

My review of Herr Musil's work in the rest of Moab and in Edom, with its ethnological and religious results, I must postpone till the next number of the EXPOSITOR.

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*THE HELVIDIAN VERSUS THE EPIPHANIAN
HYPOTHESIS.*

THE April number of the *Church Quarterly* contains an anonymous article on the Brethren of the Lord in support of what is known as the Epiphanian, in contrast to the Hieronymian and Helvidian theories. In p. 76 the recent history of this last theory is compared to [the temporary triumph of "a band of resolute men, under an intrepid leader, carrying a strong position through the sheer force of a splendid irresistible dash. . . . It takes us by surprise, and for the moment carries all before it. But such . . . brilliant assaults melt away under the dry light of criticism."

It would not have occurred to me to suppose that I was included among the heroes of this spirited narrative, were it not that I find two publications of mine specified among the authorities which stand at the head of the article, and also that my name appears in the course of the article more frequently than that of any other supporter of the Helvidian theory. On one point, I must demur to the above comparison, flattering though it may be. It is said that "the first sensation of the victors is that of utter surprise to find themselves in possession, a surprise which deepens into a conviction that this exploit should not have succeeded." As far as I am concerned, it could not be a matter of surprise if the evidence which had compelled me to adopt a certain view, after the fullest

God, the same is my brother and sister and mother.”

Here, too, I think the natural impression on an unprejudiced reader is that *οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ* (cf. *de chez lui*) implies one household, that brothers and sisters are such in the strict sense of the word, that all shared a common anxiety when they heard that the Son and the Brother was so absorbed in His work of teaching and healing, that He took no thought of the necessaries of life (cf. John iv. 34). Added to this was the fact that the religious authorities brought against Him the same charge as they had done against the Baptist, “He hath a devil and is mad,” meaning perhaps little more than “He is a wild enthusiast, and will soon wear Himself out, unless His friends insist on His taking rest.” It has been said that the behaviour of the brothers here towards Jesus is that of elders towards a younger. But is it not more probable that Mary herself was the one who would feel most anxious about her Son, and most ready to suggest some way of inducing Him to take rest? It is she who stands first in the rebuke, “Who is my mother?” “Behold my mother.” We may suppose, therefore, that she was in error here, as she had been at Cana, and as she had been in the Temple, when her complaint at His disappearance drew forth from her Son the words, “Wist ye not that I must be *ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός*? To take a parallel case, is it more in accordance with human nature that a second wife should be induced by her stepsons to take action against her own firstborn and only child, than that a mother, with several children of her own, should consult with the younger ones when a sudden danger seems to threaten the eldest and dearest?

I will add here some remarks from my Introduction to St. James, p. xxvii., as they form the subject of comments by X. “It depends more upon the positive than the relative age of brothers whether the interference of

a younger with an elder is probable or improbable. When all have reached manhood and have settled in their different spheres, a few years' difference in age does not count for much. . . . If we remember how little even the Apostles were able to appreciate the aims and methods of our Lord up to the very end of His life, how different was their idea of the Kingdom of Heaven and the office of the Messiah from His, we shall not wonder if His younger brothers, with all their admiration for His genius and goodness, were at times puzzled and bewildered at the words which fell from His lips; if they regarded Him as a self-forgetting idealist and enthusiast, wanting in knowledge of the world as it was, and needing the constant care of His more practical friends to provide Him with the ordinary comforts and necessaries of life. This much, I think is certain from the facts of the case; and we need nothing more than this to explain their fear that His mind might be overstrained, and their attempt to dictate the measures He should adopt in going up to the feast." The above is commented on in pp. 87 and 90. It is there said that the "attitude of domineering interference on the part of the brothers is apparent; that "it is only an uncritical amiability which can see in their behaviour an instance of affectionate solicitude"; that our Lord was "a man singularly wide-awake and clear-sighted in His scrutiny of men and circumstances"; that there is nothing to lead us to suppose "that younger brothers could have been conscious of superiority in any department of life. And the impression of seniority must, we think, be allowed its full significance."

It will be noticed that X makes no reference to Mary. The brothers are guilty of domineering interference, but the mother disappears from the story. In order to justify this view, he adopts a reading, rejected by WH. and

Prof. Swete, which puts "brethren" before "mother" in Mark iii. 31, though it keeps the usual order in the verses that follow. The reason which he assigns for supposing that the brothers were older than our Lord, is to me very extraordinary. "Younger brothers could not be conscious of superiority: the impression of seniority must be allowed its full significance." I see no consciousness of superiority, unless we are to say that Crito was conscious of superiority to Socrates when he urged him in vain to make his escape from prison. And what has "clearsightedness" to do with it? We are speaking of "One who saved others, and therefore could not save Himself." Are we to blame His mother and His brothers if the fearful foreboding of such an end was like a sword piercing their own hearts?

