conscience, both in individuals and in the community, then the sooner it is disturbed the better for all concerned.

The third charge was that of having won a party to their opinions—not so much a new charge as a new aspect of the second. To win a party is to confirm that state of commotion and strife which they had made, and to perpetuate it. But whether this be a virtue or a crime depends simply on the rightness or wrongness of the views they hold.

There is all the difference in the world between the case of proselytizers winning a party for self-will, and truth winning a party for itself.

### The Judge.

The main note of this trial is that all the personages introduced in it, except the prisoners, are bad. When such men as these are in the places of responsibility, 'the post of honour is a private station.' 'Such a verdict from such a jury,' is indeed itself an honour and a testimonial to any good man. But the whole malice and wickedness of the court is summed up in the name of the Judge—*Hate-good*. A whole theology, a whole psychology and ethical philosophy, as well as a deep and thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, are wrapped up in that name. The judge, indeed, had his human models—Judge Jeffries beyond all, whose savage cruelty, bullying, and undisguised unfairness have branded not himself only, but the age in which he was possible, for all time to come. Yet that ferocity which is said to have kindled a light in his eyes while he was condemning, that lust for railing which found in the enforced deference of a court of justice an opportunity for its atrocious and filthy gratification, seem to be phenomena that recur. Every now and then history produces a man whom a little brief authority affects in this fashion. Stevenson's picture of Lord Braxfield and his 'hanging face,' and his taunting of his victims, will recur to the minds of many. Fortunately for our country, such cases owe something of their conspicuousness, and the mark they have made upon the imagination of the land, to their rarity. Such a judge is here fitly chosen as the type and pattern of the Master-Sin, Hatred of good—that is, sin at the black heart and essence of it. Stripped of excuses and explanations, seen directly and with the severe eyes of conscience, the moral problem is a simple one. Good is set before us, and we have to say whether it shall be loved and chosen, or hated and rejected. To see the alternative clearly, and to say, with Milton's Satan, 'Evil be thou my good,' is to have chosen the supreme and lordly sin, to have deliberately adopted a sin against the Holy Ghost. We have already overheard Apollyon's frank profession of such sin—'I am an enemy to this prince: I hate his person, his laws, and his people.' Judge Hate-good has been an excellent learner in that school of the devil. This judge is a type which

stands for the evil element that is in us all. In every court of judgment of the soul, where we pronounce upon the character of men or things, there are two voices that may be heard from the bench. Hate-good and Love-good both are there. Hate-good has the richer ermine and the louder voice; Love-good speaks too often inaudibly, like one who apologizes. Yet when the truth is known and realized, the gentle speaker will have most authority. Behind these two are the protagonists whom they love and hate—Good and Evil. He is wise who looks beyond the appearances of their representatives to these supreme facts of this world and the next, who boldly commits himself to the side of Good and dares to make Evil his enemy.

### The Witnesses.

The three witnesses may possibly be portraits also. John Bunyan had had wide experience of misrepresentation, and could write on such a subject with authority. 'Therefore,' he says, 'I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament; it belongs to my Christian profession to be vilified, slandered, reproached, and reviled; and since all this is nothing else, as my God and conscience do bear me witness, I rejoice in reproaches for Christ's sake.' The most trying element in such witness, however, is the subtle fashion in which truth and falsehood are interwoven in it. It is true that—

A lie that is wholly a lie may be met and fought outright,  
But a lie that is half of the truth is another matter to fight.

The words of the three witnesses are little more than a paraphrase of Faithful's own confessions. Yet they have the subtle power of putting every detail into a base instead of a heroic light. This is the fine art of lying.

*Envy* is the first of them, and he is so eager to speak that he is already in the full swing of his address (for such it is) before the judge remembers that the oath has not been administered. The name is suggestive. Whom did this man envy? There can be no question as to the answer. He envied Faithful. He envied him those 'principles of faith and holiness' at which he was sneering. He envied the man who, he swore, was 'one of the vilest men in our country.' He said these things because he envied him. His tongue was bitter

because his heart was sore. In fact, men often envy Christians, although they refuse to have that for which they envy them. To know that another has the best of it, and yet to love that which you know to be worse, is a state of mind in which all that is false and bitter in human nature comes to its strength. Yet, if we could but remember it, that strength is but labour and sorrow, and no one deserves a man's pity so deeply as he who thus envies him. All who have had much experience in dealing with men must remember case after case in which the first bitterness and defiance has broken down suddenly into the confession of a heart miserably sore and empty. Poor Envy! he will envy Faithful more even than to-day, when he sees the faggots kindled for his burning!

