

Dr. Döllinger concludes these articles¹ with a comparison between Madame de Maintenon and the Empress Maria Theresa, decidedly to the advantage of the latter. Both were ornaments of their sex, combining a masculine spirit, understanding, and insight with all womanly virtues; but the one ruled through her own innate capacity, the other in the name of others whom she influenced, so that the Duke of Villeroi called her "the mole." Both practised, or too willingly sanctioned, persecution, and were zealous in the service of the Church. But the Frenchwoman, stifling her own judgment, surrendered herself absolutely to her directors; while the German allowed her confessor no influence in State affairs, and often disregarded his advice in ecclesiastical matters. Both suffered much, in that those who were nearest to them did not share their views—the one through her husband, the other through her son. Both mistook their wishes for hopes, and allowed their personal sympathies far too much play in politics, and both thereby have done much harm. But their position in history is very unequal. The memory of the great Empress is still blessed by millions, while that of the foundress of Saint-Cyr has long since died away.

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ART. III.—NEW TESTAMENT SAINTS NOT COM-
MEMORATED.—LYDIA.

“THE kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.”² The kingdom of heaven, the Church of Christ in Europe, as it is to-day, and as it was on that memorable morning, when its message was first proclaimed and its earliest members were enrolled—what a striking exemplification of the parable does it afford! There was no synagogue at Philippi. Philippi was a military post, not a commercial town, and there was therefore

¹ The reader is requested to bear in mind that in this English summary six articles have been condensed into one, a process which does scant justice to the original. All who can do so should read the whole in the German. Mr. David Nutt, 270, Strand, would procure it.

² Matthew xiii. 31, 32, R.V.

little to attract Jews to it. The newly arrived missionaries do not seem to have been certain that they should even find a *Proseucha* there. If there was one (building or enclosure open to the air) in which the few Jews and proselytes were wont to meet for worship, it would be outside the city and near to water, with a view to the ablutions and lustrations of their ceremonial law. Accordingly, when the Sabbath came, they "went forth without the gate by a river-side, where they supposed there was a place of prayer."¹ It was historic ground over which they passed. On that "even field"² had been fought the decisive battle, fraught with momentous issues to the world, which sealed the triumph of the Empire over the Republic for Rome. The river³ beside which they went to pray had parted the ranks of the contending armies. Its waters had been dyed with their blood. On that calm Sabbath morning peace reigned supreme. They found the "place of prayer;" but a sense of disappointment may well have visited them as they entered it. No large or influential congregation awaited their arrival; no signal opportunity offered for their message. What an array of preachers—Paul and Silas and Timothy and Luke! What an assembly to listen to their words, "the women which were come together" there! Was this the meaning of that eager cry, "Come over and help us"? Was this the welcome Macedonia gave to those who had sped forth so earnestly in response to her invitation? But they had "gathered assuredly," and the "conclusion" was not now shaken, that it was "God Who had called them for to preach the Gospel unto them."⁴ And His ways, they knew, were not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. In His way, therefore, they set themselves to do His work. Prayer over, instead of a set discourse by one of them, and as better suited to the audience and the occasion, they sat down, each with a little knot of women round him, and conversed with them on the great subject of their mission.⁵ In one of these little companies which St. Paul was addressing, or possibly when he, the Mercurius as ever of the missionary band, had become the sole speaker and engaged the attention of them all,⁶ the grain of mustard-seed fell into good ground. Wonderful were the links in the chain of circumstances—of gentle yet constraining

¹ Acts xvi. 13, R.V.

² Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act v., sc. 1.

³ The Gangites.

⁴ Acts xvi. 10.

⁵ The informal nature of the address is not to be gathered from the fact that they *sat*, for that was the usual posture of a teacher in a Jewish synagogue (Luke iv. 20), but rather from the expression, "we sat down and spake," καθίσαντες ἐλαλοῦμεν.

⁶ ἐλαλοῦμεν, ver. 13; τοῖς λαλοῦμένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Παύλου, ver. 14.

influences, each simple and natural in itself, yet needing a hand to weld them into one, and make them draw to one common end—which brought Lydia that day to the place of prayer. Not a Jew by birth, yet a proselyte to the Jew's religion;¹ not a native of Philippi, yet belonging to Thyatira, which was a Macedonian colony;² following an occupation for which her city was famed,³ but which led her in its pursuit to the mother city, between which and its colonies there was constant intercourse; removed for a time from Asia, where they had been forbidden by the Holy Ghost then to preach the Word,⁴ yet brought to Europe, whither they were on their undeviating path to preach it—who can refuse to see in Lydia, as she sat among the worshippers in that place of prayer that day, the working of that never-failing Providence, which ordereth all things, both in heaven and earth? And now the Hand that had worked in Providence to bring her there worked also in grace to accomplish the purpose of her coming. "The Lord," He Who alone has the key of every human heart, Who "openeth and no one shutteth,"⁵ "opened her heart to give heed unto the things which were spoken." And thus Lydia became "the firstfruits" of Philippi, of Macedonia, and, so far as the sacred record informs us, of Europe "unto Christ."⁶

Though only a conjecture, it is interesting to reflect that through Lydia the Gospel may have been introduced into her own city of Thyatira also. "One poor woman, and she a foreigner and an alien in that city (of Philippi), has her heart touched by Divine grace in listening to a Gospel sermon. She gives the first house and the first household to the Church in that place. From her and hers the light spreads till it illuminates a whole region. Who knows but that from her also may have sprung the evangelization of her native city? And that thus two churches, Philippi and Thyatira, may have been the eventual produce of this one river-side conversation?"⁷

¹ *σεβομένη τὸν Θεόν*, Acts xvi. 14. Comp. xviii. 7, xiii. 50.

