

*FATHER JOHN IN RELATION TO THE RUSSIAN
CHURCH.*

THE Russian Church—the Church of St. Andrew and of Vladimir, of Nestor the historian and Philaret, Patriarch of Moscow and father of the founder of the present reigning house, of Nikon the Reformer and of Father John of Kronstadt—has received little or no attention in the widespread interest in Russian affairs generally that is manifest in our country at this time. And this is hardly as it should be; for not only as a part—and by far the greatest and the most important part—of the Eastern or Greek Orthodox Church does she share a venerable and inspiring history with the other members of that confederation prior to her own peculiar and romantic story, but in Russia more than in any other European country is the Church national. From the very earliest times the religious and the national elements have been closely identified in the Russian State. “Its religious festivals are still national; its national festivals are still religious,” to use Dean Stanley’s epigram; and he who would rightly understand the one, must know something of the other.

We are not here concerned with the history of that Church; what will rather be attempted is to give some account of the Russian Church of to-day, to paint as it were a background against which the subject of these notes may stand out in clear relief.

The activity of the Russian Church manifests itself in three distinct directions—in ordinary parish work (the labours of the White Clergy), in the monasteries (with

which are associated the Black Clergy), and in definite missionary enterprise.

The missions of any particular Church are generally taken as a fair index of the spiritual life of that community. When compared with the Western Churches from this point of view, those of the East suffer badly. "In regard to missions," says the brilliant historian of Oriental Christianity already quoted, "the inaction of the Eastern Churches is well known. While the Latin Church has sent out missionaries for the conversion of England and Germany in the middle ages, of South America, of India, and of China down to our own time; whilst many Protestants pour the whole of their religious energy exclusively into missionary enterprise, the Eastern Churches, as a rule, have remained content with the maintenance of their own faith. The preaching of Ulfilas to the Goths, of the Nestorian missions in Asia, and, in modern times, of Russia in Siberia and the Aleutian Islands are but striking exceptions." And then he goes on to say, as if in palliation, that if the Eastern Churches are not missionary they do not at least persecute. No one would, I think, venture to make these assertions about the Russian Church of to-day. In the first place a good case could assuredly be made in defence of the thesis that the Russian Church is a persecuting Church. In the second place, every one who considers the compact nature of the Russian Empire and of the many heathen peoples that own allegiance to the great White Tsar will see that theoretically all Russian missionary work must, in the broadest sense, be of the nature of a home mission for a long time to come: Russia has no colonies. And so in Siberia alone there are missions in the Altai region, amongst the nomadic Kirgiz, amongst the sub-arctic Tchuktchi, in Kamtchatka, in Irkutsk, and in Transbaikalia amongst the Buriats. In European Russia there is a mission in the neighbourhood of

Astrakhan, and also near Kazan amongst the Tartars. In Caucasia, moreover, considerable missionary activity has been shown; whilst in other countries, *e.g.* at Jerusalem, Pekin, and notably in Japan, the emissaries of the Russian Church have met with distinct success. Finally, the entire bishopric of Aleutia in North-west America constitutes an extensive sphere of Russian influence in the New World. No one pretends that the work accomplished by the Russian preachers of the Cross is missionary in our sense of the expression, unless perhaps in Japan. The mere fact that it is seriously related of the great Innocent that he converted 300,000 Yakutes, and of Theophilact in Caucasia that he won more than 40,000 souls to the faith, shows in how great measure the work must have been superficial. Still all of it was not so, and the foregoing data afford at least some answer to the reproach of spiritual inertness so often cast at the Russian Church.

The Black Clergy and the monasteries associated with them need not detain us when considering the Russian Church in connection with Father John. In Russia there are nearly 700 monasteries and nunneries with a population of 15,000, excluding lay brethren and sisters. Upon the monks celibacy is imposed as a rule of the Church, and from their number are chosen the men who fill the highest ecclesiastical positions. As a class they are said to look down upon the parish priests or White Clergy, who really do all the spiritual work, and who, as the body to which Father John belongs, merit some fuller discussion.

