

accumulation of evidence in such a matter strengthens the argument. In the classical exposure of a fabrication, Bentley's *Dissertation on the Letters of Phalaris*, the first observation clenches the matter ; Phalaris is shown to refer to *Phintia*, which was founded long after his time, and further evidence is not required ; Bentley, however, accumulates so much, and falls into so many errors during the process, that his reader is less convinced at the end than at the beginning. There is a saying of Bentley's well worth remembering in connexion with such investigations, viz. that to refute an error is a much lengthier and more serious operation than to commit one. The amount of acquaintance with Aramaic, Persian and Armenian necessary for the composition of papyrus 8 is not very considerable ; but when one wishes to demonstrate that the phrase *hinduwānah zarnākh* must belong to a post-Christian century, as has been seen, Eranian philology and the history of alchemy are indispensable, and even after their employment the adversary has merely to say that he does not understand Persian, and one's labour is rendered futile.

D. S. MARGOLIOUTH.

THE TEACHING OF PAUL IN TERMS OF THE PRESENT DAY.

XII. IS THERE A LIMIT TO SALVATION ?

Now why are some called and not others ? Is this just or right ? And what has Paul to say about those who are not foreordained and called ? They are many. What is their fate ? What is their place and part in the purpose of God ?

The Apostle's purpose does not lead him to answer this question, although it is one which must justifiably and

necessarily rise in the mind of every person. Paul was not writing philosophic treatises, but stimulating and hortatory letters. He knew the nature of a Graeco-Romano-Judaic audience. It was not the problem of the fate of the un-called that could interest their thoughts or touch their hearts. The melancholy tone that always becomes the permanent characteristic of a long-established paganism was already deeply fixed in the minds of his Graeco-Roman hearers. He had to rouse in them hope, love, and faith, all nearly dormant forces in their nature,¹ so far as the higher forms and aims of those forces were concerned. He had to give them something worth living for and worth dying for. It was useless to set before such minds and eyes a picture of the misfortune of those who were not called. No misfortune could be worse than what they already endured. No lot could be more wretched than that of a Roman noble as their poet Lucretius painted it: "sick of home he goes forth from his large house, and as suddenly comes back to it, finding that he is no better off abroad. He races to his country house, driving his carriage-horses in headlong haste; he yawns the moment he has reached the door, or sinks heavily into sleep and seeks forgetfulness, or even hurries back again to town. In this way each man flies from himself, and hates too himself because he is sick and knows not the cause of the malady; for if he could rightly see into this, each man would relinquish all else and study to learn the nature of things, since the point at stake is the condition for eternity."¹

Such was the frame of mind in which the mass of pagans dwelt, and in which they prayed and made vows for salvation. To words of threatening or denunciation of future suffering, the ears of such men would be deaf. Lucretius in the passage immediately preceding has just been declaring

¹ Lucretius iii., 1059-1069, shortened from Munroe's rendering.

that all threats of punishment in a future life were mere fable, and that the only reality lying behind such denunciation was the ceaseless misery that men suffered in their present life on earth.

Such people had no faith in the present, and no hope for the future : they were filled with a thorough disbelief in the world around them, and utter despair as to the future. Threats and terrors meant nothing more to them in the future than they were already suffering in the present : with these their whole horizon was clouded.

Paul had to recreate the better nature of these men ; and this he did in the only way possible, viz., by recreating their belief in the goodness of God and with this their hope, and as a result their power of loving and serving. It was a matter of no interest to him to discuss speculative questions or even to set forth a complete and well-rounded system of philosophy. Those to whom he addressed himself did not want a system of philosophy ; they wanted life, hope, salvation. Their vows and their prayers were for "salvation."

It must not, therefore, be concluded from Paul's almost total silence on this subject, the fate of those who were not called, not foreordained, not justified, that he had never thought about it. To a certain extent he recurred to his fundamental principle that God is good, and took refuge in the unfathomable depth of the Divine counsel ; "His decisions cannot be sought out in detail, nor His ways traced ;¹ for who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been His counsellor ?" The entire plan of the universe and the whole purpose of God cannot be comprehended by man. We have to reach, by faith and by direct insight and by the natural power of believing, the truth that God is good, without being able to prove it logically ; we have the assur-

¹ Romans xi. 33.

ance in our heart that this axiom is true, but we cannot demonstrate its truth to one who disbelieves it.

