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## ARTICLE I.

LECTURES ON FOREIGN CHURCHES, *delivered in Edinburgh and Glasgow, May, 1845, in connection with the objects of the Free Church of Scotland.* FIRST SERIES. *Edinburgh, 1845.*

LECTURES ON FOREIGN CHURCHES. SECOND SERIES. *Edinburgh, 1846.*

The first series of these lectures is by the Rev. Drs. Candlish, Wilson, and McFarlane; and the Rev. Messrs. Thomas McCrie, Robert W. Stewart, Wm. K. Tweedie, and J. G. Lorimer.

The subjects are as follows:

- I. The Mutual Relations of the Churches of Christ.
- II. The Independent Eastern Churches.
- III. The Ancient History of the Waldensian Church.
- IV. The present condition and future prospects of the Waldensian Church.
- V. The Religious History of Holland and Belgium since the Reformation.
- VI. Past and Present State of Evangelical Religion in Switzerland, and especially Geneva.
- VII. The Past and Present State of Evangelical Religion in France.

The *Second Series*, contains seven lectures by Messrs. Wilson, Forbes, Fairbairn, Bryce, Tweedie, Hetherington, and Buchanan. Their subjects are:

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- I. The Papal Eastern Churches.
- II. The Reformation in Germany.
- III. The Present State and Prospects of Evangelical Religion in Germany, with a sketch of its history, from the time of Luther.
- IV. The State of Religion in Italy, from the Fall of the Western Empire till the Council of Trent, including an Account of the Introduction of the Reformed Doctrines into that country.
- V. Italy and its Religion.
- VI. The Religious Condition of Spain at the period of the Suppression of the Reformation, and in particular the great leading features and events in the History of Popery in that country at that period, whereby it was enabled to crush the Reformation.
- VII. The Prospects of Christendom.

These are all very interesting subjects, and handled in a very interesting and instructive manner.

In the introductory lecture to the first series, Dr. Candlish undertakes to solve "the great and urgent Christian problem of the day, viz: in what sense and manner, split as she is into sections and fragments, by innumerable peculiarities of thought and feeling, brought out in the exercise of that right of private judgment and free scriptural enquiry, which is her just privilege and boast, (let no man take her crown,) the Protestant Evangelical Church of the living God is yet in every land, and over all the earth, to recognize herself and be recognized by the world, as one." And in the prosecution of his undertaking, the author dwells on the manner in which "Christianity, as introduced by its divine founder, was fitted to penetrate all nations and possess and occupy the world." It was "first to be divested altogether of the local, territorial and ceremonial character which belonged to the preceding dispensation." "Secondly, no universal empire, or monarchy was established. The principle contained in the New Testament, is substantially that of self-government, fitted to give the church the aspect of a number of free and separate commonwealths, rather than of one single, vast and gigantic empire." Thirdly, there was provision for "a close and frequent interchange of good offices among these spiritual republics,

and the exercise of much mutual deference in the way of constantly consulting one another, &c. &c." Thus, the author makes out the "general principle of a sort of federal union of kindness and consultation among the independent Christian communities throughout the world."

Viewing primitive Christianity as having a constitution thus elastic, yet cohering, Dr. Candlish beholds her making her way among the nations, congregations every where springing up, spreading their branches out, forming themselves into connected bodies, and under their pastors and elders, consulting and acting together in consistories, or colleges, or presbyteries, or synods. "Union, not isolation, being the law and tendency of the Gospel, these Christian communities become provincial and national." "Considerable diversities, however," and even in some things "great dissimilarity may prevail." "The general rule of decency and order, and the precept of mutual forbearance being observed in all, with whatever in the discipline and worship of the church has not warrant of the word of God, being repudiated and disowned, there will still be room for shades of peculiarity, occasioned by climate, customs, or circumstances;" and, "instead of insipid and enforced uniformity," there will be a "real unity."

Dr. C. admits that this pleasing delineation exists more in theory than in fact; but "the hour (he says,) is now come, and the longing is generally felt for the current of evangelical sympathy to circulate again, and the grace and strength of evangelical union, not artificial, forced and fettered, but free, elastic, unconfined, to be manifested at last for the conviction of an unbelieving world." p. 17. The remarks which follow, we should suppose must have had some influence in originating the great "Evangelical Alliance," which met August, 1846, in London, at which were present not less than 1200 ministers of various denominations. His views respecting the objects to be kept in view by such convocations for Christian union, are thus given: "Few would anticipate good at present from national conventions to settle the affairs of the nation's Christianity. But, nothing could be more practicable, nothing more safe or becoming, than the meeting together from time to time of brethren representing the various Protestant churches, at convenient seasons and places, for prayer and

conference on all that relates to their common Christianity. Let them have no power or authority, but let the time be spent in Christian fellowship and devout exercises of the soul before God; let missionary intelligence and information regarding the Lord's work be interchanged. \* \* \* Controversies need not be agitated, since there would be no competent tribunal to settle them; \* \* \* all may be occupied in brotherly conversation, &c. &c." p. 19, 20.

It was a lovely vision, and entranced many a gentle, peace-loving soul, but it soon vanished. First, came the difficulties, (which Candlish himself anticipated,) of "adjusting such a test or criterion of genuine Christianity, as might exclude the avowed holders of error, and yet be comprehensive enough to embrace all who love the truth" — "the difficulties of meeting the views of this body and obviating the scruples of that." We fully accord with all our author says respecting its being "a hazardous thing to set about drawing a line between essentials and non-essentials in religion, and selecting out of a creed which is compact and consistent as a whole, what portions are deemed to be indispensable, and as such, detached from the rest, on which a slur may be thus imagined to be cast." "We fully admit, indeed, the propriety of Christians substantially drawing this distinction for the recognition of one another's Christianity, and the regulation of their mutual intercourse. But the risk is, when they begin also to do this, in forming their own opinions, and determining their own conduct; for a door is thus opened to much subtle casuistry and refinement, and a sophistical tampering with conscience, as to the harmlessness of ignorance and error, upon minor points. Now, in this view, it is not safe for any man to count any point a minor point on which Scripture may be found to give any deliverance at all, if he use such an idea as an apology for either not enquiring, or not making up his mind in regard to it. For not to speak of the relaxed conscientiousness and impaired moral tone that may be thus engendered, we really know too little of the mutual relations and influences of the truths of God, as they stand in his word, all harmonizing and meeting together; or of their mutual bearings, as they balance one another in the believing mind, to be able to assure ourselves, that an error, even in non-fundamentals, may not, to us, at least, be per-

icious and fatal; and it were to be regretted, if the adoption of a vaguer and more general profession, in the adjustment of the fellowship of the churches, should seem at all to warrant a loose and latitudinarian interpretation, even of the details of their particular creeds. But, besides, we have another fear. All experience shews that the omission or disparagement, or doubtful interpretation of a single clause in a well-weighed doctrinal statement, may be held to cover far greater laxity than was ever contemplated. It is by no means the same thing for a Christian man, or a Christian church, to abandon a doctrine previously held, as it is never to have known it; the abandonment of it necessarily involving more than the mere absence of it would have done. Hence, as has been often remarked, degenerate Calvinism is not so spiritual and evangelical as reviving Arminian Methodism." p. 21 and 22.

