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might be effected in the thinking mind of the nation. But from whence this Christian philosophy is to come, is more than we can predict.

The difference between France and either Germany or England in this respect is striking, with all the monstrous errors of Germany. It is still a perpetual problem with the newest philosophy, to give a philosophical solution of the doctrines of Christianity. The solution may be more inexplicable than the difficulty left unsolved, but the attempt to make it, argues the conviction that scientific and Christian truth ought to be harmonious. In England, philosophy has endeavored to follow and to keep pace with theology, though it must be confessed it has too often been "*haud passibus sequis.*" But in England it has always been believed that theology and philosophy should move with even pace in the same harmonious rounds, and should together manifest the glory of the God who is truth and love. That this ideal harmony should be fully realized, is the aim and effort of every truly Christian philosopher.

ARTICLE VII.

JEROME AND HIS TIMES.

By Rev. Samuel Osgood, Providence, R. I.

1. *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis, Presbyteri Opera. Studio ac Labore Domini Johannis Martianay, Presbyteri et Monachi Ordinis S. Benedicti à Congregatione S. Mauri, Parisiis, MDCXIII—MDCCVI.*

Works of St. Eusebius Jerome of Stridon, Presbyter. Edited by John Martianay, Presbyter, and Monk of the Benedictine Order of the Congregation of St. Maur. In five Volumes, folio.

2. *Histoire de Saint Jerome, Perè de L'Eglise, au IV^e Siecle; Sa Vie, Ses Ecrits et Ses Doctrines, par F. Z. Collombet. Paris, 1844. History of St. Jerome, Father of the church in the Fourth Century; his Life; his Writings and his Doctrines. In two volumes, 8vo. By F. Z. Collombet.*

RICH as was the church of the fourth century in illustrious men who adorned imposing office with brilliant abilities; in princes like

the imperial convert Constantine who begun, and the more consistent Theodosius, who completed the union of the church and State; in prelates indomitable as Athanasius, profound as Augustine, eloquent as Gregory and Chrysostom, and commanding as Ambrose and Basil; it is not to any of these titled dignitaries that Christendom in ages since has paid her most frequent honors. The Roman church, at least, has passed over this majestic array of princes and prelates with comparative indifference, and reserved her brightest aureola for an untitled scholar, who shrank alike from courts and councils, who refused the proffered mitre, and forbore to exercise even the office of priest. Whom can we mean but Jerome the monk of Bethlehem? As a devotee he has perhaps been more honored by Catholics than any saint upon the calendar who has lived since the apostolic times, whilst as a scholar he has been ranked by all parties as chief in the ancient church. His spirit has haunted the visions of monks and nuns, and the imaginations of painters and sculptors. His kneeling form meets us in the gorgeous windows of the middle age cathedrals, and in the rich miniatures of illuminated manuscripts. Who has not heard of the picture, in the Vatican, of the Last Communion of St. Jerome, and who would undertake to complete the catalogue of similar works or name the artists among whom Domenichino and the Caracci have taken the lead?

It is not merely from the prostrate devotee of the papal ages, that the monk of Bethlehem has received such honors. His letters and tracts were among the first to receive the stamp of the printing-press,¹ and in their Gothic type are now among the most precious specimens in antiquarian collections. No fewer than eight editions of his entire works have been published, the first of which appeared at Basle (1516—1520) under the charge of the celebrated Erasmus, and the last of which is from the Paris press with ink as yet scarcely dry. As an interpreter and translator of Scripture, his name stands chief of the fathers in the preface of the translators of our approved English Bible. As great proof of his literary importance may be found in the ponderous volume that Le Clerc wrote in question of his scholarship, as in the petulant and tiresome folios that Martianay and his fellows sent forth in his defence. The lighter literature of a later day has not forgotten the saint. He appears conspicuous in the meditations of Zimmermann and the fancies of Chateaubriand, whilst in the gayest city in the world

¹ In the library of Harvard University we find an edition of his epistles which, although without date, according to Brunet's Manual must have been printed as early as 1469, and an edition of his tract against Jovinian that bears the date of 1474.

several selections from his works have been recently published in a popular form, and L. Aimé-Martin¹ ranks with Collombet² among his eulogists.

We too are much interested in Jerome. For his monkish superstition we of course have little love, nor can we find much that is Christlike in the temper with which he met the adversaries of his creed. We are interested in him as the best scholar of the ancient church. We like to read him because his works are the best index of the state of learning in his time, and moreover the most faithful mirror of the opinions, manners and morals of his age. Recluse as he generally was, he kept up a minute acquaintance with contemporary events and characters. His nervous and irascible nature never failed to expose every trouble that annoyed him. His peculiar temperament reveals the presence of every current literary and religious influence, as faithfully as the torsion balance measures the minute electric forces. If any new opinion were started he could never be easy until he lifted his pen in the agitation. Much as we may value the homilies of Chrysostom for shedding light upon the manners and morals of the time, we may prize more the letters of Jerome, since these instead of being busied chiefly with the affairs of single cities like Antioch or Constantinople, deal with all Christendom, and reflect every shade of the prevalent faith and practice. This indefatigable letter writer kept a kind of central post-office at Bethlehem, and he was of such a nature that of everything that interested him whether in his own studies or in current events he must straightway write to some of his correspondents. Every literary undertaking, however grave, gave occasion for his epistolary gift. His elaborate criticisms were written in the form of letters, and in the prefaces to his commentaries whether upon prophet or evangelist, he is sure to have a fling at some crying evil of the day.

In the cursory sketch which we propose to give of the life and labors of this most learned of the Christian fathers, although we do not of course presume to add anything to the knowledge of those who are acquainted with the recent foreign contributions to ecclesiastical history, we are safe in saying, that with the aids that are at hand, nothing but incorrigible stupidity, can prevent a review from giving a more satisfactory survey of the subject than any that is offered by our current church histories. In reference to Jerome, our English historians are wretchedly meagre. The most racy of his German biographers ends his narrative with the declaration that the best that has been done in

¹ *Oeuvres Choisis.* 10 vols. in 8vo.

² *Oeuvres Mystiques.* 1 vol. grand in 8vo.

this field serves rather to excite than to satisfy the desire for a more comprehensive portraiture of the Saint and his times. This want of course we may not hope to fill. It is enough to try to make out our sketch from the best authorities at hand, with such study of the works of Jerome himself as we have been able to make.

By universal consent the richest materials are furnished from the saint's own pages. The chief office of the editor and biographer indeed consists in correcting the text and in determining the dates of events and the connection of passages, so as to derive from the author himself a consistent portrait and harmonious story. Of the three editions which separately or collectively have been the basis of all the others, the chief two, those of Erasmus and Martianay are before us, whilst we are reconciled to the absence of that of Vallarsi (Verona, 1734—1742) from the fact that Schroeckh so fully defines its characteristic, and Collombet has based upon its principles his entire work. Of the almost score of Lives of Jerome that are extant, we need not give even the names. Tillemont and Martianay deserve the chief place on the list, the former from the careful criticism which he applies to the works and life of the saint, an application not always ungrateful to his Jansenist scruples—the latter from his indefatigable labor and devoted partisanship. If Vallarsi has in some respects surpassed them both, especially in a more accurate chronological arrangement of Jerome's letters, it is to be remembered how much he depended upon the labors of his predecessors, and that he has builded upon their foundation. Of the work of Dolci (Ancona, 1750) and that of Engelstoft (Copenh. 1797), we may say with Collombet, that they have not reached us. As to the volumes of Collombet himself, they cannot be read without pleasure, and profit, much as the constant tone of eulogy may offend us, and distasteful as the ornate style and sometimes bombastic rhetoric may occasionally be. The work has evidently been prepared with considerable study and great ambition, and comes to us with the sanction of a brief from the late pope, and a dedication to a cardinal as noted as De Bonald. It is of considerable service in enabling us to judge of the Saint in connection with his times, although the protestant reader is often repelled by the papal hue in which the enthusiastic Frenchman invests the Christendom of the fourth century. The whole of the two volumes, however, fails to give so good or at least so definite an idea of the general subject as the half volume of Schroeckh¹ in his history, and the twenty quarto pages by Von Cölln in the Encyclopaedia of Ersch and Gruber (Leipsic, 1831),—an article admirable for its learning, compactness and point, tainted though it may be with

¹ *Christliche Kirchengeschichte*, T. XL. Leipzig, 1794, pp. 1—239.

a little of Gibbon's sarcasm. Of Neander's labors in this department, we need not speak at length. Although far from being full enough to meet our wants, his observations are distinguished by his usual learning, freedom and good sense. It is enough to say of the biography by the Jesuit, John Stilling,¹ which although by no means of recent date came latest to hand, that it is an unqualified and extravagant eulogium, and shows its character very well from the fact that about thirty of its folio pages are devoted to the investigation of the relics of the Saint, and other like matters connected with his posthumous marvels. Although far better tempered than Martianay, and remarkably laborious in historical details, Stilling shares something of the Benedictine editor's disposition, and adds one to the many instances in which the irascible monk has inoculated his champions with the virus of his own temper. But we must not linger any longer upon these preliminaries.

