

be ordained over congregations; and the latter (i. 10-16) explains the necessity for strong measures in defence of the Church's purity by describing the false teachers and their dangerous influence. In what remains of the central portion of his Epistle, St. Paul instructs Titus how to urge, upon various classes among the private members of the Church, the practical duties of a Christian life as they legitimately spring out of Christian doctrine. This section subdivides in like manner into two: the duties respectively of domestic and of social life (ii. 1-15, and iii. 1-11); but under both the main interest attaches to those weighty sentences in which the writer enforces his admonitions by motives drawn from the great facts and truths of evangelical religion. In no other portion of his writings does the Apostle descend into more detailed or elementary moral instructions; in none does he ground his ethics more expressly on the most sacred doctrines of the faith.

J. OSWALD DYKES.

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### THE EXEGESIS OF THE SCHOOLMEN.

So far we have at once recognized one source of the weakness of scholastic exegesis—its secondhandness, its lack of independence, its traditionalism, its abject submission to inadequate authority in matters wherein abdication of the individual right to test truth and to acquire fresh knowledge is fatal to progress. A few men of genius like Abelard, Rupert of Deutz, and above all, Nicolas of Lyra, gave a fresh impulse to the science of interpretation; but, practically, between the sixth and the fifteenth century there was little genuine criticism, and still less demonstrable progress. It was not till the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, the invention of printing in

1449, the use of vernacular languages for purposes of instruction, the Renaissance, and above all the Reformation, that "Greece rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand." Nominalism, Mysticism, Neo-Platonism, modern Philosophy, modern Culture, modern Criticism, Philology, and the recent science of Comparative Religion, have one after another dealt their deathblows to the spirit of scholasticism; <sup>1</sup>—blows of which it must inevitably perish, though it still retains, in some regions, some faint semblance of life. As late as 1879 the present Pope, Leo XIII., in his Encyclical Letter, still wished to send us back to the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas for the defence of the Faith. No one will deny either the greatness or the holiness of St. Thomas of Aquinum; <sup>2</sup> but nothing is more certain than that he who would try to defend Holy Scripture on the principles of interpretation which he borrowed almost exclusively from the Fathers, will be using an old and broken shield of mediævalism against the terrible artillery of modern warfare. It is in no spirit of disparagement to the Angelic Doctor, rather it is the inevitable result of the age in which he lived, that we are compelled to say "Non tali dextrâ, non defensibus istis." The assertion of Calvin was not boastful, but literally true, when he said that the Reformers "had shed more light on the understanding of Scripture than all the authors who had existed since the rise of the Papacy, and that the Romanists themselves would not deny them this praise." <sup>3</sup> "Bone Deus!" exclaims Flacius, "quam nil minus a theologis (quod dolens gemensque dico) actum est inde ferme a Christi tempo-

<sup>1</sup> See Ueberweg, vol. i. p. 357 (E. tr.). Hauréau *Hist. de la Philos. Introd.*

<sup>2</sup> "Far above all other scholastic doctors towers St. Thomas Aquinas, their Master and Prince. . . . Greatly enriched as he was with the science of God and the science of man, he is likened to the sun; for he warmed the whole earth with the fire of his holiness, and filled the whole earth with the splendour of his teaching."—Leo XIII.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin, *Antidot. in Conc. Trid., Sess. iv.* (in Klausen, *Hermen.*, p. 229).

ribus ad nostram hanc ætatem quam ut ipsemet natus textus ac sensus Scripturæ clare perciperetur.”<sup>1</sup>

Another source of weakness in the exegesis of the schools is that it was essentially clerical and monkish, and therefore under the absolute despotism of a rigid system of doctrines from which it was death and ruin to diverge. As late as the 15th century the Council of Constance promulgated a decree that “no layman ought publicly to expound Scripture, but to yield to the order appointed by the Lord, to open the ear to those who have received the grace of teaching, and to be taught divine things by them. If any layman break this rule let him be excommunicated for forty days.” The natural result of such notions is that the whole of scholastic exegesis is tinged with professionalism. John of Salisbury says in so many words, “*Claustales rectissime et tutissime philosophantur,*” and in setting down the requirements of the interpreter he simply describes the life of a monk.<sup>2</sup> The taint of monachism comes out, again and again, both in the questions and the comments of even the better scholastic exegetes. Nicolas of Lyra towers above all his predecessors and most of his followers, yet if any one will turn to his commentary he will find on Gen. iv. 1, “*quod primi parentes egressi sunt de Paradiso virgines;*” on Gen. iv. 23, that Lamech’s wives devoted themselves *a toro*; on Gen. viii. 16, that Noah’s family lived in a celibate condition in the Ark, and many other notes which are very monkish in tone, some of which Luther in his commentary contemptuously sweeps away as a “*närrisch Ding.*” Even the Council of Trent lays down the rule that “To judge of the true sense and interpretation of Scripture belongs to the Church,” and that “in things

<sup>1</sup> Flacius, *Clavis*; *Præf.* (A.D. 1567).

