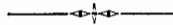


humanity. It is the same fact which so impresses us to-day with the Incarnate Life of God in the witness which It bears to Itself amongst men. Its unique claim to Divinity rests upon the breadth and fulness of its Humanity. The Transcendence lies in the perfection of the Immanence, in the universality of each. No *merely* human thing could be in either case so broadly, so sympathetically human, so free from all partial aspects of humanity, from all prejudice or passing influence such as clouds or warps or straitens sympathy with man as man. And the desire for God, the yearning after the abiding and the satisfying, the striving for a more complete self-realization, the longing for fulfilment, the sense of present incompleteness, the consciousness of hindrances to communion brought about through sin—these are there also. The Psalter is interpenetrated with the passion to find God more fully. Perhaps its wistfulness is even its greatest feature. But always the tones are human. Like that other Voice which spoke amongst the smiling hill-slopes and shining waters of Galilee, whereof it is written that whilst It “spoke with authority, and not as the Scribes,” yet also “the common people heard It gladly.”

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ART. III.—STUDIES ON ISAIAH.

CHAPS. XI., XII.

IT will be convenient at the present stage to bring together the various conceptions of the Messiah and His work contained in the foregoing chapters, and to compare them with other prophecies and with their fulfilment in the New Testament. Thus we shall be able to see more clearly that the teaching of Holy Scripture forms an organic whole, and that its claim to interpret to us the mind of God, and to connect the expression of that mind in “God’s Word written” with man’s whole history, is better founded than modern interpreters would have us believe. We shall see that from the very first God’s dealings with us have proceeded upon a defined plan—a plan which has been gradually unfolded, and that by processes of which there is no evidence elsewhere in history. I do not use the word “supernatural” in relation to these processes, because that word, as well as the word

“natural,” have never been satisfactorily defined,¹ and because I do not wish to be understood as asserting that the spiritual or unseen world is not as subject to law as the visible universe. The want of accurate definitions has enabled men to “darken counsel by words without knowledge” on these deep and mysterious subjects. All I wish to say in regard to those laws spiritual is (1) that we have no means of ascertaining their *modus operandi*, and do not know that we ever shall have; and (2) that they differ in a thousand ways from, and are a thousand times more complex than, the ordinary laws which affect matter; whilst (3), as Professor Kidd has shown, the influence of spiritual laws upon human history and conduct has by many been most unscientifically ignored. They are, and, for aught we know, they ever will remain, among the “secret things” which “belong to the Lord our God,” and which neither man’s curiosity nor man’s faculties will ever enable him to fathom. They belong to the domain of will, and the will of the Supreme Being. And the laws of will, even among finite beings, who is acute enough to define?

I. *The Mission of the Anointed One rests on the Foundation of Religion.*—The prophecy in chap. xi. speaks of the coming together of all nations under Messiah’s banner. But in chap. ii. 2² we have a closely similar prophecy connecting all these wonderful results with the “mountain of the Lord’s house.” These words have received a most conspicuous fulfilment. Jesus Christ was “born under the law,” of which Jerusalem was the headquarters. His deepest teaching (see St. John’s Gospel, *passim*) was given there. There He made atonement for sin. There, by fulfilling all sacrifice and oblation, He “made” the types to “cease” (Dan. ix. 27). There He rose again from the dead. Thence He ascended up to heaven. There His disciples were filled with the firstfruits of the Spirit (mentioned in chap. xi. 2). And from thence He specially charged them to take care that the good tidings were to radiate throughout the world (see Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 4).³

II. *The Anointed One was to be a Divine King, dwelling among Men* (chap. vii. 14).—Whatever the “nearer foreground,” acknowledged even by the most extreme defender of the supernatural to exist in almost all prophecy, it is clear that the final reference of chap. vii. 14 is to the Divine Person

¹ I may be permitted to refer to my “Miracles, Special Providences, and Prayer,” pp. 43, 44.

² Quoted in Mic. iv. 1-4.