² "It was one of the many Macedonian colonies established in Asia Minor, in the sequel of the destruction of the Persian Empire by Alexander."—"Dict. of Bible," Thyatira.

³ The guild of dyers (*οἱ βαφεῖς*) is mentioned in no fewer than three inscriptions, "so that dyeing apparently formed an important part of the industrial activity of Thyatira, as it did that of Colossæ and Laodicea."—*Ibid.*

⁴ Acts xvi. 6. ⁵ Rev. iii. 7. ⁶ See Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

⁷ Dean Vaughan, "The Church of the First Days," ii. 290. See also Archbishop Trench, "Epistles to the Seven Churches," p. 135: "She who had gone forth for a while, to buy and sell and get gain, when she returned home may have brought home with her richer merchandise than any she had looked to obtain." Dr. Hutchison ("Lectures on the

But, however this may be, we are on sure ground when we turn to consider the significance of Lydia's conversion, as regards the place of *woman* and of *the family* in the Church of Christ.

The first known convert to the faith of Christ in Europe was a woman. It may be that in Macedonia the social position of woman apart from the Gospel was exceptionally high.¹ But it is none the less certain that there, as everywhere, it was the Gospel alone that restored her to her rightful place and her true dignity. Nor is it unimportant to observe what that place and dignity, as shown by the example of Lydia, really are. The Church of Philippi was not without women who took an active part in what we now should call Church-work. Euodia and Syntyche, whose eminent services St. Paul acknowledges, were such.² But no such service, so far as we are informed, did Lydia render. Her first thought was of woman's offices of hospitality. Her great ambition was to serve her newly-found Lord in woman's true sphere of home. Him she will receive into her house in the person of His ministers, increasing for His sake "the common task," and consecrating to Him "the trivial round" of her household occupations. Lest they should seem to have been seeking not her but hers, they are unwilling to accept her proffered hospitality; but she constrains them,³ and will take no refusal. To minister to them in her home is all the service she desires. For worship and for work they still continually resort to "the place of prayer."⁴ But for "many days"⁵ they abide and are cared for beneath her roof.

And akin to this elevation and consecration of woman in her true sphere of home is the elevation and consecration of the family which this history records. "Lydia being convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and having made a profession of her faith, was forthwith baptized. The place of her baptism was, doubtless, the stream which flowed by the *Proseucha*. The waters of Europe were 'sanctified to the mystical washing away of sin.'⁶ But she was not baptized alone: "When she was baptized and her household"—her

Epistle to the Philippians," pp. 3, 4) traces a similarity of character as well as of origin in the Churches of Philippi and Thyatira—"love and faith exhibited in ministering works" (Rev. ii. 19)—in which he sees "the impress of an ardent and organizing female influence, an impress visible in the benevolent forms which their faith so readily assumes."

¹ Bishop Lightfoot, "Epistle to the Philippians," pp. 54-56.

² Philip. iv. 2, 3.

³ *παρεβιάσατο ἡμᾶς* (ver. 15), a strong word.

⁴ Ver. 16.

⁵ Ver. 18; comp. ver. 40.

⁶ Conybeare and Howson, i. 348.

slaves and, it may be, her children; but, at any rate, all who were comprised in her family. Twice in the brief account of the planting of Christianity at Philippi—in the case of Lydia and in that of that other convert, who “was baptized, he and all his straightway,” and “who rejoiced, believing in God with all his house,”¹—are we taught the lesson, that to “provide for his own, and specially his own household,”² is, in things spiritual no less than in things temporal, the first duty of a Christian; that out of His own institution of the family Almighty God is pleased to build up His great “family in heaven and earth”—the Church.

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ART. IV.—A CURATE'S FIRST YEAR.

THE position of a man who faces the unknown, conscious that, whatever may be its difficulties, he has been almost wholly unprepared by experience to cope with them, is never a very enviable one. The freshman, into whatsoever career of life, must always, at first, have an anxious time of it. Many can perhaps recall such a moment as that which recurs to the writer of this article, when he was left a shivering schoolboy at the gateway of the great quadrangle of one of our big public schools, and watched the swiftly receding postchaise which bore off his parents to the dear old home. Then did he first know what was meant by loneliness. With what tremulous agitation, with what a tumult of anticipation, did he turn to await the advent of the incoming horde of boys, and brace himself to meet their starings and their questionings! Such a memory, though travelling over a quarter of a century, still has power to make one shudder.

But of all the awkward days through which he has passed, none surely were awkwarder than that in which, as a newly-ordained deacon, he first put on his long-tailed coat, and, having adjusted his soft felt hat, prepared to start upon his first round of parochial work.

Why is the curate thus launched, an untried bark, upon an unknown sea? How comes it that no practical training for their special work is expected from what we may, almost without fear of challenge, term the most cultivated and not the least efficient class of clergy in the world? That they *are* cultivated—and we would include in this term the possession of an accurate knowledge of the requirements of their profession—and that they are efficient as a class is certainly not the

¹ Vers. 33, 34.

² 1 Tim. v. 8.