<sup>2</sup> Johan. Sarisbur., *Polykrat.*, vii. 13. “It was the solitude of the cloister, the midnight office, frequent vigils, and a life of prayer, that set Lanfranc against Berenger, Anselm against Roscelin, and Bernard against Abelard.” Vaughan’s *Life of St. Thomas of Aquino*, p. 145.

pertaining to faith and morals, no one is to decide against the sense which the Holy Church has held and holds.”<sup>1</sup> But how purely negative is this rule! It denies our individual capacity to judge of Scripture, yet does not tell us how we are to understand it. For to refer us to the interpretation of “the Church” is to refer us to the vaguest and most unreal of abstractions. The Church has never laid down a single positive rule of exegesis. If the Church be represented by the majority of her great doctors, they—from the Apostolical Fathers downwards—abound in interpretations which were once universally accepted, but are now abandoned as absolutely untenable. Further than this, they exhibit the extremest diversities of opinion even about the most important passages, and constantly run counter to each other. The Church has never formally accepted any of their rules, and if she had done so, those rules, even when most admired, have proved themselves to be valueless. The Church has never sanctioned or laid down the acceptance of any single commentator, or even adopted any special comment on any single passage. Different branches of the Church have understood very differently even the rules which pertain to such external matters as oaths, images, the laws of marriage, and the obligations of the Sabbath. The Universal Church has never so much as agreed as to what the Bible *is*.<sup>2</sup> The Greek Church forbids the reading of certain parts; the Romish Church has largely discouraged the private study of *any* part. The Church has never come to an agreement as to the text of Scripture. The Roman Church accepts the Vulgate, the Greek Church the LXX., the Reformed Churches refer to the original text, which in many respects differs from both. Under such circumstances one might foresee that “the Church” would be interpreted by Romanists to mean “the Pope.” “The

<sup>1</sup> Conc. Trident., *Sess. lv.*, *Decret.*, 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Merx, *Eine Rede vom Auslegen*, 1879.

supreme judgment," says Cardinal Bellarmine, "rests with the supreme Pontiff."<sup>1</sup> Hence, as Luther said, in Papal exegesis, "it was the Pope who sat on the eggs." But all history has proved again and again that in these matters neither Pope nor Church is infallible, and "as the Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria have erred, so too the Church of Rome hath erred." Nay, even within her own limits, the Church of Rome was forced to tolerate wide differences of exegetical opinion within the limits of strict dogma. The Franciscans would tolerate no divergence from Nicolas of Lyra; the Dominicans none from St. Thomas or Hugo of St. Caro; the Augustinians none from Augustine. But, as Erasmus wisely said, "No one who is earnest in the pursuit of truth ought to bind himself by the authority of any one. It is not right to attribute to any more than they themselves claim, and what they would be all the less entitled to claim if they did."<sup>2</sup>

No one has more naively expressed the duty of the subservience of Scripture to Roman dogmatism than Hugo of St. Victor.<sup>3</sup> He says, "Learn first clearly and briefly what you are to hold about the faiths of the Trinity, indeed, what you ought to profess and truly believe. But *afterwards*, when you have begun to read the books (of Scripture), and find many things expressed obscurely, many openly, many ambiguously, attach to their base the things you find openly expressed, *if perchance they agree therewith*. And if you find anything *contrary* to what you have learned, yet it is inconvenient to be daily changing your opinion . . . especially till you have ascertained what the universal faith, which can never be false, bids you to think on the point." Indeed,

<sup>1</sup> *De Verbo Dei*, iv. 1 (comp. iii. 3). So too Gerson, *Tract. de Exam. Doctr.* He says that the only infallible rule is a General Council, representing the whole Church; but where is the infallible rule to be found?

<sup>2</sup> See Erasmus, on 1 Cor. viii. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Eruditio Didascalix*, vi. 4. This treatise enables the reader to judge accurately of the spirit and the method of scholastic exegesis.

he lays it down as a rule that no one can rightly interpret Scripture till he spiritually knows the doctrines of the Trinity, freewill, sin, punishment, the Incarnation, the Sacraments, and the Resurrection. Could there be a more clear admission of the truth of the scornful epigram—

“ Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quidque  
Invenit es pariter dogmata quidque sua ” ?