³ It is remarkable that it is from the *Gentile* evangelist that we learn the importance attached to this fact.

of the Messiah. The special sign to Ahaz seems to have indicated the speedy passing away of the peril of which he stood in so much dread. The *ultimate* fulfilment related to one who should "endure afflictions" (chap. vii. 15, 21, 22), to whom the land should belong (chap. viii. 8), and to whom chap. ix. 6, 7 also refers.¹ Immanuel rather means "God among us" than "with us." The translations of both the Old and New Testament have tended to make the truth of God's indwelling presence in His people less clear and definite than does the original. It may be remarked that the *immediate* fulfilment of the prophecy does not in the least rise to the level of its high significance.²

III. *The Anointed One is Divine in Wisdom, a Source of Being, and a Manifestation of Love* (chap. iv. 6, 7).—Here we have a prophecy which is clearly outside man's natural capacities. Nothing of the kind which is here indicated had ever happened, or was, humanly speaking, in the least likely to happen. Beyond the vague hope, which could hardly be described as an expectation, that the golden age should one day return, which is found in some of the Latin poets (*e.g.*, Virgil and Ovid³), there was absolutely no anticipation in the mind of the ancient world that such a Person as is here described could possibly have arisen, nor anything whatever in the condition of the times to make such an event even possible. And the anticipation that such a Person, if He arose, could possibly be the harbinger of peace, was to add the final touch of improbability to the prediction. The prophecy does violence to all probability. The coming was to be a wonder.⁴ He was to be an Adviser to whom all would resort. Not only this, but He was to be the Mighty

¹ See "mighty God," ix. 6, and *cf.* x. 21.

² So the Fathers frequently remark. See Theodoret on this passage in his Commentary on Isaiah.

³ "Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas
Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.
Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna
Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto."

VIRGIL: *Eclogues*, iv. 4-8.

For Ovid, see the Introduction to his "Metamorphoses." When we consider how the expectation of the Jewish Scriptures had, as Tacitus and Suetonius relate, pervaded the whole East at the time of the birth of Christ, is it quite inadmissible to suppose that some idea of their contents had reached the great Latin poet?

⁴ The copies of the LXX. differ widely here. Whether it is due to different readings, or whether some copyist has revised the translation, is a point I leave to the critics. But the true translation or reading, "angel of great counsel," substituted in the Vatican Codex for "Wonderful, Counsellor," is adopted by many of the Greek Fathers.

Force itself which lies behind all phenomena.¹ He was to be the source of a new life—the Almighty Father. He was to govern in justice and righteousness,² and the outcome of His administration was to be the gradual spread of righteousness and peace throughout the world. Add to this that this Person was to be a descendant of David, and that His kingdom was to be the legitimate development of the institutions, political and religious, on which David's kingdom was founded,³ and we have a combination of antecedent improbabilities which could hardly be exceeded. The man who could forecast such a picture on the bare foundation of his "spiritual convictions" and his "observation of history" must have possessed powers far beyond those of ordinary mortals—powers the existence of which would constitute a mightier miracle than inspiration itself. Add to this the fact that these amazing predictions have been fulfilled to the letter; that the Eternal Word, who "was God," and was with Him "in the beginning" (John i. 1; cf. Heb. i. 2)—He by whom all things "consist" (Col. i. 16, 17), or are held together—*did* come down in human shape, *did* become a source of life to mankind,⁴ and that steadily, though slowly—*too* slowly for many impatient persons of our puny and short-lived race—the predicted "increase of righteousness and peace" has taken place, and is to be found even among nations who have not formally enrolled themselves under the banner of the "Prince of Peace," and are we not justified in seeing here a complete demonstration of the truth of that great doctrine of inspiration which has always been believed in the Church, and which must of necessity outlive the naturalistic theories which have been all too hastily and greedily swallowed in the present age?

IV. *The Prophecy of the "Shoot," or "Branch."*—The new criticism has based an objection to the homogeneous author-

¹ *El Gibbor*, translated "Mighty God." The original meaning of *El* is *power* or *force*. Had we remembered this Hebrew conception of God, we should probably have been spared some of the conflicts between religion and science which have so seriously affected us of late. We have come to think of God's will as an arbitrary will, instead of seeing it harmoniously at work in all phenomena.

² "Justice and righteousness." These are invariably distinguished in Hebrew as in English thought. In Latin there is but one word for the two. As has been before remarked, the Authorized and Revised Versions alike neglect the distinction. "Judgment" is repeatedly used where the Hebrew means "justice." And in Jer. xxiii. 5 the word usually translated "righteousness" is rendered "justice" in the Revised Version. See also preliminary observations.

³ That is, if we may trust Hebrew history as it stands, which, *pace* the critics, there appears no sufficient reason why we should *not* do.

