

I do not see how the historian, the archæologist, and the palæontologist can avoid making this conclusion in future a prime factor in their discussions, and I venture to think that before long it will be accepted as unanswerable."<sup>1</sup>

This being so, we are led to regard the narrative (or narratives) in Genesis as, to take the very lowest view, the genuine ancient Hebrew tradition about the Flood, and quite as independent of the Babylonian as the latter is of the Indian or the Mechoachan. In any case, whether this view be correct or not, we venture to conclude that the derivation of the Noachian Deluge narrative from the Babylonian has certainly not yet been *proved*, and should not therefore be *assumed* or *asserted*, as it now so frequently is.



### Hilary of Poitiers.

By MISS M. E. AMES.

THE esteem generally entertained for the Patristic writings has not more obviously erred in ascribing undue honour to some than in evincing a lack of appreciation of others of the earlier Fathers; and as one whose claims to our gratitude and reverence have thus met with a wholly disproportionate response, we unhesitatingly instance the subject of this present sketch, Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers. While the fame of his friend and pupil Martin of Tours has transcended the limits of human reverence, we are assured by Isaac August Dorner that the merits of Hilary, his father in the faith, have never been appreciated—a circumstance that is all the more remarkable from the fact that, while the sources from which the history of the founder of monachism has been drawn are universally admitted to be more or less unreliable, the Bishop of Poitiers has interwoven so much of his own personal experience into his various writings that Dom Constant has furnished us

<sup>1</sup> "The Mammoth and the Flood," p. 463.

with a Life which renders us independent of the superstitious anecdote of Fortunatus. It is, however, in his preface to his great controversial work "De Trinitate" that Hilary unfolds to us the very secrets of his inner being, and invites us to enter, as it were, into the sacred arena of conscience, and to witness the birth-throes of a young and ardent nature, as it bursts asunder the bands of pagan darkness, and soars, with outspread wings, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And here we would entreat attention to the indisputable fact that the doctrine which claimed Hilary's entire allegiance, and to which he tenaciously clung from the moment of his conversion throughout his whole career, was "justification by faith," and "faith only." We venture thus to emphasize the importance of this statement, because there can exist but little doubt that herein lay the primary cause of the waning influence of one of the most illustrious of the early Post-Nicene Fathers, whom every eminent theologian from Jerome to Peter Damien had delighted to honour—a conclusion emphasized by the fact that the Basle edition of Hilary (dated 1556), formerly revised by Erasmus, to be seen in the British Museum, contains eleven original erasures by the hands of the Inquisitors, besides an attempt to obliterate the name of Erasmus from the title-page. While in some instances the references themselves are entirely obscured, the pagination is still traceable, and a brief glance at the passages thus indicated will convince the reader that they contain in their absolute loyalty to Scripture a *primâ facie* reason for this effort at elimination by the Church of Leo X. and Julian II.

Moreover, as at this period the celibacy of the clergy had been universally enforced in the Latin Church, and asceticism had become to be regarded as the crowning virtue to which all were encouraged to aspire, the fact that Hilary led a naturally simple family life with the wife and daughter so dear to him, and from whom only an enforced banishment could separate him, was so entirely at variance with the narrow conception of medieval theology, that the high estimation which had formerly

procured for this noble champion of the Nicene faith the title of the "Athanasius of the West" was allowed to fade gradually into oblivion, while the thunders of Trent and the creed of Pius IV. silenced for the time at least the last lingering echoes of that revered voice.

But for us, as members of a historic Church, with her foundations striking deep into the rock of revealed truth, and encircled by the impregnable battlements of her Creeds and Articles, the whole range of ancient ecclesiastical records does not contain a more perfect type of the ideal clergyman of our own day than Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers. Nay, further, it is hardly too much to say that had this "blameless" man of God, "the husband of one wife, sober, grave, given to hospitality, apt to teach, ruling his own household well, having his children in subjection with all gravity," lived three centuries earlier, he might almost have furnished the model for that beautiful portrait of the Christian Bishop traced by the aged hand of the great Apostle.

Concerning the personal history of Hilary, we possess many interesting and authentic details. We learn he was born about the year 320, that his father's name was Francarius, a man of noble family, distinguished not only for their patrician birth, but for the nobility and generosity of their nature, all of which we are able to read between the lines, as it were, in Hilary's account of his own conversion already alluded to. He appears to have married early in life, and it is generally supposed that his wife was instrumental in leading her husband into the glorious faith she had herself for many years embraced. They had one child only, the beautiful Abra, who appears to have been as richly endowed with inner as with outward graces. A very pleasing testimony to Hilary's abiding love and fidelity to both wife and daughter exists in the tender letter written to the latter from his place of exile. A noble suitor had desired to present this maiden of his choice with gifts of rare apparel and priceless gems, and the young girl had evidently written to her father to solicit his consent before accepting them. Hilary,