Further, we must accept the world as it is. We have to deal with the universe and its facts, and it is folly to think we could improve them if we had our way, or if we had been consulted. "Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus?"¹ It is the idea of a child or a fool that, if he had had the making of the world, he could have made a much better one.

The Apostle, whether intentionally or not, has given very little indication of his views regarding the choice of those who are called and the fate of those who are not called. While many are not called, yet there stands always the axiom that God is good, and that therefore His purpose, however incomprehensible to us, must justify itself in the final and complete view; but that fundamental principle must not be pressed to the dangerous extreme that the grace of God will in the simple sense save every one. Paul does not teach a universal salvation. He does indeed speak of God's purpose "to reconcile all things unto Himself"²; but he does not explain this further, and leaves it in apparent contradiction with his general teaching (as contained e.g. in Philippians iii. 18, i. 28, Romans ii. 4-8, etc.).

As passages like Romans iii. 7 f., vi. 1 f., 15 f. show, Paul had reason to fear lest, by insisting that the infinite grace of God must triumph in the long run, he might do harm to the raw pagan hearers, who would be inclined to ask, and who did sometimes ask, Why should we not continue to sin, and trust to the sure love and grace of God to save us from the consequences? He replies that there is a judg-

¹ Romans ix. 20.

² Col. i. 20; cp. Phil. ii. 9-11.

ment, that the choice must be made between sin and righteousness, and that there is punishment for sin : and he makes it clear that salvation can be attained only in one way, and that those who miss that way cannot be saved, but lose the lot of life and the grace of God. He does not, however, dwell much on this aspect of the justice of God ; but prefers, whether from his own natural bent or owing to experience of what was most efficacious, to lay emphasis on the free offer of salvation to all. His teaching and his mind were filled with the thought of eternal life in Christ. He spoke little about the doom of death, and that little was expressed chiefly in his earliest teaching to the Thessalonians (though it also appears a good deal in his second letter to Timothy).

There remains in Paul's public teaching, so far as his letters reveal it, a certain unsolved discrepancy between his fundamental axiom of the goodness of God and his *dicta* as to the death, or destruction, or wrath, that awaits the unrepentant. This we must admit. It is not our business to set forth a complete system of philosophic teaching, but simply to state what Paul taught. He leaves us to accept through the power of faith this discrepancy between the fundamental axiom, which is true and necessary, and the other fact which we can neither deny nor explain. There is, however, a possible opening to a reconciliation of the discrepancy, which will be alluded to in a following Section.

XIII. THE IDEA OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE TEACHING OF PAUL.

A close parallel to the triple expression " from and through and to faith," is found in Romans xi. 36. There, immediately after the highly emotional sentence regarding the counsel of God, which is so immeasurably beyond the comprehension of man, Paul ends the brief paragraph with a

measured and rhythmical phrase, "of Him, and through Him, and unto Him ¹ are all things," which may be roughly paraphrased as an assertion that the entire universe originates from God, and its existence (i.e. its order and evolution) continues by means of God, and its development culminates in the attaining (i.e. the re-attaining) to God. Just as the whole universe comes from God, and exists through Him, and with a view to Him, so faith (which is the working of the spirit of God in man) is the originating and maintaining and consummating force in the reconciling of man to God.

This is a glorified form of the ancient Anatolian thought which was latent in the paganism of Western Asia. Paul raises to an infinitely higher level the beautiful old idea that all men—and especially the chiefs and heroes—come from the Great Mother, all are nourished and instructed and guided and advised by her, and all return to her kindly bosom at death—the Great Mother being the mother earth. A touch of the enthusiasm which characterised the pagan votaries of the goddess lingers in the almost lyrical character of Paul's loftier utterance. As we read a paragraph like this, we feel that it is not necessary to regard the even more markedly rhythmical and lyrical phrases of 1 Timothy iii. 16, or Ephesians v. 13-14, as fragments of contemporary hymns quoted by Paul: they may with equal reason be looked upon as examples of the lyrical expression to which the Apostle rose in moments of emotional and mystic enthusiasm.

