

naturalization having actually taken place, no evidence of *θρίαμβος* and *θριαμβεΐω*, in their Latin connotation, having entered into the general current of Greek thought and speech. The idiom appears to have remained a pure Latinism up to this time, belonging only to Roman historians and biographers as such.

On the other hand, *θρίαμβος* had a very distinct, primitive, and popular sense of its own in Greek, antecedent to, and independent of, the exotic Latinist use, and on which the latter was evidently grafted. The passage quoted from Plutarch's *Marcellus* goes far to prove, if I mistake not, that this native sense of the word was *living* in the Greek of St. Paul's day, and that, as the general relation of the languages would lead one to expect, instead of being displaced by the foreign idiom, it most decidedly trenched upon it.

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NOTE ON ST. MARK ix. 33-50.—The latter half of this Chapter seems to be a concise report of all that passed between our Lord and his disciples upon this occasion; for the concluding words, "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another," evidently refer to the contention which gave rise to the conversation. This connection has not been sufficiently regarded in any exposition that has come under my notice. Yet it is of the first importance, because it shews that the governing aim of our Lord's whole strain of remark was to check the personal ambition and rivalry which had betrayed his disciples into an angry dispute. I propose in this Note to submit to the judgment of the readers of the EXPOSITOR an exposition worked out upon this line.

When Jesus found himself alone with the Twelve in the house which He usually occupied at Capernaum, He asked them, "*What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?*" Shame held them silent, for they had been contending as to which of them was the greatest. Then He sat down (the signal of his having something important to say); and, as they drew around Him, He said to them, "*If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all;*" meaning either that his ambition and contentiousness would degrade him to the lowest place and least spiritual form of service, or that, if he desired the only preëminence worth seeking, he should be content to occupy the humblest position, and make himself more useful and necessary to his brethren than any one else. Then He called a child, and set him in the midst of the Twelve, and, having folded his arms about him, said to them, "*Whosoever shall*

receive one of such children in my name receiveth me ; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me." A little child, belonging to a disciple's family, was the last member of their circle whom they would regard as worthy of any special consideration. They were not likely to think of him as the greatest. But such a child, in his lowly estimate of himself, and modest demeanour, was much nearer to Christ's spirit than the cleverest and bravest of those who served his cause with ambitious and self-seeking aims. And it was to express this that He took this child of the household to his bosom in the presence of them all. Any one who received and befriended such a child in his name (Verse 37) *i.e., as representing Him*, discerning in its lowliness a true earthly image of their Master, would really be receiving Christ, and not Christ only, but the Father who sent Him. Such an one would be great indeed, as having the Father and the Son abiding in him—great without any thought of greatness or disposition to set himself above his brethren.

John, with a dim perception that something they had lately done was out of keeping with this instruction, and probably with a desire to test, by its application to such a case, whether he had understood it aright, answered Him : "*Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us ; and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.*" He does not say it, but probably his tone conveyed the inquiry, "I suppose from what thou hast just said, that we did wrong?" Jesus answered, "*Forbid him not, for there is no man who shall do a miracle in my name, that can readily speak evil of me, for he that is not against us is on our part.*" The man who is contending against the same foe as ourselves, and avowedly identifying himself with me, the Christ, though he may not see eye to eye with other disciples, is not an enemy to be repelled, but a friend to be encouraged. "*For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ,¹ verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.*" The meaning apparently is that the slightest service rendered to a Christian *as such* is a proof of some sympathy with Christ, and desire to do Him honour ; and sympathy with Christ, however mingled with mistaken views, ranges men on his side, and their love and loyalty cannot be disregarded. So dear in fact are these seeking souls, in the infancy of their faith and service, that "*whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe² to stumble, it were better for him*

¹ The other reading, "*for your name that ye belong,*" &c., is preferred by most editors, but Tischendorf adopts the reading of the Received Text. The sense is not very different whichever we accept.

² Tischendorf.

that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." This form of capital punishment was the most terrible to a Jew, because it made burial rites impossible; but a man had better suffer even this fate than incur the more terrible woe of being burdened with a soul whom his harshness and intolerance had driven from Christ.

From being an occasion of falling to another, the Lord passes on to speak of being an occasion of falling to one's self. One member, one faculty enshrined in such a member, may prove a snare to the whole man, and involve him in ruin. The passage which follows will require closer consideration. Most readers, I suppose, are struck with the rhetorical repetition of the words, "*Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;*" as unlike our Lord's usual manner, as without parallel indeed in other of his discourses. Years ago, when my attention had not been drawn to the fact that the oldest MSS. and the best authorities omit from the text Verses 44 and 46, and from Verse 45 the words "*into the fire that never shall be quenched,*" this unusual repetition seemed to me to indicate that not only was there something more solemn than went in our Lord's manner, but that we had here the *ipsissima verba* that fell on the ears of his disciples without abbreviation. But probably, to say the least, these repetitions are additions which illustrate that tendency to exaggerate appeals to fear, for the purpose of deepening impression, which has so often biassed the minds of Church teachers.

Without these additions the passage reads thus: "*And if thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off, it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into Gehenna, into the fire that never shall be quenched; and if thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter halt into life than having two feet to be cast into Gehenna; and if thine eye cause thee to stumble, pluck it out, it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than having two eyes to be cast into Gehenna,² where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and (but this clause is doubtful) every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."*

Now it is manifest that if Gehenna is to be interpreted here of the place of future punishment in the spiritual world, then "entering into

¹ They are omitted by N, B, C, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort; retained by A, D, Alford, Lachmann, and Tregelles (1st ed.)

