do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." The pure in heart shall see God; if not now, then hereafter.

MARCUS DODS.

BISHOP MARTENSEN.

IT is with very great reluctance that I have allowed myself to be persuaded to say a few words about the greatest Scandinavian, perhaps the greatest Lutheran, divine, of our century. Every cobbler should stick to his last, and among the theologians I am silent. But it happens that I had the great privilege of knowing Bishop Martensen personally, and I suppose that I am the only Englishman of letters who did know him, for he never visited this country. The editor of this Magazine, therefore, having kindly desired me to speak, and I having consented to do so, it would be affectation if I hesitated to give my brief and poor personal recollections, since I have been selected to sit here because I happen to recollect. I am interesting, as Mr. Browning would say, because I picked up the eagle's feather; so I will produce my prize, and hasten to make room for fitter company.

It was in July, 1872, that I saw Bishop Martensen first, and on several occasions. Of the earliest of these only, I am sorry to say, have I preserved notes. I was staying in Copenhagen as the guest of Dr. Fog, afterwards Bishop of Aarhuus, and now, since Martensen's death, his successor in the Primacy. To this happy circumstance I owed the honour of seeing the great prelate at home, and in private. I had been reading the famous *Dogmatics*, the eloquent and varied pages of which contain intellectual food for the laity no less than for the clergy, and I felt a strong curiosity to see the illustrious author. The palace of the metropolitan bishops of Sjælland stands in the heart of Copenhagen, opposite the Cathedral church of Our Lady. We saw "Bispinden" first, the Bishopess, as the Danes put it, and then we were shown into the library. The man who rose to welcome us was not of imposing stature. I fear to seem irreverent if I confess that my attention was seized by his ears; they were very large, and set at right angles to his head, standing out from his pinched face like wings. The eyes, in fact, were the only feature which, to my mind, answered to the fame and public character of the Bishop; they were full and deep grey in colour, but habitually covered by heavy lids, through which there shot a sort of mild steely light. These lids rose in moments of excitement, quite suddenly, and showed that the eyes were of unusual size and beauty. On such occasions the little, almost wizened face, seemed to wake up, and become charged with intelligence. I am bound to say that had I not known of his power in dialectic, and his strong hand in administration, I should not have had the wit to guess them from his appearance.

In the above notes I have summarized my recollections of his appearance. On the occasion I describe, July 25th, 1872, I had not the opportunity to observe so much. But I have noted something in my diary of his talk that day. After conversing with my companion, his most intimate friend, he presently turned to me and courteously said, in German, "I am sorry to say I speak no English; can you converse in German?" I replied, "Will your Höiærværdighed permit me to talk to you in Danish?" He laughed—I had occasion to observe that he laughed frequently, and with much geniality—and set me in a little arm-chair by his side. "Ah! you talk Danish; now that is very nice!" He then proceeded to speak about the English—a charming nation individually, but their policy, ah! their policy! "Alas! you have blundering statesmen and a cowardly policy; I fear you will suffer before long!" and he began to discuss the burning question of 1864 with a certain vehemence. This was a matter about which I knew nothing, and about which he knew too much. I was less embarrassed when he suddenly veered to English poetry. He told me that he had always been a great student of Shakespeare, in Foersom's old-fashioned version, but that his son, who was re-translating some of the plays, told him that it was not very accurate. "And is it true," he went on abruptly, "that Byron was refused burial in Westminster Abbey? Ah! we would have given him a resting-place in Holmen's Kirke, would we not?" he said, turning quickly round to Dr. Fog. That was the most notable thing he said, as far as my diary and my memory help me, on that first occasion. I saw him at least once more in 1872, but my memories of what he said are quite swallowed up in the fact that, as I have described elsewhere, I had just heard his great antagonist, Grundtvig, in his ninetieth year, preach his last sermon, a few weeks before he died.