The righteousness, then, which man possesses is a process of growth towards the supreme righteousness of God. It is the young tree which will grow into the consummation and the perfect form: it is the seed which will produce that fruit. This thought of growth or development is always present in Paul's mind, when he speaks of the

¹ With a view to Him: *eis* following after and balancing *ἐξ* and *διὰ*.

righteousness which is attributed to, or set to the account of,¹ man. Hence, in interpreting his thought to his audiences in the Greek and Graeco-Asiatic cities, he frequently has recourse to the metaphor of growth culminating in the production of fruit. So in Philippians i. 11, "being filled with the fruit of righteousness, which is through Jesus Christ." So again in Colossians i. 9-10, "that ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will . . . bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Here comes in the apparent self-contradiction which is involved in the idea of development, on the one hand "filled with the knowledge of God's will," and yet on the other hand still "increasing in the knowledge of God,"—for the knowledge of His will is the knowledge of Him and of His nature and work. So also in Ephesians v. 8-11, "the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth," whereas "the works of darkness" are unfruitful. By this Paul means that there results from them no good fruit, no progress towards God, but only degeneration and evil. Sin is not inactive. It is as real and vigorous, according to Paul's ideas, as righteousness. It is just as dangerous as righteousness is beneficent.

In accordance with this governing thought Paul twice speaks of those who gain salvation as "in process of being saved" (*σωζόμενοι*). Similarly the lost are often called *ἀπολλύμενοι*, who are in process of perishing. In the latter case the idea of a still incomplete process is more often marked by the tense than in the former. The lost may always turn towards salvation; there is always offered to them the opportunity of changing and returning to God; but Paul calls the saved just as frequently "those who have

¹ *λογίζομαι* is a metaphor from the keeping of accounts, and is more characteristic of the Roman than of the Greek thought and writers. It is also perhaps characteristic of the Jewish mind.

been saved" as "who are in process of being saved."¹ There is in the double description of those who are saved the same apparent contradiction of completed and uncompleted process about which we have already spoken. Those who have entered on the process of salvation rarely turn back: those who have put their hand to the plough rarely withdraw: to begin the process of salvation is salvation. On the contrary, those who are in the process of ruin may always return.

In 2 Corinthians iii. 18 the life of the saved is described as a continuous process of transformation from one stage of glory to another. Each step forward in the path towards righteousness attains a higher level and a glory; and this new stage in turns becomes a mere stepping stone to attain the glory beyond and above.

That this idea of growing, or developing, or being perfected, is implicated in all the teaching of Paul as it appeals to us at the present day, must be presumed. Those in whom this idea is the mould for all their thought must find Paul incomprehensible, unless they recognise that all his thought bears the same form. The good life is a process of perfecting (*τελείωσις*) No word in Paul is more lucid or more typical of his teaching than this.

The meaning of the term *τελείωσις* is clearly explained in Romans viii. 29. It is a process of transformation into the likeness or image of Christ, so that men may be His brothers, and He may be the eldest of many brethren. They begin by being unlike Him; they end by being like Him. Such are the first and the final terms in this process. The process itself is defined in the words just quoted from 2 Corinthians iii. 18; it is a series of stages in the gradual

¹ *σεσωσμένοι* Ephesians ii. 5 and 8: *σωζόμενοι* 1 Cor. i. 18, 2 Cor. ii. 15 (compare also Acts ii. 47).

growth of what Paul names "glory," i.e. the glory, the splendour, the nature of God.

In 1 John iii. 2 the two terms of the process are defined thus : " Now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him even as He is." The apparent inconsistency between Paul's statement in Romans viii. 29, that the end of the process is that we become children of God and brothers of Christ, having the likeness of brothers to one another, and John's statement that we are now children of God, is merely another example of what constantly appears when we contemplate the process of growth as Paul describes it. We are in a sense what we are growing to be : we have attained because we shall attain : we possess the righteousness of God because we are developing towards it : our nature is perfected because it is in the process of being perfected : we are the children of God in so far as we are making ourselves His children.

