

BE KIND.

Oh, who can measure kindness
Or estimate its worth?
'Tis the strongest link which binds us
Together here on earth.

No riches can obtain it,
However vast they be,
'Tis lovely without telling
When found in purity.

It is the willing service
Of love within the heart,
Which rises all unbidden
And hath no counterpart;

The healing touch in sickness,
The loving words we speak
In moments of deep sorrow,
When we to comfort seek.

The poorest of God's creatures
Full often doth possess,
In overflowing measure,
The power to help and bless.

THE GOSPEL AND APOCALYPSE OF PETER.

BY DR. J. E. GASQUET.

Documents belongs to the first ages of Christianity continue to be discovered in such abundance as to suggest a providential design in their being withheld until our own day. The apology of Aristides was almost immediately followed by a very early apocryphal correspondence between St. Paul and the Corinthians, found both at Milan and Leon; and this in turn has been succeeded by a much more important discovery, made in the following circumstances. The French Government, as is well-known, maintains at Cairo a "Mission Archeologique" to examine the antiquities that abound in Egypt. In the course of his investigations, the Director, M. Bouriant, opened the tomb of a medieval monk at Akhmin, and found in it two Greek manuscripts. One of these was a ready-reckoner for the use of trades-men, but the other—a small parchment volume—proved of greater interest. Two-thirds of it consisted of extracts from the apocryphal Book of Enoch, which for the first time supplied a considerable part of the original text, hitherto only known in an Ethiopic translation. The remaining eight pages were found to contain fragments of a Gospel and of an apocalyptic vision; and it is to these that the attention of students has been chiefly directed.

Several monographs have appeared on the subject during the last few months in this country and on the continent; among which Father Lucas's very able and scholarly article in *The Month* should be particularly mentioned here. Within the last few weeks, Professor Harnack has published an edition of these fragments, illustrated from his great knowledge of Early Christian literature, and containing many suggestions from other scholars, as well as a popular account in the *Preussische Jahrbücher*. The time seems, therefore, to have arrived for bringing the chief results of so much research before the general reader.

1. The Gospel fragment professes to be written by "Simon Peter," and it therefore at once suggests that it is a portion of that apocryphal "Gospel of Peter," which has long been lost, but of which there are a few scanty notices in Origen and Eusebius. The former writer quotes it as stating that the brethren of Our Lord were the sons of St. Joseph by a previous marriage; while the latter includes it among the spurious works which were the production of heretics. He has also preserved a letter of Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, at the beginning of the third century, from which it seems that the book was used by the Catholics of a town in Cilicia. Serapion at first permitted it, but on closer examination found it to contain much that favored those heretics whom "we call Decetæ," and condemned it.

The fragment is only a small part of the Gospel, in length equal to about sixty-four verses. It begins abruptly with Pilate's washing his hands, and ends eight days after the Resurrection at the Sea of Galilee. The narrative which it contains differs considerably from the Canonical Gospels; the chief points of divergence being the following: Pilate is acquitted of all complicity in our Lord's death, the whole responsibility being thrown upon the Jews and on Herod, who appears as His Judge. He is represented as silent on the Cross—"as one suffering naught"—until the last moment. His bones are ordered not to be broken, "in order that He might die in torments." At the last moment the Lord is said to have cried aloud; "my strength, my strength, hast thou forsaken me?" "and having said this, He was taken up." When he was taken

down from the Cross the earth quaked; His body was delivered by the Jews to Joseph, and after burial they asked Pilate for a guard. The centurion of this guard is named Petronius. The elders watched the grave with the soldiers and on the morning of the Lord's day they saw the heaven's open and two men descend. The stone rolled away from the door and the two men entered, presently issuing forth with a third whom they supported. "A cross followed them, and the head of the two reached unto heaven, but the head of him whom they lead overtopped the heavens. And they heard a voice from the heavens saying: Hast thou preached obedience unto them that sleep?" And from the cross was heard: "Yea." Soon the heavens were seen to open again, and a man descended and entered the grave. Mary Magdalen came with her friends early on the same morning to the grave; but being told by the angel that the Lord had risen, they were frightened and fled. No manifestation of our Lord is recorded, but the Apostles are said to have returned in sadness into his own home, on the "last day of unleavened bread"—a week after the Crucifixion.

