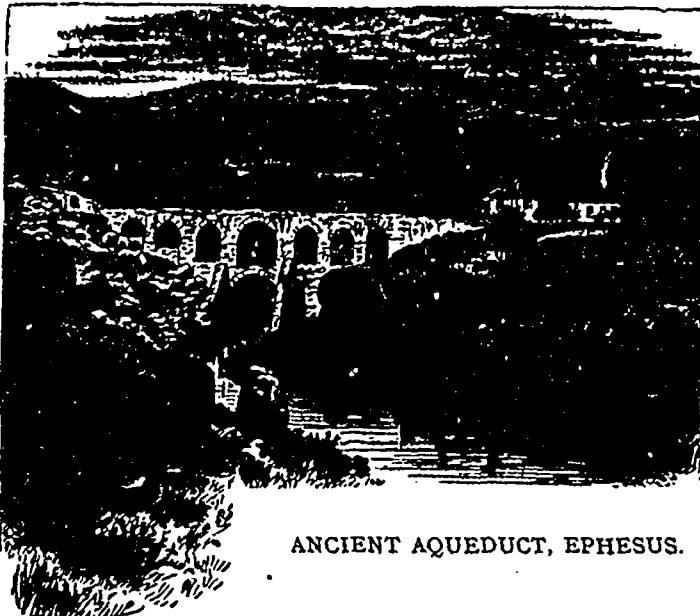




ANCIENT AQUEDUCT, EPHEBUS.

insidiously or temptingly they may be presented?

This was what the Church at Ephesus did, but yet she was far from being perfect. The voice of complaint is raised against her, and it comes with a pathos and force all the stronger because of her many bright spots and commendable deeds. "Nevertheless," the message goes on to say, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Here is the sad picture of a people who could hate the wickedness and unreality that they saw in others, while they themselves were trembling in the balance of right and wrong, and were hastening headlong upon a course which would involve their own extinction! For the solemn warning is, "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

And yet how true this is to life! There are many men ready to hate sin as they see it in others, while they will not hate that particular sin which is dragging themselves down to ruin. It is the story of Ephesus over again. They can hate the Nicolaitanes, while they themselves are falling from their first love.

The Church of Ephesus was growing cold. She had left her first love. Her first love was God, and the Saviour; it was virtue and Heaven. From this she was drifting away: she was leaving her first love.

And modern Churches and individual Christians are doing the same thing. Churches have settled down to a supreme selfishness, without one thought of missionary work or primitive energy. Individuals have left their first, fresh thoughts of God and salvation, thoughts which came to them in their younger days, with their

confirmation, with their first communion. Where are these all now? Withered, it may be, and gone—decayed by a process of decline. We say of some diseases that their unhappy victims have gone into decline. There is first the shrinking from exercise, then the hectic flush and the tell-tale cough, followed by gradual sinking and the final close of all. There is the same kind of decline in spiritual matters, and its result must be fatal. It will be as stated with much solemnity to the Church at Ephesus, "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

And this points out the effort for regaining the old paths which lead to God. It will be an effort; it will be a struggle. But then to him who *overcometh* there will be this reward:

"I will give to him to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

The history of mankind began in paradise. There it was that man lost his high position, and there it was that God found him, bleeding with his wounds and gave him hopes of another paradise, a place of rest from which the wicked will be forever expelled. And that paradise has been already reached, but it has been reached by those who have "overcome." They conquered the world, the flesh, and the devil; they conquered covetousness and deceit; they conquered their evil nature, and now they rest in Jesus Christ the Son of God, awaiting their final triumph and glory in Heaven.

MODERN CHURCH HISTORY.

I.—THE RESTORATION PERIOD.

BY REV. C. W. E. BODY, D.C.L., PROVOST OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

FEW decades in English history can rival in interest that from 1660 to 1670. Those ten years saw the English Church and monarchy re-established, they were marked by the great fire of London and the great plague; they were years, too, of great literary and scientific development; witness the establishment of the Royal Society for scientific research, and the publication of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, works which will never be forgotten wherever the English tongue is spoken. The special task allotted to me is, however, to trace the history of the Church through the eventful period of her restoration.