⁴ See under the next section.

ship of Isaiah on the fact that the latter sections of the prophet represent the coming "Servant" or "Messenger" of God as a humiliated and rejected Person, a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," whereas the earlier portions of the prophet dwell on his conspicuous and extraordinary success, on the spread of His kingdom throughout the world, on the humanizing and transforming effects of His appearance among men. As if the same difference were not observable throughout the whole of the Old and New Testament, and among all its expounders from the beginning until now! Since when has it become impossible for a man to regard his subject from more than one point of view? Since when has there been any contradiction between the two sides of Christ's work—His sacrifice and His exaltation? The same argument which is held to prove that Isaiah could not have foreseen *both* sides of the work of the Anointed One would prove that no clergyman of any Church could write both a Christmas Day and a Good Friday sermon. The analytic criticism of the day, in Old Testament and New Testament alike, invents its own impossibilities, and then proceeds gravely to build theories on the creations of its own brain, while it coolly strikes out or ignores the facts which preclude its imaginings. It is to be lamented that many critics of judgment and soundness on all vital matters have on minor points given too much encouragement to criticism of this description, by building too wide-reaching conclusions upon presumed improbabilities or impossibilities. Nor is this altogether confined to Biblical critics. I remember meeting, nearly sixty years ago, with an edition of Shakespeare which relegated all the comic parts of his plays to the margin, on the principle that they were unworthy of the dignity of the poet, and were therefore the work of the stage-managers of the day. Thus, one of the most remarkable features of the character of that myriad-minded man, whose humour as much excelled that of other writers as does the majesty of his genius, the wondrous breadth of his view, the delicacy of his touch, the depth of his pathos, the brilliancy of his imagination, and the extent of his knowledge of mankind, is sacrificed to a pedantic *a priori* notion of what he must needs have written. Much modern criticism is yet more incapable of rising to the height and comprehending the greatness of the writers in the Bible than was the Shakespearian critic above mentioned. They take their six-inch measure, and reduce to their petty rule and square the work of men "borne along" by the Spirit of God, with infinite self-satisfaction and, be it added, with infinite presumption. We proceed to the analysis of the prophecy in chap. xi.

1. *The Coming One: His Personal Character* (vers. 1-5).—It is here predicted that in times to come a Shoot¹ shall arise from the stock of Jesse, and a Branch from his stock shall bear fruit.² It will be seen hereafter that One only has fulfilled this prophecy, being “of the seed of David according to the flesh, but marked out to be the Son of God in power—according (*cf.* ver. 2) to the Spirit of Holiness—by the Resurrection from the Dead” (Rom. i. 3, 4). This prophecy is repeated almost word for word (save that a different word is used for *Branch*) in Jer. xxiii. 5 and xxxiii. 15. The prophecy relates, of course, to the Incarnation. The Shoot is not only to arise, it is to *bear fruit*. In other words, a new and spiritual progeny is to arise from the descendant of David, which shall subsist unto all eternity. Thus are all the prophecies fulfilled which promise an eternal throne to David (as one example out of many, take Ps. lxxxix. 28, 29). “He who shall come”³ shall thus be an “Eternal Father” (chap. ix. 6) of a spiritual posterity—a “Second Adam,” as St. Paul puts it.⁴ So St. John tells us that “as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God, who were begotten, not through the means of natural descent, nor of any earthly power, within or without themselves, but of God alone” (John i. 12, 13). And he further points out (chap. v. 26) that this Fatherhood—this Source of Life—is not ultimate, but *derived*. “As the Father hath Life in Himself, *even so hath He given to the Son to have Life in Himself.*” And it is this derived Life, even His Redeemed and Sanctified Flesh and Blood, which those who have faith in Him draw from Him. So Athanasius tells us,⁵ a man whose deep insight into the Scriptures has never been surpassed, and to whom the whole world owes a debt of

¹ The so-called Higher Criticism has been heard of before our time. Theodoret, in commenting on this passage, replies to those who say it refers to Zerubbabel!

² See note above for “judgment and justice.” The fact is worth noting, though the modern critic, for obvious reasons, has *not* noted it, that the word *netzer*, translated “branch,” is not found except here, in chap. xiv. 9, a passage assigned to “the close of the exile,” chap. lx. 21, and Dan. xi. 7. Similarly, *geza*, translated “stem” (R.V., “stock”), is only found here, in Isa. xl. 24, and in Job. xiv. 8.

³ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, Matt. xi. 3.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 45. *Cf.* 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15 (where the true translation is, “there is, or has been, a new creation”); Eph. ii. 15, iv. 24; Col. iii. 10.