It is a sufficiently difficult task to find in any language a sympathetic treatment of the Russian priest. For his unpopularity there are many reasons. The ministry is to him a profession, not a vocation. During a certain period in their history the White Clergy formed an exclusive caste; and the peculiar unconscious hostility that

at once arises against any exclusive body remained even after the primary occasion of that unpopularity had been removed. To the average Russian religion is still a round of rite and ceremonial. The priest is commonly a man without an ideal, one with whom the public mind does not associate nor indeed from whom does it expect any of those qualities which we *demand* in those who are called to work in this lofty sphere. Popular opinion about the priests is crystallized in many witty and sometimes coarse sayings, for which unfortunately there is ample justification. One of Pushkin's verses—a suggested epitaph—runs thus :

In this cemetery there is a grave,
In this grave there is a bier,
In this bier there is a priest,
And in this priest there is some brandy.

Open one of the best books on modern Russia—"Au Pays Russe," by Legras—and take at random any one of his sketches of village priests. They are true to life, and the effect is not pleasing. "At dinner the priest of N— was our guest. Blind of an eye, dirty, with fair curly hair and unkempt beard, with the air of a jolly fellow, especially when the vodka which precedes the hors d'œuvres has loosened his tongue. He is placed at my side, and I am inconvenienced by the odour which comes from his yellow cassock, turned at places to reddish brown, frayed and torn here and there. He eats with avidity, without ceasing to smile and jabber. He has an evil tongue, and tells stories about his colleagues which tend to prove that they are all thieves and drunkards. After the siesta, we sit down to play at cards ; it is for this above all that the priest has come. At supper, towards ten o'clock, several glasses of vodka have finished him, as also a poor young wretch of a teacher who was there with him. Both are drunk, but the priest

comports himself quite well, whilst the schoolmaster talks nonsense. Nevertheless they continue to play till two in the morning. Then they are put into the carriage, the one propped up against the other, and in the black night Ivan drives them home."

The average Russian priest is thus a creature with little to commend him in the eyes of his parishioners, who are only too ready to make him a butt for their rude ridicule. As Legras says in another place, "I know no country where the people speak such evil about their priests—and the monks also for that matter—as in Holy Russia."

It is admitted on all hands that even now the means of support of the parish clergy are preposterously insufficient. They are practically placed in dependence upon the parochial community; in consequence they are sadly tempted to direct their energies in the first instance to getting out of the peasants as much as they can in return for their performance of church rites both public and private. Income from any other source is so small and so precarious that it may quite well be left out of account. "For the first time, in the forties, the parish clergy were allowed from the Treasury a sum of £10,000 a year, but subsequently this aid was discontinued, and has only been renewed since 1893." Even in that year, with a vastly increased grant of State aid, only half of the parishes received support from the Treasury, and that merely to the average extent of £34 per parish. In the towns at the first glance the conditions appear even worse in this respect, for there the priests have no fixed income at all. To each Church, in a town or city, a definite number of priests is attached, who divide the income amongst themselves. The people do not as a rule worship regularly at any one place, preferring to wander. The priests carry on no serious visitation amongst them;

they enter the people's houses only on the great holidays, and receive a little money for the recital of prayers. Extempore prayer is not allowed; the set forms in the Liturgy must alone be used even on such private occasions. Many priests openly maintain that the State interest in the Church is merely pecuniary. Educational and charitable institutions are supported out of the money—a large sum—obtained, *e.g.*, by the sale of candles. The clergy have no place in society owing to their comparative lack of education. It is only when contrasted with such men, and when viewed against this disheartening background, that one fully realizes the unique character of the life and work of Father John. Still it would not be right to pass to more particular consideration of that remarkable man before briefly adverting to the brighter side of the question which we have been considering. One hopeful feature is the way in which the people attend the churches. They are waiting and ready to hear. In the Russian constitution there is a certain ingrained religiosity that will enforce attention to, and a deeply emotional nature that will respond to, a heart-stirring, commanding call to repentance and to righteousness; but since the days of St. Vladimir that appeal has never been made, unless it be now in our time and generation by the mouth of Father John. But, further, there are amongst the rank and file of the clergy many exceptions to the type of man portrayed above; men who endure the hardness of their lot and do seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, content to trust that a sufficient measure of the other things will be added unto them. And as a matter of fact they are; for the peasants are not slow to recognise a disinterested, unselfish life. Again, more care is being expended upon the education of the clergy, and they even now begin to recover, although very slowly, the place in society which has so