whose one profound desire for his little daughter was that she should live uncontaminated by the world and its allurements, wished to urge upon her, by way of allegory, the far more transcendent beauty of the Lord and the exceeding riches of His spiritual gifts. The epistle concludes with the parental advice: "If on account of thy tender years" (she was only thirteen) "thou art not able to understand my letter and hymn, ask thy mother, who prays to God that He will bring thee up in His ways." Beside this simple testimony to Hilary's respect and confidence regarding his wife, whom even Dom Constant declares to have been "a worthy spouse," the letter contains in itself a refutation of many of the foolish fictions which superstition has endeavoured to weave around his history. The story that the impending betrothal of his daughter was supernaturally revealed to him is entirely destroyed by his opening words: "I have received thy letter," etc.; and the still more absurd fable that Hilary "obtained the death of his daughter by his prayers" is equally nullified by his closing petition, immediately following his advice regarding her mother, quoted above: "I pray that God will keep thee here and in eternity." So happy appears to have been the domestic life of Hilary that it is not surprising to learn from Grynaus that he encouraged marriage among his clergy, a "temerity" which Dom Constant laughs to scorn as against the teaching of the Church, in happy oblivion of the fact that the father, grandfather and great-grandfather of St. Patrick, supposed to be the nephew of his friend and pupil Martin of Tours, were all married clergymen.

Hilary appears to have been raised to the Episcopate about the year 350. As had frequently been the case with other great leaders of the Church, he was evidently consecrated when merely a layman by a plebiscite of the Pictavians, and his zeal and learning became so speedily and universally recognised that only a brief period elapsed before he was chosen by all the Gallic Churches to be their champion against the Arian heresy. The exact period of his first acquaintance with Martin is not

known, but as the young soldier appears to have been attracted to Hilary by the fame of his preaching, and in consequence came to visit him in his home, their earliest meeting cannot have taken place very long after the Bishop's consecration, from the added circumstance that within five years from that event, when he was driven into exile by the edict of the Arian Emperor Constantius, given at the Council of Biterra, Martin had retired from the army, had been instructed in the Christian faith by Hilary, had been baptized by him, and had also received the ordination of deacon at his hands. And that all these events happened before the banishment into Phrygia is clearly evident from the fact that it was to the care of his friend and pupil Martin that Hilary entrusted the charge of his family and flock during his absence. This responsibility must have been greatly increased by the circumstance that, in the untiring energy of his nature, the Bishop had already founded schools in his diocese for the free education of his people, and the maintenance of these must have formed no light addition to the usual duties of pastoral ministrations, which signified in the case of Hilary that he gave himself to his people. In the multitudinous extra-diocesan duties which devolved upon him his care for and work among his flock seems never to have faltered, and even in his exile he appears to have kept in some degree in touch with them; for in a passage in "De Trinitate," which was written during that painful time, he speaks of his duties as still those of a Bishop and preacher of the Gospel.

His exile in Phrygia appears to have lasted for about three or four years. He was met upon his return by his wife and daughter, accompanied by his faithful friend Martin. His people welcomed their Bishop's arrival once more into their midst by every possible demonstration of affection and delight; but their mutual happiness was doomed to be speedily overshadowed by the death of the gentle Abra, followed within a few months' time by that of her broken-hearted mother. Hilary himself only survived the home-call of his dear ones for

a period of ten years. The concluding period of his life was spent in happy, peaceful ministration among his beloved people. He died in January, 366, after having endeavoured faithfully to work for and to follow his Lord, and also to suffer for His sake throughout a period of twenty-one years.

As in the due course of our consideration we emerge from the peaceful atmosphere of Hilary's personal and pastoral life, and step forth into the more extended and important arena of his writings and conflicts, we by no means leave behind us those traits of the typical Evangelical minister of the Gospel which our previous contemplations of this man of God have so clearly revealed to us.

Our attention has already been drawn to his Scriptural fidelity concerning justification by faith. As a further evidence of this, we may observe in passing that a considerable portion of the index of his *Opera* under *Fides* refers especially to this doctrine, besides numerous other passages under *Justificatio*.

With regard to other vital doctrines which constitute the heritage of our reformed Church, we shall find the same adherence to revealed truth. For instance, concerning confession of sins, Hilary declares "that it must be made to God, and to none other," a passage which occurs in his commentary on Ps. li. (LXX.), and which we gather from the appended note formed a subject for discussion between the Protestant Dally and the Romanists. The contention of the latter that Hilary, in accordance with the original intention of the Psalmist, was referring to confession of *praise* is from the context too palpably absurd for comment. Again, in commenting on Matt. ix. 2-8, he observes: "Forgiveness is from God. Because the law has no power to unloose, faith alone justifies . . . because it is true that none but God can forgive sins, therefore He who can forgive sins is God, because no one but God can forgive sins."

As indirectly allied to the forgiveness of sins, we refer the reader to a very interesting passage on Matt. xxv. 1-13. Commenting on verse 9, he says: "To whom they" (the wise virgins) "answered it was not possible for them to give" (oil),

“because there was not enough for all, from which it is evident that no one will be assisted by the works and merits of others.”