⁵ In his exposition of Matt. ix. 27, sec. 5, he tells us that “the Son is one in will and counsel with the Father, because their Nature is one and indivisible.” And he adds that, “since the Only Begotten has Life in Himself, as the Father hath, He only knoweth the Father, for He exists in the Father, and hath the Father in Himself.”

gratitude which has been very inadequately recognised. The prophecy in this chapter, as we shall see more clearly still as we proceed in the exegesis of it, is a remarkably full and accurate outline of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, as we find it put forth by St. John and St. Paul—by the former in the shape of detached apothegms, uttered “at sundry times and in divers manners,” as occasion suggested, by the Lord Himself; by the latter in more systematic fashion, as became an Apostle and interpreter. But from the first (Gen. iii. 15) it was decreed that a Sprout or Branch should arise from the ancient stock, from which the regeneration, restoration, consummation of man’s being should proceed.

This source of redeemed and regenerating Life was (ver. 2) to be connected with the Spirit of God.¹ Here, again, we find ourselves on the borders of a great mystery, which as yet theology has done little to penetrate or elucidate. To the Spirit is assigned by the revealed Word of God the task of working *within* phenomena. He “brooded over the surface of the waters” when the work of Creation commenced. It is through His means that the power of God works internally in the Christian soul. And even in the human life of the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity He is regarded as energizing and operating. In the Incarnation the “Power of the Holy Ghost overshadowed” the mother of our Lord (Luke i. 35). At His Crucifixion it was “in the Eternal Spirit” that He “offered Himself without spot to God” (Heb. ix. 14). He reveals to His chosen prophet in this passage that all the sevenfold² gifts and graces of a sanctified and perfected humanity are His work, since the *ἐνεργεία*, or inward working, whether in things natural or spiritual, is His special function in the economy of grace, and in the mysterious and eternal mutual relations of the three Divine Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity.³

The Incarnate God is further described as having His delight

¹ Cf. here Jer. xxxi. 33, Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26, 27, where the work of the Spirit is spoken of as one of the features of the coming age. This, again, was a knowledge of things to come, for which no natural faculties of man are sufficient to account.

² The notion that the gifts of the Spirit are “sevenfold” is derived from the LXX., which reads or interpolates *piety* (or *godliness*) here.

³ “The Lord will not come in the flesh without the Holy Spirit, but constituting Him, with His Divinity, who fills the universe, since He is the unction upon His Flesh” (“Ath. De Trin. et Spir. Sanc.,” sec. 12). The words are only found in a Latin translation, which is by no means clear. The meaning apparently is that Christ is Incarnate through the operation of the Divine Spirit, who fills all the universe, and who, by His unction, makes the flesh of Christ what it is, the flesh of the Incarnate Word.

in the "fear of the Lord." And justly so, for the fear of the Lord is no slavish timidity, but derives its sway over the human heart from the conviction that obedience to Him must needs be life and joy, and that disobedience to Him is the un-failing source of misery, first to others, and ultimately to one's self. "He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of His ears," for His desire is not His own will, but the Will of God (John iv. 34, v. 30). And therefore He does what He has bidden others to do—He "judges not after the appearance," but "righteous judgment" (John vii. 24). He has come (vers. 4, 5) to set right what is wrong upon the earth, and to drive away wickedness from before His face. The "humble and meek," as His inspired mother sang before His birth, are they whom He came to deliver from their down-trodden condition; and oppressors, as well as the selfish and thoughtless rich, He will "send empty away." Who can fail to see what, in the long ages since He came, He has already done for the meek and the oppressed, and what He is doing still?

2. *The Effect of His Coming* (vers. 6-10).—The prophet next pictures the effects which will follow on this inauguration of a reign of justice and righteousness enforced by the presence with the Ruler of the Spirit of God. A time of peace and happiness shall date from His appearance: all political, social, personal antagonisms shall die out; all the depraved natural appetite for "wrath and clamour and evil speaking, with all malice," shall cease to exist; greed and aggression and violence shall no longer afflict the children of men¹ because of the new nature which has been given to them—the redemption and regeneration which has changed our hearts has "made us alive with (or *in*) Christ," has "raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places" (Eph. ii. 5, 6). Nothing less than this could have effected the amazing change which is here described. The simile in vers. 5-8 relates to the external peace which shall take the place of conflict; vers. 9, 10, to the internal union of heart and spirit which will be brought about when all are filled with the Spirit of Christ (Eph. iii. 16-19, iv. 13). No hurt shall be done by one to another, for all shall be alike filled with the knowledge which comes from God. And the offspring² of Jesse shall be a banner to the

¹ The *genuine* critic will not fail to note the similarity between this passage and chap. lx. 18.