In the middle of the fourth century, a young Illyrian, who had already exhausted the literary privileges of his provincial home, in company with a schoolmate of like age, turned towards Rome. He came to enjoy the instructions of the celebrated teachers who held their schools in the imperial city. Judging from his own allusions, we cannot form a very favorable idea of his native place. The people of Stridon were gluttonous and avaricious, whilst the bishop Lupicinus was a pastor not unlike his flock. The student's childhood had been under the tuition of a pedagogue who drilled him in the rudiments so severely that, using an epithet from Horace, he spoke of him in after years as the savage Orbilius. He was born of Christian parents, probably in affluent circumstances, and left home with favorable dispositions towards Christianity, although without any very decided personal convictions. Such was the young Illyrian, who came to Rome to enjoy the learning of her noted schools. He thought quite as little as his teacher Donatus how soon the tables would be turned, and Rome would look to this pilgrim to her literary shrine as her own most learned teacher, and that after ages would regard Eusebius Jerome as the most illustrious scholar of the Latin church.

The year of his arrival at Rome is not ascertained. It is very clear, however, that he was there in A. D. 363, at the time of the death of the emperor Julian. What was then his age is a much controverted question, since his birth has been placed at dates as widely apart as 329 and 346. He has been supposed by most of his earlier biographers, who have followed the ancient chronicle of Prosper, to have been born

¹Acta Sanctorum. Septemb. Tom. VIII pp 418—688. Antwerp 1762. fol. Copy in Library of Harvard University.

in 331, although this date is not consistent with the same writer's subsequent statement that Jerome died in 420 at the age of 91.¹ The saint, moreover, speaks of his being a mere boy at the time of Julian's death, and from this and other equivalent expressions, Baronius was led to fix the date at 342, and has had the approbation of Dupin, Tillemont, Dolci and Lardner. Vallarsi goes still further, and fixes upon the year 346, and is followed in this opinion by Collombet. As our own patience has been well nigh exhausted in following Stilling through his elaborate vindication of the earlier date in reply to the six or seven arguments of Baronius and his followers, we will not test the temper of our readers by rehearsing the controversy. The Jesuit certainly makes out a very good case, and proves that Jerome at least might call himself a boy at any period without implying anything more, than that he was then a pupil of his masters or a mere tyro in learning. Schroeckh, who has gone into the particulars of the controversy, is quite satisfied with Stilling's argument, and thinks it a sufficient refutation of the later date, that about the year 403, Jerome addressed Augustine as his son, an epithet that would not be appropriate if the former was but in his sixtieth year, since the latter was certainly almost fifty. This point, however, is by no means satisfactory, since ten years of seniority might give great venerableness to one, who like Jerome, had hastened old age by his austerities, and who from his ghostly sanctity might, as has sometimes been the habit of spiritual directors, address even his seniors as his children.

But, however this controversy as to the saint's birth may be decided, it is beyond question that in 363 he was in Rome. At that time the condition of the empire was peculiar, and the church on the eve of her most brilliant period. Julian had died, and with him died the enterprise of supplanting the doctrines of Christ by the ethics of Antoninus, and substituting for Christianity a splendid but visionary eclecticism of philosophical deism, nature-worship and vulgar paganism. The apostate died; under the auspices of Jovian the *Labarum* of Constantine again glittered at the head of the imperial legions, and in the hearing of the young Illyrian the pagans expressed their dismay at the summary vengeance taken by the Christian God upon the restorer of the ancient altars, and their wonder that he could be called patient and long suffering. But yet for many years the old religion retained its temples and pageants. Pontiffs, augurs, vestals, flamens, with all their ancient retinue, still exercised their offices, and by their regular succession connected the Porte of Constantine and Jovian

¹ This incongruity is regarded by Stilling as coming from an error of the pen, which led the transcribers to write *Udenonagesimo*, XCI.

with the Rome of Numa. But it could not escape a mind so sagacious as Jerome's, and one so tremulously sensitive to every popular movement, that a power was at work in the empire, that must overthrow the pagan idols, and set up the cross on the very altar of victory. More than four hundred temples or chapels still remained to satisfy the superstition of the people; yet there were a few far less conspicuous edifices which were resorted to with a kind of reverence unknown to the votaries of Jupiter or Mars. The Basilica of the Lateran and that of St. Peter with others of like stamp were frequented by the followers of the cross, and already the Christian bishops began to rival the pagan pontiffs in the splendor of their array. The great prelates of the East and the West, who were to make the close of the century so brilliant in the Christian annals, had not yet appeared. The veteran Athanasius occupied the most conspicuous place among the churches, and under the patronage of Jovian, had promise of passing the remainder of his troubled life in dignity and peace.

How Jerome passed his student years at Rome, he has pretty fully disclosed. He was a close student, somewhat of a man of pleasure, and occasionally he was seized with the impulses of a devotee. He learned grammar of Donatus the commentator upon Terence, and rhetoric probably of Victorinus who was celebrated for the brilliancy of his school and for the notoriety of his conversion. Jerome was ambitious of literary name—made himself very familiar with the Roman and probably somewhat with the Greek literature, and not content with the instructions of the lecture-room, frequented the courts of law to take practical lessons in logic and oratory. So strong was the impression left upon him by the studies of this period, that in old age they haunted his dreams, and the ghostly monk seemed to himself to be listening to rival pleaders, or to be declaiming before his master. He made a point of gathering a library at Rome, and thus unconsciously to himself was providing for his solitary years the companionship of the choice spirits of the classic world.

Although far from being strict in his habits, he loved to frequent the places in Rome that had been hallowed by the events of the martyr-age. He visited the sepulchres of the apostles and martyrs. It was a favorite habit with him to take a few companions, and on Sundays go down into the crypts of the catacombs, and wander in the subterranean gloom among the monuments of that solemn cemetery. There rambling, now spelling out the inscriptions on the tombs, and now quoting some line of Virgil as the darkness reminded him of the poet's Avernus, this Sunday loiterer had then within him the elements of character that were to give him such a name as the monk and

scholar among the Christian fathers. Yet he had no such sympathy with those dark retreats as to destroy his zeal for the gaieties of the capital. He lived very freely, and with all his subsequent reverence for chastity, and contempt even for lawful marriage, he lays no claim to the credit of having never left the path of virtue. He allows that he could not well resist temptation, and that in youth he was as emulous in taking the lead in pleasure as afterwards in devotion. He laid claim by a singular figure of speech to the crown of virginity because in his soul he honored the virtue the more from not possessing it himself.¹

At Rome Jerome received baptism. But whether this took place before or after his journey to Gaul, it is very certain that during that journey his strongest convictions were felt, and the purpose was formed that shaped his whole subsequent life. It was in the city of Treves, that he first resolved to devote himself to Christ, and formed with his companion and countryman Bonosus, the plan of an ascetic life. He evidently carried with him in his journey at the outset a decided taste for Christian studies, as he busied himself with the Christian literature of Gaul, and copied for his friend Rufinus the work of Hilary of Poitiers upon Synods, and also his Exposition of the Psalms. It is not strange, that on the banks of the Rhine among a semi-barbarous people, he should view life and the world far otherwise than in the gay metropolis, look upon his past history in a far graver spirit, and be led, moreover, to a better understanding of the genius of that church which was to restore the falling majesty of Rome, and bring into prostrate reverence the pride of those three nations who were preparing to overthrow the eternal city. It is a coincidence worthy of being mentioned, that the see of Arnoldi, bishop of Treves, the champion of the holy coat that has so lately convulsed Germany, should be in the city in which Jerome, the father of Romish monasticism and relic worship, met with the impressions that made him what he became. Truly the nineteenth century is not wholly different from the fourth. Nay, we have serious doubts whether Jerome, in his most erratic moods, would ever have dared to undertake the enterprise of the holy coat.

