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## ON THE EPISTLES OF ST. PETER.

## THE FIRST EPISTLE.

IN approaching the Epistles of St. Peter in order to compare their style and characteristics with those parts of the historical Books of the New Testament which have been before shewn to bear traces of St. Peter's influence, and in some cases to have come from his own lips,<sup>1</sup> we have to bear in mind that many of the features most prominent in historical writings must of necessity be wanting in epistolary compositions which aim solely (as the New Testament Epistles must do) at being didactic and hortatory. For such a comparison, moreover, St. Peter's writings would hardly be expected to supply much material. He possessed, as we have seen, the faculty of minute description, of graphic detail, in a singular degree; but the place for the exercise of this power is narrative, not exhortation. Still we believe that a careful examination of his Letters will furnish us with traces of the same pictorial style so abundantly seen in the "Acts" and in "St. Mark." His idiosyncrasy was so marked that it must leave its traces everywhere. We shall find that though he may not describe his mental pictures, yet in his words he is constantly shewing us how clearly they are before him. They influence his choice of language and make his epistolary composition of another kind from the rest of the Epistles in Holy Scripture. There are other indications in both Epistles that they are the work of the mind set before us in the Gospels and in the Acts, but it

<sup>1</sup> See THE EXPOSITOR, vol. ii. pp. 269-284, and vol. iii. pp. 264-282.  
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will be convenient to examine this feature first. It seems also best to confine our observations for a while to the First Epistle. There have been questions raised about the genuineness and authenticity of the Second which will receive the best answer that an examination like the present can give them, if the marked characteristics of the two be discussed separately. The reader will then be able to look at each and say how far they deserve to be esteemed as the work of the same author.

A few examples will illustrate what has been said of the effect which St. Peter's graphic turn of mind seems to have produced on all his speech. In his exhortation to the younger brethren of the societies for whom he wrote he has a sentence (Chap. v. 5) which our Authorized Version renders "be clothed with humility." But these words, though perhaps the best that Translators could find, come far short of expressing all that is contained in the Greek *τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε*. The verb of this sentence, like so many other words in these Epistles, is found nowhere else in the New Testament, and is very uncommon anywhere. It is connected with a series of words which all imply *tight wrapping* or *rolling together*. The simplest of them, *κόμβος*, means a knot or roll of cloth made in tying or tucking up any part of the dress. It is also used of a pouch, or pocket, which such tucking up of the skirts might easily make. Another of the series, *ἐπικόμβια*, is applied to little packets of money tightly wrapped up, or tied, in bags, to be thrown among the people on certain feast days by the Byzantine Emperors and Patriarchs; while the noun from which

St. Peter's verb is immediately formed (*ἐγκόμβωμα*) is the name for a kind of over-dress used by slaves when engaged in any labour likely to be interfered with by their customary loose garments, by the wearing of which they might keep their usual clothes out of the way and clean. We are now in a position to grasp better the Apostle's graphic idea in using this word. In putting on humility as a garment of the nature described by his unusual expression, his hearers are exhorted not to employ that virtue as a loose flowing robe, so familiar to Oriental eyes and so readily laid aside, but as a tight close vesture, meant for wear and work, and which would suit with all the parts of their everyday life, and whose effect would be to keep more pure and stainless all the other portions of their character.

But St. Peter meant more than this. In his one word he has pictorially embodied a lesson which in other days had been given to himself. When he was writing we cannot doubt that his mind had called up that solemn scene on the evening of the Last Supper, when the assembled disciples were witnesses of the Lord's great practical sermon on humility. St. John records it (xiii. 4), but St. Peter played in the transaction a part which could never fade from his memory, and which his language in his Epistle shews to have been in his thoughts, for it almost exactly describes the action of the Lord. "Jesus riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself, . . . and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded."