But differences as to abstract points of doctrine, were not the only breakers which endangered the ship of that Alliance. The American proposal for introducing such an item into the doctrinal basis, as by asserting a future judgment, and the everlasting punishment of the finally impenitent, (strangely overlooked by the British brethren,) should exclude *Universalists*,—this *American*, had in the outset of the deliberations, well-nigh shivered all hopes of an ecumenical confederation. But, towards the close, the *English* proposal, for introducing a clause which should exclude *slaveholders*, actually destroyed every such hope, turned the whole affair into an Anti-Slavery meeting—and amidst hoarse murmurs and bitter complaints from the rabid Irish Abolitionists, Nelson and Stanfield, because the Alliance took no stronger ground, together with solemn protests on the other hand from some of the Americans against any interference whatever with slavery, sent the soundest and best men of all countries then present back to their homes again, in mingled sorrow and vexation at the conduct of those, who cared too little for Christian union, to make a sacrifice to it of their own mad fanaticism, and too much for their Anti-Christian theories, to lose so good an opportunity of thrusting them before the eyes of the whole world, then turned towards the meeting in Freemason's Hall.

Dr. Candlish absented himself entirely from the Alliance. Some said it was because he foresaw the rising storm. Be

this as it may, the Doctor is reputed the father of the Church of Scotland's last letter to our General Assembly, on the subject of slavery,—and we cannot let this occasion slip of remarking that only with the observance as respects ourselves on the part of the Church of Scotland, of those "*Relations of the Churches of Christ to each other*," of those "*Principles of Union*," which we quoted above from the Doctor's lecture; only thus can a continuation of the epistolary correspondence between us be either pleasant or useful. We do not charge upon the last letter of the Scotch Church, (what the Irish letter certainly breathes,) a spirit of unkindness or untenderness, but we do charge upon it, that it does not observe the principle of Union which Dr. C. lays down—that it does not "*repudiate and disown that in discipline which has not warrant in the word of God*." Our Church treats slavery as the Bible treats it, and as the Apostles treated it. We act towards the State as the primitive church acted. The Church of Scotland ought not to condemn our course. But, if she must do this, we prefer to dispense with an annual lesson from her, on a subject which we are sure she does not yet comprehend. "Mutual deference among these spiritual republics!," we echo back the correct Scotch principle to the ears of our Caledonian *sister*. She is too good a Protestant to demand that we call her *mother*, or defer to her as such.

We have dwelt longer than we designed upon this introductory lecture. Our object requires us to call the special attention of the reader to the two lectures of Dr. Wilson. And we do this with the more pleasure, because they are to be found embodied in his valuable work on the "*Lands of the Bible*," of which we were able in our last Number to take only the most cursory notice. The theme of these two lectures, is one which has the highest claims upon our interest—the Independent and the Papal Eastern Churches.

"The East, (says Dr. W.,) is associated with all that is interesting in the past history, and glorious in the future prospects of the world."

From this new theatre of human action, the eyes of Americans also look back with eager animation to those Eastern climes, where were enacted so many of the most stirring scenes of the old world's history. "Westward, the

star of empire takes his way;" but, Eastward, roam the thoughts of every student of the past—especially, of every student of the Bible. There are the Euphrates and Tigris, rivers of Paradise; and there the sacred Jordan, the brook Cedron, and "that ancient river, the river Kishon." There is the Dead Sea, covering the ruined cities of the plain—and there the blue waters of the Sea of Galilee. There is Mount Ararat and Carmel, and the mounts

"Of Oreb and of Sinai, and which delights us more,  
Sion hill; and Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God."

There is Olivet, and there is Gethsemane. In the East, fell the first Adam. The gate, where entered "Death into the world and all our woe," was in the East. And there, the second Adam was manifested for the destruction of death. The blessed feet of God's Incarnate Son pressed that soil—his eye gazed on those Judean hills, and grew familiar with the shores of that Tiberian lake. In the East, the traveller finds that town which (as no other town on earth ever did or shall) once gave birth to a sinless child! And, there he finds that city, which has the equally solitary but gloomy distinction of having brought death upon the Prince of Life. The East is associated with the first and most conspicuous triumphs of Christianity, when Apostles were its missionaries and martyrs, its living and dying witnesses. And, although its golden candlesticks, lighted under Apostolic ministry, have been removed, and a decayed and deformed Christianity now shares with Turkish bigotry and Jewish prejudice, the sway of mind in those fair regions, yet do the Eastern Churches claim a more than classic interest—the sacred interest, which belongs of right to the Gospel's earliest home, and to the inheritors of the dwelling places and names of the primitive Christians.

As to the future prospects of the world, with all the glories of which Dr. W., as above quoted, thinks the East is to be associated, we shall sufficiently indicate his views by the following quotation:

"Though the Mosaic economy and law shall not be restored, and though spiritual privileges shall not be dispensed alike throughout the world, yet the birth-place of

Christianity will be its great metropolis, the central spot or focus, where the rays of light from all God's providential dispensations towards the nations of the earth, and especially the seed of Abraham, his friend, will converge," &c. &c.—page 45.

But Dr. W. complains that the regard paid by the people of the Lord, in highly favored Scotland, has not comported with these high claims. And we may, to a considerable extent, apply his language to the Presbyterians of the United States also, and say, that "With those in Eastern lands, who have borne the Christian name, we have scarcely formed the least acquaintance." Individual missionaries from the Presbyterian Church have, in another connection, gone to them; but as a church, and through our Board of Foreign Missions, "we have conveyed to them neither instruction nor warning, nor exhortation nor entreaty. We have mourned more over the desolations of the natural, than over those of the spiritual Zion. Our past neglect has been complete, and I will add criminal." The aim of this article, as of the lectures of our author, is to stimulate enquiry and lead our readers to further investigation.

We must here introduce some observations from a quarter, all whose sayings and doings are, or should be, interesting to us Protestants. Rome does not imitate the Presbyterians either of Scotland or the United States, in her manner of feeling or acting towards the Eastern churches. The expensive and extensive efforts she is making to effect their conversion, declare the estimate she has formed of their importance. Rome glories in the efforts she is making in their behalf. Hear what the Society for the propagation of the faith, (whose headquarters are at Lyons, in France, and the stream of whose pecuniary contributions empties largely in the United States,)—hear what this society says, in 1840: "But above all, it is the soil which has been fertilized by the Savior's blood, and consecrated by his tomb; the territory of the primitive churches; the native land of those countless generations of martyrs, of anchorites, and teachers of the faith. Finally, is it not to this region that an irresistible influence seems to be drawing the partialities and interests of modern times, as if the destinies of the human race must be decided in the very places whence



they parted to meet again—from the Tower of Babel to the Valley of Jehoshaphat? So also, the Catholic Church maintains a filial regard for that maternal land. She avoids no expense to save her from calamity. She went there to die and conquer in the middle age, with the millions of the Crusaders; she has watched there for six centuries, over the holy sepulchre, with the intrepid monks, whom no outrage has discouraged; she shows herself there still, surrounded by all the lights of learning, and and all the treasures of charity, raising up, from Smyrna to Tauris, from Damascus to Beirut, her schools, her colleges, her benevolent institutions, her apostolic stations. There she encounters all the hostile systems which the spirit of evil has raised up to oppose the truth. Idolatry survives in the mysteries of the Druses; the Gnostic sects show themselves at some obscure points of Mesopotamia; Nestorianism sits among the ruins of its ancient greatness; the Eutychian delusion unites half the population of Armenia and Chaldea; the Greek schism sits still in many Episcopal chairs; the Muhammedan scourge chases before it the wandering flocks; and in addition to all the rest, Protestantism has lately come to spread new snares, by scattering in all parts its disfigured Bibles and slanderous tracts. It may be said that all lies clothe themselves in immortality under the heavens of the East, which seem to smite men and things with an incapacity of change. Yet the signs of better times are too plain to be misunderstood. The three Musalman powers, among whom these vast regions are divided, the Porte, Egypt, and Persia, all desire and solicit the benefits of Christian civilization. Their ambassadors have appeared at the Vatican. A tolerance, before unknown, allows the preaching of the Gospel to the followers of Muhammed, and the word has not fallen among them in vain (?). Heresy has seen several of its bishops return to our ranks. The water of baptism has flowed upon the face of the Druses, whom neither instruction nor force had formerly been able to tame (?). Vainly does a powerful patronage attempt to rally the schismatics of all denominations for the promotion of its designs. Asia will see the dangers which are concealed under that haugh-

ty protectorate,\* The only disinterested proselytism which seeks her conversion, she will at length perceive, is that which belongs to no political interest, to no earthly ambition—that of the holy Roman Church.”

