

ment of Christianity has surpassed and will surpass more and more—just as these wrappings of its origin from lower religious ideas have been shed by modern Judaism. We are, in most cases, unable to adhere to these conceptions ; but we need not for that reason give up other convictions dear to us. Those conceptions, which we have outgrown, did not belong to the essence of Christianity, they came from a religion in which God's relation to the world and to mankind was represented in another way than it was represented by Christ. So by the very rejection of these Judaistic conceptions our belief will become clearer and dearer to us, just as the entire beauty of a picture may be seen only after all veils have been removed.

CARL CLEMEN.

MARY OF BETHANY ; MARY OF MAGDALA ; AND ANONYMA.

RENAN eulogizes Luke's Gospel as "uniting the emotion of the drama with the serenity of the idyll," and declares expressly, "C'est le plus beau livre qu'il y ait." In its idyllic pages three women are successively portrayed. The sketches are only in outline, but they are limned by a master hand (chapters vii., viii., x.).

I. ANONYMA.

We are taken first to Galilee where the young Rabbi from Nazareth is going about doing good. In Capernaum He has healed a centurion's servant who was ready to die. At the gate of Nain He has called back to life a widow's only son and delivered him to his mother. The multitude are beginning to recognise that in Him God has visited His people. Common people and outcasts justify God ; Pharisees and lawyers frustrate the counsel of God "within themselves." One of the latter group, with some hesitation, "desired

Him that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner " comes into view out of a life of guilt and passion to weep her penitence at Jesus' feet ; and she passes out of sight when He has said to her, " Thy faith hath saved thee ; go in peace." We see fresh beauty in the story each time we read it. It palpitates with life. It forbids prurient prying into the hidden history of one whom Jesus three times speaks of simply as " this woman." The good Shepherd could have called her by her name. Let it content us that we may hope to meet her where He gives to the overcomer a white stone and in the stone a new name written, unless like Simon we misjudge the sinner and her Saviour. It is of grace that the sacred writers withhold the three names ; *first*, of " this woman " ; *second*, of the woman of Samaria into whose soul Jesus began to sink a well of living water by asking her for a drink from the well whereof Jacob drank, and his children, and his cattle ; and *third*, of that other to whom He said in the temple, " Neither do I condemn thee ; go, and sin no more."

Would the theologians not do well to let " this woman " go unnamed into the peace that passeth understanding ? It would add nothing to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that shines resplendent in her story if they could tell her name. But they cannot. Let her be, as Luke guided by the Holy Spirit has left her, Anonyma.

II. MARY OF MAGDALA.

After telling the tale of Simon and the woman of his city whom the Pharisee called " a sinner," Luke in his very next sentence lets us see the Nazarene Rabbi going " throughout every city and village in Galilee, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God ; and the Twelve

were with Him," he adds, "and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities." He names three of the better known of these devout and honourable women, and tells us that they ministered unto Him of their substance. The first of them was a "Mary." Now multitudes of Hebrew women bore the name of the heroine who sounded the timbrel and led the chorus of the triumph song that was sung at the birth of their nation on the Red Sea shore. Because it was the name of the mother of our Lord, it has been handed on to multitudes in Christendom as well ; so that Mary Queen of Scots, e.g., had four Marias among her maids of honour. There were several Marias among the early friends and followers of Jesus. So to distinguish this Mary, Luke gives these two notes—that she was "called Magdalene," and that out of her had gone seven devils. The first note, of course, indicated that her home was in Magdala. The second indicates that she had been a very marked instance of that demon-possession from which Christ had occasion to deliver so many persons in different ranks of life. By one or other of these notes she is constantly distinguished when she appears in any of the Gospel narratives, and differentiated from the other Marias with whom she is found associated. That Luke names her in precedence of Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and the many others who had means enough at their disposal to be able to supply the Master's wants, gives us the impression of a personage not only well known in the early Church but well-to-do. She has a profound affection for her young Deliverer, takes a kind of maternal care of him, has a place beside his mother at the Cross, is named first among the matrons who assisted at His hurried entombment, and came early on the morning after the Sabbath with the sweet spices that they had bought wherewith, too late, to anoint Him. Her wealth had en-

abled her first to minister to Him in life and then to honour Him in death. But He was risen, and the love that kept her at the empty tomb earned for her the first sight of the risen Lord. And Luke gives her again her accustomed place of precedence when in his last chapter he says, "It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James and other women with them, which told these things unto the Apostles."