long been denied them. It is just possible that Father John, so solitary to-day, may even yet, before his course is run, see the beginning of an awakening in Russia in the only sphere where her ancient torpidity is not as yet thrown off, viz., that of true religion.

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The tourist who approaches St. Petersburg from the sea is, towards the end of his voyage, borne past an island—Kotlin—on which is situated Kronstadt, the port and outer defence of the capital. The population of the town numbers some 60,000, of which nearly one-half is garrison. Here fortifications were first raised by Peter the Great against the Swedes in 1703, and during subsequent reigns they were strengthened and enlarged; but the present formidable lines—impregnable, from the Russian point of view—date in their completeness from after 1854, in which year, at the time of the Crimean War, two vessels of the British Baltic Squadron sent out to reconnoitre ascended the northern channel farther than the Russians cared to see, demonstrating that if there had been necessity they could have made a dash for the capital. A sunken dam supporting seven batteries now guards this particular passage; three lines of forts constitute the outer defences, while masked and open batteries, redoubts and earthworks are simply strewn about the island.

Kronstadt is the chief station of the Russian Baltic fleet, but there are also at least two harbours for merchant vessels, and from May to November the wharves and dock-yards swarm with busy men. During this period wages are high for Russia; the stevedores make from eighteen-pence to half a crown a day; but in winter the port is still with a northern stillness. In itself Kronstadt presents little of interest. The streets are long and broad with the length and breadth of Russian thoroughfares; continually they

resound to the measured tramp of soldiers going from one position to another. Apart from war considerations, however, Kronstadt is a poor place in every sense of the term, so much so that after exhausting the interests of the little seven-mile island in a forenoon, the officer who kindly acted as guide finally conducted me to the military cemetery as worthy of a visit. And in this he was right, for the serried rows of mounds, at the head of each of which stands a little metal cross inscribed with the name and rank of the man who lies at its foot, the unhewn monolith bearing the expressive words, "Comrades to a Comrade," above the nameless grave of the young officer who sought escape in death from the cruel net of his own weaving—all these form a necessary part of the background of the picture which we are studying. And it is now that one saw how strange it was that in Kronstadt, this centre of naval and of military activity, should be found the most renowned Russian ambassador of the Prince of Peace.

"I am the son of a sacristan of the province of Archangel, from the village of Sursk, and I was born in the year 1829." (He is thus a year younger than Count Leo Tolstoi.) "Now, although I had not been prepared for school, hardly knowing how to spell, I entered the Archangel Parish School as a paying scholar in my tenth year. There they gave me letters; careful individual instruction there was none; I was obliged to face all my difficulties alone. I suffered not a little vexation because of the seeming dulness of my comprehension. From my earliest years, my parents instructed me in prayer, and by their own personal example made me a religiously inclined boy. I loved prayer, divine service, and, in particular, good singing. Being so much put out by my slow progress in learning, I prayed passionately to God that He would give me more mind, and I remember how all at once there was a marvellous clearing up of my intellect—a veil, as it were, fell off