XIV. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SIN.

Since Paul, as we have said, was filled with an intense, flaming passion for righteousness, so it follows that he was filled with an equally intense hatred for sin. The life of man is to him quite as much a struggle to get free from sin, as it is a growing into the righteousness of God. Sin is a force which expresses itself in the deterioration of the individual, and which steadily becomes stronger and more dominant in him. At every step that man takes backwards towards degradation and death, he becomes weaker and less fitted to resist the power of sin that rules him. His nature grows more and more corrupt. His will loses tone, and becomes enslaved to the passions or caprices of the moment.

Moreover, the power of sin increases, not merely in the

individual, but in the family and the race. The stern old Hebrew principle that the iniquity of the father is visited upon the children is only an aspect of this domination of sin. The race deteriorates: the family grows weaker and poorer, and dies out: society and the pressure which it exerts on the individual turn towards evil.

The form in which the power of sin most clearly manifested itself in the Pauline world was idolatry. This he hated with all the strength of his nature, not because idolatry was a philosophic error regarding the nature of God, but because through that error it started mankind on the wrong course towards bad and harmful aims, and became thus the cause of numberless errors and sins. A merely speculative and abstract error about the nature of God might conceivably remain an error in word, not in power, and, if this were so, it need not be very seriously considered; just as a philosophic truth, if it remains abstract and theoretical, a matter of word and not of power, may exert no practical influence and earn no commendation from Paul. But in idolatry the false conception of the Divine nature has become active and misleading, and makes itself a terrible power among men. On this account Paul hated it and fought against it all his life.

All these statements require to be more carefully scrutinised in detail.

Righteousness consists in, and is perfected through, the approach of man nearer and nearer to God. The word "approach" must not be misinterpreted or misapplied. It must be taken as an expression of spiritual truth, not of local character. God is not in one place more than in another. We do not go to any special point or place in order to find Him there. Place is a term of limitation, and can be applied to the illimitable and the infinite only because we have to use the limited ideas and terms of finite existence

for want of more appropriate and correct words. Man approaches to God only in the approximation of his spirit and nature to the spirit and nature of God. He is transformed into the same image from glory to glory ; and as Professor H. A. A. Kennedy says,¹ the likeness is not mere outward appearance, for to Paul the term " image " means appearance that " rests on identity of character, community of being."

Sin, as the contrary idea to righteousness, consists in the movement of man away from God, that is to say, in the increasing divergence of his spirit from that of God, and the increasing opposition between his nature and the nature of God. It is not simply a definite, unchanging fact ; it is a process ; and its character is to become accelerated as it continues.

Moreover, sin is not merely a process ; it is also a force, and it becomes in itself a power ever growing stronger and stronger to draw man away from God. That this is so is evident from the situation of man in relation to God and to the universe. Man is placed in the difficulty of having to re-attain to God. The difficulty is there to be overcome. Through overcoming it the divine element in man is strengthened, and he grows in likeness to God. The difficulty constitutes the opportunity. Only through the possibility of a choice does man learn to exercise his power of choosing the right and rejecting the evil. Thereby his nature is strengthened, and he attains towards real freedom of will. In the strengthening of the will he is strengthening the divine nature within him. The will of God is that man should do good ; and the will or the spirit of God acts in man to make him choose the good.

Thus, on the one hand, it is true to say that the evil in

¹ *St. Paul on the Last Things*, p. 294.

the world exists in order to give man the opportunity of overcoming it and attaining to God. The evil is in this view the measure of man's separation from God; and human life well lived is the traversing of this intervening distance. Without evil there cannot be the human part of the universe, for unless the human is separated from the divine, there would be no humanity and no cognisable universe. From this point of view, then, evil is mere negation, formless and empty distance between man and God. It is the condition of the act of creation; now the nature of God is to create, and without interposing the distance that separates Himself from man He could not create this universe.

