

again. Hatch's book came out, and—almost incredible to say—one found oneself looking at it all from a new point of view. All the old familiar scenery presented itself at a somewhat different angle and at a new perspective; one felt oneself drawn and bound to make a new reckoning with all the old authorities, and make a new estimate of results. Now it does not matter at all to my present purpose, though it should be pleaded that Dr. Hatch looked too exclusively from the side on which he thus approached the object—saw things a little too exclusively in that peculiar light. Very likely. I am myself disposed to think and say so. Only it must be observed that was in a manner his business. It was his special contribution. But let it be so. The important thing was that it was a new aspect—a new line of approach, a new connection of facts and principles, a new road by which to come down on the old positions. It was a remarkable coincidence that just then the *Διδαχῆ* fell in, to complete and confirm the impression that there was really something new.

And I repeat this was not a work of mere eccentric guess-making. It was the fruit of solid first-hand learning in a man who made fresh pathways through the forests of antiquity, and who, I repeat it once more, wherever he came applied a fresh eye.

He remained only long enough to let us see that he was able to perform similar service for us in many another region of ecclesiastical research. He would have taught us, or forced us, to open our minds to sides of things heretofore overlooked. I repeat that I do not pretend always to have been in perfect sympathy with his modes of thinking. But I respected his thoroughness, his first-hand independence; I appreciated his freshness of vision, and I mourn his loss.

Students and divines may own something animating in feeling that the actual strain and exertion of mind, goes on with reference to the

great and various themes which are the objects of our science. If notable labourers are passing away, still their work admonishes us that more work remains to do, for all that has been spoken of is only a part—these various labours only so many fragments—of the great work which the Church has in hand, in so far as it is her mission to confront the inquiring and labouring human mind with just views and just impressions of the great history of redemption. Other animating influences there are, in the discoveries of fresh material which are being made, and in the feeling, impossible to resist, that we may be, must be, on the verge of more. Some day the five books of Papias, some day the book on heresies of Justin Martyr, some day Hegeppus may turn up. Anything may turn up, and set us all agoing afresh. There are also sources of a deeper interest, and reasons for a graver enthusiasm. We are passing through a time in which there is in a sense a co-operative effort to sift Christianity, its books, its doctrines, its methods, its fruits, down to the very last fibre, by the same methods and with the same severity with which any other religion would be tested. In that effort, believers, as well as unbelievers, are engaged with a tacit consent—carrying on what must be, what cannot help being, processes of dissection on objects which involve the most living and the most sacred of interests. I have not a word to say against the inevitableness, the necessity, the obligation that this process should go on, and the final advantage that many come by it; though perhaps much needs to be laid to heart as to the spirit in which we may take part in it. But it creates a very peculiar form of experience for the Church of Christ. And if it is to be happily traversed, a succession of grave and earnest thinkers and students must be looked for, who will carry down to the future the best qualities of those who have been taken away.

Q Suggested Exposition of Reb. xiii. 18.

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IT may seem a wild idea to make another attempt to explain the six hundred three score and six of Rev. xiii. 18; but I hope I may be read before being condemned.

It seems to me, then, that Hengstenberg makes a very wise suggestion on the subject, but does not draw the right conclusion. "Here," he remarks, "we must not wander after our own imaginations. The Seer of the Apocalypse lives entirely in Holy Scripture. On this territory, therefore, is the solution of the sacred riddle to be sought." He then goes on to find in the name of Adonikam, whose

"sons," or rather descendants, in Ezra ii. 13, are given as six hundred sixty and six in number. But may I call attention to that number in 1 Kings x. 14, where it represents the number of talents of gold which came to Solomon in one year. The luxury and extravagance thus brought in corrupted the heart of the king himself, who, considered the model of wisdom, gave way, led astray by wealth and its consequences, to wickedness and idolatry in his old age. May not the number in question there represent worldliness and covetousness, of which Christ our Lord taught us so especially to take heed and beware.

Additional probability is given to this by the preceding verse in Revelation (xiii. 17), where the votaries of this are described as the worshippers of the beast and of his image.