A great soul was Mary of Magdala. The powers of evil made their *seven*-fold effort to dominate her, but she was the subject of a great deliverance. She greatly devoted herself and her substance to the service of her Saviour, and was greatly honoured by all His followers. What good ground has anybody for alleging that she had ever lived a life of shame? Luke seems carefully to differentiate her from the nameless woman in Simon's house, and surely the Church was in a decline when she suffered her sons to degrade the honoured name of the Magdalene matron by giving it to her fallen sisters.

III. MARY OF BETHANY.

When we follow Jesus under the guidance of Luke from Galilee to Judea, we are introduced to another Mary. She is the younger of two sisters in a home into which Jesus has been welcomed. Later on we are to learn more about these sisters and their brother, and their home and friends, from the other evangelists. One of them is to tell us how "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." What Luke has to show us is the relation the sisters respectively assume towards their Guest. Mary is all the while at Jesus' feet, drinking of the well of life that He opens up for her as He expounds in Isaiah liii. and in other scriptures the things concerning Himself. She has learned that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and with Him she takes

the lowly place of the receiver. Martha is more concerned as to what she can do for the comfort of the great Teacher ; and, cumbered about her much serving, she bridles up to Him and says, " Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone ? Bid her, therefore, that she help me." How cumbered the good lady must have been to speak thus to a guest, and such a Guest ! Some Maries would have flared up and said, " Martha, how dare you ! " But our Mary had not been sitting for nothing at Jesus' feet. She kept silence. And Jesus answered and said to her, " Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things ; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." This is all Luke has to say of her. No hint is here of lapse and recovery ; no memory of shame and demon-possession. It is a beautiful picture of a beautiful soul meekly bearing reproach for her love of the Highest. The artist who has just given to the ages in the preceding paragraph the portrait of The Good Samaritan, follows it up with the portrait of the daughter of Zion who chose That Good Part, which became to her, as to one of her favourite psalmists, a " portion for ever."

The other evangelists have each to make mention of Mary of Bethany, and all they have to tell accords well with the winsome sketch of Luke. Martha and she are always in character such as he makes us acquainted with at the first.

When Lazarus fell sick and died, they had kept saying to each other, " If only the Master had been here " : and each when they met Him said it to Him, " Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." But Martha, in keeping with her Lukan character, is the first " as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming " to go out and meet Him, while " Mary sat still in the house." And when she stands face to face with Him, Martha is not content to express regret

that he had not been there to save her brother from dying. She takes it upon her to suggest to Him that He use His influence with God to get the brother restored. The interview leads to His great declaration, " I am the Resurrection and the Life ; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." When He went on to ask, " Believest thou this ? " the good-hearted lady put the question by and said, " Yea, Lord : I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." She makes as intelligent a confession of her faith as had earned for Peter at an earlier day the Master's commendation. But neither Peter, nor John, nor any of Christ's disciples, except our Mary, had as yet learned the Death and Resurrection lesson. So we do not wonder that Martha felt she had got out of her depth and, when she had made her simple but somewhat inadequate confession, " she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for *thee*." She knew that Mary would understand what the Master was saying. " So when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet " with her " Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." That was all. " Jesus saw her weeping." This is the only time she is seen weeping. It was " a time to weep." " The Jews also weeping . . . Jesus wept." At the grave our bustling, uncomprehending Martha would have forbidden the rolling away of the stone. Of Mary we read that when the risen Lazarus had been loosed and let go, " Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him." What had *she* said to them beforehand that made it easier for them to believe ? There is something quickening in the intelligent faith of a saintly woman.

What else we are to know of Mary of Bethany we still

must learn from Luke's fellow-evangelists. Matthew and Mark and John have each to tell us of something she did so unique and wonderful that Christ said of it, "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Because it was not in Luke's plan to record it, and because he alone has told the tale of the Anonyma it has been ultroneously suggested that Mary was the unnamed sinner of his northern story.