The next witness was *Superstition*. They had a religion in Vanity Fair, and Superstition was its representative supporter. It was a religion of observances, whose demands were ceremonial, and which made no claim on either the conscience, the heart, or the intellect. It would have been interesting to overhear that reported conversation between Faithful and Superstition. Men talking two different languages could not have been more unintelligible to one another. The ritualist, with his mingled haughtiness and fear, is proud of his assertion that he neither knew, nor desired to know, the man he is helping to condemn. He does not like to think out problems, and his accusation amounts to little more than a general impression that Faithful had been attacking his religion. The sketch is drawn with Bunyan's usual insight.

*Pickthank* is the last witness. It is always painful to hear the words of good men reported by the bad. The report seems to rob them of their dignity, and give to them an evil infection. An old author has said of this passage that what Pickthank had heard Faithful say was, 'Other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.' Pickthank, unlike Superstition, has known the prisoner a long time. And all that long time he has been watching for opportunities of stirring up personal animosities against Faithful, for ends of his own. 'It was his practice,' says a recent author of one of his characters, 'to approach any one person at the expense of some one else. He offered you an alliance against the some one else; he flattered you by slighting him; you were

drawn into a small intrigue against him before you knew how. Wonderful are the virtues of this process generally.' True, no doubt, so far; and yet this way of making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness is not without its dangers. He who retails cutting words against another, associates himself with them and with the resentment they waken, and seldom is better loved for it in the end.

### The Jury.

As we read over this atrocious list of impartial fellow-citizens, we feel that all hope for Faithful may now be abandoned. It is like a man about to be tried by the verdict of a lunatic asylum. Carlyle's words come to mind, when he says in *Past and Present*, 'Do but contrast this Oliver with my right honourable friend Sir Gabesh Windbag, Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, Viscount Mealy-mouth, Earl of Windlestraw.' This jury is but a repetition, in other personalities, of the combined characters of the judge and witnesses. It is peculiarly interesting to remember that, 'These words and this trial were quoted (January 25, 1848) by the Attorney-General, in Westminster Hall, in answer to the manner in which Dr. Hampden was then charged with heresy by the Puseyites' (Offor). Each of the jurymen has his little remark to make, each characteristic of the speaker, like Mr. Blindman's 'I see clearly.' Mr. No-good is of the family of the judge; Messrs. Love-lust and Live-loose remind us of Faithful's early temptations. Mr. Highmind, whose satisfactory and final opinion is embodied in the words 'a sorry scrub,' has caught the ear of Robert Browning for one of the pleasantries in his 'Andrea del Sarto.'

### Faithful's Martyrdom.

The end of the trial was inevitable, and Faithful may have felt the freer in his replies from the consideration that his death was already resolved on. Bunyan had studied history in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and the detailed circumstances of the

execution may all be found there. But the chariot and horses come from an older book. To Bunyan, as he looked on at that judicial murder, was given the power of seeing the invisible, with which Elisha's servant had been gifted long ago. It was the martyrs' secret also, and nothing short of it could have explained the long story of the courage and endurance of the martyrs of the Cross. In his *Faculties and Difficulties*, Bishop Paget has a memorable passage in which he describes the Christian martyr waiting under the scowl of a hostile sea of faces, for the coming in of the lions. In no words could the impression be better conveyed of a soul that saw beyond and above the world.

So ended the earthly pilgrimage of Faithful. There are words in the *House of Lebanon* which have been aptly applied to him: 'Was not this man, think you, a giant? Did he not behave himself valiantly? Was not his mind elevated a thousand degrees beyond sense, carnal reason, fleshly love, and the desires of embracing temporal things? This man had got *that* by the end that pleased him; neither could all the flatteries, promises, threats, reproaches make him once listen to or inquire after what the world or the glory of it could afford. His mind was captivated with delights invisible. He coveted to show his love to his Lord by laying down his life for His sake. He longed to be where there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor sighing, nor tears, nor troubles. He was a man of a thousand.' . . . 'These men had the faces of lions, they have triumphed in the flames.'

Christian was spared for further pilgrimage. The close of persecutions is generally as unaccountable as their origin. Political motives enter, the reaction and disgust of public opinion, and the actual advantage to the cause which is attacked, contribute to this result. Yet Christian felt that Faithful had the best of it. At least his was the easier part. While he had mounted up with wings as eagles, Christian must yet walk a long while and not faint.