Now in his Epistle the Apostle has just couched his exhortation in these words: "All of you be subject one to another," and instantly his mind reverts to the form in which such teaching had fallen from his Lord's lips. "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." The scene is all before him in a moment, and he stamps the most noticeable feature of the whole on the next word of his exhortation, which in its fulness seems to say, "Wrap tight round you your humility, as my Lord wrapped the towel wherewith He was girded when He deigned to wash the feet of his disciples."

Such, then, is the form in which St. Peter's graphic power exhibits itself in his Epistles, and instances are not few in which we can trace it. In his exhortations his mind constantly becomes retrospective, and his recollections of what he is able to recall vividly supply him from time to time with single words in which we can detect the very set of circumstances that he had in his thoughts. Thus there can be little doubt when he speaks (Chap. i. 13) with another unique expression, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your minds," it is with his memory fixed on that exhortation of Jesus (Luke xii. 35), "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning," and with the vivid recollection of some marriage festivity to which the remark was well adapted, or, it may be, of some Passover feast wherein this preparation of the dress was ordained from its first institution.

Again, when the Apostle tells, a few verses earlier in the Epistle (Chap. i. 10-12), of the salvation which

is proclaimed in the Gospel, his thoughts revert at once to the day on which the great manifestation, whereof he himself was a partaker, was made, when "the Holy Ghost" was "sent down from heaven;" and, sensible of the wondrous gifts of the new dispensation, feeling how much more light had been shed on life eternal and on immortality by Christ's death and resurrection, he concludes,—“which things the angels desire to look into.” But *look into* is a feeble expression whereby to render παρακίψαι. In the Greek is pictorially expressed the bent body and the outstretched neck of one who is stooping and straining to gaze on some sight which calls for wonder. Now, except in St. James (Chap. i. 25), where the same word is used of the earnest gaze of the believer into the perfect law of liberty, παρακίπτω is employed only here and in the two accounts of the visit of Peter and John to the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection. Both Evangelists (Luke xxiv. 12; John xx. 5) employ the same word, and its use is no doubt due to St. Peter's narration, which was given to the rest of the Apostles on their return. The word is exactly descriptive of what he had seen, as St. John went into the sepulchre before him, and was the most pictorial and expressive word he could apply to the bowed form and earnest gaze of his fellow-disciple as he stooped down and looked into the empty tomb. In that vacant grave John saw what angels had longed to see. Its vacancy was the seal of man's salvation, the beginning of the glories which followed the sufferings of Christ, the keynote of the gospel which

proclaimed, through that resurrection, the rising again of all the dead. In thought Peter seems by his word to have gone back to that scene by the grave of the Lord, and to have before him John's eager and astonished act and gaze while he bent down that his eyes might make themselves sure of the truth of such things as the angels desired to see.

In like manner St. Peter looks back to that interview with Christ which is recorded in St. John xxi. 15, 16, when he gives his exhortation to the elders (Chap. v. 2), "Feed the flock of God which is among you." Those to whom he speaks are in the same responsible position as himself. He reminds them of this and of the charge which it involves, and he knows no better way whereby he may fulfil the injunction laid upon him (Luke xxi. 32, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren") than to repeat to them, as nearly as they can be applied, the words of the command which Jesus aforetime gave to him.

Once more, there can be little doubt that the Apostle's thoughts were in that Gentile home, to which he in former times was sent for, in Cæsarea; that he was recalling the history of that man who had feared God, and had been working righteousness, when he speaks (Chap. i. 17) of the way in which God will hearken to every man's prayer: "If ye call on the Father, who *without respect of persons* judgeth according to *every man's work*, pass the time of your sojourning here *in fear*." The sentence is, as it were, a picture of the life of Cornelius described by himself in the Acts (Chap. x. 2). The mind of the Apostle

travels back to those former days and to the wondrous revelation by which his own prejudices had been swept away, when he learnt that, through the Gospel, all men were alike before God. On Cornelius and his house St. Peter had seen the Holy Ghost descend as on himself and his fellow-disciples at the beginning, and his first words then were the basis of his exhortation afterwards. For he opened his mouth and said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no *respecter of persons*, but *in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness* is accepted with him."