² "Of fire," omitted by N, B, C, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort; retained by A, D, Alford, and Lachmann.

life" and "entering into the kingdom of God" must be interpreted, correspondingly, of the rest of glory, honour, and immortality. Moreover, there must be a sense in which men can enter into this rest shorn of a hand or a foot, or deprived of an eye. If, on the contrary, "entering into life" and "entering into the kingdom of God" are Christ's customary phrases for becoming a Christian and beginning the new life of faith, then Gehenna may stand for the doom, here or elsewhere, of whatever is morally corrupt, dead, and pestilential. But can any one imagine that Christ intended either a literal cutting off of foot or hand, or a literal appearance of the maimed and halt among the children of the resurrection? To ask the question is to answer it in the negative. But if entering into life maimed and halt be a figure, so also is being cast bodily into Gehenna. The same principle of interpretation must be applied to both the contrasted terms. Is not the passage rightly explained and applied thus? By the offending hand Christ means some special skill or power of acquisition a man may possess, which, as he employs it, makes him stumble, leads him, that is, into such powerful and irresistible temptation, that unless he deny himself its use, his whole man will become involved in moral ruin—eaten through with corruption, like a carcase thrown into the burning refuse-heaps of Gehenna. Better for him would it be, infinitely better, that he should forego the advantage of that particular skill and become a child of God with that faculty undeveloped, than use it and be morally ruined. The offending foot stands for some power by which one could out-distance competitors in the race of life, or some peculiar cleverness by which he might wrong other men and elude pursuit; better, then, to be unambitious and unenterprising, and enter into life so, than to outstrip others in the pursuit of present personal advantages and be morally a castaway. "Thine eye" may well represent some perception of beauty or artistic taste, and if this be a snare, better for a man that it should remain uncultivated and useless, and he become a Christian, than by using it lay a snare for his soul which will eventually deprave his whole character.

These are applications of a general character; but was there not something in the characteristic abilities of the prominent members of the Apostolic band that answered to the hand, foot, and eye respectively of our Lord's illustration? The natural capacity for command, and the firm grasp of whatever commended itself to his judgment, which belonged to Peter; the zeal of James, the son of thunder, ever ready to step forward into the place of danger; and the eagle glance of John into the mysteries of truth, were gifts precious indeed as a hand,

a foot, or an eye; but if these were to become a snare to them, tempting them to arrogance, intolerance, and pride, then it would be better for them that these characteristic gifts should be repressed than that their whole natures should be tainted with moral evil, and they themselves become as the offscouring of the world.

In the similar words used in the Sermon on the Mount (St. Matt. v. 29, 30), our Lord's thought swept a wider range than the Apostolic circle. He may have had in view that dreadful doom of the Jewish people when their nation would become one vast Gehenna-heap of corruption and fire, such as Isaiah refers to in his prophecy (Chap. lvi. 24): "They shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." In the Talmud, "a man tried for his life was said to be *'thrust down into hell or tossed into Gehenna.'*"¹ If, therefore, Christ meant any physical punishment, He probably referred to the terrible destruction overhanging the Jewish nation, from which adhesion to Him as the Saviour, and a corresponding crucifixion of evil desires, afforded the only hope of deliverance. It would be better for men that they should enter into the kingdom of God at the sacrifice of something dear to them, as a right hand or right eye, than, by endeavouring to keep every social advantage and worldly gift, be cast at last into the Gehenna of their burning city and national doom.

But my conviction is that our Lord's mind, all through this conversation in the house at Capernaum, was in the same track as that on which it started; and that, as the members of the body are figures of mental capacities, so his reference to Gehenna is simply an image of moral corruption and death. And the remaining words accord well with this interpretation: "*For every one shall be salted with fire.*" Every one that enters into life must be secured against corruption by the purifying flame of self-judgment and self-denial, just as "*every sacrifice,*" the emblem of our consecration to God, is required to be "*salted with salt.*" "*Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it?*" Your power of judging yourselves and estimating your fitness for this or that position is good, if it lead to a correction of your failings, to self-denial in the presence of temptation, to humility before God and charity towards your brethren; "*but if the salt have lost its saltness,*" if what was intended to bite into your self-conceit and purge away your pride have lost its power, and your judg-

¹ Quoted from the Talmud by Lightfoot and Schoetgen, and here taken from *The Evangelists and the Mishna.* By the Rev. Thomas Robinson.

ing of yourselves be simply an occasion of vanity and a spur to ambition, then how is its self-correcting virtue to be restored, the light within has become darkness? "*Have then salt in yourselves,*" the salt of a searching and impartial self-judgment, "*If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged*" (1 Cor. xi. 31). The result will be a humble charitable temper, which will dispose you to "*have peace with one another.*"

Now, I claim for this interpretation this sign of truth, that it is in harmony with itself throughout, and marks a clear track of thought from the beginning of our Lord's discourse to its close, which, considering how its last words echo the motive of the first, is a desideratum to be satisfied. One phrase only has been left untouched. The Gehenna of moral corruption is represented by our Lord as "*an undying worm and an unquenchable fire.*" And it seems to be so through the constitution of conscience: "*their worm.*" It is a question of men turned towards the right way, but afterwards stumbling to fall, who set out in quest of righteousness, but have been turned aside by a great temptation. In all such Remorse must gnaw as a worm and burn with unquenchable fire until these antidotes of corruption have wrought in them that self-chastening from which they shrank. The worm can never die, nor the fire be quenched, so long as there is any remaining compliance with evil whereon to feed. Evil is its own punishment; and so long as men remain evil, they will abide in the fires which it kindles. The ultimate issues of the discipline are not disclosed. General statements, applying to men of different characters, are necessarily indefinite.

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