my mind—and I began to understand my lessons well. The older I grew the better I succeeded with my studies, so that almost from the bottom I rose to be dux of the scholars, especially in the seminary, out of which I passed first in 1851, and was sent to the Theological Academy of St. Petersburg to be educated for the Church at the cost of the State. The post of clerk to the Academy Board of Direction was at that time given to a student, with the modest salary of one pound a month. Having a mother, a poor widow, who needed my assistance, on the proposal of the secretary of the Board I agreed with joy to take the position. Having finished my Divinity course in 1855, I went as priest to Kronstadt, in December of that year, and married the daughter of the senior priest of the place, Elizabeth by name. Of children we have none, nor ever had any. In the very first days of my ministry I made it a rule to attend with the utmost possible earnestness to my work as pastor and priest, and strictly examined myself as to my inner life. With this intent in particular I took to the closest study of the Holy Scriptures, selecting from them what most concerned myself as a man, as a minister, and as a member of society. Then I began to keep a diary, in which I set down my inward struggles with myself, my expressions of repentance, my secret prayers to God, and my gratitude for deliverance from temptations, afflictions, and misfortunes; and every Sunday and feast day I speak and preach in church, either delivering my own sermons or those of the Metropolitan Gregory. Besides my preaching, from the very beginning of my ministry I tried to take the utmost care of the poor, the more so that I was one of them myself. Nearly thirty-one years ago I conceived the idea of founding in Kronstadt a Workhouse and Refuge for poor people, which God helped me to do ten years later.”

This large institution is mainly supported by donations received by Father John from those to whom he has been

of service, and it is now managed by a committee. It consists of several departments. There is, first, accommodation for those who wish to have special interviews with Father John—either in the form of a common lodging-room, with perhaps thirty beds at eightpence the night, or more select separate apartments at two shillings. There is also the night shelter for the poor, with dinner for a halfpenny, and a wooden bed, pillow, and coverlet for a fraction more. There is also a school for orphan boys and girls. In another wing of the institution—for it comprises several self-contained houses, and embraces sixteen different philanthropic agencies—is the home for aged and infirm men and women. At all seasons of the year the cheap dinner of soup with meat and bread is well patronised. In summer the men come to and return from it to their work in the dockyards, but it is in winter, when there is little to be done, that they fully appreciate the advantages of the work-house.

To the institute is also attached a church with its private entrance from the street to the altar, a necessary precaution. Here every morning at 5 a.m. Father John conducts a service. There is another large room where he receives people who have come specially to see him. Off the church opens a private chamber, along one wall of which runs an extensive wardrobe where are hung one upon the other a most magnificent collection of priestly garments of immense value, gifted to Father John by different admirers from the late Emperor downwards. These he never wears. Along the opposite walls are fitted great glass-doored cupboards containing other rare and costly presents, goblets of gold and silver, enormous Bibles with solid, silver-gilt cases, some inlaid with the beautiful Moscow enamel work, or embossed with mother-of-pearl, on which, in one instance, are tastefully painted representations of the four Evangelists.

In great contrast to all this is his own humble dwelling. It stands at the corner of two unimportant streets, and is entered from a courtyard surrounded in part by the usual high boarded-up fence. It consists of two or three rooms scantily furnished, but he cannot be said to spend much of his time there. His life is one long act of beneficence. From the early morning, when he leaves his home in a drojky—he would never arrive if he went on foot—his every movement is dogged by crowds of people demonstratively anxious to obtain his blessing or even see him as he passes. Pilgrims and beggars cry for aid from a man whom they verily believe to be divine; those that sit in high places are no less solicitous in their demands upon his time and prayers. And so, up and down Kronstadt, in the capital, to Moscow, and yet more distant parts of this world-empire, does the great priest continually move in his practice of the life of Christ. The people say that he never sleeps; but he is naturally a strong man. They say that he seldom eats or drinks; it may be that his meals are very irregular; still into whatever house he enters, he generally partakes of some food and drink. But behind all the accretion of popular fancy there remains a personality which the most critically-minded man cannot but *feel* whenever he is brought into contact with it. Measured by ordinary standards of greatness, there is nothing in Father John that would make it worth a man's while to cross the street to see him. It is nothing that he *does* that attracts, it is what he *is*. It is the life in some ways unique, the life of a man who verily practises all that he preaches, of a man who calls no moment of his time his own, of one who, when other men—his colleagues even—sleep or amuse themselves, still spends himself in the service of humanity, finding all needed relaxation in the consciousness of souls recovered or renewed, or in the divine acknowledgment of his humble efforts. A life of that order, wherever passed and however

pervious to the detractions of friendly or hostile observers, must still draw men unto it.