The manuscript ends in the middle of a sentence: "There I, Simon Peter and Andrew, my brother, took our nets, and went away to the sea; and there was with us Levi, the son of Alphacus, when the Lord"

With these exceptions the narrative before is evidently drawn from the Evangelists. The extracts are quite recognizable, though they are combined very unintelligently; and the order is sometimes inverted, and details are added to strengthen the account, often with a total absence of probability. The work was evidently intended for readers who were unacquainted with Jewish customs, these being explained, sometimes incorrectly. All critics appear to be agreed that this Gospel is not to be put on a level with the four Evangelists; and it is its testimony to their antiquity which gives it its chief value. Harnack's conclusion is that the closest relationship of the fragment is to St. Mark; the most remote to St. Matthew. Its testimony to St. John is, of course, the most interesting point; and he fully brings out the numerous points common to both. In order to escape from the result that the fragment must have been compiled by some one who classed the fourth Evangelist with the other three, he has recourse to the unverifiable hypothesis that both are derived from some common source, of which nothing is known. I need not dwell on a fallacy which has been so often exposed by apologists.

Granted, however, that the fragment before us uses St. John as canonical, the amount of value to be attached to its evidence will depend on its date. This Harnack, with most other critics, is disposed to put as early as about A.D. 120; believing it to have been used by St. Justin as one of the sources of the *Life* of our Lord. Father Lucas' article seems to me, however, to have made this very doubtful. He shows with great learning that the type of heresy favoured by this pseudo-Peter arose some half a century later; moreover, it is exceedingly improbable that St. Justin would have relied on a work that is so much opposed to the spirit and the letter of the four Gospels. On the other hand, the points of contact between his works and the pseudo-Peter are so numerous and remarkable that they cannot be explained away. It seems to me most likely—and this is borne out by a close examination of the parallel passages—that St. Justin quoted an earlier and simpler edition of this Gospel than the fragment thus discovered belongs to. The history of the Clementines, and of the spurious Gospels and Acts, proves abundantly that the test of all such extra canonical works was peculiarly liable to corruption by heretics, who introduced such alterations and additions as favoured their own dogmas. On this view of the case there would remain a sufficient number of passages, in which St. Justin quotes the fragment, and the fragment quotes St. John, to make it highly probable this is the earliest witness to the canonicity of the fourth Gospel.

It is not possible in the space at my disposal to dwell on the many points of interest which the Gospel of Peter raises. I will only mention one, because we are likely to have it brought forward more prominently by Rationalists. Harnack urges that the account given of the resurrection, of which I have given a summary, shows that there was an early history of

that period, without any mention of Our Lord's appearing, at least during the first week, and that the Evangelists' narratives of His apparitions are therefore additions. It is obvious to reply that no weight can be attached to the account given by a writer who has throughout surprised and altered his authorities at his pleasure. In this particular case only one of the appearances of the risen Christ—that to St. Thomas—seems to be excluded by the pseudo-Peter; there is merely a gap in the narrative between the flight of the women from the sepulchre and the last day of unleavened bread, during which the others took place.

2. The second fragment discovered is anonymous, though evidently written in the person of one of the Apostles. It is, however, proved to be part of the long-lost Apocalypse of Peter, from a passage which is quoted from that book by Clement of Alexandria. This "Revelation" was held in much higher esteem in the primitive church than the so-called Gospel of Peter, though it was finally excluded from the Canon of the New Testament. Its contents justify this preference, as far as can be judged from the portion preserved—34 verses, nearly one half of the whole book. It consists almost entirely of "visions on the mountain," in which our Lord shows the twelve disciples the glory and happiness of the just and the punishment inflicted on the wicked. The latter, in particular, are described with much of the minutness and power of Dante, as varying for different classes of sinners. The most interesting point in the whole fragment is the name given to the just in heaven, as "your high-priests," evidently, as Harnack remarks, to teach the intercession of the saints before God. The whole has a much more simple and archaic character than the Gospel, with which it very favorably contrasts.—*The London Tablet*, Feb. 4, 1893.

DOMESTIC READING.

It is better to serve God than to govern the world.

Keep yourself faithfully in the presence of God.

Death, life, sickness, health—all come to us by the order of Providence.

We must know how to learn before we can teach, and we must learn to obey before we can guide.

God's mercy is greater than our infirmities. The most precious blood of Jesus is greater than our sins.

There is no surer sign of a heart which knows the love of God and its own sinfulness than a spirit of joy.

We should always regard others as better, superior to ourselves, and comply willingly with their wishes.

Holiness consists not in doing uncommon things, but in doing all common things with an uncommon fervor.

Experience is a flannel waistcoat that we do not think of putting on till we have caught cold.

Let us always and everywhere cling to our Faith and believe humbly and firmly all that it teaches.

When you are tempted have recourse to God immediately without reasoning with the temptation.

The last virtue of the egoist is the necessity for weaving some ray of altruism to cover his selfishness.

Let us not speak either good or evil of ourselves. To speak evil of ourselves sometimes serves to nourish pride.

He who always walks in the presence of God, will never commit sin, but will preserve his innocence and become a great saint.

BAD BLOOD CURED.