In the early summer of 1874 I saw much more of Bishop Martensen, and could appreciate him better. I was admitted to the honour of his hospitality, and saw the genial and domestic side of that genius that appeared so grim to his opponents. I should be accused of frivolity if I recounted the incident that most clearly recalls to my memory the countenance of the Bishop; Sir Thomas Urquhart, the translator of Rabelais, died, choked with a fit of laughter; history has, happily, no such dreadful entry under the name of the greatest of Danish divines. I hurry on, past the verge of this indiscretion, to mention the great ecclesiastical excitement of that spring in Copenhagen, namely, the ordination of Tobias Mörch, the Esquimaux, the first, and I believe still the only pure-blooded Greenlander who has ever been successfully trained to be a pastor. The ceremony, at which I assisted in May, and of which I gave at the time an account in the *Spectator*, took up a great deal of conversation at the houses I frequented, and I find in my notes that Bishop Martensen spoke much about it. He inspired, in fact, a good deal of what I wrote on the occasion. The Greenlander himself, the living nine-day's wonder, was a terrible little personage, and I never felt more uncomfortable than on one occasion when he breakfasted with Dr. Fog, and I found myself left alone to entertain him.

The Bishop, of whom I despair of giving an impression of due episcopal sedateness, deigned to be excessively diverted at my horror of the clerical Esquimaux. I have noted in my diary that the Bishop put me through a cross-examination regarding religious education in England, and that he detected easily that I knew nothing about it. He also, on one occasion, spoke to me with great enthusiasm about the poems and tragedies of Oehlenschläger, and advised me, if I wanted to become a master of the finest Danish, to study them. He said that modern criticism had found fault with Oehlenschläger, but that nothing prevented him, Dr. Martensen, from coming back to the author of *Palnatoke* with rapture, as to the first of poets. On another occasion, as I happened to speak of having steamed up the Little Belt under the lee of Langeland, he recited some lines from Oehlenschläger's lovely poem, the *Langelandsreise*, with great emotion. I feel very much ashamed to be obliged to confess that I remember nothing else that this great man honoured me by saying to me.

The only other contribution to personal reminiscence which I can make is to reprint from the *Spectator* of May 23, 1874, the passage in which, on the afternoon of the day in question, I described a sermon which I heard Bishop Martensen preach in the Cathedral of Our Lady:—

"After a sermon of some length from a young pastor, the eyes of the vast assembly turned to the door of the South Chapel, from which the Bishop, in his robes of silver satin, emerged and rapidly ascended the altar, followed by all the candidates for ordination, who then ranged themselves, kneeling, around the altar-rail. The central figure among these latter was the Greenlander. It was easy to recognise him; his low stature, high cheek-bones, and narrow eyes proclaimed the Esquimaux. It formed a remarkable contrast to look at the sensitive, intellectual face of Dr. Martensen, and then at the flat features of the young candidate before him. The greatest philosophical genius that the Lutheran Church possesses in all Europe stood face to face with one who was but lately a savage of the dullest of the world's races. Dr. Martensen then delivered an address that the clock assured one was long, but the eloquence, fervour and grace of which prevented the attention from becoming weary. He dwelt on the unique character of the event that brought us together. Remembering how many other candidates were present, he would fain have made his remarks more general, but it was evident that the excitement of the scene overcame him, and he had eyes and words only for the Greenlander. With an exquisite fervour and pathos he pointed out the desolate condition of the tribes, only ten thousand persons in all, who seek a miserable livelihood in the frozen seas and on the sterile plains of Greenland. When the candidates had entered in procession, another procession of the clergy of the diocese had followed them, and had taken their places in the choir, in a square around the winged angel that Thorwaldsen designed to bear the font. When the address was over, the candidates descended from the altar, and forming in procession again, walked round the choir, each to receive the greeting of each priest. They returned to their kneeling posture; the Bishop then prepared to perform the act of ordination, while the clergy gathered and thronged on altar-steps, to support their brethren with their presence. When the prelate reached the Greenlander, a special excitement seemed to move in the congregation. Amid the deepest silence, and with a voice trembling with emotion, Dr. Martensen ordained Tobias Mörch to be a priest of the Lutheran Church, and to carry the Gospel to his countrymen in Greenland. He had reached the centre of the semicircle, and the outspread movement of his hand in blessing seemed to reflect the inspired attitude of the colossal marble figure [Thorwaldsen's 'Christ'] above him."