The next passage for consideration is John vii. 2-8. "Now the feast of the Jews, the feast of tabernacles, was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may behold the works which thou doest. For no man doeth anything in secret and himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou doest these things, manifest thyself to the world. For even (*οὐδέ*) his brethren did not believe on him. Jesus therefore said unto them, My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it that its works are evil."

On this X says: "Whatever may be said of the earlier incident, here the attitude of the brothers is seen to be definitely hostile. It is trifling with the Evangelist's words to see in them a precautionary effort on the brothers' part to dictate the measures our Lord should adopt in going up to the feast. As a matter of fact, the brethren here display a reckless disregard of His welfare, and are

ready to thrust Him into a perilous position. The constant friction between Him and the ecclesiastical authorities appears to be becoming too severe a strain on their affection, and they are at a loss to understand His diffidence. So they would goad Him into decided action by taunts at His inconsistent conduct. . . . Our Lord's reply to the brethren recalls His vehement denunciation of Peter, when he made himself the mouthpiece of Satan. Now these men of His own household have ranged themselves on the side of the world-power."

I think X forgets here that those against whom he is so bitter were shortly to take their place by the side of the Apostles in defiance of the ecclesiastical authorities; that the leading one among them would become the head of the Church at Jerusalem; and that he and his brother Jude would write epistles, which would be treasured up for all time among the sacred writings of the Church.¹ Christ's words leave no doubt that the brothers were in the wrong here, but were they more in the wrong than the sons of Zebedee when they wished to call down fire from heaven, or quarreled about precedence in the Messianic kingdom? Westcott, in his note on John vii. 5, "For neither did his brethren believe on him," seems to me to give the true account of the matter. "The phrase need not mean more than that they did not sacrifice to absolute trust in Him all the fancies and prejudices which they cherished as to Messiah's office." "They ventured to advise and urge, when faith would have been content to wait." I will add that they are eager for the triumph of their Brother and impatient at its delay. They de-

¹ In p. 89 X makes the rather curious suggestion that, after the death of Joseph, James may have "acted as the Virgin's ally," and that this fact, and the authoritative position which he held in the home at Nazareth, may have made it natural for the Apostolic band to concede to him the first place in the Christian family.

mand that He should manifest His power at the centre of action, rather than in remote districts. No doubt they hope, as His disciples did, to share the glory of His kingdom ; but it is an entire mistake to speak of their conduct as evincing hostility or jealousy ¹ towards Him.

“ If the mother of Jesus had had other sons, would He on the cross have commended her to the care of a disciple rather than to that of a brother ? ” In urging this objection Bishop Lightfoot speaks of the Helvidian theory as requiring us to believe that the mother, though living in the same city with her sons and joining with them in a common worship (Acts i. 14), is consigned to the care of a stranger, of whose house she becomes henceforth the inmate.” The word “stranger” is hardly applicable to the disciple whom Jesus loved, who appears also to have been the son of Salome, His mother’s sister. It seems to me, therefore, an exaggeration to say that “our Lord would thus have snapped asunder the most sacred ties of natural affection.” If, as was probably the case, the younger brothers of our Lord were already married, whether living in separate houses or in a common household with their mother,² we can see distinct reasons why

¹ So Mr. Harris in *Hastings’ Dict. of Christ*, i. p. 236.

² In the *Introduction to St. James* (p. xxvii.) I wrote “dispersed in their several homes,” while I had previously spoken of the brothers as forming one household with their mother. My critic speaks of this as “a glaring inconsistency” (p. 80). The essential thing is that, in the one case, the mother and the brothers act together as one family ; in the other case, that St. John’s quiet home is better suited for the mother than the bustle of family life, which would be all the greater if the married brothers still form one household. From the articles under “House” and “Family” in *Hastings’ Dictionary of the Bible*, I am inclined to think that the brothers and their wives still occupied the same house with the mother. In the former article it is said, “As it is customary for the married sons to remain under their parents’ roofs and bring up families, a house may often have had forty or fifty inmates, exclusive of servants and slaves” ; and similarly in the latter article we read, “The members of a Hebrew household included some or all of

He should have commended her to the charge of her nephew, who was probably unmarried and living in a house of his own. "Could this," I added, "be regarded as in any way a slight put upon her other sons? Must they not have felt that the busy life of a family was not suited for the quiet pondering which now more than ever would characterize their mother? and further, that this communion between the Mother and the Disciple was likely to be not only a source of comfort to both, but also most profitable to the Church at large?"