² Isaiah here uses a new word for root, *sheresh*. He uses it here, however, in a sense peculiar to himself. It does not mean "root" here, but *what springs from* a root. The *sheresh* of this verse is something *visible*, not invisible. Its use here intensifies the fact that the "shoot" here

nations, who one by one shall come to Him and grow in that knowledge, and so find peace, happiness, and prosperity.

I cannot pass over a curiosity of modern criticism here. A popular critic, referring to vers. 6-9, remarks: "It is one of those errors which distort both the poetry and truth of the Bible to suppose that by the bears, lions, and reptiles which the prophet now sees tamed in the time of the regeneration he intends the violent human characters which he so often attacks. When Isaiah here talks of the beasts, he means the beasts. The passage is not allegorical, but direct." And a passage from Tennyson is quoted, in which Arthur is said to have "slain the beast." But the critic quite overlooks the fact that Isaiah is not speaking here of extermination of the beasts, but of a *change of nature* in them. No such change has passed over brute nature since Isaiah wrote, nor is there any prospect of such change. We still are compelled to slay the lion in Africa and the tiger in India to prevent them from ravaging the flocks and destroying human beings. There has been no appreciable tendency on the part of the lion during the centuries which have gone by since Isaiah's day to adopt the diet of the ox, nor has it become one whit safer than of old to entrust the kids and antelopes in the various zoological gardens to the safe keeping of the leopards. The result of such an experiment, were it made, would only, I fear, be adequately represented by one of Mr. Lear's well-known "Nonsense Rhymes." "Isaiah," we are told, "would not have the wild beasts exterminated, but tamed." And we are given some details, on the authority of Darwin, which are interesting no doubt, but hardly to the point, of the ease with which animals are tamed *before they have become familiar with man!* No doubt the loving-kindness to one's fellow-creatures which is one of the fruits of the promised life in Christ naturally overflows to the animals. It has done so, and will increasingly do so. But to refer this passage to any such result of Christ's coming is absurdly to mistake the prophet's meaning. The present is one of a class of passages with which every student of Isaiah—all Isaiah—is familiar, in which *natural* phenomena are taken as the type of *moral* phenomena. For instances of this see ver. 9 of the present passage; also chaps. ii. 10-17, x. 18-20, xxviii. 21-29, xxxv. throughout, xl. 4, 11, 31, xli. 17-20. And so almost *ad infinitum*. If we ask *why* the critic thus strangely travesties

spoken of springs from Jesse. We find a similar use of the word in Isa. liii. 2. It occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament in this sense. Here, then, we find another indication of unity of authorship. But see critical note at the end of this paper.

his author, the reason is not far to seek. He is driven to do so by the necessities of his position. For the second portion of this chapter (vers. 11-16) is *attributed to another hand*. A "definite historical situation," we learn, "is assumed in it which can only with some violence be harmonized with the actual circumstances of Isaiah's time." It might at least, one would think, be as "easily harmonized" with those circumstances as the supposed change of nature in the beasts. But the critic was compelled at all hazards to destroy the close connection which obviously exists between the figurative prophecy of vers. 6-9 and the literal repetition of it in ver. 13. It is only when the critics come to be criticised that the amazing shifts to which they are reduced in order to cover the weak places of their work are clearly perceived.

J. J. LIAS.

(To be continued.)

ART. IV.—AN ANCIENT CUSTOM OF THE SEA.

FROM ancient times, it was at sea that the fullest development of lay work in the Church was found. Lay ministries at sea necessarily include the most sacred offices in health and in sickness, in life and in death. Who but a sea-officer has within the last few years baptized eighteen persons at one time? Yet that was done in the ordinary course of a commander's duty, calling at Tristan d'Acunha in the South Atlantic. That he did not also perform the Office of Holy Matrimony was only that there were no couples ready for marriage at the time of his visit. Christian burial at sea is a most solemn service, which is rarely conducted by a clergyman. Rightly or wrongly, even the Lord's Supper itself is sometimes administered, in one form or another, with or without the sacred elements, by seamen shut out for lengthened periods from participation in clerical ministrations. Daily prayers and Sunday worship have come down from the days of old as the ordinary habit in all well-regulated British ships, whether of the King or of the merchant. These are still the "custom of the service" in the King's ships and in some well-commanded merchant vessels.

Naturally, therefore, the discussion at the Liverpool Church Congress on "Religion on Shipboard" turned almost wholly on Divine worship in merchant ships on the high seas. All seven appointed readers and four free speakers rightly made