

on May-day of that year "came the Queen into the chapterhouse to be received into the Society" as a kind of honorary member of the convent. It was in Winchester Cathedral that the marriage of Philip and Mary took place, and the chair in which she sat is still to be seen in the church. The Stuart kings loved the place; here in the great rebellion was enacted that strange scene when, after the capture of the city, the mob rushed into the Cathedral, wild for booty and mischief, and finding in the chests nothing but bones, are said to have amused themselves by throwing them at the stained windows.

THE CANTICLES AT MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER.

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I.—THE 'TE DEUM.'

(Continued.)

[4] Let us pass now to some deeper thoughts. And first we may observe how this "best of hymns," "this true prayer, yet mingled with praise," brings out the connection between the Old and New Testaments. The heaven-and-earth-joining seraphim of Isa. vi. 6, and the stern justico-ministering cherubim of Ezekiel, are joined with the innumerable company, with the living creatures, representing the worship of God by the whole creation, and the twenty-four elders, representing the Patriarchal and Apostolic Churches, in the common song of adoration and praise. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." And again, the goodly fellowship of the prophets is joined with Apostles and white-robed martyrs in the praise of God. And, further, when in the closing verses the Church offers her prayers to Jesus Christ, she does so in Old Testament words taken from the Psalms.

This close connection of the two great parts of the Bible admits of extended study. To trace the gradual unfolding of the Messianic promise until its accomplishment in Jesus Christ is a work of very great interest, and one which, if we pursue it, will bring its reward. We shall be following the lead of our Lord Himself, and of St. Peter and St. Paul; and as we go on with it we shall not wonder at the character stamped upon the Old Testament by our seventh Article, which says, "The Old Testament is not contrary to the New, for both in the Old and New Testaments everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ." The study of the Old Testament in the light of the New will help to strengthen our faith, it will throw light on some difficulties, and solve, or help to solve, some of those problems, which will again and again recur to our minds in thinking of God's dealings with mankind. And we shall assuredly find that the spiritual teaching of the Old Testament will come continually more into prominence, so that difficulties of numbers, of genealogies, of commands, of dates and of authorship, of which so much has been made by some, will sink as continually into the background, and into a wondrous insignificance. Only let our prayer be, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

[5] A second thought in regard to the 'Te Deum' is the wonderful way in which it helps us to realise the oneness of creation. 'All things,' to use St. Paul's words, 'were created by Him and for Him,' and the 'Te Deum' unites all, earth and heaven, angels and all the heavenly powers with Apostles and Prophets, Martyrs, and the whole Church, in one grand chorus and burst of praise. The brothers Hubert and John Van Eyck surely must have had the 'Te Deum' continually in their minds as

they painted their great picture of the Adoration of the Lamb.* Sometimes, yes sometimes, in those deeper moments to which none of us are entirely strangers, there comes a conviction that we are sharing, in our poor weak way, with the one great song. We seem, if only for a brief moment, to have seen the glory, and to have stood amongst the throng ranged in ever-lengthening lines on either side of the throne. For a moment, the veil, often so thick and dark and impenetrable, has seemed to be withdrawn. We could have said with St. Peter, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here;' the Unseen and the Seen have been brought very near. 'Ye are come,' says the Apostle to the Hebrews, 'ye are come to . . . an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.†

[6] And this inspired Word leads us on to another thought—the real oneness of the Church, triumphant and militant. Think over those four verses about the glorious company; the goodly fellowship; the noble, or white-robed army; the Holy Church, and you will no longer imagine them as separated; all will become a living body, working for the one Lord. The world beyond the veil will be peopled with no idle host, satisfied with having attained themselves, but with living, sympathetic, fellow-creatures with ourselves, anxious still for the spread of their Lord's kingdom upon earth, and praying still, as we are praying here, 'Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' Hence we are able to grasp the idea of the continuity of life; the life *there* is begun *here*. Death and the grave do not break its continuity, they simply change its sphere of operation and of work. The life beyond, indeed, is still a life of imperfection, because it is a life in which the soul, to use St. Paul's words, is unclothed from the body, and awaits its re-clothing, but it is a life nevertheless. St. Paul speaks of it as a being "present with the Lord." Some there, are spoken of as already 'just men made perfect,' and some can still receive and appropriate truth, for our Lord, in the interval between His death and resurrection, went and preached to the spirits in prison.‡

