

Codex Colbertinus), which seems to be a re-translation of the Western Greek, and also in the Sahidic or Thebaic version, "which ultimately leans on a Latin base," and is usually referred to the third century, at least. Hence the metrical gloss must be very ancient also, and Harris sums up by stating that instead of regarding D as a fourth century product, he regards it "in the main, including the glosses, as two hundred years earlier than this," *i.e.*, second century.

He has, by thus dealing with the relation of the Greek to the Latin text, added much to our knowledge of the Old Latin version, which forms so large an element in the work done in "Studia Biblica." In addition to the now increased probability that the Old Latin and all Latin texts go back originally to one version, and that a product of *North Africa*, he shows us that the original Old Latin version was the first line-for-line translation of the Greek text, and regards the Latin of *d* as its best and most unaltered extant representative.

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(To be continued.)



ART. V.—BENEVOLENCE.

I WONDER which of us really knows by his own intimate personal experience what is the meaning of being in distress. I do not use the word "poverty." Poverty is a very relative expression. It may mean totally different states in the mouths of different people. A man might even say that he was poor because he was reduced from some high standard of expenditure, though he might be still able to lay out many thousands a year. "Poverty," said an acute writer—William Cobbett—"is (except where there is an actual want of food and raiment) a thing much more imaginary than real. The shame of poverty, the shame of being thought poor, is a great and fatal weakness, though arising in this country from the fashion of the times themselves." I shall therefore avoid the word "poverty." It is not about anything so liable to be misunderstood that I wish to write. I am writing about a very real and terrible fact. I shall use the word "distress." And I ask my readers whether they have any experience of the bitter meaning of being in distress.

It means that all earthly hopes have failed you. You do not know where to look for the next bit of bread. Your strength, which is to you of the last and greatest value, has slowly ebbed away through weeks or months of insufficient

food. Each day as it comes diminishes the likelihood of obtaining employment. Your little savings, which you had with difficulty scraped together from the pitiful, uncertain fitful earnings of an overstocked labour-market, have all dwindled away, and there is nothing left. Everything of your poor little stock of household possessions which was of the least value, on which you could raise even a sixpence, lies in pledge. You have no comfort by day or by night. Your grate is empty, and you sit shivering and dreary. You know that after mid-day it is useless to seek for employment, and for the rest of the weary hours you have nothing to do but to gaze into the face of Despair. At night you cannot sleep for hunger and cold; at four or five you rise, and go out into the dark, chill, damp morning, bound to walk very many weary miles, though weaker than you were yesterday, in the hopeless task of seeking for work. Nobody wants you. But the horrors of your own sufferings are not the worst which you have to bear. Your wife, who was never at any time so strong as you, has grown thinner and weaker than even yourself. With the fond, proud instinct of a mother she has wished that she should starve herself before your children. For many months past, while your troubles were beginning to close in around you, she has been giving herself insufficient food. The girl whom you once so much admired, and who was so bright and comely, is now a wan, feeble creature, little but skin, bone, and rags. How incredulous you would have been if anyone had told you that this would be the end of it in those far-off sunny days, when you and she were courting, and when you first set up house together! She bears her lot without a murmur, but her silent look of wretchedness cuts you more deeply to the heart than if she were frequent in her complaints. The little babe in her arms and her own exhausted vitality prevent her from supporting the family during your own enforced idleness. The children, whose thin, threadbare, worn-out rags make them pitiable objects for even the hard-hearted to look at, whose shoes, never meant to last more than a month or two, let in the wet and mud at every seam and crack, stare helplessly at the empty table, the empty cupboards, the empty hearth. The pretty blitheness, the rounded cheeks and limbs, the fun and frolic, which belong to childhood, are no more for them. For months they have been languishing for want of proper food; for weeks they have been slowly starving. Their brains are dulled for want of blood, their spirits numbed with the sickliness of hopeless, habitual hunger. Heavily drags each day over these sad little beings, for they are too miserable to go to school, and at home there is nothing. No more can father or mother do for them. Life

is as silent and cramped as a frozen pond. Plenty exists all round them, but they cannot touch it. It is not theirs, nor meant for them. Within a quarter of a mile, perhaps, there are riches in every house; but the wheels of the world grind on in their daily course, and have no knowledge of these hapless sufferers. How gladly, for their sake, would you have remained unmarried if you could have foreseen that this was to be the miserable, unnatural lot of those pretty, smiling babes which God in His providence gave you as the crowns and blossoms of your union with her whom you loved! You can go into the workhouse with your little family if you please; but that would be to set the seal on your doom, to part with even the vestiges of what once made your little home, to give up even the tickets of your pledges, to sacrifice all that once was yours. That is what is meant by distress.