GENTLEMEN,—I have used your Burdock Blood Bitters for bad blood and find it, without exception, the best purifying tonic in use. A short time ago two very large and painful boils came on the back of my neck, B. B. B. completely drove them away. SAMUEL BLAIN, Toronto Junction.

Mr. Knox: "Ethel, it is perfectly imbecile your trying to give yourself the airs of a prima donna every time George calls." Ethel Knox: "Why, papa? What can you mean?" Mr. Knox: "I heard you say farewell at least sixty-five times last night."

FOR SPRAINS AND BRUISES.

No other remedy cures sprains, bruises, cuts, wounds, chilblains, sore throat, rheumatism, etc., so promptly as Hagar's Yellow Oil. It is an old standard remedy that has given perfect satisfaction for 30 years.

OBITUARY.

THE LATE MR. P. HOWARD, OF OTTAWA.

It is with deep regret and sympathy that we record the unexpected death of a truly good man and worthy citizen, in the person of Mr. P. Howard, of Ottawa. It is thus one of that city's papers tells the sad story of the mournful event:

"It will be learned with pain by a wide circle of friends and relatives that Mr. P. Howard, one of Ottawa's well known and highly respected citizens expired this forenoon most unexpectedly, with only a few alarming symptoms of warning to his surrounding friends. The melancholy occurrence took place at the residence of his only son, Mr. John P. Howard, of the post office accountant's branch, 230 Stewart street. Mr. Howard had been complaining slightly since Tuesday last, but no such sad termination was anticipated. The deceased gentleman had been moving about his room as usual when he suddenly became faint and lay down. His appearance prepared his friends for the worst, and a message was sent for his son who arrived just in time to see the end. Heart disease was pronounced to be the cause of death. Mr. Howard came to this city from Pembroke where he had been a successful business gentleman for some years, and was spending the evening of his life in the quiet company of his son and unmarried daughter. He was 65 years of age, and predeceased by his wife some years ago. It is only a short time since Mr. John P. lost his wife, and much sympathy is extended to him and his sister in this double bereavement."

We may add that a grand requiem service was held in the Ottawa University Chapel, after which the remains were conveyed to the Notre Dame cemetery. The pall-bearers were Prof. Gasmacher, P. Baskerville, M. J. Gorman, J. Jeffrey, M. Brady, Jno. Gorman, E. P. Stanton and C. D. Doncette, all of whom were very intimate friends of the deceased gentleman.

THE TRUE WITNESS can heartily sympathize with the relatives of the deceased gentleman, especially as we know of the severe blows that have been struck by Death's Angel in that family circle, and of the high merits and fine qualities of heart and mind that rendered the deceased Mr. Howard a cherished friend by all who knew him and an object of deep affection for those more intimately acquainted with him. The successive strokes of sorrow that have come to Mr. John P. Howard would forcibly recall those words of Denis F. McCarthy:—

"As the smith in the dark, sullen smithy,
Striketh fast on the anvil below,
Thus fate, on the heart once so burning,
Struck rapidly blow after blow."

But we of the olden Faith believe that there is an unbroken communion of spirit between those who remain on earth and the souls of the departed; basing ourselves upon that strong reliance in a union hereafter, and an assurance of the power, even for the present, of mutual assistance, we pray that his soul may rest in peace, for, as the poet wrote:

"Naught can avail him now but prayer;
Miserere Domine!"

IN GLASS.

That's the way Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets come. And it's a more important point than you think. It keeps them always fresh and reliable, unlike the ordinary pills in cheap wooden or pasteboard boxes.

They're put up in a better way, and they act in a better way, than the huge, old-fashioned pills. No gripping, no violence, no reaction afterwards that sometimes leaves you worse off than before. In that way they cure permanently, Sick Headache, Bilious Headache, Constipation, Indigestion, Bilious Attacks, and all derangements of the liver, stomach and bowels, are prevented, relieved and cured.

They're tiny, sugar-coated granules, a compound of refined and concentrated vegetable extracts—the smallest in size, the easiest to take, and the cheapest pill you can buy, for they're guaranteed to give satisfaction, or your money is returned. You pay only for the good you get.

There's nothing likely to be "just as good."

Let us not speak either good or evil of ourselves. To speak evil of ourselves sometimes serves to nourish pride.

Holloway's Pills are admirably adapted for the cure of diseases incidental to females. At different periods of life women are subject to complaints which require a peculiar medicine, and it is now an indisputable fact that there is none so suitable for such complaints as Holloway's Pills. They are invaluable to females of all ages, young or old, married or single. They purify the blood, regulate the secretions, correct all suspended functions, give tone to the stomach, and clear the complexion. The first approach of disordered action should be met with appropriate doses of these Pills; whilst taking them no restriction need be placed over the patient. They contain nothing which can possibly prove injurious to the system. They act by purifying the blood and regulating every organ.