Yet, on the other hand, evil which is not overcome is thereby made active. If the will of the man fails and is not strengthened by achievement, it does not remain as before, but is weakened. The nature of the man thus becomes less like the nature of God; the distance by which he is separated from God is widened; and his energy for work in the future is diminished. The widening gap that intervenes between him and God, the loss of sympathy with and desire to attain to God, becomes a power to dominate and enslave his will and control his action. The opportunity which is missed, the possibility of right choice which is not used, leaves behind the omission an inheritance of increased inability to face and overcome the difficulties of the world.

Being now less like unto God, and being further separated from God, through the growth of weakness and idleness, sluggishness and inactivity, man loses some portion of his original endowment and power of comprehending God and good. Such an endowment man possessed in the beginning: what can be known about God was clear at first in his mind and judgment, for this power was the original gift of God to

man.¹ He loses it by not exercising it ; it is clouded and distorted, and the intelligence is darkened.

From all this there result error and misconception of the nature of God ; and thus comes idolatry. The form of idolatry which was most familiar to Paul and to his readers was the representation of the incorruptible God after the image and likeness of corruptible man (as especially among the Greeks), or of birds and quadrupeds (as especially among the Egyptians), and serpents (as was common everywhere).² Instead of contemplating the divine power as it is in its reality, they invented these foolish forms, trying by human skill to compensate for their gradual loss of ability to see God, who was now further removed from them.

It is involved in Paul's view, and this was his inheritance from the ancient and continuous Hebrew conception, that man degenerates through error ; and that man's earliest religious ideas are not so wrong and false as his later conceptions. In other words, the savage man is not the primitive man, but an advanced stage of degradation ; and idolatry in the Greek or the Egyptian or other pagan forms is the result also of degradation from an earlier simplicity which had been nearer the truth.

This Pauline doctrine is not admitted by recent speculations regarding the history of religion and the growth of mythology ; on the contrary, it is a postulate assumed by almost all investigators, that the history of religion is a history of continuous progress. It is not part of our purpose to defend Paul's teaching (for it can defend itself), nor yet to compare it with modern speculative theories ; but it is involved in my design to show that his teaching is reasonable and consistent with modern philosophic views. To do so fully would lead too far at present because it would

¹ Romans i. 19.

² Romans i. 23.

require a complete study of comparative religion and comparative sociology from an unfashionable point of view. There are, however, two or three points that can be stated briefly without fear of contradiction. There is, for example, no possibility of disputing the fact that extreme polytheism is a later development alike in Greece and in Egypt: so much is admitted universally. Behind that extreme polytheism, as it was current in the time of Paul, there lay in many cases the simpler and older religion of the common man—not the philosopher who sought and invented a highly philosophic explanation of polytheism, but the uneducated rustic. This common man was often content to reverence “the God,” to be guided by some vague perception of the will of “the God,” to make vows and prayers to “the God,” and to record a confession of his failure to act according to the will and ritual of “the God.” The ideas and actions of the common man were false and bad in many respects; his training and surroundings from childhood had been calculated to turn his conduct into wrong grooves; but at least his views continued to be in many respects the simple issue of his native intuition, of his intercourse with the phenomena of nature, and of his daily contemplation of those eternal witnesses, the sun and the sky. The deep things of God, the invisible things of God, His everlasting power and divine nature,¹ were only to a small degree within their ken; but they had the beginning of knowledge in their hearts, and they had received too little education to lose hold of the simple beginnings, though they had been trained to misapply these initial conceptions.

In the second place, the modern savage is in some and even in many cases found dwelling amid the remains of a higher civilization. His world and his society have degenerated around him, and his habits and thoughts in

¹ Romans i. 20.

maturity are the product of a long degradation. This situation sets in strong relief the truth of Paul's other opinion, derived from his old Hebrew training, that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. This is a scientific fact of the highest importance. All educated men are now alive to it. All are seeking to find some way to avoid it, or to minimise the evils that arise through it. Something, as we think and hope, could be done to give the children a fairer start, and a more even chance in life; but how ineffective have our efforts been as yet, and how powerless has European civilisation proved to save the children from the consequences of their fathers' guilt.