The objections made to this reasoning by X (in p. 80) are that I am "endeavouring to show the *expediency* of an action, the permissibility of which is denied." I wonder whether we are to take this sentence as a specimen of "the dry light of criticism" (p. 76) by which it was proposed to disperse the Helvidian mirage. To me it suggests rather the stumbling of a man befogged in his own abstractions, and desperately clutching (by means of italics) at the two points of which he is sure, viz., that I argued for the *expediency* of something, while he himself denied the permissibility of something. To clear the fog let us ask, What is the action referred to, by whom is its permissibility denied, and on what grounds? The action is evidently that of which I affirm the expediency, and that is our Lord's commendation of His mother to the disciple whom He loved; but surely X does not deny the permissibility of this. However we may disagree on other points, we should all agree that whatever He did was not permissible only, but the one right thing to be done. Supposing He had commended His mother to

the following, the man, his mother (if residing with him after the father's death), his wives, children, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, other friends or dependants. Sometimes the widowed mother appears as the head of the household, as in the case of Micah (Jud. xvii. 1-4) and of Mary after Joseph's death."

the charge of Mary of Bethany, rather than to that of St. John, who could have ventured to dispute His right to do so? Perhaps, however, X speaks of permissibility from the point of view of Jewish law. He may mean that a widowed mother was compelled to reside with her sons after their father's death, and that this rule could on no account be dispensed with. If this is what he maintains, let him show evidence that there was such a law, and, what is more, that our Lord would have felt bound to observe it.

But X may be thinking of a sentence of Lightfoot's, which he quotes a little before, that the fact of the unbelief of the brothers "would scarcely have been allowed to override the paramount duties of filial piety." In my Introduction I have excluded the unbelief of the brothers from the consideration of the question, because a few hours saw unbelief changed into fervent belief. We have simply to consider generally what is the duty of sons towards a widowed mother. Undoubtedly their duty is to show towards her in all fitting ways the feelings of love and gratitude. But does this require them to dictate to her, where, and with whom, she shall live? If, on the advice of her wisest and oldest friends, she chooses to live alone, or with one who is not a relation, are we to say either that she is wanting in natural affection, if she takes this advice, or that her sons are failing in filial duty if they consent to its being done?

There is nothing further, I think, in the review bearing on the evidence from Scripture, except the allusions to the later history of St. James. Speaking of his Epistle, X says the comparison between it and the Sermon on the Mount given in my edition "would gain in significance, if it were made with the sources of the Sermon rather than the Sermon itself." I am not quite sure what is

intended by the "Sources of the Sermon." In p. xliv. I have said, "It is to be noticed that, close as is the connexion of sentiment and language in many of these passages, it never amounts to actual quotation. It is like the reminiscence of thoughts often uttered by the original speaker and sinking into the heart of the hearer, who reproduces them in his own manner." If, on the other hand, by "sources" is meant the Jewish sources, such as were collected by Deutsch many years ago in his famous article, I have touched on these in my notice of Spitta's argument in favour of the pre-Christian origin of the Epistle (pp. clxviii.-clxxviii., ed. 2).

In p. 80, X thinks it necessary to "remind the reader that the man most prominent in the early Church for his ascetical life, residence hard by the Temple, and assiduity in devotional attendance at its worship, was no other than James, the very man who is now maintained to be Blessed Mary's eldest surviving son." Here, too, I find it a little difficult to make out what is the point of the argument, but I suppose it is considered that the story of James' asceticism in his old age is inconsistent with his being married in youth, which I have inferred from St. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians ix. 5. The story of his asceticism is given by Epiphanius (*Haer.* lxxviii. pp. 1039 f. and 1045). "James was the eldest son of Joseph, he died in his ninety-sixth year, having preserved his virginity intact, having never cut his hair or tasted flesh, or used a bath, or worn more than one tunic. He alone was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, and to wear the priestly *petalum* because he was a Nazarite and of kin to the priests." The story is doubtful for many reasons, which I need not dwell on here, and it differs in some respects from the account given by Hegesippus (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* ii. 23. 5), who says nothing of his vir-

ginity, but merely gives the particulars of the Nazarite life: "He was holy from his mother's womb, drank no wine, nor strong drink, nor ate animal food; no razor came on his head, nor did he anoint himself with oil, nor use the bath. To him alone it was permitted to enter into the Holy Place, for he wore no woollen, but linen. His knees became hard as a camel's, because he was ever upon them, worshipping God and asking forgiveness for the people." Even of Hegeſippus Lightfoot ſays, "There is much in his account which cannot be true: the assigning to him a privilege which was confined to the high prieſt alone is plainly falſe. . . . Still it is poſſible that James may have been a Nazarite, may have been a ſtrict aſcetic."

One other point may be noticed: X finds an explanation of "the intently Judaistic tone" of the Epistles of the two brothers James and Jude, and "their diſſimilarity to all the other apoſtolic writings," in the ſuppoſed fact that "they were already full-grown men when they accepted the Meſſianic claim of our Lord." I think this eſtimate of the Epistles very much exaggerated. Is it fair to characterize as "intently Judaistic" a writing which includes ſuch a paſſage as the following, "But ye, beloved, building up yourſelves on your moſt holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourſelves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life" (Jude 20 f.)? But I have no time to diſcuſs this here, and can only refer thoſe who are intereſted in the ſubject to what I have ſaid in my edition of the two Epistles.

I reſerve for another article the conſideration of Tradition and Sentiment.

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