The reader will have already gathered that it is no easy matter to obtain audience of Father John. For myself, I am entirely indebted in this particular to Colonel Gulaev, known in this country as the translator of Father John's book, *My Life in Christ*.

The colonel lives in St. Petersburg on the top flat of a fine mansion in a certain Boulevard, a house that belongs to and is otherwise tenanted by the priests attached to the Cathedral of St. Isaac. He arranged that Father John should call here at a certain hour when next he had occasion to visit the capital. The prospect of his visit had not been mooted beyond Gulaev's drawing-room, yet a small crowd assembled about the street door; people got past the hall porter on various pretexts, and climbed the stairs to seat themselves upon the landings, or take up a position against the balustrade. One young woman, distinctive amongst the other watchers by reason of her sweet, sad countenance, and tasteful dress, was invited by the courteous colonel, on one of his expectant sallies to the entrance door, to pass the time of waiting in his rooms. There she narrated to his sympathetic wife that her father, stricken with tubercular disease of the bones, had been given up by the physicians, but she believed that Father John could yet save him, and at the worst she wished to carry his blessing to him. But the hour came and went; the healer did not appear, and the girl was hardly comforted with a phial of holy water that had been blessed by the renowned priest and was now offered to her by her kindly hostess.

Later it appeared that he had been carried off by the wife of one of the merchant princes, who had often tried to arrange an interview with him, and had even passed a night in his hostelry at Kronstadt only to receive his

blessing in the morning. That day she caught him in St. Petersburg, and he had become so engrossed in conversation with her that he forgot his pre-arranged engagement. The colonel could merely try again. A service at St. Isaac's, where Father John rarely officiates, to be followed by a meal (over which he was to pronounce a blessing) at the senior priest's house, seemed to offer a suitable opportunity for carrying out the unfulfilled pledge of a previous day.

"It is certain that he will come to-day," said Gulaev, "and you see the people know it." He points as he speaks to the courtyard at the back of his lodging, which is visible from his windows, and from which alone there appears to be access to the senior priest's apartments in a detached building railed off on another side of the yard. A few persons are standing about, but gradually their numbers increase, the windows round about are thrown up and occupied, and a hum of suppressed excitement rises from the court below. At last the feelings of the people pass beyond their control, and they rush to meet another human wave that at this moment rolls in through the archway that leads from the street parallel to, and behind the Boulevard, in to the yard. The incoming wave bears the other back by sheer force of weight, but for a moment its course is checked, and the seething mass resolves itself into a human maelstrom. The centre of the commotion is at brief intervals seen to be a man of medium height, dressed in the ordinary black gown and felt hat of a priest. On his left he is supported by a yard porter, and on his right by an admiring military officer. The people throng him, and with great difficulty his attendants make a passage for him, while he moves his hands about—nay they are thrown about—so that the people may kiss them. And those who achieve this good fortune instantly disappear with a solemn or a pleased expression upon their countenances to make

way for others. He is borne on, however, and passes through the iron gate into the priest's house. The crowd attempts to press in after him, but is mercilessly pushed back by one or two policemen who have joined it, and the people wait patiently outside. But now the two-horse brougham which he had left in the street drives into the yard and the proprietress, an elderly lady, whose is the privilege of driving the great man on that day, steps out and makes her way into the house. The crowd, three-quarters of which are women, now fills the whole yard, and it looks as if the carriage were blocked in. The door is opened, but only to receive the little old lady with her black bag, who wisely seeks a retreat within. Four yard porters vainly attempt to form a passage for Father John. The people dodge them, slip under their arms, and literally besiege the vehicle. At length he appears; it is a hard struggle. For some moments it seems as if he will not traverse the few feet that separate him from his objective; the stout officer on one side is jostled to the detriment of his temper; the sergeant of police opposite him is driven to issuing sharp, incisive orders to his subordinates, who make a fierce onslaught on the eager surroundings, and the door is safely closed upon the venerable priest. Immediately the people encircle the brougham once again; they push in hands and head at either window. They become utterly reckless; some strive to hold the horses, but the carriage moves at the second attempt. They are flung about by the wheels; they care not. More than one woman has been trampled to death under his horses' feet at Kronstadt. But even now a man is standing on either step, imploring a blessing or begging permission to kiss that hand. Others run after the carriage, but it distances them; their chance is gone.