The stream of life does indeed purify itself as it runs; the punishment of the children in the old Hebrew doctrine lasts to the third and fourth generation; but there are certain causes and consequences that last longer and cause a permanent deterioration of society, or even poison (as physicians say) the springs of life at its source.

Sin cannot be localised or confined to one individual in the succession of the generations. We all suffer through the sins of our parents, and we all transmit the consequence of sin to following generations. Racial guilt is a real and powerful force. The Hebrew teaching is fully justified by experience and science; and Paul, who assumed its truth, was right.

In short, a good life consists in the overcoming of difficulties. Such is the law of nature, or, in other words, the will of God. A difficulty or trial which is not overcome gives an opening to sin. It is the triumph of inertia in the character of the man who fails to do well. His nature ceases to grow, and slips back to weakness and degeneration. The Divine element in him fails and is dulled, whereas by conquering difficulties it would grow stronger and brighter. The progressive development of man, the realisation of

“the chief end of man,” consists in that strengthening of the Divine within him, in the raising it from glory to glory through the stages of life, in the growing sympathy with the place and work of God in the world, and in the consequent identification of one’s personal happiness with the life and triumph of the Divine will.

On the contrary, the force of inertia does not remain constant under failure, but is increased. From being a mere hindrance, it grows into a power actively working on the nature of the man, encouraging his self-conceit (Rom. i. 21), making him more and more selfish and self-centred. He expels from his mind all sense of the divine around him and above him ; and thus he loses the desire to attain to God, and makes his own pleasure or success the end and aim of his life. He substitutes for the true God his own conception of what God is. In ancient times and among uneducated races, he expressed his conception in some external and visible form or symbol ; and thus arose the kind of paganism with which Paul was familiar in the Graeco-Roman world. In more educated races, the false conception of God remains an ideal of some kind, and is special to the individual mind. Such ideals may be, and often are, of a comparatively lofty order, and the life which aims at realising such great ideals partakes of the nobility of its object. The nobler the ideal, the nearer does it approach the nature of the true God, and the more does the life which strives towards this ideal approximate towards the life of the seeker after God. Yet there remains always a certain manifest difference, for the created ideal, lofty as it may be, partakes of the mind which has created it ; and the man who seeks after it is not aiming at an object above himself, but is satisfied with the expression of himself.

The lower kind of paganism, such as St. Paul knew, externalised its own conception of God in a visible form,

which appealed to others, and was almost always common to a whole race, or a tribe, or an association. Along with it there invariably grew up a formal cult and ritual (from which the individual ideal of the higher paganism remained free), because the veneration which is common to a number of persons must frame for its expression a series of actions which are incumbent on all as symbolical of the common purpose. With the ritual grows up a body of priests who know the series of prescribed actions and guide the conduct of ignorant devotees. The passions, the ignorance, the vices and the failings of the multitude, mould the customary ritual, and express themselves in it. The history of paganism, therefore, always becomes a racial degeneration; because paganism is in its nature human and erroneous, and does not seek after the ideal of the true God.

The picture which Paul draws in Romans i. 24 f. of the results of idolatry in the deterioration of moral character in the society of the Græco-Roman world is not exaggerated, provided one remembers that it was not true of every person. There were noble characters in pagan, especially Roman society. There were philosophers, whose life in many respects corresponded to their philosophy. But the general standard of conduct and of judgment was extremely low, and (what was worse) had been deteriorating through recent centuries.

The force of sin in the form of idolatry was peculiarly one which worked on a race through the generations, and caused a steadily progressive deterioration in the social standards of conduct for the individual and of moral judgment generally. Paul had seen this progressive deterioration in the Graeco-Roman world, and traced it to its cause. The pagans themselves were fully alive to it, and described it in almost equally strong terms; but they did not trace it to the same cause as Paul did, though they saw something of the truth. Lucretius ascribes this deterioration and un-

happiness to religion : " Human life lay foully prostrate upon earth crushed down under the weight of religion " : the " victory over religion brings man level with heaven " : and therefore " we must well grasp the principle of things above " in order to see the world aright, and to realise how " great are the evils to which religion could prompt." ¹