We may see also a remembrance of his own inability to watch even a short time with his Master, when "the hour" of his enemies "and the power of darkness" arrived, in the earnest exhortations to watchfulness which he gives (Chap. v. 8) against the attacks of the devil.

But, above all things, he is never weary of reverting to the scenes of the passion and the resurrection of the Saviour. His great claim to be heard is that he is "a witness of the sufferings of Christ" (Chap. v. 1), and the lessons to be drawn from those sufferings are his constant theme. We can see a memory of his own faithlessness on that dread night as he records how it was the just Jesus who suffered for the unjust world (Chap. iii. 18); and the memory of his Lord, "put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit," has prepared him who formerly denied his Master to be ready to follow Him now to prison and to death, when the time shall come for him to glorify God. We see this spirit break out continually in his appeals: "Forasmuch as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm

yourselves likewise with the same mind" (Chap. iv. 1); and, again, " Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings " (Chap. iv. 13); and, once more, when his mind pictures the Lord on the cross praying, " Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," he shapes his exhortation to those who call themselves by Christ's name from his revived memories, and tells how men shall, after the Saviour's example, in their afflictions (Chap. iv. 19) " commit the keeping of their souls to God in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator."

But especially is the whole scene of Christ's trial and crucifixion put pictorially before us in the exhortation (Chap. ii. 19-24) to suffer patiently even when we are doing well. " What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?" *Κολαφιζόμενοι* means " smitten with the palms of the hand," and having taken this one figurative word from the occurrences at the examination of Christ, the Apostle applies the whole example of the Lord as the type of what a Christian should expect to meet with and should strive to do. " Christ," he says, " suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps." The graphic character of these words we shall need to refer to afterwards: " He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." We can see that all the terrible events

are revived in the writer's mind with the utmost minuteness. The jeers and blows of the servants, the insolent scorn of the High Priest and his assessors, the silent submissive Jesus, are all as fresh before his eyes as on the day when the solemn tragedy was enacted. He uses also the unusual word *ξύλον* for the cross of Christ, a word which he employs in the same way in two of his addresses in the Acts of the Apostles (Chap. v. 30, x. 39). But it is the word *stripes* that, perhaps above all the rest, betrays to us the eye-witness of all which he is narrating. The Greek word *μώλωψ* is here employed in the singular, and is found nowhere else in the New Testament. It means the *bruise*, or *wale*, which rises under the skin, and is charged with blood, after a severe blow. Such a sight we feel sure, as we read this descriptive passage, St. Peter's eyes beheld on the body of his Master, and the flesh so dreadfully mangled made the disfigured form appear in his eyes like one single bruise. And what he saw he has tried to depict in the figurative and unique word which he has written down for us.

But his whole Epistle is full of the like graphic touches, and in consequence abounds with words which are never, or very rarely, used by the other sacred writers. The pictorial word employed in the description (Chap. v. 8) of Satan going about as a roaring lion (*ἄρρῶμενος*) is found nowhere else in the New Testament, but is just the word we should expect from the writer, who, as we believe, reminded St. Mark that Christ in his temptation "was with the wild beasts." The same observation applies to the Apostle's language (Chap. iv. 1) in the exhortation to imitate

Christ. The bold metaphor, "Arm yourselves with the same mind," is like St. Peter, but unlike the other writers of the New Testament. In Chap. ii. 16 we come upon another unique word where the Apostle is dealing with the misuse of Christian liberty. "Use not liberty for a *cloke* of maliciousness." Ἐπικάλυμμα, the word of the Original, is literally a veil, whereby the face, or anything else, may be shrouded so that the true expression or character of what is behind may be unnoticed. St. Peter feels that Christian freedom pushed too far may tend to license and yet the profession of Christianity be urged as an excuse for it, and his pictorial mind fixes on such a state the graphic name of a mask, or veil, employed to hide the real countenance behind it.

