

manifesto. If we are on his side, we seek to know what most to emphasise and how best to make it felt. If we are on the other side, we seek to understand the enemy's most entrenched position or ward his most effective weapon. In this volume we have the Newcastle Programme of the Reformation Party in the Church of England. And yet Archdeacon Sinclair disclaims party leadership and party warfare. It is true we have here chapters on "The Benefits of the Reformation"; on "The Principles of the Reformation"; on "The Use and Meaning of the word Catholic"; on "The Meaning and Use of the word Protestant"; on "Fasting Communion"; on "The Invocation of Saints"; and on "Mitres." But we also have chapters on "Our Unhappy Divisions" and on "Forbearance in Disagreement." He would have no parties in the Church if he could. But since he must have the Reformation, he cannot help himself, and he cannot help his leadership. So this is the Newcastle Manifesto; but there is more in it, and it is more momentous to you and me.

THE NEW ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON. (*Nisbet*. Crown 8vo, pp. xxii, 451.) The somewhat considerable cost of this book is due to the addition of a large coloured map of the religions of the world, which is excellently printed on linen. The map alone would have cost the money if it had been issued alone. So we shall not grudge the price. As for the book, it is the work of a great mission enthusiast, and it is full of startling things. In style it is a trifle rhetorical, which was the less necessary, as the subject is itself so instinct with true eloquence. But it is the republication of a course of lectures, and Dr. Pierson calls it "the

marvels of modern missions," so that some space for rhetoric must be allowed him.

NISBET'S SCRIPTURE HANDBOOKS. THE BOOK OF JUDGES. BY CHARLES LETT FELTOE, M.A. (*Nisbet*. Crown 8vo, pp. xii, 91.) We already have a commentary on the Book of Judges of this scope, and the comparison is instructive. Mr. Feltoe names some authorities he has used, but he does not name Dr. Sutherland Black's little book. For he distinctly says that he has "aimed at stating what is fairly certain though old, rather than what is still doubtful though new." And if one, writing "for the instruction of boys and girls," can do that without retarding knowledge, one is certainly right to do it. The book follows the series. First a sketch of the history, say of each chapter, then notes on the text, and a practical set of "Examination Questions" at the close.

THE BIBLE BY MODERN LIGHT. BY CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE, D.D., LL.D. (*Nisbet*. Crown 8vo, pp. 462.) This is the fifth volume of the new edition of Dr. Cunningham Geikie's "Hours with the Bible." It has already been said that the new edition is new enough to explain the new title. This volume covers the period in the history of Israel from Manasseh to Hezekiah—a period full of magnificent contrasts. Unapproachable goodness and unutterable degradation crowd one another into incredible space and time, till at the last the suspended sword falls. There is no need of artifice to make this story interesting, the writer has but to let it tell itself. And that Dr. Geikie very well does. It is as convenient an epitome of this period as we have, and it is well illustrated from contemporary sources.

The Symbolism of the "Divina Commedia."

BY ELEANOR F. JOURDAIN.

DANTE'S *Divina Commedia* is a parable as well as a poem, and is open, as the poet himself has taught us, to more than one interpretation. If we look upon it as a record of the experience of an individual soul, we see that Dante points his parable for dramatic purposes by the introduction of symbolic characters and scenery. If, on the

other hand, we look upon it as an attempt to state the relation of humanity to the Power, the Wisdom, and the Love of God, we then see that the poem is itself a symbol; an image of a truth too mysterious for direct expression. It is with this twofold aspect of the *Divina Commedia* that we are now concerned.

I. The figures introduced into the poem often symbolise ideas. Thus Judgment and Discipline, human Wisdom and Divine Love, are living actors in the drama; and Dante, for the purpose of giving adequate expression to these and other conceptions, has pressed into his service all times, all places; the world of reality and the world of mythology. Thus, side by side with portraits drawn from contemporary Italian life, we have figures that have come down to the poet from his intellectual ancestry. If Charon, Cerberus, Minos play their parts as officials in the Christian Hell, and Apollo and the Muses are invoked throughout the poem, the fact does but point to the presence in literature of ideas which have become indissolubly associated with certain forms of expression, and embodied in mythical personalities.

Yet where Dante only speaks the ordinary language of literature, the words, as he uses them, have a strange new force. The myths, *e.g.*, that had grown up round the story of the shadowy underworld of Greek and Roman literature still survive in the *Divina Commedia*, but a change has come over them. They are, in the first place, all subordinated to the Christian idea. The classical underworld reappears as the lowest of the three Divine kingdoms; the gods and goddesses who reigned there have lost their prestige, and figure as types and emblems along the path of the Christian poet; the furies and monsters have lost their power, and are now mere officials in Hell. In the second place, new meanings are often forced out of, or applied to, the old stories. The darkness of the underworld is made typical of sin, not merely of separation from the daylight life; the rivers which water that unknown land are endowed with new and horrible characteristics, bearing a direct reference to the sins punished in the country through which they flow. The black marsh of the Styx imprisons the angry and sullen; the blood-red Phlegethon, the violent; in the dim frozen lake of Cocytus dwell the cruel and the treacherous. So, too, the appearance and characteristics of the personages of the classical underworld have undergone a change. They act both as types and guardians of the circles in which they occupy subordinate positions. Thus Pluto¹ appears as the "accursed wolf," the cruel ravening monster placed at the entrance of the circle in which the avaricious are punished. Cerberus is no longer the guardian of the whole realm:

¹ In the *Divina Commedia* indistinguishable from Plutus.

his three heads may have suggested to Dante the idea of using him as an emblem of gluttony, and he accordingly guards the circle of the gluttons. The Centaurs, types of a "violence which is half-bestial," shoot at the miserable souls who try to escape from the river of blood in which they are immersed; the foul Harpies, "snatchers of souls," guard the circle of the suicides. Geryon, king of the Red Islands of Sunset, who is described by the poets as having three bodies (with reference perhaps either to his great strength or to his triple kingdom),² is thought by Dante to be worse than double-faced, since he can look three ways at once. He is, therefore, accepted by the poet as a fitting emblem of fraud. In this character he is furnished with the face of a righteous man, and a forked and poisonous tail of variegated colours.

When we leave the regions of Hell for Purgatory, we find that the guardians of the terraces there are angels, and represent not, as in Hell, the sin, but the contrary virtue to the crime for which the soul is suffering punishment. They are emblems of the perfection, in that one particular, of the human nature which the sinner has degraded by his crime. If he has sinned through pride, the angel wears the white garment of holiness, and his face is "as the tremulous morning star."³ If envy has closed his eyes to the "light of Heaven," the angel is a vision full of heavenly light. If anger has shadowed love with "gloom of Hell," the angel flashes upon the sight "like a new day," and his very form is "veiled by excess of light." The spirit who has sinned through sloth sees an image of aspiration in the swan's wings of the angel; the avaricious and prodigal lie prostrate on the earth while an angel points the way upward to those who have expiated their sin; the gluttonous see a type of the penetrating power of immaterial delights in the angel who strikes upon their senses "like the fragrance of a May morning"; to the sensual is granted the vision of one so pure as to pass unscathed through fire, singing as he goes "in a far more living voice than ours."⁴ In the same way the angel, who, at the foot of the mountain, guards

² See Butler on the *Inferno*.

³ This angel is thus, perhaps, a symbol of the undimmed brightness and purity from which Lucifer, the "Morning Star," fell when he gave way to the sin of pride. See Isa. xiv. 12, the words of which were considered by early theologians to apply to Satan.

⁴ The same idea is carried out by the instances of special virtues continually brought before the notice of each separate

the gate through which each soul must pass to its purification, wears the ash-coloured garments of humility.

In Paradise the symbolic characters are fewer. The nine heavens are presided over by the nine orders of angels, instead of by the sibyls of Greek literature, and the only symbolic figure (if we may call it so) introduced is the Eagle in the Sixth Heaven. The emblem of imperial rule is here used as a type of power no longer earthly, but Divine. That this "apotheosis of the personified Empire" should be found in the Heaven of the Just is quite in character with the teaching of the "Paradiso." As in Hell the spirits are confronted with types of the sins they have committed; as in Purgatory they see types of the virtues in which they have failed; so in Paradise the spirits have themselves become types of the virtues most consonant with their characters while on earth. St. Peter has not lost his impetuosity, nor St. John his fire; and it is St. Thomas who warns Dante against believing too readily in what he does not see. But we are meant, I think, to understand that in Paradise the characteristics which were theirs in the earthly life are purged of sin and transplanted to a higher and more spiritual level. The saints are not dehumanised spirits, but spirits in whom individuality can be seen at its highest point of perfection and beauty.

II. If we attempt to look at the *Divina Commedia* as a whole, we cannot help being struck by the fact that whatever was Dante's belief as to the after-life, in whatever way he used the orthodox theology of the day to express his convictions, he had a finer end in view than to realise for the world the terrors of Hell, the pain and peace of Purgatory, or the bliss of Paradise. For in his mind the three kingdoms were themselves symbols—symbols of the unseen life which is actually being lived by us all. Our knowledge of this life may be dim or clear,—it is always limited,—but it is only in the vision of it, as seen side by side with the material life, that the problem of our human existence can be solved. There are many instances of this belief of Dante's in the twofold life of man. Some of the characters introduced into the poem are men who were alive at the time when the action of the poem is supposed to take place. Dante refers to their spiritual state as one hidden group of sinners, and also by the Beatitudes sung in the different circles.