On the Boulevard a crowd of three or four hundred has gathered. It is always the same. There had been a

similar crush at the cathedral in the morning, causing a policeman, who had been one of Father John's escort, to remark, "Surely now he will need to go back to Kronstadt to recover." The house porter is helpless; the landings are in possession of elderly men and women seated on benches, while those who are younger have pressed up to the highest flat and line the staircase two deep on either side. The doors of the different lodgings are flung open, and as the magician approaches emit their human tribute. He mounts the stairs somewhat rapidly, still supported by his military friend and a porter. At one door he pauses to pay his respects to the senior priest in this building. Incessantly the people press him, crying, "Father, little Father, bless me." And as he passes on he lays his hand upon their heads, or gives it them to kiss. On one landing were gathered several children, some of them in arms, and as he laid his hands upon their heads or took their little faces between them, imprinting a kiss upon their foreheads, one was reminded of a scene familiar since one's earliest recollections. At that moment he happened to look up, and there rested on his face an expression almost divine, while love streamed from the kindest eyes that I have ever looked upon in fellow-man. Gradually he worked his way up to the top landing, the officer continually exclaiming, "Enough, enough," as some more impetuous admirer would not go away without a blessing. But Gulaev's door was at last shut behind him and greetings were interchanged. For the moment the devoted colonel was absolutely overcome with emotion, and broke down. At once Father John went up to him, patted him on the back, and with a few cheery words helped him to recover his wonted equilibrium. But in such an affection Gulaev was not alone. "I cannot see you, you are so holy," the senior priest had said to him with deepest feeling on the landing below.

Let me take him as he sits at table over tea and biscuits,

listening carefully to certain questions with which Gulaev plies him. He is a man of medium height, who does not look his years. A high forehead, heavily lined, rises over two eyes that shine with a light of excessive kindness. The face, especially round about the eyes, is deeply wrinkled, and often assumes an expression of intense weariness. The long, scant hair, divided in the middle, is yielding the earlier auburn to a severer grey; the beard and moustache, by no means long in proportion, are more pronouncedly grizzled. The cheeks are somewhat red; it is a face like a benediction. He seems to put his whole soul into everything that he does. He looks you steadily in the face the while you speak to him. He makes you feel that he has given himself up entirely to you and to your interests for the time being. You see that, in any case, he is a strong man—very level-headed, not easily put out—one who quickly grasps a situation and enters fully into it. You ask him a question; he pauses for a moment to consider it, and then gives a clear, pointed response. One had been told to expect a shy, nervous man; there was no trace of these qualities. He is a born leader of men; you feel instinctively that you are in the presence of no ordinary being. A man of naturally liberal tendencies, he proves to be hopelessly conservative along certain well-marked lines of opinion. Tell him that in certain far-off islands of the sea people have found genuine pleasure and help in the perusal of his book, and he bows in grateful humility. Above his name he always inscribes a cross; it is the secret of his life. He is the same affectionate, sympathetic soul to every one, particularly loving to lay his hands over the children's heads and bless them. Now he seats himself by Gulaev's well-furnished table, but will not taste vodka. He enters into general conversation, asking if a certain fish he is eating at that moment is found in our country. Thither he will probably never go—the language

would be too great a difficulty—but he found the word “indifferent,” on the occasion of some slight table mischance, with evident amusement to himself. In the end he quietly asks his host if he can do him any further favour, and then announces that he must go farther on.

Meanwhile, the people wait outside, and as he passes to the street there is the same wild demonstration. The number of spectators has doubled itself. As he passes down the stair he gives pound notes to two women. This is a favourite habit; in the distribution he seems to trust to some unusual instinct: for, in many cases, it has been found subsequently that his charity was well deserved where he had dispensed it. Many pressed close to ask some rule for the guidance of their lives, others sought his blessing; one poor woman simply kissed his hand, and he gave her a note. And through it all he ever wears that sad, wistful expression of overflowing love. “Was his face not as the face of Christ?” said Madame Gulaev, when her door was shut upon him.