The exact extent of his travels in Gaul, a country with whose people he had much subsequent intercourse and great sympathy, we do not know. He probably went as far as the western coast and looked towards Britain and that far distant continent, that was not for ages to see the light of Christianity. After his return he spent some time in the famous city of Aquileia, not far distant from his own native place, and lived upon

¹ Epist. XXX. p. 242. T. IV. Martianay.

terms of intimate friendship with a circle of Christian friends, among whom were the priest Rufinus, afterwards his enemy, and Chromatinus afterwards bishop of the city, and other clergy and monks. From this place he wrote probably the first letter that has reached us, and related to a friend the particulars of a strange occurrence at Vercella in the neighborhood, where an innocent woman was kept alive by a miracle after having received seven blows from the sword of the executioner. This letter may have been the cause of his flight which soon followed, since his version of the affair must have reflected severely upon the conduct of the civil tribunal. But whatever the cause, whether political troubles, family embarrassments, or, as the less believing suspect, the heat of his own passions, "a storm" came over him, and he was obliged to flee. In company with his friends Evgrius and Innocentius, and not forgetting his precious library, he turned his face towards the East to visit the regions for which his heart had many a time yearned. It was about the year 372, that he undertook this adventurous journey, and traversing Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, he arrived at last at Antioch and ere long sought a solitude in the Syrian desert. While at Antioch, he was seized with severe sickness and in addition to his personal sufferings was grieved to the heart by the death of his friend Innocentius. It was probably at this time that he had that vision of judgment against the heathen classics which he describes in one of his letters to Eustochium, and in which he heard himself condemned by the judge as a mere Ciceronian and no Christian, and sought to escape the sentence by promising to abjure heathen literature forever. A dream like this was very likely to haunt the fevered hours of an invalid such as he was, and indicated very plainly the state of mind that led him to seek for a retreat among the monks of Chalcis.

But if the recluse had indulged in roseate fancies of solitary life he was destined to be grievously disappointed. He had frequent occasion to remember the remark of Horace, that they who cross seas are far from changing their dispositions with their abode. He found, that the retirement of the desert gave him no safe-guard from temptation. In the midst of his vigils and fastings, his imagination would steal away and revel in visions of Rome, its beauties and refinements. He suffered sadly alike in health and spirits. But in study he soon found the solace that could alleviate if not remove his desolation. As the world in which he had moved was hid from his sight, the realm of literature opened upon him with new brightness. While at Antioch he had informed himself of the system of Apollinarius of Laodicea, so celebrated for his skill in interpreting Scripture and for his peculiar

view of the nature of Christ; and had thus acquired important aids in the science of biblical interpretation. Even before retiring to the desert, he had attempted a commentary upon the book of Obadiah, a work whose loss is not much to be deplored, since in the preface to his subsequent commentary upon the same book, he speaks of it contemptuously as a token of his youthful ignorance and specimen of vain allegorizing.

His desire to interpret the sacred books led him to feel the want of knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. To meet this want, and at the same time aid him in subduing his fiery nature, he put himself under the instruction of a converted Jew and studied the Hebrew and probably Chaldee. He evidently thought it no little mortification for one so familiar with Cicero and Quintilian and Pliny to occupy his mind with a language so harsh and inflated.¹ But what was first a sacrifice became in time his delight, and the recluse soon grew more proud of his Hebrew than of any branch of learning, glorying as much on mortifying his classic tastes by this new study as in mortifying his flesh by fastings and vigils. His letters are rich in pictures of his hermit life. He appears to have gained a subsistence by the labor of his own hands, and to have passed his days in toil, study and devotion. At this time he probably wrote his eloquent, although extravagant history of Paulus, the first hermit. But fond as he was of study and determined as he had been to shut out the world and its agitations, he gave constant proof that he was still like other men, and could not be indifferent to the current of events. At first declaring that he had lost all knowledge of the affairs of his own country, and did not even know that it was in existence, he soon engaged in a close correspondence with his former friends in the West; now requesting that his sister, who had recovered from a sad fall from virtue, might be encouraged in the path of rectitude; now asking for theological books and again offering to spare manuscript copies, versions and explanations of the Scriptures from his own collection.

But the solitary had not yet so schooled his mind as to be long content to hold intercourse through the medium of letters. He was drawn into controversy that drew him from his retreat. Four rival bishops laid claim to the possession of the see of Antioch. Of course Jerome had no thought of favoring the claims of the Arian Euzoios or the latitudinarian Vitalis. His choice must lie between the two catholics, Meletius and Paulinus. Meletius was obviously the legitimate bishop, and had such defenders as Basil and Chrysostom. But Paulinus had

¹ "Stridentia anbelantiaque verba." *Epist.* XCV. Ad Rusticum, p. 774. *Martianay*, I. IV.

the countenance of Athanasius and pope Damasus, and his cause triumphed alike by the posture of the rival factions and the connection of the controversy with a dispute as to the words most fit to be employed in defining the Trinity,—a dispute that soon exceeded in violence and extent the original controversy. Jerome was at first evidently at a loss what side to take in the conflict, and various causes increased his perplexity. He was no metaphysician and was 'almost crazed by the questions that were put to him by the monks who came to his cell to learn his mind as to the use of the word 'hypostases.' It was at once following his own inclinations and relieving himself of personal responsibility to appeal to Damasus of Rome, which he did in a letter not to be surpassed in ambitious rhetoric and servile adulation. What answer Damasus returned to this and a second similar letter, we do not know. But we soon find Jerome at Antioch upon intimate terms with Paulinus, and receiving ordination as presbyter at his hands. This was in the year 378 or 379. Instead of being weary of controversy and demanding as he had threatened to do the right of utter solitude in the desert, he engaged still more in the affairs of the church, and soon sent forth a treatise upon the Luciferian controversy in which he speaks in a tone of unusual mildness, and repudiates the doctrine that the bishops of the Arians, after renouncing their heretical connection, should not be recognized as bishops, and that the converts from Arianism should be re-baptized. The saint showed some humor in styling Hilary, the deacon who advocated the re-baptism of all converted heretics, the 'Deucalion of the world.'

But the controversialist was not so absorbed in these disputes as to forget the claims of the scholar, and Jerome sought the privileges of the brilliant schools of Constantinople and the countenance of Gregory its eloquent and learned bishop. Here he studied closely the Greek language with which before he seems to have been but partially acquainted, although we can by no means favor the idea sanctioned by Rufinus that he knew nothing of Greek while pursuing his studies at Rome. It was well for him to acquaint himself with the Byzantine literature, especially its method of interpretation, and thus enlarge even if by the too rhetorical and *Origenizing* method of Gregory, the rules which he had learned in the more liberal and practical school of Antioch. Yet he was too good a critic to be blinded by the glitter even of Gregory's eloquence into acquiescence with his ideas, and somewhat silyly remarks that an ignorant audience, such as listened to the prelate's expositions, was not by any means the best test or school of biblical criticism. From Gregory however he acknowledged that he received important aids. How could a mind so susceptible as his

be otherwise than quickened and enlarged by the society of perhaps the most accomplished bishop of his day, at once poet, orator and theologian, imbued with classic knowledge gained at Athens in company with the noted Julian, and surpassed in eloquence only by his successor Chrysostom?

Although so long an inhabitant of the East, Jerome was at heart, a Roman, and labored for the literature of the Latin church by enriching it with translations of the most approved works from the Greek. He translated and enlarged the *Chronicles of Eusebius*; and showed how fully he began to appreciate the services of the great scholar, whom he alone was to surpass, by his translation of the homilies of Origen upon *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*. Yet then, so long before his conflict with the Origenists, he showed that he was no blind follower of the method of him whom he pronounced as second only to the Apostles, by openly departing from some of his criticisms. At the same time we are not disposed to regard the instance of his independence so frequently alleged, his criticism upon the vision of *Scraphim* in *Isaiah*, as an improvement upon the allegorical fancies of the great Alexandrian.