In the preceding verse (Chap. ii. 15) is another of these striking words, "Put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." The verb *φίμω* is from a noun signifying a *muzzle*, or *nose-band*. The primary use of the contrivance was to prevent dogs from biting or calves from sucking. How much vigour is imparted to the Apostle's language when this figure of his is appreciated! Well-doing is the means which the Christian is to employ against his opponents, and at the sight of it they shall become tongue-tied and powerless for harm. They cannot bite, for they are muzzled by what they behold in the conduct of the servants of Christ. The Greek word is rarely used in its metaphorical sense, but is more frequent in St. Mark than elsewhere in Scripture. It is the word which Christ used in his address to the raging sea (Mark iv. 39), and, more strikingly in accord with the passage in St. Peter's Epistle, when our Lord employs it (Mark

i. 25) against the unclean spirits, saying, "Hold thy peace" (literally, be muzzled), "and come out of him."

As the last word carried us back to St. Mark's Gospel, so some of the figurative words which the Apostle uses have their counterpart in the language of the Acts, which the Apostle is recorded to have employed. Such is his use of *σκολιός*, which he applies, in his First Epistle (Chap. ii. 18) to the character of masters in their dealings with their servants. The word is primarily used of material things which are crooked and awry, such as a twisted piece of wood. When we know this, we see at once what the Apostle means by those whom our Translation calls *froward* masters. They are men of a distorted and perverse nature, with whom no reasoning would avail, but who would ever do things contrary to all fairness and justice; yet even to these the Christian servant is urged to submit. The word is one which the Apostle employs in the exhortation which follows his Pentecostal sermon (Acts ii. 40): "Save yourselves from this *untoward* generation;" a passage which St. Paul seems to have had in his mind when he wrote Philippians ii. 15, in which place alone, except in the language of St. Peter, is this metaphorical use of the word found in the New Testament. Another example which carries us to the language of the Acts occurs in the exhortation to brotherly love (Chap. i. 22): "Love one another with a pure heart, *fervently*" (*ἐκτενῶς*). But the figurative word in the Greek says much more than the English. It speaks of a continuous strain and labouring for the accomplishment of this duty. The heart is to be, as it were, on the rack till it fulfil

its work. St. Peter has himself taught us what he means by it, for he uses the kindred adjective in the description of his imprisonment (Acts xii.) by Herod. There he says, "Prayer was made *without ceasing* (*ἔκτενης*) of the Church unto God for him." He again applies the word to the description of charity (Chap. iv. 8), where *fervent* is also the English rendering. Now both adjective and adverb are words peculiar to St. Peter among the writers of the New Testament.

Any attempt to give an idea by translation of the vigorous and expressive character of some of the words which he alone uses is hopeless. No readable version could be made, if we were to give the full force of the Original. But as many of them illustrate the peculiar character of St. Peter's diction, it is worth while to call attention to them. Such a word is *ἀνάχουσις*, used (Chap. iv. 4) of the *excess of riot*. It implies any lavish outpouring, especially such as would be made by the rising of a high tide, which in retiring leaves behind it a number of puddles. Nobody but St. Peter ventures to employ so bold a metaphor. No single English word can give the full force, but that force, when realized, is pictorial, and like much else in St. Peter's style. Similar words are found where he speaks (Chap. ii. 2) of babes *just born*, and in the same verse of the *guileless unadulterated* milk of the word. In Chap. ii. 21, *ὑπογραμμός*, the word employed to describe Christ as our *example*, is really the copyhead set before the schoolboy for his imitation, and the metaphor, when appreciated, shews that the notion of St. Peter was that, like the pupil at his copy, we should need re-