1. We are told to notice that the host in Galilee and the host in Judea were both Simons. But the name of the second of the tribal fathers was one of the commonest in the nation. It was simply scattered in Israel, north and south, among high and low. There are more of that name than of any other in the *entourage* of Jesus. One of His brothers was a Simon. Two of His twelve disciples were Simons. The fathers of others of them as well as the betrayer's father may have borne the name. A Cyrenian Simon carried His Cross. The two Simons who had Jesus at their tables, respectively in Capernaum or other northern city and in Bethany, are far apart in their attitude to their Guest as the poles asunder. The northerner is of the class of His opponents—with this qualifying grace, that he condescends to invite the peasant Teacher to a meal. Even so it is only that he may pass judgment upon Him ; he treats Him with scant courtesy ; and the last we see of him is as one of a group who grumbled when a penitent passed out of his house to go down to her own house justified. The just Justifier of the ungodly (Romans iii. 26) he let go without seeking His forgiveness, and his company were like himself.

Simon, the cured leper, at whose table in Bethany Jesus had a place, is a man of an altogether different

mind. Whether he were a relative or not of Lazarus and his sisters, they are among his familiar friends. While chief priests are consulting that they might put both Jesus and Lazarus to death, this Simon entertains them as his guests. He made Jesus a supper and His disciples were invited to the feast. Be sure he did not omit the kiss of welcome, the washing of the feet and anointing of the head that the other Simon disdained to offer. But the evangelists have not brought us into his house to see him, nor yet Lazarus who had been raised from the dead. We see them, indeed, and Martha doing the kindly house-wifely service Luke teaches us to expect of her. The twelve are also there. Through their eyes we are made to look on the greatest act of homage rendered to the Redeemer in the days of His flesh. The actress is one of those rare souls who have earned the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." She had listened to what Jesus told her. She took in what no other disciple had yet understood, that He was on His way to die and to rise again. She believed not only with Simon Peter and her sister Martha that He was the promised Messiah, the Son of God. She believed that on the way to His throne as Priest and King He would be the Lamb of God taking away the world's sin. The voice that said to Samuel in the old time, "Fill thine horn with oil and go," and he went "and anointed David in the midst of his brethren," bade Mary go with her alabaster box to anoint David's greater Son. She had sung from her childhood of the

precious ointment on the head,
that down the beard did flow,
Even Aaron's beard, and to the skirts
did of his garments go.

And the 110th and other psalms may have been singing themselves through her being as she filled her alabaster

box with the costly spikenard and went to anoint this Royal Priest against the coming hour when He was to be spit upon and crowned with thorns. For she poured the fragrant oil all over Him. "On His head," said two of those who saw it, Matthew and Peter (in Mark); "On His feet," said John. "She hath poured this ointment on my body," says Jesus. And Judas saw how it was lavished on Him from head to feet, and said, "To what purpose is this waste?" And the same thought found room in the minds of others, as they all noticed that "the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." It is characteristic of Mary that again when she is blamed for her devotion she is silent. And again it is Jesus who defends her. Defending, He explains her action: "She did it for my burial." He had told them all time and again that He must die and rise again. They did not believe Him till Peter and John stood in His empty tomb. He had said to them, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" When Pentecost is fully come they will all ask and each receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. But Mary has asked it already and has learned the things that only the Holy Ghost can teach. And so with prophetic inspiration and womanly devotion she carries through this great anointing—the only anointing, let us never forget, that the Blessed One received from a human hand.

2. But again, because it is said in John that she wiped His feet with her hair, it is alleged that she was the penitent sinner of Luke's story in the house of Simon the Pharisee. It is a desecration of paper to write the thought. It is alleged that there were so many wicked people in Galilee it was easier to play the harlot there. As if, had she been that kind of woman, she could not have got five husbands

in a Samaritan village nearer at hand. Or at the Capital, about fifteen furlongs off, she could have been with a whole templeful of men whose consciences kept them from casting a stone at an adulteress. We are told Augustine and other Latin church fathers believed in the identity of the nameless sinner and Mary of Bethany ; and to make confusion worse confounded they drag in Mary the Magdalene matron into the miserable blur into which they reduce Luke's masterly sketches. St. Augustine was St. Augustine. But before he became saint he was a profligate among sinners. He had played the prodigal devouringly, and I have an impression that the law in the members which a better saint than he felt warring against the law in his mind should be taken into account in accepting his judgment in this matter.