Once more the scholar was called away from his books to mingle in the agitations of the times. In 381, *Meletius* died at Antioch, and his partisans instead of recognizing the legitimacy of *Paulinus* appointed *Flavianus* his successor. The old dispute was renewed, appeal was made to a Roman synod, to which *Paulinus* went, followed by his friends *Epiphanius* and *Jerome*. The decision of this synod had little effect in settling the controversy in question, but its session resulted in no small advantage to *Jerome*. From his acquaintance with affairs at Antioch, he was appointed secretary and adviser of *Damasus*, and in this capacity displayed such learning and ability as to be employed in far more ambitious literary labors. He was often consulted upon questions of exegesis, and at the request of *Damasus*, began to translate the work of the Alexandrian catechist *Didymus* upon the Holy Spirit. We cannot much admire the manner in which he solved some of the Roman father's critical problems. Take for example the parable of the prodigal son. Something more than Greek and Hebrew was wanting to save him from the folly of regarding the two sons as the two nations, the Jews and the Heathen, and finding minute historical parallels for every feature of our Saviour's touching narrative. He still cherished his taste for Origen, and at Rome translated two of his homilies upon the *Canticles*. In a more arduous labor however he was now to be engrossed.

The Western Church possessed no authorized version of the New

Testament, but was obliged to depend upon divers anonymous translations which varied as much in sense as in phraseology. In public worship and in every controverted question, these varieties were very troublesome, and Damasus was desirous of having an approved version made from the original Greek. Jerome was called to the task and executed it most faithfully by a careful comparison of the current versions with one another and the original. He first translated the four gospels, and sent them forth with a preface to Damasus, and tables and marginal notes for the better understanding of the parallel passages. He went on with his undertaking, and labored upon the remaining books of the New Testament. He also corrected the old Latin version of the Psalter by the Septuagint, and busied himself with comparing the Greek version of Aquila with the Hebrew text. This first revision of the Bible was subsequently completed in the East. The only portions of it now extant are the Psalms, Job, and the New Testament.¹

But the scholar was still at heart the monk, and Rome was to feel the influence of his asceticism as well as of his learning. The strictness of his life made him very conspicuous in a capital whose clergy already began to revel in all the luxuries of the world, and it was soon seen that the ascetic student was as little disposed to keep his austerity as his learning to himself. He conducted himself in such a way as to provoke the worldly, astonish the moderate, and awe the devout. The views which Athanasius had brought with him from the East in his journey to Rome, found far more followers when advocated by the eloquent scholar than by the stern dogmatist. He scandalized a large party of the clergy by his denunciation of their laxity, and drew upon him the attention of society at large by the sensation which he created among the Roman ladies. Strange it is, yet by no means unaccountable, that among the rich and privileged there have always been found those who are most earnest in condemning the vanities of the world, and most ready to listen to the praises of solitude and renunciation. From the more favored classes asceticism has derived its most devoted champions, its Basil, Benedict, Bernard, Dominic, Francis, Catherine of Genoa, Theresa, and a multitude of the same high mark. The reason is obvious; they who have tasted the pleasures of the world are more likely to feel their unsatisfactory character, than they who have seen them only in the enchantments of distance; and, moreover, the refinement of cultivated society is apt to bring with it sensibilities that subject their possessors to disappointment, life-weariness or yearning for retirement. It was among the courtly circles of Rome, that the accomplished monk of Syria found

¹ Martianay, T. I. p. 1185.

most willing and enthusiastic listeners. Several of the most distinguished widows and maidens resigned themselves wholly to his direction. Thus the monastic spirit took its strongest hold in Rome at a time when, under the auspices of Theodosius, the Christian church was about to wear its most brilliant secular honors, and to open even to worldly ambition the path of ecclesiastical preferment. By his pen as shown in his reply to Helvidius on the perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary, and by his conversation as many a Roman household proved, Jerome contended for the sanctity of celibacy and the worth of the ascetic life. Marcella, a rich and gifted widow, who had previously led a very devout life, was first to ask the monk's counsel in the study of the Scriptures, and offered the use of her stately palace on the Aventine for the re-unions of the pious circle that gathered around her. But it was not with Marcella and her mother Albina, devoted though they were, that his destiny was to be most intimately connected. The names of Paula and her daughter Eustochium are identified with the history of their austere director, and the letters addressed to them by him have been in all ages among the manuals of nuns and devotees. Under the influence of their friendship a fresh zeal for biblical study seized him, for now he was sure of readers eager and able to enjoy the results of his labors. Jerome was always very dependent upon feminine society, and when most eloquent in praise of retirement or in denouncing the vanity of the sex, he proved his dependence by the assiduity with which he courted their regard, and addressed to them his ghostly epistles. He had not a little of that bachelor temperament which leads so many men to rail against the vanity of woman and at the same time never be happy without her society. His letters to Paula and Marcella contain some of his most valuable biblical interpretations. When we look over his letters to his female friends upon the worth of celibacy, we cannot but wish that for his own credit he had always confined himself to scriptural exegesis. How he could have written as he did upon virginity to a young girl like Eustochium¹ we cannot understand. That epistle is in shocking taste, and detestably gross in its allusions. The monk, either sinned against the prevalent standard of propriety in such statements and illustrations, or Roman society had sadly degenerated since the days of Cicero and Tullia, or delicacy of speech had been placed among the dainty refinements of the world and with them been put off by the ascetic party. With some reason, a prejudice arose against the instigator of the ascetic movement. The relatives of the wealthy ladies whom he had converted looked upon him as the robber of their

¹ Martianay, T. IV. Ep. XVIII. p. 27.

inheritance. The clergy winced beneath his rebukes, and were not slow in retaliating. It was looked upon as an intolerable grievance that young women were prohibited from associating with men, and that wine should be forbidden. It was thought that Blesilla, the second daughter of Paula, whose second marriage Jerome had prevented, was brought to her premature death by excessive austerities, and such was the excitement upon the subject, that the populace at the funeral were provoked almost to violence against the author of the wrong. Jerome's popularity so far waned that he who was regarded as the most available candidate to succeed to the chair of Damasus found his position in Rome far from comfortable.

But he was not of a temper to be put down by his enemies. Their very attack upon him he made the occasion of gaining a yet more commanding position. He looked towards the East, for some calm retreat, where from the heights of monastic sanctity, he might still dictate to the church, and act upon its opinions and manners as never before. To the maiden Asella¹ he wrote a parting letter, giving his view of Rome, and his three years' stay there, leaving to her and her friends the task of vindicating his memory from the charges brought against him in the Babel to which he now pronounced his farewell. Attended by his younger brother Paulinianus, by the presbyter Vincentius and several monks, he embarked in August 385 for Palestine. Paula and Eustochium soon joined him at Antioch. It was no small triumph to the monk and his cause, that this noted woman, whose family boasted the blood of Aeneas and the Julian race, should leave the city of the Caesars, for the land of the Nazarene and a life of self-denial. From Antioch, the coming winter, the company of devotees began their tour of Palestine. At Jerusalem, the Roman pro-consul prepared for Paula a stately abode, but she chose to lodge in a humble cell. Visiting Bethlehem, Paula was overwhelmed with emotion as she looked upon the place of the Saviour's birth, and resolved to make that her abiding place. First, however, she must see Egypt. In Egypt, as elsewhere, Jerome did not allow his devotional raptures to blind him to his favorite pursuits. The sites hallowed by ancient miracles, by saintly men, or memorable deeds, he investigated with critical eye, and notwithstanding his gray hairs he was not ashamed to sit as a learner in the catechetical school where the blind Didymus now discharged the office of the great Origen.

Returning to Bethlehem, the devotees gave themselves in good earnest to the contemplative life. A few years saw Jerome transferred from his little cell at the gate of the town, to the charge of a mo-

¹ Martianay, Ep. XXVIII. p. 65.

nastery erected by the charity of Paula, who herself was at the head of a similar establishment for nuns. Here Jerome passed the remainder of his days, living in the simplest manner, never relaxing his austerities, and finding his only diversion in biblical study, letter-writing and theological controversy. He applied himself with new zeal to the Hebrew language, under the guidance of the Jew, Baranina, who came to him by night from fear of violence from his own nation. In the inquiring minds of Paula and her daughter, in the enthusiasm of nuns, monks and the vast crowds of pilgrims who sought the shrine of Christ's birth, the devoted scholar found motive and appreciation sufficient to encourage him in his work. His vision of judgment did not prevent him from reviving his classic studies, and for the instruction of children confided to his care if not for his own entertainment, he opened once more the forbidden pages of the great heathen masters. Yet the Bible was his absorbing study, and at the request of Paula, in spite of his professions of inability, he was led step by step to give a kind of commentary upon nearly the whole of the Scriptures, for the instruction of herself and daughter. Next to those of Paula, stood the claims of the Roman widow Marcella, who upon the death of her mother Albina, sought consolation anew in the sacred books. His first labors were his comments upon the epistles to Philemon and to the Galatians, the Ephesians and to Titus. Then he turned to the Old Testament, and gave an explanation of the book so cherished by the monks, Ecclesiastes. Then (about 390) appeared his tracts on Hebrew Proper names—on the Names and Position of Places mentioned in the Bible,—and his Hebrew Questions upon the book of Genesis. In rapid succession came his completion of his translation of Didymus on the Holy Spirit, his seven tracts on Psalm x—xvi, his Lives of Malchus and Hilarion, his prosecution of his enterprise of revising the old Latin version of the Scriptures from the Alexandrian. He now began his great task of translating the Old Testament from the original Hebrew, and by the year 393 completed the books of Samuel, Kings, Job and the Prophets, and meanwhile composed commentaries upon five of the lesser prophets, besides writing at the suggestion of the Roman prefect, his catalogue of distinguished church writers.