peated endeavours before we could hope to approach to a likeness of the Exemplar, but also holding out the blessed hope that our unwearied efforts would be crowned by a nearer resemblance to what we have striven to copy. The plaiting (ἐμπλοκή) of the hair, and the (ἔνδυσις) putting on of apparel (Chap. iii. 3) are both words peculiar to this Epistle, and have been chosen by St. Peter, we can hardly doubt, because they give, in the Original, a graphic suggestion of great pride and exultation in the adornment, far more than is represented by our Translation. Excess of wine (Chap. iv. 3) is in the Greek only one word; also ἄπραξ λεγόμενον, which sets before us the terrible picture of a man who has drunk till he can drink no more; he has become like a vessel full to running over. A single word (Chap. iv. 15) says all that we render by *a busybody in other men's matters*, and indicates a man peeping, spying, and overseeing everybody's business but his own. It is a word which no other writer has used, as is also the title *Arch-Shepherd*, applied to Christ in Chap. v. 4.

The number of such unique words, and all of them partaking largely of the graphic character, in the Epistle is very considerable.<sup>1</sup> But we have adduced instances enough to establish our position that, as in the Gospel of St. Mark and in the Acts, the descriptive power of St. Peter distinguished his utterances

<sup>1</sup> We might have enlarged our list by adding,—

ἀναγεννάω (Chap. i. 3),

ἀμαράντινον (Chap. v. 4),

ἀμάραντον (Chap. i. 4),

ἀνεκκλήτος (Chap. i. 8),

πατροπαράδοτος (Chap. i. 18),

ὑπολιμπάνω (Chap. ii. 21),

συνέλεκτος (Chap. v. 13),

and should not then have exhausted the examples of such words which are found in this Epistle.

from all the rest of the Histories, so in this Epistle we have a similar graphic character exhibited, as far as it can be in such a composition, and that the peculiar turn of St. Peter's mind has made itself felt here by his large employment of words which serve his purpose for giving verbal pictures, but which are not found in the language of other New Testament writers.

But, leaving the consideration of single words, we may see in whole passages how the tendency to realize complete scenes betrays itself, both in the Apostle's own language and where he is quoting what has most impressed him. Look, for an example, at the picture of Satan given in Chap. v. 8. He is an enemy against whom you must never remit your watchfulness; he is a roaring lion, who goes to and fro, with an ever-greedy appetite, seeking out whom he may gorge down. In opposition to such a foe the Christian must stand firmly fixed on the foundation of his faith, which nothing can shake, but which is *sure* (*στερεὸς*) as the foundation of God, of which the same word is employed 2 Tim. ii. 19. Again, when alluding to Christ in his glory (Chap. iii. 22), he is evidently painting what in part his bodily eye has seen, and what his mental vision has figured as a fitting sequel of the triumph of the Ascension. Christ "is at the right hand of God, having gone away into heaven, while angels and principalities and powers are all ranged in subjection beneath him." The slight expansions which have been given to these two quotations are fully warranted by the Original, and shew how graphically the whole, as a picture, was before the mind's eye of the writer.

And when he quotes, we may see that passages of a like nature are those which dwell with him and come most readily to his tongue. It is on "the stone which the builders refused, and which is become the head of the corner," that he dwells, both in this Epistle (Chap. ii. 7) and in his address to the High Priest and his party (Acts iv. 11) after the arrest of himself and St. John, which followed close on the cure of the cripple at the Temple Gate; a passage which is further to be noted because it forms a close link between the language of the Acts and that of the Apostle's letter. And what could we find more in the character of St. Peter's own diction than the quotation with which the first chapter of this Epistle is brought to an end? "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." But we have dwelt long enough on the graphic character of all that the Apostle utters, let us turn now to another peculiarity.