Was Pius IX. aware of this passage, which hurls so powerful a dart against, not only the “spiritual,” but the actual treasure-house, of his Church, when he styled the author “*Doctor ecclesiæ universæ*”?

But perhaps the question which appears to us to constitute the most powerful touchstone of Protestant truth, especially in the light of present-day controversy, is that which centres round the Table of the Lord. What, we ask ourselves, was Hilary’s conception of the Eucharist? Let this man of God himself furnish us with the answer.

Commenting on Ps. cxxvii. 2 (LXX.), “Thou shalt eat the labour of thy fruits,” he observes: “This is not natural food, neither is it to be corporally eaten, but we possess here a spiritual food, for the sustenance of our spiritual life, which is evidently those good works of benevolence, charity, mercy, patience, tranquillity, by which the sin of the flesh in us must be laboured against. The fruit of these labours is in eternity, but the labour is to be eaten beforehand, in order that our souls may be nourished by the food of these labours in this mortal life, so obtaining through the bread of these labours the living Bread, the heavenly Bread, from Him who says, ‘I am the living Bread from heaven,’ which, according to the Apostolic injunction, ‘whosoever eateth and drinketh unworthily acquireth judgment.’ The labours are to be therefore eaten now, but the fruits are to be gathered in heaven.”

And again on Matt. ix. 15-17: “He answered them that the Bridegroom being present, there was no necessity for the disciples to fast, and by the joy of His presence He signified the Sacrament of the holy Food, in which He being present—that is, contained within their mental vision—no one fasts; but He being withdrawn, they fast . . . for we receive this Sacrament of the heavenly Bread of the Resurrection by faith; but whoever is without Christ will be left to fast from the Bread of Life. And in order that they might understand how

impossible it is for those remaining in the old man to receive the finished Sacraments of salvation, He showed them by the example of the parable of the new cloth being put to the old garment, and the new wine being put into the old bottle . . . that it is plainly to be seen that while our minds and bodies are clothed in the old garments of our sins it is impossible to receive the Sacrament of a new grace." The remaining extract from St. Hilary's writings which space will alone permit us to give is contained in a fragment from an unidentified work : "Give us this day our daily bread, for this is the will of God, that Christ, who is the Bread of Life, the Bread from heaven, should dwell in us daily ; and because the prayer is to be daily prayed, the answer is to be daily given."

While the spiritual signification which St. Hilary attached, not only to the Lord's Supper, but to His words in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, is very clearly to be seen in these foregoing passages, yet at the same time, with that truly regrettable inconsistency of the early Fathers, he appears to give elsewhere a more material interpretation to both the one and the other. It cannot, however, be too emphatically declared that there does not exist within the whole scope of his writings the faintest trace of even an approximation towards the conception of any sacrificial character in the Eucharist ; nor does he ever allude to a change in the elements resulting from priestly ministration. Moreover, those passages which appear to convey the idea of a corporal presence in the Sacramental bread and wine occur in his "De Trinitate," written, as we have already seen, during his exile and in the heat of controversy, while the passages to which we have drawn attention occur in the more sober portion of his writings, containing commentaries on the Psalms and St. Matthew's Gospel, which it appears were in the first place given in the form of separate sermons to his people, and were afterwards collected and compiled "for the good of the Church" at large. It is these addresses, the result, no doubt, of quiet and prayerful reflection, which are especially distinguished by the persuasive earnestness of their tone and by



their fidelity to Scripture—as, for example, a truly majestic passage on the dignity and inspiration of God's Word, a truth which we meet with again in Hilary's letter to Constantine. It is also as interesting as it is pleasing, to learn, in his enumeration of the canonical books, that Hilary follows Melito of Sardis, and Origen, and antedates Jerome, in including only those of our own English Bible. Space alone forbids our further referring to those other doctrines of our Catholic and Evangelical faith maintained by him in a spirit of equal scriptural integrity. The object, however, of our brief considerations will be amply fulfilled should they conduce not only to a recognition of Hilary of Poitiers as one of the most Evangelical of all the earlier post-Nicene Fathers, but, what is of still greater importance, to a fresh revelation of the reality of the continuity of our own Church with that of the early centuries.



### Barnack on "Luke the Physician."

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**N**OTHING in the criticism of the New Testament has been more remarkable than the steady return by the leading theologians on the Continent to the traditional views of the authors and dates of the books contained therein. The day is past when the publication of startling paradoxes arrests attention, and constrains acceptance by reason of the eminent position of their propounders. It is becoming more and more recognised that the Church has not been wrong in the assignment of dates and authorship, and the detailed analysis of sources and language in order to determine the various documents that lie behind the writings as we receive them has taken the place of "tendency" discussion, and fantastic theorizing. This decisive change of attitude has received its last, and in many respects most important,