From the calm retirement of his cell, the monkish student was now startled by the rise of a powerful adversary of the monastic doctrines. Jovinian had asserted at Rome the worthlessness of celibacy in securing salvation, and maintained that all baptized Christians stood equally accepted in the kingdom of heaven. The ascetic school at Rome was scandalized at this attack upon their darling doctrine, and Jerome as

with a scream of horror at the outrage, sprang to the rescue first with two books against the heretic, and then (394 or 395) with an apology for the previous work, whose ultraism was met with scorn from his enemies and fears from his friends. The fierce champion of monasticism, however, must have been gratified at this time with the notice of the renowned Augustine, who first wrote to him in 393, to introduce a young clergyman to his regard, and who afterwards renewed the correspondence. Yet the testy recluse ill brooked the adorer even of Augustine, and a jealousy sprung up between two men who of all others ought to have been friends, from their peculiar fitness to benefit each other. Jerome was the scholar and Augustine the theologian. The learning of the one would have been a great aid to the profound thought of the other by furnishing exact information, whilst the logic of the thinker would have been of invaluable service to the scholar in chastening his rhetoric and invigorating his mind. But these two veterans of the Latin church were upon ill terms one with the other, until at last common hostility to Pelagius brought them into agreement.

The other controversies which in turn engaged the mind of Jerome we can merely mention, as they are so fully treated in church histories. Sad is it when friends fall out with one another, especially friends from youth upwards. Such was the lot of Jerome and Rufinus in the famous *Origenistic* controversy. It was natural enough that Jerome should be troubled at being identified, even in a friendly spirit, at Rome through Rufinus with the school of Origen, for much as he prized the Alexandrian scholarship, he was by his position and nature, little inclined to his Platonizing theology. He erred sadly in going to such extremes, and so reviling the illustrious man whom he had once ranked next to the apostles. Ten years the controversy lasted (394—404), and did not end until it rent Christendom into hostile factions, and brought discord to Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Posterity has very amicably united the two names placed in such opposition by this controversy, for Jerome has been called the Origen of the Latin church. But whilst the Latin father is the superior in broad and exact scholarship, the great Alexandrian bears the palm for philosophical acuteness, penetrating judgment, calm faith and uniform charity.

But it was upon the head of the follower of Jovinian and the opponent of the rising passion for relics, pilgrimages, celibacy and asceticism, that the fiercest anathemas of the saint were to fall. Nothing in the whole compass of theological controversy has ever come before us, that has seemed more fierce than his second letter against Vigilantius.

tius.¹ He writes as if his dearest convictions of Christianity had been assailed, and as if he saw in his alarm his whole stock of ascetic riches snatched away at one fell swoop by this wretch whom by a play upon his name he calls *Dormitanti*us or sleepy-head.

But even during these years of controversy his studies and correspondence went on. His translation² of the Bible was completed by the year 404, a year marked by the death of Paula. His commentaries were continued during the remaining sixteen years of his life. His prefaces to them are very rich in illustration of the history of the times. The conquest of Rome by Alaric is brought nearer to us by the pathetic allusions to it in the commentary upon Ezekiel; and the unfinished pages upon Jeremiah, from which death in the year 420 snatched the aged student, are in mournful unison with that age of declension, and that life so solitary and desolate in its close. Yet with all the loneliness of his position, and in the midst of great revolutions that shook the empire, and endangered his own retreat, the soul of the monk could not be utterly desolate. He had something to hope from his labors for the church. With his visions of heaven, no mean prospect of influence upon future ages must have been mingled. We are willing to view him as an earnest devotee, and deem the sonnet of the Oxford bard³ no exaggeration :

The peaceful star of Bethlehem
Came o'er thy solitude,
The radiance of that heavenly gem
Lit up thy sterner mood;
Yea, like a star in murky wells,
Cheering the bed where darkness dwells,
The images of earth its happier light imbued.

The thought of the Eternal child
Upon thy cloistral cell
Must sure have cast an influence mild
And like a holy spe l,
Have peopled that fair Eastern night
With dreams meet for an Eremite,
Beside that cradle poor, bidding the world farewell.

Yet other thoughts may have crossed the mind of that old man and blended with his anticipation of bliss. There he rests upon his miserable pallet about to breathe his last. He has lived through a most interesting period—not far, probably, from a century of eventful history.

¹ Martianay, Tom. IV. Class's III. p. 279.

² Given by Martianay, T. I. under the name *Bibliotheca Divina*. Not in the edition of Erasmus.

³ The Cathedral. Oxford: 1841. p. 297.

He has known the leading men and taken part in the leading movements of his time. The prominent actors in church and State had passed away. Augustine alone of the renowned fathers survived. The daughter of his cherished Paula, Eustochium, had died the previous year, and with her the brightest thread in his life was rent. He almost alone remains. Yet many signs appeared to indicate that the labor of his life was not to pass away. His eye before it closes forever, perhaps looks upon his books, those friends that were never unkind or variable—upon his own manuscripts, the fruit of years of toil, his commentaries, his translation of the Scriptures, that darling child of his studies. In these thoughts the dying man might well feel happy. As he thought of his years of seclusion, he might deem himself nearer God by withdrawal from the world. But could he have seen gathering around him the images that history must associate with him, what would have been the feeling of the expiring monk? Could his eye have been gifted with aught of the prophetic power that death is sometimes believed to impart, how it would have glowed with pride, as he looked upon that mighty order of men who followed him in the monastic life, who formed communities in all lands, and bore civilization to barbaric wilds, and kept learning in sacred trust during the ages of darkness, who forced their doctrine of celibacy upon the church, made its ministers adopt their discipline, who rose in signal instances above the imperial throne, and wielded power such as was never granted to the sword of Alexander or the sceptre of the Caesars. Shall we not believe, too, that his eye would have darkened with something of horror, could he have seen the blacker forms in that monkish band who have mortified human appetites only to indulge preternatural passions, and who are to be blamed more than any others for stirring up religious wars, wielding the rack and kindling the fagot? Surely he would have had little toleration for the degenerate age of monasticism, when retirement from secular observation was too often the shelter of gluttony and licentiousness. Surely, too, he would have gloried in the thought of the innumerable students of sacred learning who were to follow in his steps and call him master. He who could refuse a mitre for the retirement of his cell, could not refuse the wreath placed upon his head by the Council of Trent in the precedence given to his Vulgate Bible. Could he have looked into the cell of the monk of Wittenberg and seen the form of Luther bending with rapture over a copy of that same Vulgate Bible, and drawing from it principles that cast down so much of priestly despotism, and created a new civilization, perhaps the dying man would have found

in his pride as a scholar something to console him for the wreck of many superstitions which he cherished as a monk.

But we have a more serious task to pursue than to deal in such imaginations. We are called to give some opinion of the character of Jerome's labors, and of his worth as a scholar, theologian and Christian man.