In the examination of St. Peter's utterances, as recorded in the historical Books of the New Testament, we found that a most noteworthy feature was the absence of all attempts at argument. The character of the man in this respect is exactly portrayed in his language (Acts iv. 20) to the chief priest, who charged him for the future to be silent, and cease to preach in the name of Jesus: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And we find just the same spirit animating the whole of the First Epistle, and almost making its appearance in express words. In Chap. iii. 15 the exhortation of

the Apostle is, that Christians should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the faith" that is in them; but it is to be no more than an answer. It is to be without debate, in meekness and in fear; and it is by the sight of a consistent walk, a good conversation in Christ, and not by many words, that those who malign are to be put to shame.

And the whole Epistle abounds with what was so eminently conspicuous in all we know of St. Peter's teaching, that whatever was learned should be carried out at once into action. Even at the outset of the Epistle (Chap. i. 2), where he is speaking of the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, whereby the brethren are "elect according to the foreknowledge of the Father" (a passage which is a reproduction in part of the very words which he used in Acts ii. 23), such sanctification must have its result in the life, and be shewn by obedience. So the knowledge of Christ is to have a like practical issue (Chap. i. 15): "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." Those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious are to make manifest their appreciation of this blessing by a change of conduct, by becoming as those little children from whom the Apostle had seen his Master so often deduce his lessons; they must (Chap. ii. 1) "lay aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil speaking." And after the 10th verse of this second chapter almost the whole of the Letter is occupied with exhortations to personal religion, which is to manifest itself by outward good deeds, and so to produce

its effect both in silencing gainsayers and winning new converts. "Abstain from fleshly lusts," for they "war against the soul." Shew an honest conversation to the heathen, "that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." Such religion as this is not only to make men fear God, but honour the king, submit themselves to all ordinances of the community to which they belong, respect their neighbours, and love the brotherhood. And then, leaving general exhortations, the Apostle descends to particular cases. The duties of household servants (Chap. ii. 18) to their masters, of wives to their husbands (Chap. iii. 1), and of husbands to their wives (Chap. iii. 7), are dealt with in the spirit which is not content with knowledge only, but must carry knowledge into practice. And in like manner does he lay down the most useful rules of behaviour (Chap. v. 1-5) to guide the elders in their oversight of the flocks committed to their charge, and the younger brethren in the humility with which it is their duty to yield to authority. The whole tone of these lessons is what we should expect from the eager impetuous disciple who was always ready both with hand and tongue to give a practical turn to whatever was set before him. True, the spirit is more chastened than of old, for the man has a memory of many shortcomings, and is moreover filled full of the Holy Ghost. But the old ardour, the ancient impulsiveness, the former boldness, are all there, sanctified indeed by large gifts of grace and many trials, but instinct with the

fire and life of the man who stands out among the Apostolic band as foremost in everything that was to be said or done.

There is also another peculiarity in this Epistle which betrays the character of the writer as we have observed it in the History. There we found that St. Peter was a man whose eyes were always open, and who let nothing escape his observation. And what he saw he remembered and was ready to act upon. We should naturally expect such a person, in writing a letter, to make *sight* the great vehicle of instruction, and to put into a most prominent place that faculty which played so large a part in his own life. And this is just what we do find. The Apostle, who himself was always on the alert to see, takes it for granted that others will be like him; and having profited so greatly himself by the sights which he had been allowed to witness, he is never weary of telling how he has been influenced in this way. The sight, and what it should do and will reap, fills a great space in St. Peter's Letter. The salvation of which he speaks is to be such as can be observed, it is ready (Chap. i. 5) to be revealed in the last time. It is the desire of angels (Chap. i. 12) to *look* into the Gospel of Christ. It is the great blessing of the New Dispensation that under it Christ (Chap. i. 20) in these last times was *made manifest*. It is by *beholding* the good works (Chap. ii. 12) of the followers of Christ that unbelievers are to be won to love the truth. It is one of the purposes of Christ's coming that He might leave us *an example* (Chap. ii. 21), that we might see his footsteps and prepare our-