I have not exaggerated the terms of this description of distress. They are familiar to us every winter. Every winter there are at least 20,000 men out of work in London. It is not really a very large number out of four and a half to five millions; but when we consider that for the most part they live together in certain well-defined districts where rents are lowest, the number is very different from what it would be if they were all scattered about, and means an amount of misery which is appalling. It is not that I forget the existence of the professional unemployed. I am well aware of them. The professional unemployed are the loafers and idlers, the tipplers and drunkards, the bullies and scamps, the thieves and miscreants, whom our system of limited punishments for definite crimes has allowed to grow up in the midst of us, and who would not take honest employment if they could get it. These are they who love the voice of the Socialist and agitator, and who run like hounds after plunder and like hares before the voice of firm and just authority. These are they who one year desecrated Westminster Abbey, and looted the shops of the West, and drove trade and traffic from the Strand and Trafalgar Square. They exist, and we know about them, but we shall not allow their shameless degradation to blind our eyes to that great amount of real distress of which every minister of Christ whose life is spent amongst the working classes is only too painfully and vividly conscious.

Nor can I allow anyone to tell me as a complete answer to appeals for sympathy with the distressed that such bitter suffering is the fault of the distressed themselves. No doubt that there is far too large a population in London and our great towns of unskilled labourers. There is not a doubt that thousands of them, and their families, are perfectly superfluous. They have been, some of them, attracted from their

village homes and from other parts of England by the great glitter and glare of London. In spite of the spread of reading, writing, and arithmetic, it is still true that your countryman is under the delusion that the streets of London are almost paved with gold, and that fortunes are to be made almost for the asking. Little does he know of the grim reality! Some of them have been born here generation after generation, and have never been gifted in their enfeebled constitutions with either the ability or the energy to raise themselves from that low condition. It is the result of that freedom which for ages you have been claiming for all alike. You cannot insist for yourself on your liberty to come and go when and where you please, and to do what you please, and yet deny that liberty to this vast nation of unskilled labourers. According to the theories which for ages you have been devising and perfecting, what is true and necessary for you is true and necessary for them also. They are unconsciously the victims of the very principles which you have been worshipping. Do not blame them for coming to London or for being born here in such wretched conditions. They cannot help it. They know no better.

And then, again, do my readers themselves know by their own experience the truth of the word *misfortune*? "Misfortunes," said the greatest of orators, Demosthenes, "are the lot of all men, whenever it may please Heaven to inflict them." "When the strong influences of the stars," wrote Cervantes the Spaniard, the author of the immortal "Don Quixote," "pour down misfortunes upon us, they fall from on high with such violence and fury that no human force can stop them nor human address prevent them." All are liable to sudden reverses and changes of their condition; but with most remorseless hand misfortune falls on the poor and friendless. It is not my present purpose to trace the origin of misfortunes, or to analyze their meaning. We cannot deny that they come, and often come thick and fast. What is it but misfortune when the winner of the family's bread is laid aside with long, slow-lingering illness, and the wife watches anxiously for the promised improvement, and looks wistfully in the face of the doctor, and the improvement never comes? What is it but misfortune when the employer dies or moves away, or the firm is broken up, and the old connection is gone, and other employment seems all for younger and stronger men? What is it but misfortune when some child, perhaps, or the wife herself, has had long disease, and savings are exhausted, and all has to be begun again? What is it, as far as the poor struggling labourer is concerned, but misfortune that the labour markets of England in her Metropolis and in her

provinces are yearly more and more thickly overcrowded by tribes of Polish Jews, crowds of penniless aliens, numbering every twelvemonth no less than 120,000? What is it but misfortune when eye grows blind, or hand or limb is injured, and the means of livelihood are gone? What is it but misfortune when there comes some lasting snowstorm or lingering frost, and all those great trades on which the vast army of unskilled labourers depend for their bread are suddenly stopped? What is it but misfortune when palsying old age creeps on apace and prematurely, and after the sixtieth or sixty-fifth year there seems to be little chance of regular employment for the unskilled labourer? In other classes, in a more natural state of civilization even in this class, that time of life would be little more than middle age, and much would yet remain to be earned and achieved. To the hapless class of which I am speaking it is their condemnation. What is it but misfortune when husband or wife is dead, and children are all dead too, and friends are dead, and this loneliest of life's pilgrims, chilled and daunted by the hard lessons and discipline of the world, retires in grim silence to the miserable garret or cellar, there to linger on in hopeless, friendless wretchedness, in hungry, struggling, desperate poverty, till death comes as the most compassionate and welcome of friends to the release of that dreary soul?

