

No man can be a really successful pastor, in either town or country, with whom it is otherwise. Of course I do not mean to assert that the parish priest who interests himself in the affairs of the Church and the world outside the boundaries of his own parish cannot hope to be successful within his parish. Only this—that the simplest and rudest *pagani* to whom the Divine message is sent require to be studied, and studied both sympathetically and experimentally. The man who is a scholar, author, ecclesiastical statesman, or anything else *first*, and pastor only during what time he can spare from the pursuit of the main ambition of his life, cannot well hope to get beneath the surface and reach the core of humanity which is to be found somewhere within the clod-like husk of the most labour-warped frame. He must be pastor *first*, essentially pastor, if he is to gather around him anything worthy to be called a flock. If all the clergy were such, one might make bold to say the position of the Church would be impregnable; but that there are many more such than it is the fashion to suppose we are fully persuaded.

E. C. DAWSON.

EDINBURGH.



### ART. III.—CANON WYNNE'S "FRAGMENTARY RECORDS."

*Fragmentary Records of Jesus of Nazareth.* From the letters of a Contemporary. By Canon WYNNE, M.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

IT was the fashion two hundred years ago to give to controversial books and pamphlets the title of "A Short Way," as "A Short Way with the Anabaptists," "A Short Way with the Quakers," and so forth. Canon Wynne might have called the little book now before us "A Short Way with the Unbelievers," for the whole of his lucid argument might be read, and that with care, in a couple of hours. But the ideas connected with such a title are so quaintly unsuited to the tone and spirit in which he writes that the suggestion might well provoke a smile. As a rule, the stern old treatises to which we refer carry with them a grim implication that a still shorter and surer way with the heretics therein condemned would be the gaol, or perhaps the block, whereas the governing sentiment in the "Fragmentary Records" is a sympathy with the difficulties of unbelief so tender and ardent that the author projects himself into the position of the doubter in seeking to

lead him on towards the light of God. In controversy, as in practical benevolence, if we would help a suffering brother we must first, like the good Samaritan, come where he is.

Every method of controversy, however, has its difficulties; and Canon Wynne feels evidently some apprehension lest in approaching the Scriptural records from the doubter's point of view, he should offend or pain those who are accustomed to regard the Bible as an organic whole, and who see in even the statement of a sceptical opinion a dishonour done to Christ. But as a matter of fact the instinct of reverence is so strong in Canon Wynne that even when he withholds the customary titles of adoration in speaking of our blessed Lord, we feel the reverent spirit is there, and he apologizes so gracefully for the position his method compels him to assume that the most rigid orthodoxy is disarmed. He says: "If the end may not justify the means, it is hoped that in this case the recollection of it may at least explain them, and show that what seems a lack of reverence is only, like the holding back of the outbursts of loyalty on a coronation-day while the crown is being placed on the monarch's brow, a pause that makes the glad acclamations ring out afterwards with warmer enthusiasm. The love and loyalty have not ceased to exist, while the nature of the ceremony forbids their expression."

It cannot be said that the method of argument pursued by Canon Wynne is altogether new—who is there that in theology writes what is both new and true? In addition to the authorities he names in his preface we may mention that of Dr. Rawson Lumby, whose interesting work, "The Gospel in the Epistles," traverses to some extent the same ground. But the originality of a thought depends on the originating power of mind that thinks it. Canon Wynne has "cut down for himself in the land of the giants," and the country so occupied is therefore his own.

His method, then, is briefly this. He takes as the groundwork of his argument St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians, as being those the authenticity of which is acknowledged by even the most obstructive criticism, and having pointed out the high importance that may fairly be attached to the incidental references which occur in the letters of a contemporary writer, deduces from them the teachings they contain as to the life and work, and divine attributes, and ethical standard of Jesus Christ. The author is too careful a logician to take for granted at once that these statements are true, but having established the fact that Paul believed them, and taught them some twenty-five to thirty years after the death of Jesus, and more, that they must have been his convictions at a considerably earlier date;—"the

stately galleon has taken in its cargo at a point much higher up the river than where we first see it sweeping down to the sea"—he then goes on to prove that St. Paul's position is inexplicable, unless we conclude that what he believed was indeed the fact. He shows that St. Paul's writings mark an epoch in ethics; that this epoch is caused by a history; that the corroborative evidence is immensely strong; and finally, in a brief but weighty chapter, he discusses that last intrenchment of the septic, the theory that the supernatural is "unthinkable," unassailable by any weight of evidence.

We have left ourselves but little space for quotations, and must therefore ask our readers to accept our assurance that this little book is no less readable than it is sympathetic and carefully reasoned. There is, however, one leading characteristic of the work which we must not leave unnoticed. Canon Wynne, it is plain, is a believer in the power of the Word to be its own best evidence; and so in the chapters which treat of the "contemporary records," he is content to fill page after page with verses grouped together so as to illustrate St. Paul's view of the dignity and the doctrine of Christ, merely adding a few sentences at the close of the chapter to emphasize the result obtained.

From among the many passages we had marked for quotation, we can only select two or three. One of the most striking is that in which the author speaks of St. Paul's ethical standard as tested by the theory of evolution. He says:

We are struck as we read Paul's letters by the modern sound of them all. They have never become antiquated. The growth of humanity has never left them behind. Ethical culture, advancing to its highest tide-mark, has not reached beyond them. How could we, who are the heirs of the ages, better express an ideally beautiful character than in the language Paul used eighteen centuries ago? Have we gained any moral and spiritual idea by which we could add to the catalogue of graces he describes as "fruits of the Spirit"? Could we improve upon his description of "charity"? Could we bring out self-sacrifice, devotion to duty, loyalty to the great Power on high, sympathy and kindness towards our brethren, steadfastness and unshrinking courage in the doing of the right, robust indifference to morbid scruples along with tender allowance for the difficulties and mistakes of others, generous and unsparing liberality combined with steady diligence in everyday work? Could we bring out these varied, contrasted, and yet harmonizing virtues with greater force and yet greater simplicity than he has done?