As a man of letters, Jerome had no equal surely in the Latin church. He stands more than any other man as a connecting link between the literature of the classic and the middle ages. Augustine understood better than he the philosophy and ethics of the old Greek and Roman civilization, and dealt far more than Jerome with fundamental ideas. But with the classic literature in its own form and dress he had small acquaintance. He was not skilful in the use of the Latin tongue, provincial as he was, alike in birth and education; of Greek he knew little and of Hebrew nothing. Of these three languages Jerome was sufficiently master to enable him to enjoy and interpret their master pieces, whilst in the use of the Latin, he was so accomplished as to win, not without reason, from Erasmus, the unsurpassed Latinist of modern times, the name of the "Christian Cicero." Whether his family was of Roman origin or not, we are not able to say, nor whether from the nursery he learned to prattle in the Latin or Illyrian tongue, but it is certain that from his early childhood he was taught by a Roman teacher, and thoroughly drilled in the Latin language. If his family was of Illyrian origin, as is probable, it by no means follows that they had not adopted the language of the people who had for centuries governed them, and to whom Illyria had furnished many distinguished men, and more than once, as in the case of the Dalmatian Diocletian, given a monarch in one of her sons. What the original stock of the Illyrian tribes was, is somewhat uncertain. Some deem it to have been Slavonic, others like Mannert, and with greater plausibility, trace it to the Thracian family, and consequently to the Pelasgic races. If the Thracian family was in great part of Celtic blood, as we are told on good authority, it would not be difficult to trace that blood in the peculiar temperament of the saint, so sensitive and excitable, so keenly alive to praise and blame, in style and spirit so often reminding us of Irish enthusiasm and French volatility.

His education was such as to bring him into close communion with the best literature extant. In Rome, Constantinople and the East, he had diligently studied, and upon its own genial soil he had devoted himself to the languages and letters of the great nations, who had held the empire of thought. It was a happy circumstance that he flourished

when he did—at a time when the classic literature was still taught in the schools, in its original purity, and before the barbaric invasions had done their destructive work with those literary monuments that had already lost their hold upon the ideas and affections of the people. Literature always rests upon religion as its ultimate foundation, and as the leading minds and the popular feelings went over to the Christian church, the literary idols of the classic ages must fall. It was well that Jerome caught so much of their spirit, and breathed it through his translations and letters into the church of the middle ages. Rail as much as he would against the old poets, philosophers, orators and historians, he was always careful to treasure up their riches, and perhaps never showed his obligations to them more than in the very periods in which he set forth their worthlessness, and sent them all to the realm of darkness. The Latin Vulgate has undoubtedly had more influence upon the mind of Europe than any other book previous to the Reformation, and has had no small effect upon the translation and interpretation of the Bible since the Reformation. From Jerome the Vulgate has its chief characteristics. Of this there can be but little doubt, even if we accept the largest estimate that has been made in regard to alterations of that version since Jerome's day. To attempt a critique of the Vulgate is beyond our purpose, to say nothing of our ability. To defend it from all censure would be folly. In some respects, it must be regarded as having done great harm to evangelical religion, as in translating the Greek *μετανοήσατε*, agite poenitentiam, rendered in the Douay version so speciously "do penance," and the Greek "*ἐπιούσιον*," *supersubstantialem*, a rendering of the Lord's Prayer so favorable to Romish notions of the Eucharist. But surely none can deny to its style the praise of great richness and majesty, and to its renderings the credit of general fidelity and correctness. We must allow the translator the honor of singular independence in his mode of dealing with the apocryphal books, and of being unwilling to defer to the prejudices of the age and escape the denunciations of antagonists like Rufinus, by placing them among the canonical Scriptures. His study of the Hebrew language was of itself no small proof of his fidelity to the cause of sacred scholarship. The Hebrew was almost a proscribed tongue. For his devotedness to it, he was accused of an outrage upon the good name of the Seventy, of following a course unexampled by apostles and saints, and of preferring Barabbas to Jesus by becoming the pupil of the Jew Baranina. Augustine too dissuaded him from Hebrew studies, and besought him to be content with revising the old version by the Septuagint, and not alarm the churches by any dangerous novelties. The praise of a faithful schol-

arship far in advance of his age therefore belongs to the monk of Bethlehem. The earnest pursuit of knowledge under difficulties is always noble. And to judge of Jerome's merit as a Hebraist, we must not estimate his difficulties by the standards of our own day of philological appliances. The grammar of the Hebrew had not begun to be written, the Masoretic text had not been settled, and the Chaldee Targums with the poor interpretations given in the Mishna, constituted the monk's philological apparatus. How far deficiencies could be supplied by the living voice of the teacher, we cannot definitely say. But surely Baranina could not well teach more than he knew, and his knowledge could not have been great when measured by the standard of a Schultens or Gesenius.

It would be very strange if with a temper like his, Jerome did not claim full enough consideration for his own Hebrew renderings. He is unquestionably sometimes unjust to the authors of the Septuagint, and prefers in some instances a poorer translation to that given by them. Yet the position which he occupied, and the qualifications which he possessed, could not but give many advantages over the Alexandrian interpreters, and enabled him certainly to aid Christians in their controversies with Jews by affording a more correct understanding of the Old Testament in its relations to the New. Such men as Stilling claim almost supernatural infallibility for Jerome's Hebrew. It is enough for us to turn to Father Simon's¹ more candid pages, and learn from this Catholic scholar's admission that the translator of the Vulgate is by no means free from error. We are perhaps safe in saying with Le Clerc and Von Cölln, that Jerome learned as he was, never attained to a scientific knowledge of the principles either of the Greek or the Hebrew Grammar.

As a commentator, Jerome deserves less honor than as a translator, so hasty his comments generally are, and so frequently consisting of fragments gathered from previous writers. His merit however is, and this was by no means a common one in his day, that he generally aims to give the literal sense of the passages in question. He read apparently all that had been written by the leading interpreters before him, and then wrote his own commentaries in great haste without stopping to distinguish his own views from those of the authorities consulted. He dashed through a thousand lines of the text in a single day, and went through the gospel of Matthew in a fortnight. He sometimes yielded to the allegorical methods of interpretation and showed frequent traces of the influence of his study of Origen. Yet

¹ R. Simon, *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, T. I. pp. 244—249, 257—259, 296—307. Rotterdam, 1655.

he seems not to have inclined to this method so much from his own taste as from the habit of his time. And if of the four doctors of the church particularized by some writers, to Gregory belongs excellence in *tropology*, to Ambrose in *allegory*, to Augustine in *anagoge*, to Jerome is given the palm in the literal and grammatical sense. We cannot however exonerate him from frequent extravagances as a rhetorician and allegorist. Whilst few will with Erasmus dispute the verdict that assigns to Augustine the dialectic palm, few will deny that the grammatical doctor often rivals Gregory in his tropes and Ambrose in his allegories. Whether writing a letter of acknowledgment to Eustochium for a basket of cherries and a dove, or to Marcella for cups and chairs, or elucidating a prophetic vision or gospel parable, he could exhibit a proficiency in finding double senses and mystic meanings, as far fetched as anything in Origen, and an ingenuity more suitable for a desperate rhymester than a grave theologian.

Rich and eloquent as his style frequently is, he does not appear to have had very good taste as a critic. He had not that delicate appreciation of an author's meaning, that enables one to seize hold of the main idea or sentiment, and through this interpret the language and illustrations. He was not a master of reproductive criticism. He could not reproduce the thoughts of the prophets and poets of the Old Testament, in his own mind, and throw himself into their position. Their poetic figures he sometimes treats as logical propositions, and finds grave dogmas in casual illustrations. His want of good taste in the *morale* of many of his allusions, we judge the more clemently from remembering the unnaturalness of his way of life and the effect of his habits of seclusion and mortification upon his notions of social propriety.

As a theologian he cannot be placed among the foremost of his age, unsurpassed as was his influence upon biblical study and ecclesiastical life. As Neander has justly observed, his mind did not so much tend to unity as to details. He was never haunted like Augustine with the passion for ideal truth. Student of the Scriptures as he was, he puzzles us to learn what was his specific belief. He is content to deal with the common places of established doctrine, and although he sometimes startles us as in his assertion that the clergy were originally equal, and that faith in Christ is the rock of Peter, the foundation of the church, with an almost protestant freedom, he rarely departs from the general belief except to incline the more to monastic superstition. He obviously had a monk's jealousy of the secular clergy, and makes

¹ Vide, T. IV. Com. in Matt. Cap. XVI. p. 74, 75. In Ep. ad Galat. Cap. IV. p. 273. Epist. LXXXII. ad Oceanum. p. 648. In Epist. ad Titum, p. 407. Epist. ad Evangelum, Cl. p. 802, 803. It will be remembered that all our quotations are from the edition of Martianay.

frequent allusion to their pride. In a spirit not unlike Luther's, he denounces their disposition to arrogate to their own official virtue the power that belongs only to God and his word. They who, like the German Rösler,¹ have endeavored to drag out a system of doctrine from his works have had but sorry success. As a scholar, he was bold and frequently original. As a theologian, he was little better than a parasite, who lived at other men's tables. His views seem to have differed much at various times, and one, as Simon judiciously observes, must study his relation to his times and their strifes to account for the inconsistencies of his assertions. He leaned upon the prevalent power in most things, and when he felt the growing influence of Rome, he seems not so much from prudence as from the necessity of his nature, to have attached himself to her hierarchy. Hence, as well as for his monastic notions, the honor in which he has been held by Rome. Papacy has no benedictions to bestow upon independent thought, and has given to Jerome the aureola denied to Origen and Tertullian. The monk of Bethlehem clung to Rome like the mistletoe to the oak, and about him monks and priests have gathered in awe and admiration like Druids about their mystic tree.