For some years past endeavours have been made to promote closer relations between the Church of England and the Russian Church. It need hardly be said that such ideas, which do not stop short of actual union, will mainly be found amongst members of the High Church party. It may be questioned whether these negotiations have ever got, or will ever get, beyond the stage of a polite interchange of courtesies. But the project is sufficiently well known in St. Petersburg to make it worth while to ask Father John what he thought and felt about possible future union of the English and Russian Churches. In answer to a request for an expression of opinion upon this point, Father John remarked how in Christ’s last prayer He had asked that the men whom God had given Him out of the world, and those who believe on Him through their word, might be one, even as He and His Father were one. “For

a thousand years," continued the Saint of Kronstadt, "the Russian Church has prayed for the union of all churches; and when I read the Liturgy every day there is no portion that I pray more sincerely." But when pressed for anything more definite, his conservatism became very apparent, and one saw that any union would merely be absorption of the English Church into the larger Russian community. "Union might be possible," he would say, "if the English Church will accept our dogmas of faith; but we will never give up, for example, the worship of the Virgin Mary."

Still, it would hardly be fair to characterize him as narrow. He speaks of Church differences as partitions which men have reared between themselves. When in the house of a certain orthodox Count, he was asked to pray. A Lutheran admiral who was present interposed for a moment, saying that perhaps Father John might not care to have the little service when he, an outsider, was in the room. "Our differences would not reach to heaven," he replied, and the service proceeded.

To attempt to account for Father John's wonderful influence, involves the recognition of several factors. His influence is undoubtedly due in part to his preaching. Some of his sermons are published—subject, of course, to revision by the Censor—but he is described, by those who have heard him, as a powerful preacher, although I question whether by that phrase they meant all that we would understand by the designation. Whenever he officiates in the Kronstadt Cathedral, the crowd is overpowering, and the verger shows with pride the stout movable rail that is used to partition off the choir, remarking that it has twice been broken through by the infatuated listeners in their struggles to get near the man. Colonel Gulaev is at present engaged in translating some of these sermons.

But, to go further back; he early attracted notice and won sympathy by his absolute indifference to money. This

set him at once in marked contrast to his Kronstadt colleagues in the ministry ; indeed, it separated him off from the great mass of the Russian clergy. In Kronstadt the priests appear to have a fixed salary, of perhaps £4 per annum ; for the rest, as we have seen, they are dependent upon what they receive from their parishioners. Father John asked for nothing from the beginning. He went about helping the people, expecting nothing ; and when money gifts were offered to him, he either refused to take them or would accept only to give away to some one less fortunate than himself. This feature in his character is still prominent ; so that although many thousands of rubles are gifted to him annually, he often has barely sufficient for the necessaries of life. For this and other reasons he is unpopular amongst those of his own vocation, especially with his colleagues at Kronstadt. The latter receive perhaps one ruble (two shillings) for giving the sacrament to some poor person ; but all the people now go to Father John, and thus deprive the other priests of rightful methods of adding to their slender incomes. His generosity has already been remarked on more than once. Many stories are told of him which all seem to be variants at least of one particular form of incident, and therefore certainly of some one particular incident. In this type of story he is represented as walking along the street with a rich merchant, whose wife has received blessing, physical or spiritual, through his prayers and ministrations. The merchant has previously given him a handsome donation, which the healer accepts for one of his institutions. Their walk is, however, disturbed by a poor girl, who importunately tells him her tale of misery. The priest puts his hand into his pocket, takes out the envelope lately given by the wealthy trader, and hands it to the girl. "Stop!" cries the distressed merchant, "there are a thousand rubles in that envelope." "That is only her luck," answers the

serene consoler, and the abashed merchant subsides into silence.