Nor is it any but the very thoughtless who would tell me that all such troubles could be met by the poor-law. It is easy to explain the principles on which the poor-law is obliged by wisdom and experience to act. Any extended system of out-door relief would only result in encouraging the idle and the thriftless, in checking prudence, forethought and independence, in freeing children from the noble duty of repaying their parents, in some degree, by supporting them in their old age, in teaching employers of labour to give low wages in the expectation that they would be supplemented by public doles, and in destroying trade and enterprise by tempting one half of the population to live on the other. The exercise of the benefits of the poor-law must always be very jealously guarded. Directly a man can persuade himself that he or his belongings have a right to be supported by the State, without trouble or inconvenience to himself, the first principles of independence on the one hand, and of brotherly sympathy on the other, are upset. Much the poor-law can do; but the example of the history of our own country, the example of the mistakes of other countries, proclaim to us, in tones of no uncertain sound, that the poor-law can never take the place of charitable benevolence.

Where, then, is the sufferer from distress and misfortune to

look in his helplessness and isolation for the kindly hand which may lift him out of his trouble? Riches and comforts are near him, but he cannot make his sorrows known to them. The link is wanting to bring together the wretched and those who are ready and willing to take pity on them if they could. There is nothing more pathetic than such a situation. Nothing has ever pained me more than what happened during the first winter after I came to live in a poor London parish, in the great snowstorm of 1881. A poor, friendless boy was found frozen to death in the morning behind some palings in a side street, where he had been trying to shelter himself. I suppose there was not a house in the parish which would not, on such a night, have opened its doors to him, and taken him in, and fed and warmed him. But the link was missing. The six thousand people who were sleeping in safety beneath their roofs did not know of the hapless outcast. He did not know how to make his wants known to them; perhaps he did not know that his case was worse than usual. The link was missing. That link is alone given us in the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." How beautiful, how true, how tender, are those old words! He shows to us the pitiful human side of the awful Divine Being. He Himself had not a place where to lay His head. He Himself depended for His living on the alms of others. Himself a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, He was made perfect through suffering. And by His own unceasing example, and by His wonderful words of pity and love, He has made it the one grand business of the life of every member of the kingdom which He founded to bear each the other's burdens. He listens to the moan of every lone, forsaken woman; yes, even the sinful and unfortunate. He hears the cry of every hungry child; and, doubtless, to the child of the drunkard and the cruel He is all the more attentive. That the child of the drunkard should starve as a lesson to his parents would be, to His merciful heart, unutterably horrible. That is the law of Christ which we have to fulfil. "Give to him that asketh thee," He said, in words of deepest truth. Whoever is in trouble, we have the privilege of giving him of our best. Money may not be the best thing, but something there is which is best suited to each particular case of misery; and that we must lose no pains in discovering and applying. Neglect of the poor is neglect of the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the test to which our faith and life will be subjected at the last day? The feeding of the hungry, the lodging of the friendless, the clothing of the naked, the succouring of the sick, the cheering and reformation of the wrong-doer in his prison. It

is in this spirit that the minister of Christ marshals his little force of Christian warriors against sorrow and suffering, and leads them to the darkest hovels, and is never satisfied till every story of grief and shame is told, and, as far as human means can go, is remedied. It is in this spirit that he welcomes the daily besieging of his door by the sad and mourning, and by those who need his counsel and help in bettering their position. But there are things which he cannot do, for he has not command himself of sufficient resources. He turns with delight to larger and more central associations. They are often sure and safe means by which men's healthy instincts of sympathy and brotherhood and fellowship can expand. It is a living witness to the wide—I might almost say the universal—spread of the power of the Risen Lord amongst us. For not in any careless way do they discharge the privileges which they have undertaken. They inquire, they take advice, they consult together. Food, warmth, encouragement, and improvement are their main objects. Unconsciously they are fulfilling the very advice which, after months of careful deliberation and experiment, was given one year by the Committee of the Mansion House on the Condition of the Unemployed. "The distress," said that committee, which comprised names of those who were best able to judge, "the distress of this huge and unmanageable city, differing as it does in every locality, can never be satisfactorily met by the creation of one vast fund for the whole, or by the well-meant efforts of charitable societies to give employment to the unemployed. For such evils there can be no immediate cure; they can only be met by steady and patient *local effort* to improve the condition of the people. Local distress must be met by local means; and the local authorities, aided by the charitable residents and others conversant with the wants of the district, are the only persons who can effectually cope with the evil in such a way as will alike be beneficial to both givers and receivers. Accordingly, they would earnestly press on those who direct or who take part in almsgiving, to form such local councils as will command general confidence, and which may, by relief so far as it is of service, and by some of the means before suggested, do their utmost to give an outlook for the unemployed generally, and to rescue the unskilled labourer from his present hopeless condition."

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