Now the conduct and measures of the Roman Church correspond to this language. Allied, as all the Eastern churches are, to herself in spirit and doctrines, Rome has not been content to dispense with their subjection and obedience. They have disputed her domination, and she has therefore perseveringly sought, either to subdue or to dissolve them.

“She has tried to secure their allegiance by publicly accredited messengers and disguised emissaries, by open effort and concealed artifice, by boastful declamation and gentle insinuation, and by the falsification of history and the misrepresentation of present events and occurrences. She has allured by promises, and conciliated by compromise, and by gifts of wealth, of title, of patronage, and of power. She has excited and fomented quarrels and disturbances. She has terrified by threats and curses, and restrained by oppression and persecution.”

As to her success:—

“She has had her converts among every one of them, and some of them she has reduced to small dimensions. She has formed out of each of them a body, in communion with herself; and she is now diligently plying the work of further proselytism. She boasts of distinct societies, devoted to her interests, occupying the sublime and beautiful ridges of the gigantic Lebanon; seated on the hills of holiness, in the land of Israel’s inheritance and the Saviour’s incarnation; scattered over the fertile plains of ancient Syria, Mesopotamia, and Babylon, and the classic regions of the Lesser Asia; visible on the prolific banks of the mysterious Nile; about to appear on the crest of the mountains of ‘jealous Abyssinia;’ and discernable even on the romantic heights of Malabar and Travankur, in distant Hind.”

Let us glance at the several bodies of Papal Eastern Christians, brought to our view in these lectures. The first

\* The allusion here, perhaps, is to Russia, the Guardian of the Greek Church.

is the *Maronite Church*, which is especially boastful of Romish patronage, and which on the other hand Rome regards with greater confidence than she reposes in any other of her oriental adherents. "They trace their name to a Syrian monk, named Maro, a contemporary of Chrysostom, who lived on the banks of the Orontes, about the year 400, but more particularly to John Marun, or Maro, who flourished about the year 700."\* "They are doubtless the descendants of the Christians who remained unconquered and independent, and who took refuge in the mountains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, on the invasion and conquest of Syria, by the Muhammedan khalifs, in the seventh century."

Dr. Wilson, in opposition to the boasts of many Romish writers, shews,† from the testimony of ecclesiastical annalists, both within and without the church of Rome, such as Eutychius, Makrizi, William of Tyre, Jacob de Vitry, and Torsellus, that the Maronites, for a long period, stood altogether aloof from Papal communion, and were supporters of what has been called the Monothelite heresy. They appear to have been gained over to Rome, towards the close of the twelfth century, by Aymeric, the third Latin Patriarch of Antioch, backed by the kings of the Crusades. But the connection was probably, in the first instance, more nominal than real, the Maronite Patriarch receiving the *pallium* sent to him from Rome, but probably retaining, at the same time, his own original authority.

"To the present day each of his successors has denominated himself 'Peter, the Patriarch of Antioch,' thus insinuating that he considers himself as the genuine representative and spiritual descendant of the Apostle Peter, in the East. To the ordinary seal of the Patriarchate, an engraving of which is given by La Roque,‡ I refer, in corroboration of this statement." There are Papal Bulls of Innocent III, of Alexander IV, and of Leo X, accusing them of various errors, both in doctrine and practice. Marc de Lisbon, in his chronicle of the Order of the Franciscans, boasts that Father Gripho had to bring them back from heresy and idolatry, so late as the year 1450. In 1576, al-

\*Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis, I, pp. 496—520.

† See also Ethridge's work on the Syrian Churches and Gospel, pp. 178, 9.

‡ Voyage de Syrie et du Mont Liban, p. 11.

so, Clement VIII, sent the Jesuit Dandini to Lebanon, to enquire into certain unpleasant reports concerning them, and to reduce them, if necessary, to order and submission. Coming still further down, we find Pope Gregory XIII, in order to increase the church's influence over them, founding a college at Rome for the education of a select number of their youth.

"Of its many distinguished Alumni, Joseph Simonius Assemanus and Joseph Aloysius Assemanus are the best known. The former is the author of the *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, in which there is a review and analysis of the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, Turkish, Hebrew, Samaritan, Armenian, Ethiopic, Greek, Egyptian, Iberian and Malebaric manuscripts in the Clementine collection of the Vatican, which was mostly formed by his own industry in the East. The latter is the collector, editor, and translator of all the ancient liturgies, both oriental and occidental. The former, who was a native of Tripoli, and born in 1687, was the deputy of Pope Clement XII, at the great Synod of Lebanon, held in the year 1736, by which the affairs of the Maronite Church were finally settled, and according to whose decrees they are still administered."\*

Down to the present day, however, the Maronites have been allowed to retain most of their own customs and observances, although considerably at variance with those which Rome is usually content to sanction.

"They are allowed to preserve their own ecclesiastical language, the Syriac, while Rome has shewn her partiality for the Latin rite. They dispense the communion in both kinds, dipping the bread in wine before its distribution among the people. Though they now observe the Roman calendar, as far as the time of feasts and fasts is concerned, they recognize local saints which have no place in its commemorations. They have retained the custom of the marriage of their clergy previous to their ordination. Though they profess to be zealous partizans of Rome, it dare not so count upon their attachment as to force upon them all that, in ordinary circumstances, it thinks desirable. In order to secure its present influence over them, it is subjected to an expense of no small magnitude."

The Maronites now form a population of about 200,000

\* See *Lettres Edifiantes et Curienses*, Tom. 1, p. 406, &c. &c.

souls, chiefly inhabiting the mountains of Lebanon, which they hold in common with the Druses. These are a mongrel Mohammedan and Heathen people, of great spirit and bravery, with whom the Maronites, (themselves a spirited race,) are often engaged in the most murderous civil warfare.

We make only one more quotation to shew the religiousness of the Maronites.

“Their Patriarch’s agent at Rome gives us, in 1844, (*Notice Historique*, pp. 18, 19,) the following statements. ‘The monasteries, or convents, both of monks and nuns, amount to 82. Those for monks, 67 in number, contain 1410 religious. The remaining 15 contain 330 nuns. Besides these, there are 356 churches, served by 1205 priests.’”

Thus the priests stand to the people in the ratio of 1 to 166, and over and above these, the monks in the ratio of 1 to 143! In other words, every eightieth man, (we leave out the fraction,) is a clergyman!

Next in order, we glance at the *Papal Greeks*. They are about 40,000 in number, and are found chiefly in Aleppo and Damascus, with perhaps 500 families in Constantinople.