This wiping of the feet of Jesus with their hair by these two women is well worth noticing, because though the action looks the same in both, the two were worlds apart with their loosened hair. Paul has occasion to tell us that a woman's long hair is her glory. The abandoned woman in Galilee had turned her glory into shame. When she came to herself and began to wash the travel-stained feet of Jesus with her flood of penitential tears, she washed also her shame away by wiping the tear-wet feet with her too often unbound hair. Then, after much kissing of the feet that she had washed and wiped, she anointed them with the last of the ointment she was to use no more for making her alluring locks more seductive to foolish men. For she is forsaking the society of the clamorous sisterhood who call to passers-by that stolen waters are sweet, but whose guests are in the depths of hell ; and she slips out of our sight a restored soul on her way in peace to a becoming obscurity. The once dishonoured hair she will henceforth use, as it was given her, for a covering veil. Let us leave her so.

The sister of Martha and Lazarus belonged to a circle of

good repute, and had many friends among the residents in the Capital near by. She comes to Jesus with a glory on her head of unsullied purity. She has no remorseful tears to shed ; nor do the feet need washing that have crossed the threshold of a friend. She poured her " ointment of spikenard very precious " all over Him, and as it ran from off His feet the inspiration came to her to lay her glory there. She let fall the braided locks that had never been loosened before men till now and " wiped His feet with her hair." A sister spirit, a sweet singer of our Israel of to-day, gives us the lines that may set us in unison with the mind of Mary then, as she sings :

Take my love : my Lord, I pour
 At Thy feet its treasure store :
 Take myself : and I will be
 Ever, only, ALL for Thee.

The young prophetess enacting her poem without words was anticipating the four and twenty representatives of redeemed humanity in heaven who " cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory." When " this gospel " shall have prospered in the thing whereto it has been sent, and the whole world has been evangelized, humanity in all its bounds will speak of this that was done by Mary of Bethany. They will speak of it in all the tongues of men with growing wonder. They will speak to the praise of other Marias and other women, who watched to see what took place on Calvary, who helped to wrap the sacred body in linen clothes with spices, who came back early on the morning of the third day still intent on kindly offices, and who were the first to see the Risen Lord. But they will reserve a higher note of praise for the one who, when the deadly hatred of the enemies of Christ was gathering to a head and His friends were expecting they knew not what, rose up with her regal

ointment to anoint her King beforehand for the burial that was to swallow up death in victory. They will thank the Father that He had one member of the race prepared to honour The Son against the last hour of His humiliation; and they will own that He found a fitting ministrant for the high office in this Hebrew maid, "as dewdrop pure and fair."

A. R. SIMPSON.

PS.—As the above was written at the seaside, where the writer had not access to any literature on the subject other than the article in the July EXPOSITOR, which made him take up his pen, he accepted a hint from the Editor that some of the acknowledged authorities might be consulted. His son sends him word from his manse at Kilcreggan that the ideas here advocated as to the separate individuality of the three women are confirmed by the arguments of Plummer in his *International Critical Commentary on Luke*. Plummer says: "The ἀμαρτωλὸς and Mary Magdalen and Mary of Bethany are three distinct persons"; and the writers on the Marias in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* and the *Encyclopædia Biblica* come to the same conclusion.

The parenthetic reference in John xi. 2 seems to indicate that in the primitive Church, which had not yet been beguiled from the simplicity that is in Christ, the members continued to do what Jesus had said would be done wheresoever His Gospel should be preached through the whole world. They kept speaking to one another of what Mary of Bethany had done for the Lord's Anointed. So that it was quite natural for an evangelist beginning to tell the story of how the sorrow of "Mary and her sister Martha" was turned into joy by the raising of their brother from the dead to say, "It was the Mary of The Great Anointing we so often speak about, whose brother Lazarus was sick."

A. R. S.

THE MEANING OF 'Ο ΚΟΣΜΟΣ IN JAMES III. 6.

Καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ, ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας, ἡ γλῶσσα καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα, καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως καὶ φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γέννης.

"THE tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell" (A.V.).