As a theologian, he affirmed the doctrines of the worth of celibacy, the ascetic life and the use of relics and pilgrimages more than any others, and thus as a positive dogmatist he can meet with little honor from protestants. As an antagonist of heretics he was far more prominent, than as a systematic theologian. He was willing to rest upon the symbols of the councils of Nice and Constantinople like the other Catholics of his age. He was not so conspicuous for his defence of their fundamental doctrines as for the assertion of his monastic principles. Although it is not easy to draw out his opinions into a definite system, it is beyond question that most of the views that were afterwards embodied in the papal creed lurk potentially among his pages, and that he did much to prepare the way for prayers to saints and honors to relics, and the whole array of priestcraft. His controversies drew from him his most elegant works; but even in these his rhetoric goes far before his logic, his learning is more conspicuous than his discrimination. Schroeckh asserts no libel in classing him with those men who have read more than they have reflected. Philosopher, orator, philologist, dialectician, Hebraist, Graecist, Latinist; adept in three languages, though he might designate himself, without insincerity, the versatility of his endowments is small compensation in the view of a protestant mind for his want of independent

¹ Bibliothek der Kirchenvater, the IX. S. 92—233. Quoted by Schroeckh, T. XI. p. 219.

thought, and for the servility with which he surrendered all his gifts to the service of monkish fanaticism. When as in his dialogues against the Pelagians, he enters the theological lists, we see at once his strength and his weakness. His work shows something of the grace whilst it borrows the form of the Tusculan Questions, yet when compared with Augustine's tract on the same subject, betrays the vast difference between the discursive scholar and the close logician. In fact his doctrinal system had none of the definiteness of Augustine's, and stickler as he was for the merit of works of austerity, he was not in a position to assail the fundamental doctrine of the precursor of Arminius in the defence of human ability. How little of a champion of free elective grace he was, on the whole, Luther's estimate of him shows. Luther should have spoken with more respect of the scholar to whom he owed so much in his scriptural labors, yet he had no slight grounds for the judgment recorded in his Table Talk: "Jerome should not be named nor counted among the teachers of the church; though he was a heretic, yet I believe that he is saved through faith in Christ. He says nothing of Christ, since he takes only his name upon his lips. I know none of the fathers to whom I am so hostile as to Jerome; for he treats only of fastings, diet, virginity, etc. If he would even make the works of faith prominent and urge them, this would be something; but he teaches nothing, neither of faith nor hope, nor love, nor of the works of faith."

It is no easy task to portray a character so mingled as Jerome's. We may at once dismiss the fulsome eulogists, who like Martianay and Stilling almost deify him. We cannot go with the extravagant praises which Erasmus heaps upon him in a spirit and style so much like that of the saint himself. As little satisfied are we with those who go to the opposite extreme, and call him like Isaac Taylor a mere intellectualist, or, like Von Cölln, regard sensuality and vanity combined with superstition as the most prominent elements of his character.

An intellectualist he surely was, if "gazing upon books and parchments with fond and greedy satisfaction," could make him so. Yet he was more than a book worm. He was a man of intense feeling, and his chief works are full of the marks alike of his social sensibilities, his irascible passions and his devotional zeal. His intellect always worked with most efficiency when busied in writing to gratify a devout friend's desire of knowledge or to denounce an enemy of the church. Although not prone to ascend from facts to ideas, nor to soar into the realm of the higher imagination, he breathes into his learned

pages a singular fervor, and relieves what else would be wearisome pedantry by a most exuberant and often eccentric fancy.

In the moral elements of his character, he was far from being one of those whom a benignant nature as well as privileged education places among the saints. We wonder that so judicious and well read a writer as the historian Milner, should say of him that he appears never to have known the extreme conflicts with indwelling sin which to later converts have given so much pain. He had most unruly passions. His irascibility yielded not a jot beneath the austerities of his retirement, and the lusts which stained his early days never ceased to affect his imagination after his habits were beyond the breath of suspicion. We need little wonder that with his peculiar temperament, he chose the ascetic life. His ardent religious sensibility would not allow him to lead a life of pleasure, and he felt no security from the allurements of the world unless removed from its vanities. At once eager to join in every theological strife, and keenly sensitive to every attack upon himself, he loved a position in which he could act freely upon public opinion from a covert which none could invade. He was as one of those creatures who live in a shell and are alike fierce in their attack and secure in their retreat. His very love of power would combine with his religious zeal and imitative tendency to lead him to the monastic life. Ill fitted to struggle with men of sterner mould in the shock of affairs, he readily yielded to the influence of the ascetic party, and, engrossed by their ideas, he gave more than he secured, and from being at first a follower, he became the leader of the oriental movement in the Western church. His love of study was of course gratified by the course which he took. In his books, in the vicinity of admiring monks and nuns, in a retirement which at once inspired his visions and enabled him to dictate to the universal church, he found an enjoyment not to be found at Rome or Constantinople. From the most distant regions cases of conscience and questions of scholarship were submitted to him. Hedibia of Gaul besought him to clear up her difficulties in biblical study in a series of questions not a little puzzling even in our day, and a young French ecclesiastic came to him with tears, and entreated him to write to his mother and sister to live in the same house and not incur scandal by separate residences and clerical boarders.

That he was fanatical, we must with Isaac Taylor certainly maintain, if fanaticism be the combination of malign feeling with religious enthusiasm. He was a favorite at once of the scourge and the symbol, and under different circumstances might have become a fanatic of

the banner and the brand. But he declares that he had no enmity to men, only to their errors, and that he neglected his own quarrels to take up those of God—a declaration made undoubtedly by all bigots and made perhaps sincerely whether by a Mohammed or Dominic—a Galerius or Bonner. That he would have wreaked his vengeance upon the persons of his adversaries had they fallen into his power, is not however probable, ferocious as is his invective. He calls himself the watch-dog of the church, and says that his duty was to bay at all her foes. But like all noisy quadrupeds of his class, his bark was worse than his bite. We like less than anything his mode of speaking of the dead who had crossed his path. He declares that Jovinian, the Luther of that time, in swinish indulgence rather belched out his spirit than expired when he died, “non tam emisit spiritum quam eructavit.” He was not gifted with that nice moral sense that is so necessary an element in the religious character and so powerful a check upon fanatical tendencies. In his controversy with Augustine upon the allowableness of falsehood as in the case at issue between Peter and Paul, we cannot but recognize in Jerome the germ of that erroneous principle that bore its ultimate fruits in Jesuit expediency.

That he was the Christian Cicero, may be said with some justice, if the saying means only that he was the most eloquent of the Latin fathers. We may recognize in him too something of the morbid sensitiveness of the Roman orator, and may draw a parallel between the revolution produced in the Roman mind by Cicero’s importation of the Greek philosophy with that produced by Jerome in the Western church by his translation of the oriental theology. We may see too in both great beauty of expression combined with great force of invective, and find in the flatterer of Pompey and the denouncer of Antony, features not unlike those of the sycophant of Damasus and the defamer of Jovinian. But Cicero had a mind of far the larger mould, and however imperfectly he may have attained his wishes, he aspired to see truth in its glorious unity, and had intimations of an immutable morality based upon the eternal law of God, such as never seems to have inspired the soul of the monk of Bethlehem. The fancy is an interesting one that conjectures what course a man like Cicero would have taken had he lived under the Christian dispensation. He surely would have found something in the pages of St. John and St. Paul to save him from the superstitions of the man who has been praised so much as the heir of his eloquence.