“As far as I can ascertain, (says Dr. W.,) the Greek-Catholic Church is the fruit of the Jesuit missions to Aleppo, which, as already said, had their commencement in the year 1625. These crafty Fathers soon saw that it was inexpedient to force their converts from the Greek Church to the adoption of the Latin rites; and they, and the other Roman coadjutors in the East, in due time, succeeded in getting the Papal authorities to sanction a compromise, on terms even more disadvantageous to Rome than we have seen exemplified in the case of the Maronites. The great object which the Greek Catholics have sought after, in their alliance with Rome, seems to be that of securing its assistance in disseminating among their families, the civilization of the West, and securing greater splendor for their religious services. It has succeeded in getting from them little more than an acknowledgement of its supremacy, and the renouncement of the Greek dogma, that the procession of the Holy Spirit is from the Father only. They retain the oriental calendar, regulating by it their feasts and fasts as therein entered, and according to the computation of what has been called the ‘old style.’ In Syria they cele-

brate their liturgical services in their vulgar tongue, the Arabic, which must be viewed as a great desecration, as, according to papal notions, nothing is sacred that is not mysterious. They receive the communion in both kinds, using unleavened bread and the cup, like the members of the orthodox Greek Church, from which they have separated. Their priests are allowed to marry before entering into sacred orders; but their bishops must observe the celibate. They claim the right of the popular use of the sacred Scriptures, though alas! they too seldom avail themselves of its advantages. All that I have seen and heard of them, leads me to believe that they are amongst the most liberal and intelligent native Christians in the East."

The *Papal Armenians*, in Constantinople, are estimated at from 10,000 to 13,000 souls. They are found also in Angora, Tokat, Trebizond, and Smyrna, and in small numbers in various parts of Armenia. They have no monasteries in Asia Minor, but they have one in Venice and another at Vienna. These, especially the former, have long been engaged, (both creditably and with great pecuniary profit,) in the publication of books in Armenian, such as writings of the ancient historians of the nation, translations of the Greek and Latin classics, and other works of literary and scientific merit.

Besides the Maronite, the Papal Greek, and the Papal Armenian churches, there are also other smaller bodies of Papal Christians in the East, converted to Rome by the labors of her zealous missionaries, and known respectively as *Syrian Catholics*, *Chaldean Catholics*, and *Coptic Catholics*.

Our author has also collected much valuable information respecting what he calls the *Eastern Latin* church, made up of the descendants of those who, for various reasons and in different ages, have gone thither from the West.

"The only remains of the church establishment of the crusaders at present in the East, are the monastic institutions of the Terra Sancta, intrusted to the friars minorites of the observance, better known among us as the Franciscan monks, who are the recognized custodiers and guardians of the holy places, and the pastors of the small portion of the population which adheres to the Latin ritual. Of these I shall allow the Romanists to give their own ac-

count. 'They' (the monks now mentioned,) 'are indebted for this glorious inheritance to the piety of their patriarch, St. Francis, who, with twelve of his earliest disciples, sought in Syria the labours of the apostleship and the crown of martyrdom. This last he failed to obtain, but he secured for his order the privilege of praying and dying between the cradle and the sepulche of Christ; and to this day these good monks, whose costume even the infidels respect, and whose hospitality calls down the benedictions of numerous pilgrims, have a roof and an altar at Jerusalem, at Bethlehem, at Nazareth, at Jaffa; indeed, wherever the history of redemption has left a memorial. Their superior, whose title is 'Most Reverend Warden,' and who holds his appointment immediately from Rome, has under his direction about 100 Italian or Spanish priests, divided among twenty-two convents, and having under their pastoral care 11,000 Latin Catholics, residing in their vicinity; thirty-eight secular priests and sixty lay brethren take part in their labours: two colleges, raised by their industry, contain more than 460 students.'—(Report of the Soc. for Prop. the Faith, 1840.)

"The grants made to these monastic institutions by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, now the principal organ of the support and extension of the Papal cause in foreign parts, according to the report for 1844, was 25,267 francs, 16 cents. It is entered 'to the Most Reverend Guardian of Jerusalem for the Missions of the Holy Land.'"

Dr. W. gives us the names of the twenty-two convents referred to above:

"They are those of Jerusalem, where there are two convents, Bethlehem, A'in Karim, or St. John's, in the desert, near Jerusalem, Ramlah, Yáffa, Nazareth, Haifa. (now reduced to nonentity,) A'Kka Sidon, Harissa, Tripoli, Latakia, Aleppo, Damascus, Constantinople, Larnica and Nicosia in Cyprus, Rosetta, Alexandria, Cairo, and Faiyum in Egypt, and Beirut."

"Besides the Terra Sancta monks, we have several other European fathers in the Holy Land, and in the countries adjoining. 'Several monastic orders,' says the report for 1840 of the Society for the propagation of the Faith, 'have been desirous to be represented by some of their members at this rendezvous of all Christian tradition. They are by

no means inactive there. 1. The Carmelite fathers have rebuilt the useful retreat, which they have possessed from time immemorial, on Mount Carmel, the first seat of their order, and chief place of their missions in Palestine. Five of them reside there.\* 2. The reverend fathers, the Capuchins, reckon four missions, Beirut, Tripoli, Damascus, lately stained with blood by the murder of one of them; Aleppo, where their charity supports one school; and three other stations on Mount Lebanon. 3. The Reverend fathers, the Jesuits, having reëstablished their ancient residence on Mount Lebanon, are laboring with an effective zeal to found a college at Beyrout. 4. Messrs, the congregations of St. Lazarus have four missions, occupied by six priests; Antoura, with a college; Aleppo, Damascus, with two schools for both sexes; Tripoli, with two stations, and the schools of Eden and Sgorta.' All this is exclusive of what is called 'The Apostolic Delegation of Mount Lebanon and Apostolic Vicariate of Aleppo,' of which it is said in the same document, 'The Latin Catholics of Aleppo, to the number of about 1000, are alone under the immediate jurisdiction of the Apostolic vicar; but the prelate who bears that title is also the representative of the holy see, to the patriarchs of the United Communions which are spread through those countries.'

"As the name of Jesuit in the East, is even perhaps more horrible and abominable than in the West, the Jesuits at Damascus, Aleppo, and some other places, denominate themselves Lazarists, or brethren of the company of Paul of Vincent, a fact which those who seek to trace their movements in different parts of the world would do well to keep in mind."

"There are in *Smyrna* one Roman Catholic bishop, (archbishop,) and sixty-seven priests. Of the latter, forty are secular or parish clergy, nine are Capuchins, seven are Zoccalonti, ten are Lazarists, and one is a Dominican. The Capuchins and the Zoccalonti are friars of the Franciscan order, and derive their names, the one from their hoods, and the other from their wooden shoes. There are also twelve

\* They principally devote themselves, (the author truly says,) to the rites of hospitality, and every person who may have paid them a visit, admits that their "Hotel," for such it may be called, is the best in Syria.



'Sisters of Charity.' In Smyrna there are three large churches and two chapels.

"The Roman Catholics, by whom the Latin rite is observed at *Constantinople*, are under the Apostolic Vicar of that place, and are principally the descendants of the Genoese and Venetians, who have long been established in Pera and Galata, the European merchants, and the members and agents of the different embassies of the countries which profess the faith of Rome. A good many Roman Catholic individuals, too, some of high influence and attainments, are connected with the Russian, Prussian, and English embassies at the Sublime Porte. They are reckoned about 9000 in number at the capital."

In concluding his lecture on the Papal Eastern Churches, our author dwells on the "*dishonorable means*" Rome has been accustomed to use "in the different countries of her proselyting enterprise." We copy but one of his quotations. It is from the pen of *M. Eugene Borté*, one of her missionaries, which is found in the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith," March, 1845, p. 71.