selves to walk in them. Husbands are to be brought to the faith (Chap. iii. 2) by *seeing* the chaste conversation of their Christian wives. It is because the Apostle himself was a *witness* of the sufferings of Christ (Chap. v. 1) that he exhorts his fellow-elders to take earnest *oversight* of the flocks committed to them, that they may be prepared to welcome the *appearance* of the Chief Shepherd when He shall come again; and this *revelation of the glory of Christ* is that to which not only they, but all who are partakers of the sufferings of Christ (Chap. iv. 13), are to *look forward*. Besides this, the Original has many words which bespeak the same turn of mind in the writer, though the allusions are almost of necessity obscured in a translation. Thus "the day of visitation" (Chap. ii. 12) is literally the day of (ἐπισκοπή) "*looking upon*," the time when God shall look upon these wanderers as a pastor over his flock, and, shall become the *overlooker* (ἐπίσκοπος), the *bishop* of their souls. So, again (Chap. v. 3), the elders are exhorted to be (τύποι) *types* to their flocks; they are to shew by all their actions that they bear the stamp of the Divine Master upon them, so that all may take knowledge of them, as they had done aforetime of Peter himself (Acts iv. 13), that they have been with Jesus. Once more the English Version of Chap. iii. 13, "Who is he that will harm you if ye be *followers* of that which is good?" loses much of the idea of which the Greek μιμηταὶ is so full. This implies not merely followers, but the very closest imitators. It is a word connected with the same root as our English *mimic*, only

unfortunately, through the tendency of language to degenerate, our word carries with it an evil tinge of mockery and ridicule. But this is utterly absent from the Greek, which signifies that close copying which would only be bestowed for a worthy end and on a worthy object. The Christian's life is to be a constant watch and labour, that his actions may be brought ever nearer and nearer into the resemblance of that which is good.

All these expressions, comprised as they are within so brief a Letter, bespeak a writer of the keenest observation of all that was around him, while they point, as the whole of St. Peter's life had pointed, to the practical end toward which all such observation is to be directed. They harmonize precisely with what we have seen in the Gospels and the Acts to be the most noteworthy features of the Apostle's character.

There is no lack of other matter in the Epistle which might be used to enforce the evidence we have put forward. We might point out how this Apostle (who, above all things, was a Jew, and whose Judaizing tendencies called forth the censure of his fellow Apostle) keeps up that character in the Letter before us. How he rejoices in drawing his illustrations from Jewish traditions such as those connected with the histories of Noah and of Sarah, and how the memory of the old Jewish economy shews itself in his language when he employs such a word as *ῥαντισμὸς* (Chap. i. 2), *sprinkling* (only found elsewhere in the New Testament in Heb. xii. 24, an Epistle wherein everything partakes of a Jewish turn of thought), in speaking of the salvation which Christ's

death has purchased and of its application to the souls of men. We might have dwelt on his duplication of terms and his great wealth of epithets,—features of language which, in epistolary writing, most naturally take the place which in narrative composition is given to description. Such instances are to be found in his “*strangers and pilgrims*” (Chap. ii. 11); a lamb *without blemish and without spot* (Chap. i. 19); *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people* (Chap. ii. 9); and when he speaks (Chap. i. 4) of the inheritance *incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven*; and again (Chap. ii. 4) of the *living stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God, precious*: and many others of a like character. But enough has been said to make it clear that the same peculiar features which the Gospels and Acts set before us in the language and character of St. Peter are also to be found in this Epistle. The object of the present paper has been to bring out this fact with somewhat greater distinctness than is possible by a mere examination of the English Version. It remains that we endeavour to demonstrate that, in the Second Epistle, there may be traced these same distinctive characteristics, and that we may therefore claim for it, what is not always accorded, the same degree of acceptance as for this First Epistle. Whether this undertaking be as hopeless as some have supposed, it will be the purpose of another paper to investigate.

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