Almost unconsciously the modern pen, when tracing out the character of an ideal man or an ideal woman, uses the very phrases which Paul wrote in such large letters with his own hand, not far from the time when Horace wrote his satires and Lucian his dialogues.

We have grown familiar of late with an explanation of religion by the doctrine of evolution. It is supposed to have gradually, in the course of ages, been developed and brought to its present refinement from rudimentary ideas of care and reverence towards the ghosts of departed ancestors. Eighteen centuries ought to count for something in the

evolution of ideas; yet who can find any religious conviction, any spiritual aspiration, hope or resolution, expressed by the most advanced modern teacher, which is not equalled at least in fervour, in largeness of sympathy, in refinement of thought, by the sentiment poured forth with such ardent zeal, yet chastened sobriety, by this "Paul the Apostle"? Our highest spiritual thought now is found by "reverting to type." The purest and noblest religious teaching is that which diverges least from the spirit that animates our epistles. We are thankful when we are brought to the level to which Paul has led. We have never got beyond him.

Another characteristic specimen of Canon Wynne's mode of argument is to be found where, towards the close of the book, he discusses the supposed impossibility of the supernatural:

Is the story true, then? We come back upon this question, which is the really essential one to consider. We must fix our attention upon the evidence. We must weigh it and sift it. It should be strong and clear to lead us to such unusual, such momentous conclusions. We must not say that no evidence will persuade us; if we do, we are weakly yielding to a habit of the mind, a mechanical impulse, instead of using scientific investigation. One of the disciples of Jesus, described in the old Gospel history, made a statement of the kind. When Christ's other companions declared that they had seen Him risen, Thomas said that he would not, and could not, believe unless he actually could put his fingers into the print of the nails that had fastened Him to the cross. That incredulity was not philosophical; but the result of habit, prejudice, and perhaps a morbid desponding disposition. If ever I am inclined to similar doubting, if the thought comes pressing upon me unbidden, "The supernatural is impossible," I believe it would be unreasonable weakness to yield to the impulse, as I do not know what the supernatural is and have no means of judging of its impossibility.

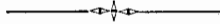
But there are classes of phenomena which do come under the range of my experience, and with regard to which I am capable of judging as to their possibility or impossibility. And when I think of the evidence before my reason and conscience for the story of the crucified and risen Jesus, I feel it is impossible that such evidence could mislead. That the character of Jesus should have been invented by dishonest forgers or fanatical dreamers, is, I am sure, impossible. That Paul and His other Apostles should have preached their noble, large-minded, and holy doctrines while they were propagating what they believed to be untrue is impossible. That they should all have imagined Jesus to be alive while He was still mouldering in His grave under their feet is impossible. That they should have had their lifelong Jewish prejudices overcome, all their narrow-minded ideas swept away, all their earthly desires and longings crushed, by their deference to One whose life was a wild dream or a daring imposture, is impossible. That His companions, who loved Him and lived with Him, and spent years in His society, should have been mistaken on the plain issue as to whether He did or did not do the things the writer of our letters and His other disciples said He did, is impossible. That He could have taught as He did, that they could have taught as they did, if He and they were victims of an absurd delusion, is impossible. That there could be any kind of glamour or enthusiasm or sentimental imagining that would make a number of men think that a series of events happened within their experience which had never happened, and as they taught them, teach at the same time the plainest, most sensible,

as well as most beautiful morality, and be so sure they had seen the things they never saw, that they should let themselves be killed rather than cease to declare they had witnessed them—such delusion and such conduct my judgment unhesitatingly declares to be impossible.

When I think of all this, of all the evidence history gives, all the evidence my heart responds to in every fibre, as to the unique and glorious life of Jesus of Nazareth, I leave my attitude of inquiry. I have been inquiring and searching, but not in vain. I have found what I wanted. I have found a real religion. I have found a narrative of outward facts which the verdict of my understanding declares to be true.

It is a melancholy fact, and every working clergyman will bear witness to the truth of what we say, that of those who profess and call themselves sceptics, even among the educated classes, there are few comparatively who possess sufficient knowledge of the subject to appreciate the arguments contained in this work. As a rule the sceptical objections one hears in society are almost unanswerable from their very crudeness; still there are not a few among the religiously taught young men and young women of our day whose minds have caught that peculiar form of doubt which seems just at present to be endemic, as the doctors would say, and to the friends of such, to all indeed who value a careful piece of reasoning presented in a kindly and winning way, we cordially and earnestly commend this valuable book. God grant that it may be the means of restoring freedom to many a prisoner in Doubting Castle!

JOHN J. ROBINSON.



#### ART. IV.—NEW TESTAMENT SAINTS NOT COMMEMORATED.—APOLLOS.

**A**MONG the questions of paramount importance and ever-recurring interest which were raised by the introduction of Christianity into the world, was the relation in which the new religion stood to the powers and faculties of the human mind. That it did not rely upon them was obvious. So far from that, it seemed studiously to disparage and decry them. "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,"<sup>1</sup> are the words of the Divine Founder Himself, words of which we catch the echo in the statement of His Apostle, "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, peasants and fishermen of Galilee, "unlearned and ignorant men,"<sup>3</sup> were chosen as the first instruments for the propagation of the Gospel.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 25.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Acts iv. 13.