It will be found that in his autobiography the Bishop speaks of the ordination of Tobias Mörch, as of one of the landmarks in his episcopate, but without giving any particulars of the event.

Towards the end of his life, Dr. Hans Lassen Martensen published, in three volumes, a sort of intellectual autobiography, *Af mit Levnet* (From my Life). It is one of the most fascinating records of the growth of a mind which I know; extremely simple, discreet and genial, barren of anecdote indeed, and still more barren of scandal, but redeemed from any suspicion of dulness by the sincerity and force of the narration. Martensen was born, in 1808, at Flensborg, in South Jutland, the territory since 1864 appropriated by Germany. His father had been a peasant, his mother was the daughter of a second-hand bookseller in Flensborg. As a boy the future theologian came to Copenhagen, and in 1827 became a student at the university. His earliest proclivities were towards poetry and music, especially dramatic poetry and the violin. Throughout his career Martensen preserved a great interest in the theatre, and had a wonderful memory for plots and parts; in the last year of his life he lamented that he had allowed himself to lose his early skill in fiddling, and he was wont to say that "to march up and down a room improvising on a violin is one of the healthiest ways in the world of passing a pleasant hour." The great theologian was no bigot in his attitude towards any of the arts. When he was in the thick of his theological controversies, he took up the study of painting, and devoted himself, like a specialist, to the old-German school, the Cologne Masters. This was not for a diversion, however, but because he fancied that by making himself acquainted with their processes, he could obtain some side-light upon the Mystics. It is worthy of mention, however, as showing how ready he was to annex to theology any province of the world's art. In the same spirit, when he was studying the early German theologians in the libraries of Vienna in 1835, he went almost every night to the Burg Theater, and associated specially with the poets and musicians, that he might have the aid of all the arts in penetrating to the spiritual constitution of the German intellect.

When he first made up his mind to give all his talents to theology, he placed himself in communication with each of the leaders of religious thought in Denmark. The stir of intelligence in Copenhagen in his youth was remarkable; a revival had set in which affected politics and religion, literature and art. In theology, all through Protestant Christendom, a reaction was taking place; rationalism was being met with a determined front, the sceptics were not allowed to have it all their own way in argument. The systems of Hegel and Schelling were attracting a great deal of notice in the Lutheran world, and these, together with the new theology of Schleiermacher, were the objects of great curiosity in Denmark. The reaction found two heads in Danish theology itself,—Mynster, and a man who is better remembered now than he, the extraordinary poet-preacher Grundtvig. Among these influences Martensen moved, passing from the one teacher to the other, not so definitely engaged in appropriating the ideas of any one, as in putting them all into the places which it seemed to him they held in the historical development of the time. Already the philosophic and historic breadth of his intelligence, which was to prove so inestimable a treasure to his party, was prominently developed in him.

Of all the leaders of his student-days, however, it seems to have been Schleiermacher in whose system he most nearly acquiesced. Schleiermacher happened to visit Copenhagen in the last year of his life, and Martensen, then a student, called upon him, drew him into interminable Socratic discussion, and though he refused to proceed so far, on some points, along the road to rationalism, as Schleiermacher seemed to do, yet on the whole he appears to have received from this man more of philosophical edification than from any other. Yet, even as a student, he was independent of others; he enjoyed and profited by dialectic, but he did not need it, and he notes the sudden death of Schleiermacher with the regret of a friend, not with the despair of a disciple.