"In Turkey, (says this son of the church,) the Christian can offer to God the prayers and homage appointed by his liturgy, without ever fearing that the Governor or the Imam, interfering with the interior of the sanctuary, will disturb its rites and ceremonies. But, through a capricious contradiction, this church in which he is so free, he is not free to build. He must, in the first instance, show an anterior title, acknowledged by the Musalman authority, and proving that this place was, before the conquest, dedicated to divine worship; otherwise, the erection of a monument would not be permitted, whose destination is opposed to the faith of the Coran. It is true, that we easily elude this legal interdiction, *and then, particularly, we have recourse to the decisive argument of the Richoet, a special word, which is happily unknown to our language and our usages, as it expresses the present offered to the great and to the judges to purchase their approbation.* This defect has invaded all classes of society, — the palace, the ministry, the divan or tribunal of justice, the mosque, the market, and the artizans' stall." Rome has yet to learn (adds Dr. Wilson,) the meaning of the divine maxim, that of those who do evil that good may come, the damnation is just.

Our author also dwells on the *concessions* of Rome :

“Of this compromise and accommodation, she actually boasts, having, in communion with her in the Eastern Churches, to use her own language, ‘people of six different rites,’ with ‘all their ancient liturgies, respected as so many monuments of the unity of belief in the midst of the variety of rites and discipline.’ Mr. Perkins, in his interesting work, entitled ‘A Residence of Eight Years in Persia among the Nestorian Christians,’ says, ‘one of the newest measures that has been reported to us, is an order purporting to be fresh from the Pope to his agents in this region, to *canonize Nestorius*, whose name and memory every Papist has been required for so many centuries to *curse*; and to *anathematize* the Lutherans, i. e. the Protestant Missionaries.’ In the view of what has been done in the East, we may clearly see, that to secure the assent of our own country to the supremacy of the Pope, she would gladly permit the formation of an Anglo-Catholic Church, not differing in a single principle from the tenets and observances of the Tractarians of *Oxford*.”

One more extract, which will perhaps surprise, and should encourage our readers to more zeal for Foreign Missions :

“Great though the missionary efforts of Rome be among the Eastern Churches and the heathen nations, it is worthy of notice, that taking them as a whole, those of the Protestant Churches already surpass them in magnitude and importance, as far as the free and open dealing of mind with mind is concerned. Such a statement as this may be entirely novel to some of my auditors; but it is one which I do not rashly hazard. The contributions of the whole Papal world to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, which is now the universal nurse and support of all its missions, when reduced to English money, at the most favorable rate of exchange, amounted, in 1843, to no more than £165,131 : 7 : 3, which is not equal to the income of two of our largest missionary societies. I am aware that, in aid of this sum, old endowments are, to a large extent, applied; but making every allowance for these, the whole sums expended by Protestants in missionary efforts *in partibus infidelium*, are annually double those expended by Rome. In the dissemination of education, in the wielding

of the press, and in the work of public preaching, Protestantism is actually doing throughout the world an in calculably greater extent of work than Romanism. It is instructing and training the minds of nations in some quarters, while Rome is content merely to allure individuals and bodies of men to change by the promise of secular advantages, and the fictitious splendor of her idolatrous and theatrical services. It is in the number of her foreign adherents in all parts of the world, principally, that Rome has the advantage of us; but, these adherents, are the fruit of her missions when the Protestant Churches were doing nothing abroad, and not, generally speaking, of the missionary effort of the present day, extended though it be in the different regions of the world. In the distribution of her missionary force, which, as in the case of the Eastern Churches, is regulated by consummate wisdom, she excels us too; but Christian union and consultation, I trust, will not long permit her exclusively to possess this advantage."

We turn now to our author's other lecture, which introduces to us *the Independent Eastern Churches.*"

*The Copts*, are a body of Christians inhabiting Egypt, the descendants and representatives of the early Christians of that country. Their number is estimated at from 150,000 to 200,000 souls. Their history has, for ages, been one of degradation and of persecution.

*The Abyssinian Church* reckons itself a branch of the Coptic, but far outstrips it in the multiplicity of its superstitious ceremonies, absurd legends, and idolatrous devotions. "How far it has strained its inventive faculties in the exercise of will-worship, appears from its giving Pontius Pilate, and his wife, Procla, a place in the calendar of its Saints; the former, because he washed his hands before he condemned our Lord, and the latter, because she said, "Meddle not with that just person."

Our author's notices of the Copts and Abyssinians, are full of interest, enriched with striking quotations from Boring's Report on Egypt, Harris' High Lands of Ethiopia and Gobat's Abyssinnia. M. Gobat, for many years missionary to the Abyssinians, has lately succeeded to the English-Prussian Bishopric of Jerusalem,—a man of the highest character and most catholic spirit.

The *Nestorian Church*, since the late subjugation of their Mountain tribes by the ferocious Kurds, has its chief locality in the plains of Urmiah in Persia. It numbers about 140,000 souls. Without doubt, this is the purest of all the Oriental churches, rejecting with the deepest abhorrence all image and picture worship, likewise auricular confession and purgatory; and acknowledging the Holy Scriptures as far above all human traditions. The Nestorians are not free however from bondage to human traditions, for they attach the greatest importance to their periodical fasts. To this we must add that the morals of both clergy and people are among the Nestorians also deeply degraded. The American Board has a very flourishing mission at Urmiah.

We cannot enter upon the question of the justice or injustice of the condemnation of Nestorius by the third general Council. Dr. Wilson, and the American missionaries at Urmiah, defend Nestorius. Palmer, in his "Treatise on the Church," and all the rest of the Oxford school, of course, bow to the decisions of the "holy Oecumenical Synod of Ephesus." It is however important to notice that the Nestorians themselves never did, and do not now acknowledge this name, much as they revere the memory of Nestorius. They claim the name of Chaldeans, or that of Syrians, and sometimes call themselves (in accordance with their current national tradition, that they are Jews by descent,) Nazrani or Nazarenes.

Let it also be borne in mind, as above stated, that to this day, these followers of the anathematized heretic have preserved the faith of Christ in far greater purity, than any of those other Eastern churches with which the prelatists are so ready to sympathize.

And let not their indefatigable missionary zeal ever be forgotten. Anathematized by their Christian brethren, as well as cruelly persecuted by their Saracen masters, the Nestorians had to struggle for existence at home, and yet were indefatigable in efforts to extend the Gospel to other lands. And this, at a time when a sepulchral sleep had fallen upon the entire Western church. Even Gibbon pays homage to their self-sacrificing beneficence. "The missionaries of Balch and Samarcand, pursued without fear the footsteps of the roving Tartar, and insinuated themselves

into the camps of the valley of Imaus and the banks of the Selinga,—entered China by the port of Canton,—were diffused from China to Jerusalem and Cyprus—preaching Christianity successfully to the Bactrians, the Huns, the Persians, the Indians, the Persarmenians, the Medes, and the Elamites—having almost an infinity of churches from the gulf of Persia to the Caspian Sea,—and being found as well on the pepper coast of Malabar and the Isles of the Ocean, Socotora and Ceylon.” *Decline and Fall*, vol. viii., 345–8.