And how completely does such a method run counter to the remark of St. Jerome himself, who says : “ He is the best teacher who does not bring his doctrine into the Scripture but out of the Scripture.” Are we then surprised to find that Albertus Magnus discovers the Roman Catholic doctrine of merits in Psalm cix., and sees in the Psalm three divisions ; first, on the merits of beginners ; secondly, on the merits of proficients ; and thirdly, on the merits of the perfect ?<sup>1</sup> or that Paulus of Burgos, in his reactionary and retrogressive writings, lays it down that we can never take anything as the literal sense of Scripture, however clear it be, if it in any way runs counter to the views of the Church ? or that St. Thomas commenting on Rom. ii. 14, feels himself obliged (after Augustine) to explain away the words “ do by nature the things contained in the law,” because they have a Pelagian aspect, so that “ by nature ” must mean “ by nature reformed by grace,” or by the light of natural reason, which does not exclude grace since grace is necessary ? Could there be any more effectual method for stereotyping existing views, whether right or wrong ? Were not the works of the Sententiarii and the writings of Systematists under such conditions naturally regarded as more important than the genuine study of Scripture ? And do not the later commentaries of Cornelius à Lapide, and Tyrinus shew in every passage the dangers of starting with a necessity for maintaining the tyranny of Romanist prepossessions ? But

<sup>1</sup> See Elster, *De Med. Ævi Theol. Exeget.*, 19.

the true handling of knowledge, as Bacon said, is not "magisterial and peremptory," but "ingenious and faithful."

Nor was it an unnatural result of such conditions that at last the Scriptures themselves came to be regarded as unimportant by many of the scholastic students. The great Schoolmen, indeed, knew the Scriptures well, but many Doctors knew nothing of it in the later scholastic period. The name "a *Biblical* theologian" became a term of contempt. We see from Erasmus that no one thought himself, or was considered by others, to be "a theologian," who did not know Aristotle. R. Stephens, in his "Apologia," quotes the public remark of a Sorbonne professor, that he was fifty years old before he knew what the New Testament was, and Stephens adds that they certainly drew their "theology," not from the oracles of God, but from Peter Lombard, Master of the Sentences, from the heathen Aristotle, and from the Mohametan Averroes. An old Pope is reported to have said, "The Scripture is a book which if a man will keep close to he will quite ruin the catholic faith." Carolstadt admitted that he had been a Doctor of Divinity for eight years before he read the New Testament. Eck confessed that taken alone it made for the Reformers. Balceus (? 1563) says (Cent. 8), that Linacre on reading the Sermon on the Mount while he lay on his deathbed, flung the book away with all his force, exclaiming, "either this is not the Gospel, or men are not Christians." Sixtus of Amana, in his *Antibarbarus*,<sup>1</sup> relates that Albert, Archbishop of Mayence (A.D. 1530), happening to take up a New Testament, read a few pages and then put it down with the remark, "I don't know what book this is, I only see that all things contained in it are hostile to us." Indeed, of what great use was an independent study of Scripture when all its doctrines were thought to be more clearly, and less perilously, taught in the *Summa Theologiæ*, and the *Sentences* ;

<sup>1</sup> *Antibarb. Bibl.*, ii. 7.

and when nothing *could* or *might* be deduced from it other, or contrary to, what the reader was already supposed to know perfectly when he came to it; and when it was openly maintained that "the Pope might modify the words of God and of the Evangelists?"<sup>1</sup>

But we shall find, as we proceed, that other circumstances beside secondhandness and dogmatic prepossession were injurious to the exegesis of Schoolmen; and that what was original in their methods and disquisitions became, in fact, a greater source of mischief than the *rudis indigestaque moles* which they heaped together from the writings of those who had passed away so many centuries before they began to produce their glosses and catenæ.

F. W. FARRAR.

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### THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS.

THAUMATURGISTS of all ages have sought to impress the multitude by claiming power to override the accepted laws of Nature; and many commentators on the Bible have laboured to prove that what they only seemed to accomplish, the Almighty enabled holy men of old to accomplish in fact, thus giving the world assurance of the Divine inspiration by which they spake. But the more we study the miracles recorded in Holy Writ, the more forcibly are we impressed by what has been termed their *economy*. So much, indeed, are the miracles spoken of in Scripture wrought by means of an extended use of the existing order of things, rather than by its violation, that we might almost lay down the rule, that the "mighty works," wrought on earth, either directly by, or with his aid, to whom nothing is impossible, differ mainly from those affected by mere traders in the miraculous in that, whilst the latter would have

<sup>1</sup> *Antoninus*, i. 17.