Martensen's gift as a theologian was manifest from the first. At the age of six and twenty he won the theological diploma of the university, and he set off at once to learn what Germany had to teach him. He was absent two years, always in Socratic dispute with some great man; at Berlin with Steffens, at Munich with the mystic Franz Baader, at Vienna with Lenau. The riddle which weighed upon him, and which he invited every thinker whom he met to assist him in solving, was the autonomy of consciousness. Those who are familiar with Martensen's writings will recognise the central position which this idea takes in all his religious philosophy. He holds it impossible that man can know God by his own consciousness, by the effort of his intellect. All knowledge of God must be based on faith, *credo, ut intelligam,* as Martensen never tires of repeating. When he returned to Denmark he took up these ideas, and formulated them in a Latin treatise, for which the University in 1837 gave him a degree. His views, which were in direct opposition to those familiar to Lutheran divinity at that time, and his determined attacks upon philosophical speculation, attracted great notice in Germany as well as in Scandinavia.

He was made Doctor of Divinity in 1840, and Professor in 1841. He long nourished a dream of writing a great work on the Mystics; at Paris and at Vienna he made vast preparations for this book, which never was written, and of which only a fragment remains in his treatise on *Meister Eckhart,* which deals with German mysticism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This was published in 1840, and in

1841 appeared his *Outline of a System of Moral Philosophy*, a selection from his lectures since 1838. As a university lecturer Martensen exercised a very wide influence, and his popular manner attracted to his chair crowds of non-theological students. His popularity became greater still, when, in 1845, he became Court Preacher, and his Hegelianism began to give a colouring to the conscience of his generation. The public was thoroughly prepared to receive his doctrines gladly when, in 1849, he published the most successful and famous of his contributions to theological literature, his *Christian Dogmatics*, which has been translated into most European languages, even into Modern Greek, and has exercised as wide an influence on Protestant thought as any volume of our century. In Germany it has enjoyed a popularity even wider than in Scandinavia. In 1854, when Mynster died, Martensen, who had refused the bishopric of Slesvig, accepted the primacy of Denmark, and he began his administrative labours in the Church with acts of great vigour and determination. He became in consequence cordially detested and violently attacked by all those sections of the Danish Lutheran body which wavered to this side or to that from a hierarchical orthodoxy.

Great part of Martensen's time and energy henceforth was taken up with polemic against Grundtvig, against Rasmus Nielsen (of whose death I hear as I write these lines), against the Catholics and against the Irvingites. Many of his later writings are of this purely controversial character, his "Exposure of the so-called Grundtvigianism," his "Catholicism and Protestantism," his "Socialism and Christendom." It must be difficult, I think, for any but Scandinavian readers to follow these discussions with interest. But in 1871 Martensen returned to the wider field of positive philosophy, and published the first volume of his *Christian Ethics*, which was concluded in 1878. This book attracted but little less attention than the

Dogmatics had done. He supported his mystical views of faith against modern logic and modern physic still more actively in his remarkable volume of studies on *Jacob Böhme,* which formed, as he confessed, his own favourite among his writings. Some passages of this book were severely criticized as being obscure and fantastic; but the theological world accepted it as putting forth the doctrines of orthodoxy more clearly and vigorously than even the *Dogmatics.* It is, I believe, the opinion of all competent students that, considered in conjunction, these three books form the most considerable contribution to Lutheran theology which Scandinavia has supplied. The extreme clearness and beauty of the style cannot but add to the charm of these works, which an outsider can study with no less pleasure than instruction. Martensen was by no means indifferent to the form of his writing; he says in one place that it was his ambition to raise Danish theology to a rank in literature level with that attained by Danish poetry.

In February, 1884, Dr. Martensen died, and was buried with great solemnity in his own cathedral of Our Lady, The King and the conservative party knew what they owed to the rigid Tory prelate, whose face was set like a flint against the modern spirit in politics, in literature, in philosophy. Martensen in his later years had come to be a dam against the rising tides of democracy, and he was much more than a churchman, he was a great conservative statesman. All the party which calls itself the party of order rallied around him, and united to do honour to him alive and dead. Nor could those who smarted under his inflexible will, who lamented his determined opposition to new ideas, fail to be proud of him. He was a great man, a man who did honour to Denmark. It is not the critics of his own country only, it is the more impartial Germans who have declared Hans Lassen Martensen to be the greatest Protestant theologian of the present century.

EDMUND GOSSE.