*The Jacobites*, Dr. W. distinguishes by the title of “the Syrian Church.” We think this objectionable, on the ground of its indistinctness and confusion. The Maronites, the Nestorians, and the Christians of St. Thomas, in India, all have as much title to this name as the Jacobites. This body of nominal Christians are Monophysites, or believers in the dogma, that the divine and human nature of Christ were so united as to form only one nature, yet without any change, confusion or mixture of the two natures. This opinion seems to have had its origin in a zealous antagonism to the alleged doctrine of Nestorius, respecting two persons in our blessed Redeemer. Eutyches, an Archimandrite of a monastery of 300 monks, near to Constantinople, carried away by a too common tendency of our nature, run into extremes; became in this manner himself the author and advocate of a new heresy, and taught that the humanity of Christ had actually been transmuted into, or absorbed by, his divine nature. The Jacobites, however, indignantly disclaim all connection with Eutyches, and draw a broad distinction between his doctrine and their own. So do the other Monophysite Churches, the Armenian, the Coptic, and the Abyssinian. Dr. Wilson is of opinion, that with the exception perhaps of the case of Eutyches, the Christian Church in the fifth century was divided by “little more than a logomachy respecting the nature of Christ.” The anarchy produced by the long and bitter controversies of the Nestorians on the one hand, and on the other, the Eutychians, properly so called, together with all the other various divisions of the Monophysites, as the Acephali, the Julianists, the Theopaschitae, the Severians, with all the subdivisions of these last as the Damianitae, the Petritae, the Conomitae, the Philoponiaci, the

Agnoetae and the Condo banditae—all this anarchy was doubtless deplorable. And yet what a needful lesson does it teach the church and the ministry respecting their own weakness! And how does it present the testimony of human nature, fallen and feeble as it is, to the value of truth—for which men in all ages have striven and contended, even unto death! And who can deny the infinite importance of the questions which gave rise to all these divisions? Etheridge well points to such passages as Rom. i., 3, 4: 1 Peter iii., 18: Heb. ix., 14: John i., 14: Phil. ii., 6, 7: Col. ii., 9, as emphatically enunciating the distinctness of the two natures; and he well observes, respecting the views of Eutyches, for example, that they lead inevitably to the overthrow of both the atonement and the mediation of Christ; for if the Messiah was not really man with men, and therefore, physically capable of death, he could not have redeemed our nature; and if he does not continue to be man, he can not have that eternal sympathy with his church which is made known to us in the Gospel. Compare Heb. ix., 12: vii., 24, and iv., 15.

The Jacobites call themselves "*Yacobeæ*," giving as a reason for this name, that they are "*Bnee Israel*," children of Israel or Jacob, and descended from the first Hebrew Christians—the converts of the Apostle James. But, doubtless, there was another reason, viz: that their consolidation from the various sectaries who held to the Monophysitic doctrine in Syria, and the countries on the Tigris and Euphrates, was mainly brought about by the agency of a monk, named Jacob, surnamed Al Bardai or Baradæus. Their chief seat is Mesopotamia, where they number about 150,000 souls. They hold to but three of the first seven general councils, for which the Greek Church anathematizes them. Their liturgies (of which Etheridge gives translations,) will be found to contain much evangelical doctrine and prayer, addressed directly to God and to the Saviour; but they are not free from idolatrous references to the *θεοτοκος*, and to John the Baptist, besides other gross Popish errors. On the whole, however, they are decidedly less corrupt than the Greek Church. And yet, Palmer and his colleagues pronounce them, as well as their old antagonists, the Nestorians, to be "no part of the Church of Christ;" (vol. i., p. 422,) while the Greek Church is lauded

as "not schismatical," "not heretical," but "Catholic," "Apostolical," and "True." p. p. 179-213. As to Apostolical succession, however, which is denied to the Jacobites, their claim to it is as loud and as tenaciously held, and we will add, as well made out as that of any prelatical church in the world. They glory in St. Peter, as their first Bishop of Antioch, and they exhibit at this day an unbroken series of more than an hundred and eighty names of successive bishops of that See, from his day to our own.\* This must have been the book, which Bishop Southgate said that he *saw*, where the *hand-writing of Peter himself* was still visible, with those of all the rest. At least, so the bishop's audience in N. Y. understood him to say, Episcopalians, as well as others; and no explanation at all would Bishop Southgate vouchsafe afterwards, though earnestly called on to explain.

*The Armenians* stand next in the order in which we have chosen to view the Eastern Churches. They are from two to two and a half millions—an ancient and peculiar race, long taught in the school of national affliction. Their country lying between Persia on the one hand, and the Greeks and Romans on the other, the strength of the nation was gradually exhausted by aggressions from both sides, until at length in the 11th century, there burst forth from Central Asia those hordes of Tartars, which carried devastation year by year through Armenia, and completely subjugated her people. In the 14th century, Armenia had experience of the cruelty of the famous Chingiz Khan; subsequent to which, Tamerlane the Great, "traced repeatedly his bloody track across her mountains." And, finally, Shah Abbas the Great, literally depopulated and made desert this unhappy land, in order to protect Persia from the incursions of the Turks. And thus, Armenia, once rich in teeming cities, impregnable castles, and fertile provinces, has been brought to the lowest condition of national degradation. One of her sons, a resident of Calcutta, thus feelingly apostrophizes his fallen country:

"Oh, Armenia! Armenia! Oh, my country! Oh, our common mother, Armenia! I weep over thy fallen greatness! I weep over thy departed power! Thy mighty

\* See Etheridge, p. 145. •

empire has mouldered into dust, and the general havoc has left no traces of thy magnificence, except the wreck of the stately structure, where every traveller of the race of Haig, is invited to give way to his feelings, and mingle the dew of his heart with the earth of his beloved country." Ardall's *Armenia*, vol. ii., p. 552-4.

The chief instrument of the evangelization of Armenia, was *Kircor Loosavorich*, or *Gregory the Enlightener*, son of Anax, a Parthian prince. So early as 302, A. D., Tiridates the Great, and a large portion of the Armenian people received baptism at Gregory's hands. We cannot forget, however, that before this period, Christianity had extensively degenerated from its original purity as a religion of the heart, to a mere profession of external rites and theoretical dogmas. And such, it is natural to expect, was the degenerate Christianity to which Gregory converted his countrymen. Indeed, Gregory the Enlightener, himself, partook largely of the monastic spirit of his age, consecrating 400 bishops and an immense number of priests, erecting various convents and nunneries, instituting religious feasts and other ecclesiastical ceremonies, and oftentimes betaking himself to solitary places, and remaining there for considerable periods plunged in the deepest abstraction. In fact, towards the close of his life, he actually retired to a cave in a mountain, where he spent the remainder of his days, (says an Armenian historian,) "more like an incorporate cherub than a carnal creature."\* Nierses, his sixth successor in the Armenian Pontificate, and one of his own descendants, so far improved upon the example of Gregory, as to erect no less than 2000 convents. This was only 63 or 64 years after the national conversion.

It was not long after the conversion of the Armenians to Christianity—and partly in consequence of this event, that the Zoroastrian persecutions commenced in Armenia. Dr. Wilson hardly touches this subject, nor do our limits allow us to enter into particulars. The intolerant hatred of the Persian monarchs, Shabooh II., and Hazgerd II., against Christianity, and their relentless and bloody persecutions, unsuccessfully employed to turn the suffering Christians, (as one of their writers has it,) to the worship of "ashes

\* Agiall's *Chamchean*, vol. i., p. 164.