All this Paul could and might have said in almost the same words ² as Lucretius ; yet the meaning which he put in them would be totally different. Lucretius would eliminate all religion, and relegate all gods to the lucid interspace of world and world, where they live at ease and neither care nor think about men ; and would substitute for belief in any personal God the study of " the principle of things above, the force by which everything on earth proceeds." In this case, where Paul might adopt the philosopher's most typical words, we must recognise that (as was stated in Section XI.) he was not so diametrically opposed to philosophy as he was to idolatry, and that in suitable circumstances he would have felt himself free (as at Athens) to rest his argument to certain minds on the philosophical basis, and show that this basis was only a stage on the way to the fuller truth.

Such is the order of the universe, and the universe is the embodiment and expression of the will of God. The progress of man towards God, i.e. salvation, according to the will and intention of God, is the consummation of the Divine love. Conversely, the retrogression of man away from God, his growing unlikeness towards God and his increasing inability to comprehend the will and nature of God, is the consummation of the Divine wrath. Hence " the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

¹ Lucretius i. 65-126.

² Naturally, Paul would use the term " superstition," where Lucretius speaks of " religion " ; but all religion was superstition to Lucretius, and he would not have objected to the use of the more opprobrious term.

unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness"; and this wrath is manifested against them, because they go wrong in spite of the knowledge of God which by nature they possess. (Romans i. 18).

This "wrath of God" can be defined more clearly when we compare the expression "day of wrath"; and it is rightly treated by Professor H. A. A. Kennedy¹ as an equivalent expression (though used from a different point of view) to the other terms, "destruction," "perdition," etc., which express the lot of the sinful. The inference from it is clear that there is only one power in the universe, that all proceeds from God, that sin is permitted in the purpose of God and is a fact and condition of His created universe "The creation" (i.e. the universe as created) "was subjected to vanity" (i.e. to failure in attaining the ultimate purpose intended by God), "not of its own will" (i.e. not because it deliberately and intentionally aims at and desires to fail), "but by reason of Him who subjected it" (i.e. because this is a stage in the evolution of the purpose of God), "in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." I should venture to gather from this that in Paul's conception the failure is temporary and the vanity is evanescent, "the evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound,"—but that this is so only when we take wider view of the universal purpose of the Creator. There shall be a new heaven and a new earth²; but these come only after a great lapse of time in the movement of the ages.

In the life of individuals the purpose of God has not the width of scene necessary for perfecting itself. That purpose

¹ *St. Paul on the Last Things*, p. 313: "the terms which he employs to denote the fate of the unbelieving are *θλεθρος*, *θάνατος*, *φθορά*, *ἀπώλεια*, *ἀπόλλυσθαι*, *ὀργή*."

² Second Peter iii. 13, Revelation xxi. 1.

works on a greater scale and through a wider sweep of time. The individual man, therefore, does not in Paul's view fill up a complete cycle of time ; but is only a unit in a greater whole, or, so to say, a link in a long chain ; and the Divine works itself out through a cycle vastly longer than the life of the individual. Paul had not wholly separated himself from the old Hebrew point of view, that the Promise of God is given to the race not to the individual, that the Divine purpose works itself out in the nation, and that the individual cannot be regarded as a complete and independent part of the scheme of the universe, but is merely a unit and part of the race.

May we not see in this a hint respecting the direction in which Paul would have proceeded, if he had been called up to explain the fate of the sinful individual and to reconcile this with the good purpose of God and the necessary triumph of that purpose ? I do not presume to run the risk of seeming to put words into the mouth of Paul, or to suggest groundless hypotheses as to the way in which he would have explained what in his letters he has not found occasion to explain. Yet there is sufficient reason to assert that he had not wholly cut himself off from the Hebrew view (a view characteristically Oriental), that the individual must be judged in his family and his tribe and above all in his nation. We are in modern time, perhaps, too apt in the West to think only of the individual and his single life and his single fate, and to interpret Paul as if he were wholly of our mind in this way of looking solely at the single being as a complete entity and never regarding him as a part of the race, whose destiny ultimately controls and overrides his fate.

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