In a *Times* communication of January 13th, 1891, the St. Petersburg correspondent, Mr. George Dobson, says: "His extraordinary healing powers, and the spiritual and bodily cures effected by the faithful acceptance of his earnest consolations, are attested on all sides by many sorts and conditions of men. To those who believe in Father John—and their name is legion—the age of miracles is not yet over." The people certainly believe that he can work miracles, although the credulity and superstition amongst them almost passes imagination. Still there are authenticated cases of recovery in answer to his prayers when the physicians had abandoned all hope. Those over whom he prays he solemnly entreats to believe in God and in His power to restore them. And so the father of the girl who sought him at Gulaev's house, and had to depart content with holy water, passed a restful night. One instance of a cure may be given, in which the patient is known to myself—the daughter of a Government official. A delicate girl, she had accompanied her father on a visit to this country at the time of the Jubilee celebrations, and on the journey home caught a chill of more than ordinary severity that left her deaf in both her ears. The efforts of the family physician and of an ear specialist were vain, and in his despair her father applied to the renowned priest, telling him exactly what had happened, and mentioning the doctor's insistence on the necessity of keeping the girl free from all damp. Father John prayed with her and touched her ears with holy water, if he did not actually pour some in; and she recovered her hearing. In the popular lives of Father John there is always at least one chapter in which are related at some length more or less remarkable cases of his successful mediation. It is a difficult question of which it is possible to seek for an explana-

tion either in the man, or in those who wait on him. These explanations will differ greatly in the two cases: in the one a solution will be sought in some special indwelling of Divine power in the healer, and on *a priori* grounds there is nothing inherently improbable in such an explanation; in the other case the credulity and superstitious tendency of the subjects will be adduced and emphasized. Many of the chronicled cures will doubtless not bear examination, but a residuum is left of which the most satisfactory rendering will be obtained by the help of the former, rather than of the latter clue; but the second is by no means to be despised in part.

His influence extends over all classes in the land, but his attitude to one and all is the same. Many people in this country first heard of him when he was summoned to the bedside of the dying Emperor Alexander III., and remained with him to the end. The present Empress kisses his hand no less than the humblest peasant, and, like a loyal priest, Father John preaches to the people that Christ is the head of the Church, and that the Emperor is the first son of God. He receives requests for prayer from all over the world. An American lady solicited his prayers for her people in the late war. He complied with her request, but with reluctance, saying that it was a war between two good peoples. He loves the warrior population amongst whom he lives, and many of them sincerely admire and love him. His life is an admirable example illustrative of what he considers to be the two fundamental requirements of them that would serve God in His ministry, viz., a living faith in God, and sincere devotion to Jesus Christ and to the Church which He founded.

When one considers the man and the extraordinary influence that he is exerting at the present time, one naturally wonders whether he will not, one day, be enrolled amongst the Russian saints. The canon of the saints is

not yet closed. It is only three years since St. Theodosius of Tchernigov was added in consequence of the wonders worked by his relics. I am not certain on what principles men are elected to a place amongst the saints; it would seem to be in part connected with the state in which their remains are found on examination at some long interval after their decease, and it will be three or four hundred years before Father John is thus, if ever, honoured. Still, one cannot help feeling that the Russian people have at the present time the opportunity of observing at first hand one of their future saints. But whether this be so or no, they at least have furnished to them in Father John a most effective exemplar of Him who went about doing good.

J. Y. SIMPSON.

ST. PAUL'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH CORINTH.

A REJOINER.

MR. WHITE'S able and interesting article in the February (1898) number of the *EXPOSITOR* was a valuable contribution to the discussion of the theory which I had ventured in the preceding year to lay before the readers of the September and October Numbers. A theory, if true, has nothing to dread, but has everything to hope, from the result of honest and able criticism; the most dangerous foes of a new truth are inattention and neglect.

I think it will be well to preface my rejoinder to this criticism of Mr. White by stating as clearly as I can the points at issue between us.

Some of these points bear on the question of the date of 1 Corinthians, and it is possible that some critics may assent to these who are unwilling to accept my other conclusions. I will therefore take these first. On this question I hold that 1 Corinthians was not written (as is