(as one of their writers has it,) to the worship of "ashes and cinders;" the selfish and unnatural efforts of Merugan, (a renegade Armenian,) to convert his nation to the religion of Zoroaster, upon the promise from Shabooch II., of his being made the Sovereign of Armenia; the steadfast adherence of the Armenian chiefs and clergy to their newly received faith, against the most tempting offers, as well as under the most severe and trying sufferings, imprisonment and death; and, finally, the deliverance which God wrought for this persecuted people, through means of the Mamigonian chiefs, are all topics on which we should delight to enlarge. Equally interesting would it be to investigate the history of the Armenian alphabet, and of their admirable version of the Bible, (particularly the New Testament,) by Isaac and Mesrop, A. D., 411. But we must pass on from these subjects, and take a mere glance at the present condition of this interesting people. They are now a scattered race—numerous at Constantinople, dispersed throughout the whole of Asia Minor and Syria, found also in Persia and in India, and even as far eastward as Batavia in Java. Russia holds numbers of them, and westward they have proceeded as far as Trieste, Venice, Vienna, and even Amsterdam. Sober, temperate, thoughtful, industrious, patient, persevering, of a genius decidedly commercial, and manifesting every where a growing spirit of patriotism, they bear a stronger resemblance to the Anglo-Saxons than any other Oriental people. They are void of courage, but have well learned fortitude in their long school of suffering. They have little taste for either music or poetry. They are not so light-minded, imaginative or versatile as the Greeks; less dull and sluggish than the Turks; less degraded and wretched than the remnant of Israel, that other peeled and down-trodden people. It has been well said that the rich Armenians of Constantinople are the real lords paramount of the empire, being the bankers of the Sultan, and all his pashas; and, therefore, able to make their power felt to the remotest ends of Turkey.

We have one more of these Independent Eastern Churches to notice, and we shall do it briefly. It is *the Greek*, by far the largest, and I may add, the farthest removed from the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. "It agrees (says Dr. W.,) with the Church of Rome in most matters of the

greatest moment, and, as has been said, its superiority to her in any respect, arises principally from its inability or unwillingness to follow out principles to their legitimate length." One great practical difference there is, however, between the Greek and the Papal systems—the former does not pretend to any infallible head upon earth, and, accordingly its ghostly power is far less consolidated and effective.

The Greek Church is found in large numbers all through Turkey and Syria; in Arabia, also, and in Egypt. At Constantinople, it has as many followers as the Armenian and Roman churches together. It is almost the only church found in the Turkish-European provinces, as Bulgaria, Servia, &c.; while north of the Danube, it occupies Wallachia and Moldavia. In Hungary, also, it has a population of more than two millions. It is the established religion of the kingdom of Greece, and of the mammoth empire of Russia. Strong in her extensive dominions, and confident in her claims to the very highest antiquity and the purest orthodoxy, she absolutely denies the very name of Christian to any but her own children, would, doubtless, re-baptize the Pope of Rome, the Armenian Catholics,—not to say the Archbishop of Canterbury, before receiving one of them to her communion, and denominates herself *ἡ καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία ἡ ἀνατολική*, THE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLICAL ORIENTAL CHURCH.

We have thus accompanied our readers, under Dr. Wilson's guidance, on a hasty tour among the Eastern Christians. If our notices appear meagre and unsatisfactory, it is what we expected, and in one view what we desire. Our labour will have received its reward, should any one of our fellow-travellers be thereby stimulated to fuller investigations. Looking back now on the ground passed over, we group all the Eastern Churches together, (excepting always those "Asiatic Protestants," the Nestorians,) and call the reader's attention to three important features which characterize them all.

I. They are all idolatrous. There is not of them whose priests do not first make a God out of bread, and then lead on the people to worship it. There is not one of them that does not pray to the Saints, of whom the Armenians, for example, reckon 26,400. There is not one of them that

does not worship pictures, although some of them are much more given to this than others; the Greeks, for instance, much more than the Armenians. And as to their apologies for picture worship, they are in no sense or manner different from those of the Roman Church for her worship of images; so that if any Protestant is ready to excuse the idolatry of the Oriental Church, he must stand ready also to cover up that of the Church of Rome. What would our readers say to a picture of the Trinity, which we saw once over the front door of the Greek Church in Thyatira—the Spirit, as a dove, the Son, as one hanging on a cross, and the Father, as an old man with a grey beard? Now, hear an Oriental distinction, relative to picture worship. Nerses, surnamed Thuorhaly, (or Full of Grace,) one of the most distinguished saints of the Armenians, who flourished in the twelfth century, says: “As a picture without the substance is not to be worshipped, and the saints are not every where present to dwell in their pictures, as Christ is in his, their pictures are not to be worshipped. We honor and reverence the pictures of the saints, but the picture of the Creator only is to be worshipped.”\*

II. We find among all the Eastern Churches the real principles of Popery, respecting the church and the priesthood, only more imperfectly developed.

The Armenians, for instance, have a regularly constituted ecclesiastical hierarchy of nine orders of clergy. The parish clergy, it is true, must be married before ordination; nay, a man cannot be ordained as a parish priest, unless he be the father of at least one child. Thus, the Armenian Church, (and we may add the Greek too,) gives her testimony against allowing the freedom of pastoral intercourse to an unmarried clergy, and shuts out her monks of all ranks from the duties of confessing, baptizing, marrying, or burying her people. Nay, there is another important circumstance which distinguishes the Armenian priesthood—their appointment rests always with the inhabitants of the village where they are to officiate, and rarely does a bishop attempt to interfere with it. *The people fix upon some one* of their own number, pay his ordination fee or present to the bishop, and he becomes their priest to go in and out among them. But, on the other hand, all the

\* Unthanragan, p. 132, 133, quoted by Smith & Dwight, vol. i., p. 229.

ecclesiastical dignities and preferments are in the hands of a hierarchy of monks. And this church power is equalled by no other among the Armenians, except the money power. The only rivals of the hierarchy are the great bankers of Constantinople. Moreover, every ecclesiastical dignity, from the highest to the lowest, is sold for money. The clergy of the Eastern Churches, and this is most emphatically true of the Greek Church, are all guilty of Simony. The Archbishop of Ephesus, (Greek,) demanded three thousand piastres to ordain a man to the priest's office, but after long chaffering, they struck a bargain for five hundred piastres, or about five and twenty dollars! We know this man personally, having often visited the family where he exercised his skill in the culinary line. His wife also was at that time a very worthy young woman, a servant in the same family. And this man, though rather weak-minded, is, we have often been told, one of the best educated and most intelligent Greek priests in Asia Minor. Indeed, the Oriental priesthood are almost universally inferior in point of knowledge and character to their people. Some of our readers will remember Coray's Account of Papa Trechas.

Thus under the ecclesiastical organization of the East, quite as much as under that of the West, you will look in vain for a *teaching priest*—a priest whose lips keep knowledge and deal it forth for the spiritual sustenance of the people.

The business of the Hierarchy is not to instruct the people, but to perform certain ceremonies, which have an inherent holiness, and the very doing of which confers holiness upon the doer and upon others. The original idea of the Christian ministry is totally lost. The priest has driven out the minister; sacrificing and sanctifying have taken the place of preaching the Gospel. The occupation of the clergy, in their various ranks and spheres, is to sweep the church; to dress and undress it; to take charge of all the holy utensils and sacred garments; to say daily masses for the living and for the dead; to chant or to read prayers in a holy, that is, a *dead* language, at burials and at marriages; to sanctify water and baptize therewith; to hear confession of sins and pronounce a form of absolution therefrom; to go about and bless the houses of their parishioners at Christ-

mas and Easter, and to perform the regular visitations of their dioceses, for the collection of their dues; to make wafers for the mass, and, preceded through the streets by one bearing a light, to carry bits of the consecrated bread in a sacred box, to the houses of the dying, and to administer it to them as a *viaticum* for their journey to the unseen world. Such are the occupations of eight of the nine orders of the Armenian clergy, while the peculiar office of the Catholicos or Armenian Pontiff literally is to *consecrate the meiron* or sacred oil, and with it to *ordain bishops*.

