

the very brilliancy of the light with which it is brought into contact will all the more display its hideous deformity and rottenness. Considered from such a point of view as this, heathenism may be spoken of as utterly *effete* in the first century—as destitute of vitality and power, and as fast hastening to final extinction. In such a representation there will be a semblance of truth so plausible as to lead to the conclusion, that Polytheism had fallen into a fatuous state and lost its hold over the public conscience prior to the advent of Christ. But we apprehend that this is a wrong method of considering the heathenism of that or of any other time. The question to be determined is, Had the heathenism of those days less hold on the public mind than it had at any time previous? Was it more *effete* in the time of Christ than in that of Socrates, or in the flowery periods of Athenian history? We apprehend that an impartial discussion of the question, in this point of view, will lead to the conclusion that the idolatry of the times immediately preceding and following the birth of Christ was not less influential, either in political affairs or in social life, than at any period of its history. It is a striking fact that a great part of the literature of paganism belongs to the very time under consideration. Virgil, Horace, Ovid (whose "Fasti" is the calendar of paganism), and others, belong to this period. The temples which had been neglected or destroyed during the civil wars were now restored by the Emperors in more than their former magnificence. The ridicule which some philosophers heaped upon the idolatry of that time and the atheism which many professed, tell no more against the standing of paganism than do similar writings and sentiments tell against the Christianity of our own day. We are, therefore, rather disposed to think that both Jew and Gentile were, when Christianity first appeared, as thoroughly fortified against it as the power and wit of Satan could render them. The progress of Christianity is not, therefore, indebted in any degree to the decadence of the powers of darkness. Its own inherent strength overcame all opposition. One stronger than the strong man armed entered into his house and spoiled his goods.

The next two lectures are by Count de Gasparin on "The Apostles" and "The Apostolical Fathers." The subjects receive from his hand an able and careful treatment. After a brief sketch of the Apostles' history and labours, and of the formation of the first Church at Jerusalem, he goes on to enumerate the characteristics of the Christian principle in contra-distinction to that of the heathen. The former he describes as an effort to do without God, the latter the direct intercourse between the soul and God. The *first* thing which strikes in the Christian principle he notes to be that it recognises a Saviour; the *second* that it requires conversion; the *third* that it inaugurates individual responsibility; the *fourth* its recognition of the supreme authority of the Word of God; and the *fifth* that it is limited to no caste, but is popular, addressing itself to all mankind. He traces the consequences of the Christian principle on the individual, the family, the Church and society. He notes further the gradual declensions from Christian doctrine and piety, observable in the writings of the Apostolical Fathers, among which he enumerates salvation by works of charity and penitence, a priesthood, and the authority of oral tradition, together with the beginning of other errors which afterwards greatly corrupted the Church. On this point he says:—

What have we to do with the religion of the fathers—with the religion of the first centuries—with the religion of the first councils? The religion of the apostles—that is what we want. The apostolic model is our fortress; I do not acknowledge any other. The cry of Puseyism is—the fathers! The cry of Protestantism is—the apostles! Let us endeavour not to be Puseyites. The tendency to imitate the Romish Church is spreading among us. And how does it spread? By adding historical