To us, Jerome seems to combine certain elements of character that may be found singly in various noted men. He had the patient scholarship and brilliant rhetoric of Erasmus, without his good sense and

taste, and the fiery zeal and copious invective of Luther, without his tender humanity and noble clemency. In his eulogium upon the ascetic life and the graces of virginity, he indulged in sentimental raptures, in a style not unworthy of Hervey, the flowery moralist of the tombs, whilst upon topics of merely philological learning, he often exhibits a dryness of detail that tried the patience of good Father Simon, and led the critics of the seventeenth century to turn from his pages in despair. His wayward and petulant temper, his biting jest and shrewd insight, to say nothing of his bearing towards the sex to him so essential and so proscribed, reminds us often of Dean Swift, whilst in visions of angels and raptures of prayer and contemplation, his devotion must place him among those saints, who like Bernard and Francis have thought heaven the nearer as earth and humanity were most despised. Collombet finds in him as the eulogist of Fabiola and Paula the precursor of that master of funeral eloquence, Bossuet, and couples his name with Gerson, as the condescending teacher of children. In his letter to Laeta upon the education of her daughter, the younger Paula, we cannot but take occasion for rejoicing that Fenelon in following his path of celibacy, did not adopt his views upon the education of girls; whilst in his mode of treating of married life and clerical follies, as in his letters against Helvidius, and to Eustochium and Rusticus and Nepotianus, we may frequently imagine to ourselves resemblances, that connect the name of the most ghostly of the ancient fathers with that recent magazine of satire and caricature, whose title is rarely mentioned in theological journals, and whose influence is anything but ascetic.

We cannot leave the subject before us without suggesting a few thoughts that are prompted by this survey of Jerome's life, labors and character. He stands before us as the type of a class of men who have had and still have vast influence upon the church and world. That he was a monk in the modern sense of that term we are far from saying, for he lived upon principles very different from the rules of Benedict and Bernard. He was not in his mature years the advocate of solitary life, but of life in community, and of this too not under very rigid restrictions. Yet his whole soul was engrossed by the monastic doctrine, and he resented nothing so much as an attack upon the superhuman sanctity of chastity. More than any other man, he has tended to give the Roman church its monastic elements. He virtually laid the foundations upon which Leo and the two Gregories builded, and Paul IV. and Sextus V. labored to restore the papal hierarchy. What would the hierarchy have been without the celibacy of the clergy, and what would the clergy have been without the mo-

nastic orders. Behind the magnificent array of bishops, cardinals and popes, we look back to the recluse of Bethlehem as the most efficient advocate of the principles that consolidated their power.

What need of caution in considering the whole system of polity and theology thus based upon a false foundation. The whole papal creed shows the traces of those spectral, unearthly beings, whom Jerome has done so much to form and exalt. Placed in the most unnatural position, exiled from the mild charities, salutary discipline, and common sense education of social life, they were not in a condition to judge of man's true relations to God and his neighbor, much less to be the dictators of religious opinion. It behoves us to think very carefully whether the system of ritual and polity advocated not without considerable learning and piety in conspicuous quarters of the protestant world, and finding favor from not a few minds in this land of the Puritans, does not owe its peculiar characteristics to men who looked upon marriage as a desecration, and celibacy as the royal road to heaven. Let the divines of Oxford in their admiration of the fathers of the fourth century show up their notions of domestic life as well as of sacramental rites. With the homilies of Chrysostom and Augustine let them translate the letters of Jerome, and give their readers opportunity to see what monkish notions were rising into the ascendant in those days. It is here that Isaac Taylor has found his impregnable position in his controversy with the Oxford Tractarians. He shows beyond question, that if Christendom is to follow the lead of the fathers of the fourth century, we must bow down in reverence before the preternatural glory of the celibate life. We join with him alike in his estimate of the morbid feeling of the monastic system, and its tendency to distort the mind, and pervert its sense of Christian truth. Jerome's pictures of himself lead us not at all to covet his state of emotion, and if it be the heart that is the ultimate source of rectitude in moral judgments, we cannot look to him for our faith or morals. Far different the Messiah of the New Testament, far different the apostolic company. We should be sorry even to believe that any worthy husband and father living among those social relations which Jerome deemed so secular and distracting, were liable to be haunted by such visions of lust as tormented the monk's seclusion.

Yet, the life of Jerome ought to make us realize the vast power of self-denial. He was not indeed self-denying in all things, for even to the last year of his life he railed at heretics in a temper singularly petulant, and even in his closing commentary upon Jeremiah he showed the ruling passion strong in death, alike by the copiousness of his classic allusions and the vehemence of his invective against the

Pelagians. Yet he subdued many desires that in him were very strong, and in his devotedness to sacred learning, he merits the gratitude of all earnest scholars. The class of men whom he represents, at last put the world under their feet by being independent of its luxuries, and beyond most of its indulgencies. Their thirst for power, we may not indeed covet. But, surely, as we read of their self-control, and their achievements, we may justly ask ourselves, whether we do not make ourselves too dependent upon fortune, and if it would not be much better for us to have a far harder culture, so that we might more readily live in the plainest manner, and in case of emergency surrender the usual comforts of life rather than bend the knee in sycophancy or stoop to any sin or shame. We have no respect for the doctrine that claims exalted merit for celibacy as such. We have respect for the man who is willing for the cause of science or religion to surrender the charms of a privileged home, and devote himself to the vigils of the student or the exile of the missionary, under circumstances which must compel him to forsake his purpose, or engage in it without wife or child either to share his anxieties or his rewards. One sentiment comes before us with peculiar force after reading the ancient eulogiums upon celibacy—a sentiment of respect for those who forego marriage for the sake of true piety or charity, whether in the broad walks of philanthropy or at the quiet fireside—a sentiment of contempt for the vulgar notion that stigmatizes the unmarried because they are so, forgetting how often love for parents or brothers and sisters has kept a noble woman from leaving her father's home, and devotion to letters or religion has moved the scholar or missionary to forsake all else for science or for the gospel.

One thought more, and we take leave of the monk of Bethlehem and all his brethren of the wilderness and the cell. They were men, and were driven into retirement by a feeling more or less active in all ages—not a little active now in some of its forms;—that sense of the insufficiency of the world for the soul's needs, that craving for a joy and peace that the world cannot give. Who does not sometimes sigh for retirement—for that "lodge in some vast wilderness," of which the Christian poet so pathetically sings? This feeling seems now to be reviving among Roman Catholic Christians, and shows itself, moreover, in various forms of thought and association among Protestants, and even free-thinkers. In the mother country a movement has actually been made towards having monasteries under a form "suited to the genius, character and exigencies of the church of England." In our New England we might marvel at an Antony in his solitary cave, or a Simeon on his lofty pillar of rock. Yet modes of living

akin to those of Antony are advocated by some ascetics in diet, and a school of thinkers have arisen who in their zeal for individuality of character and their jealousy of all that comes between the individual soul and God, place even man upon a peak of such lofty isolation and sublime egotism, that men seem but shadows, the world a phantom, and dispensing even with the mediation of Christ and the gospel, the transcendental hermit goes beyond even the Stylite, and creates a solitude that even to him would have been intolerable. It is not strange that they who have lived within the atmosphere of such notions, should have a yearning for the ancient church, that meets their craving by ministrations far more congenial with human sensibilities. There is nothing unaccountable in the obvious affinity between Romanism and ultra-spiritualism.

What turn, the dislike of exciting things and the desire to come out from them, that shows itself in every age, will take in our day, we cannot predict, nor will we venture to say that there must be ere long a reaction against the prevalent dynasty of gold and the industrial arts. That the movement of Newman will be followed to any great extent we are far from believing, nor do we believe that the great protest against the golden idol is to come from the school of Fourier, and that the coenobites of the Phalanstery are to displace those of the convent and monastery. We must be content with simple Christian principle, and at the feet of the Master be saved alike from subjection to the ascetic of the wilderness who was but his precursor, and to the epicurean who can never be his follower. Among men and in full sympathy with their joy and sadness, we may have our hours of communion with nature and the God of nature. We may deem it one of the best blessings of our improved civilization with its stable laws and guardian force, that we may have hours sacred to heaven and the soul without quitting the haunts of men; that without seeking the wilderness we may have an energy and self-control, that shall prove us like the Baptist, neither the reed shaken by the wind nor the slave of soft raiment, and more than the Baptist, sharers in the full gospel of the divine kingdom, drinking of a living fountain, and sheltered by a tree of life which he foresaw but never found in the Judean wilds. Not to the wilderness, but to God in nature, the Word, the Spirit, we may go and there find fresh zeal for action and new tranquillity after trials.

Even for privileged solitude we would not exchange our own home in our bustling century for the cave of Bethlehem or the cells of Iona.