And if there is life, there is work: work is a condition of life. But it is work under spiritual conditions. What those may be, we, who as yet see all things in an enigma, do not know. But it is work. It was the persuasion of Pascal that if there were no work in the Unseen Place for souls to do, it would be a turning of heaven into hell. But necessarily the conditions will be changed. Here, the best of work is marred by imperfection, it is done amidst difficulties of many kinds. 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread' is true in the widest sense. But there the work will be continued apart from these hindrances: it will be of that kind which, when compared with the work here, may indeed be described as rest, 'They rest from their labours.' As long as the work of creation was incomplete 'the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters,' and then, when the heaven and the earth were made, God *rested* from all the work, which He had created and made. Nevertheless our Lord says, 'My Father worketh hitherto.' Of such a kind, rest and yet work, work and yet rest, is the life of the disembodied spirit.

[7] This thought again suggests to us an answer to the question which so naturally arises when we see a life, young perhaps, and full of promise, or a life in its prime, doing great work

of usefulness amongst men, suddenly cut short, prematurely taken, as we are apt to say. Yet if the life is continuous the scene of its work only is changed, it is still making progress towards the perfect man, towards 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,' and still exercising its influence on the things temporal here. 'The influence, the preaching, the ministrations,' to quote some recent and very suggestive words, 'are not stopped, they are only transferred to another sphere, to be continued with intensified energy under spiritual conditions, though no material ear may hear the voice, no mortal hand shall feel the touch.'

[8] Again, where there is life the Giver of life cannot be absent. In St. John's vision the seven lamps of fire are before the throne, representing the energising power in its seven-fold completeness, of the Holy Spirit. All the work going on there, in heaven, is animated and sustained by the One Spirit. Therefore the Lord's words are being fulfilled there as well as here. 'He shall guide you into all truth.'

[9] And so the whole universal Church is moving on unto perfection: there continuously: here, by slow painful steps, which sometimes seem as if they were backward. Meanwhile, the whole Church, in heaven and on earth, is acknowledging her Divine Master to be the Lord, and each section of it is doing its work, accomplishing the 'service of God.'

[10] This, then, is what we learn from these verses of the 'Te Deum.' They give us the great truth, which we English people have perhaps, in these later centuries, been slow to learn, of a Church at once triumphant and militant, and yet all one in Christ Jesus. They give it to us in outline, we can fill in the detail for ourselves. And we can add to the somewhat scanty list of our calendar other names, names of later days, not unworthy to be classed with the great names of antiquity, and perhaps also the names of one or two who are now amidst the waiting, yet learning and working throng, but whose sweet examples and holy lives were a strength to us in the past days.

[11] We may add another thought. We cling to this life, it seems natural to do so. We see around us many things working out the great purpose of God, and we long to see how it will end, and yet we know that before that end comes we shall be gathered to our fathers. But there is the thought, that, after all, that other life, from which perhaps we are shrinking, has an infinitely wider sphere of action, with a reach and a scope to which we are here entire strangers, and yet, if we pass into it, we shall have our share in that greater work, and in that far wider world.

[12] Turning now to the latter part of this great hymn we are impressed with its glorious note of triumph, 'Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.' If, as we have seen reason to suppose, the 'Te Deum' owes its origin to very early days, the times of danger and persecution, how we seem to hear the Christians, awaiting their cruel death in the arena, encouraging one another with these triumphant words. And then the tone is lowered, and the Divine example of humility, set forth in the Incarnation, is commemorated. But only as a prelude to more rejoicing, and our faith is quickened, and our spiritual sense aroused as we think of that sharpness of death overcome, of the opened kingdom, of that glory which Jesus our Lord had with the Father before the world was.

[13] Yet, though redemption has been wrought, and that by the precious blood of Christ, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,"* there is a judgment to come, for all must stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Our song of triumph, therefore, changes into prayer, 'We therefore pray Thee help Thy ser-

* In the Cathedral of St. Bavon, at Ghent, Hubert Van Eyck was born 1366, died 1426; John Van Eyck, born 1370, died 1441.

† Heb. xii., 22-23.

‡ I Pot. iii., 18-19.

* I Pot. i., 19.