from themselves and from their friends. He himself, the living poet, passes through the kingdoms of the dead, and "gains the other life." There he learns how the spirits awake after death to a consciousness of the state in which they have long been living. He learns, too, that in the after-life the moral qualities of a man are a counterpart of those which distinguished him on earth. "Such as I was living, am I dead," says the mighty and arrogant spirit of Capaneus. He sees that only in the after-life can the consequences of sin or holiness be clearly traced. The spirit of Mosca, mangled by fiends for having caused strifes and dissensions upon earth, finds his doctrine, "a thing done has an end," disproved by Hell. Sometimes the consequences of sin are all the more terrible since they are hidden from our bodily eyes. For did not Branca d'Oria eat and drink and sleep and wear clothes in the sunny Italian world while his spirit was in the blue ice of the traitors' Hell? Was not the spirit of Frate Alberigo there, his eyes stiffened by salt frozen tears, while his passive body, yet living and moving in the world above, was controlled by a demon? Of the retribution, Dante teaches, the living body of the sinner may be indeed unconscious, but the penalty is being exacted all the same. The supernatural as well as the natural world is governed by fixed law.¹

It is to such symbolism as this that we must look for an explanation of Dante's purpose in the poem. For, using the high privilege of the poet, he refuses to take an ordinary view of human life and its relation to God. He strives, we may almost say, to look at sin from the point of view of the All-Pure, at things temporal from the point of view of the Eternal. He therefore expects nothing less than an ideal life from man. He never balances good against evil deeds, nor assigns to a man a place according to his average worth. Where anyone fails, there the punishment must fall. "If one fails," says Beatrice, "needs must he fall from his high estate." Thus the examples of punishment given to us typify the result of separate actions in a man's life, not of their sum total. Of the complex-

¹ It is, of course, a very familiar thought with Dante that the spiritual lot of the shades in Purgatory, and of human beings still living on earth, may be modified by intercessory prayer. The strengthening of the will, and its union with Infinite Goodness by the power of prayer, may, Dante believes, modify a condition which by the moral law must remain unchanged until the Nemesis it has brought upon itself be fulfilled.

ity of life and motives Dante can take no account, nor does he give us the consecutive history of a single human soul save his own; and that takes the form of a pilgrimage through Hell and Purgatory in turn to Paradise.

Thus we are forbidden to consider any one part of the poem independently, for it would be "not only unintelligible but untrue" without the others. Everywhere we have the mystical inweaving of the thought of the Trinity. Hell, Purgatory, and Para-

dise sum up the life of man: the Power, the Wisdom, and the Love that reign in those three kingdoms sum up—as far as man can conceive it—the "Justice"¹ of God.

¹ Dante, following Aristotle, distinguishes between human and universal (or, as Dante re-names it, Divine) Justice. This Divine Justice Dante further defines as the aspect in which God is manifested in His relation to man; the other aspect is that of Absolute Holiness; and the two taken together make up the idea of Divine Perfection.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF II. CORINTHIANS.

"Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Cor. iv. 16-18 (R.V.).

EXPOSITION.

"Wherefore."—The apostle now resumes the assertion of his determination to bear up against his trials, which he had begun to unfold in iv. 1; and, as in the preceding verses (10-15) he had gradually passed from his daily troubles to the consideration of death itself, so here he passes gradually from the daily dissolution of his outward frame by long hardships and infirmities, to its total dissolution by death (iv. 16-18, v. 1-10).—STANLEY.

"Our outward man."—The contrast here drawn between the "outward" and the "inward man," though illustrated by the contrast in Rom. vii. 22 between the "law of the members" and "the inner man," and in Eph. iv. 22, Col. iii. 9 between "the old man" and "the new man," is not precisely the same. Those contrasts relate to the difference between the sensual and the moral nature, "the flesh" and "the spirit"; this to the difference between the material and the spiritual nature.—STANLEY.

"Is decaying."—"Is being wasted away," "is being worn out." He is not as yet speaking of

dissolution by death, but only of gradual approximation to it.—ALFORD.

"Our inward man."—The life he has in view is not the *soul-life* where sense and feeling are the predominant powers; it is not the *mind-life*, where the understanding rules and seeks to reduce within categorical formulas the true, the beautiful, and the good. It is the *spirit-life*, in which the divinely-quickened and illuminated intelligence gazes upon the invisible, realises the ideal, and embraces the supernatural—the life that men live by faith, which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—LINDSAY ALEXANDER.

"Is renewed."—"Is made new," "receives new powers." Compare Col. iii. 10; Rom. xii. 2; Tit. iii. 5.—STANLEY.

"Day by day."—In point of sense, *for ever and ever*, without interruption or standing still.—MEYER.

"Our light affliction."—More accurately, "the present lightness of our affliction." This is at once more literally in accord with the Greek, and better sustains the balanced antithesis of the clauses.—PLUMPTRE.

"More and more exceedingly."—The Greek phrase is adverbial: "worketh for us exceedingly, exceedingly." After the Hebrew idiom of expressing intensity by the repetition of the same word (used of this very word "exceedingly" in Gen. vii. 19, xvii. 2), he seeks to accumulate one phrase upon another, to express his sense of the immeasurable glory which he has in view.—PLUMPTRE.

Affliction worketh *glory*; our *light* affliction