And yet we should greatly err, if we imagined that the men who are thus occupied, wield no more power than ought fairly and justly to attach to offices so trifling, nay so ridiculous and degrading. Looking at these very duties of the priesthood from another point of view, we shall see what an immense power they are calculated to confer. For, to begin with the consecration of the *meiron*,—the Catholicos, in this act, performs a *miracle*! He causes the sacred oil to *boil* merely by the act of consecration, and he employs in this operation, two instruments which not a little enhance the wonder of all who look on—a bit of the true cross and one of the hands of St. Gregory, both which are among the treasures of their ecclesiastical metropolis, the Holy City of Echmiadzin. Now this holy oil is *essential in every ordination* of a catholicos, bishop or priest in the Armenian church, and without the application of it, the whole ceremony is null and void. It is also used in anointing children at the time of baptism, and is considered by the common people as even more essential than the holy water itself, in making the child an heir of Heaven. And what a mighty influence must attach, therefore, to the office and character of that reverend pontiff, to whom is given the power of preparing such a sacred and useful material!

Consider next, the power conferred on the priesthood by the doctrine of *transubstantiation*. The priest is a man endued with the power of miraculously converting a piece of bread into the body, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ.

And see too, what power he receives from their doctrine of *baptism*. Therein the priest administers a rite which *regenerates the soul*, and without which *there is no salvation*; and this mighty regenerating and saving rite it is the

privilege of no one but the priest, the bishop, or the catholicos to perform!

But let us go a step further. This same priest becomes *keeper of the conscience* of this regenerate child. From time to time he probes the wounds of his sins, and remains always master of all his secrets! Here is an influence which must grow with the growth of the youth, and extend itself with the gradual increase and spread of families!

But look still further, and you will see that this same priest holds in his hands the tremendous power of *binding and loosing*. It is for him to prescribe the appropriate penance for every sin, according to a code of crimes and punishments made out by the church; and when once the priest has decided on the penance due, not even the bishop or the patriarch can interfere to annul it. Thus he *sits in judgment* upon the sins of his fellow, and sentences him to a mock retribution!

It is for him also to *pronounce the pardon* of the sinner, which he does after this manner — “By right of my priestly authority and the divine command ‘whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven,’ by that same word I do absolve thee from all connection with thy sins of thought, word and deed; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Mighty and impressive, though blasphemous words, and mighty the office to which the authorized use of them belongs!

Again, the Armenians steadfastly deny the Popish doctrine of *Purgatory*, and yet they believe in a place called *Gayan*, where go the souls of those who have died in venial, but not mortal, sin; and also the souls of those good Christians who have confessed their sins, but were cut off before they had time to perform the whole allotted penance. It is believed that prayers, alms, and the masses of the priest, can free these souls from their sins, and procure them admission to Heaven. And here, you perceive, is another mighty weapon whereby the priesthood influence and govern, not only in this, but also in the world to come!

Once more, the Oriental priesthood wields the terrible power of *excommunication*, whereby they cut off, whom they will, from the assembly of the faithful, both here and

hereafter. A man under this sentence is not spoken to by any one in the street or the market place;—no one may buy at his shop or visit at his house; he is avoided by the whole community,\* and exposed to every kind of insult and abuse. He is debarred the holy communion while he lives, and is shut out from christian burial and from the Kingdom of Heaven, when he dies. Nay more, his very body will not consume in the grave, like that of a good Christian, but is possessed of an evil spirit, which causes the accursed excommunicant to wander about at night, and allows him no rest. In these cases the body must be taken up and sprinkled with holy water, and then laid in a new grave,† or cut to pieces and boiled in wine, so as to dislodge the evil spirit, and dispose the body to dissolve.‡ But still there is no certain remedy for the evil, except the absolution of the priest, which is no sooner pronounced than the devil is expelled, and then immediately and peacefully the body dissolves into its first principles of earth.§

Is it any wonder that this priestly power of excommunication is so fearful in the eyes of an ignorant, superstitious people? He whom the priest blesses is blessed, and he whom the priest curses is cursed, and no man in the community is so profligate or obdurate but his conscience is startled at this sentence, nor is any so highly exalted by riches, power or reputation, but he can be reached by this influence, and made to tremble under this infliction.

III. There is among all the Oriental Christians an utter ignorance of fundamental truth. They all believe baptism to be essential to salvation, but have no idea of any *internal regeneration*. All the special influences ascribed among them to the Third Person of the adorable Trinity, have reference to miracles. They know nothing of his peculiar operations on the hearts of men.

Neither have the Oriental Christians any knowledge of the *evangelical doctrine of faith*. Faith is with them a mere belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or an assent to the Nicene creed, or the receiving whatever the

\* See Ethridge on the Syrian Churches, p. 105.

† Covell's Greek Church Preface, p. xxxvi, and p. 296.

‡ See Rycaut's State of the Greek and Armenian Churches. London: 1679.—pages 279—281.

§ Rycaut, p. 282.

church teaches. But of justifying faith they have either never heard, or heard of it only to denounce the doctrine as abominable heresy. "What must I do to be saved?" appears to them a very unnecessary question, since all baptized persons are saved already, and need only be regular in confessing, doing penance, and communing, and they are sure to go to Heaven. Their dependence, therefore, is not upon the atoning blood of Christ, for justification, but upon *works of merit* for being justified, and again upon the same works for being sanctified. The Gospel is thus made to give place to a round of superstitions imposed by men, and the common people have almost no idea of spiritual religion, or of evangelical truth. Their whole knowledge of Christ is to learn when and how to make the cross—when and how to fast, to feast, to confess and to commune; and their whole practice of religion is the careful and self-righteous performance of these ceremonies.

How dishonoring to God and to his Son, Jesus Christ, therefore, is the whole system of the Oriental churches! God's worship displaced by idols, and Christ's office usurped by priests! There is something very awful in a Christianity which thus dethrones both God and Christ!—something fearfully, unnaturally, cruel in a church which hides from the view of her own sinful children both the one God and the one Mediator.

How degrading also is the religion of the Eastern churches to those who live under its influence. The system has no sanctifying power. Hardly do they know whether there be any Holy Ghost, and yet it is he only who can sanctify! Scarcely any knowledge have they of the great fundamental truths of the Gospel; and yet it is by and through these the Holy Ghost sanctifies! Vain and unprofitable indeed are those points which they deem most essential; concerning which they dispute most fiercely; and on account of which they hurl upon each other the most terrible anathemas! How degrading is all this, both to their religion and to themselves! Alas! that religion is all *external*, all *materializing*, and all *mechanical*. It is a system of *spiritual gymnastics*, of "*bodily* exercise which profiteth nothing." It is "will worship" which *deserves not to be* "in any honor," and it only works like every other carnal



scheme, "to the satisfying of *the flesh*," that is, of the *proud and self-righteous human heart*.

How evident, also, it is that whenever preached to people living under such a system, the Gospel is destined to inevitable and even cruel opposition. We reason *a priori*, that such an apostate and anti-Christian system will rouse itself against the pure truth: and facts justify the reasoning. Witness the present hatred and malice of the Greek clergy against Dr. King, of Athens: and witness, too, the late persecutions against the evangelical Armenians by their Patriarch. But this is a tale not to be entered upon at the conclusion of our article, and so we lay down the pen.

## ARTICLE II.

### PRESBYTERIANISM—THE REVOLUTION—THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, AND THE CONSTITUTION.

1. *The Superiority of the Calvinistic Faith and the Presbyterian Government. A Discourse, by Rev. D. K. JUNKIN, A. M. Easton, 1844.*
2. *Ecclesiastical Republicanism, or the Republicanism, Liberality and Catholicity of Presbytery, in Contrast with Prelacy and Popery. By Rev. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D. Boston, 1843.*
3. *Life and Correspondence of President Reed. By his Grandson, WM. B. REED. Philadelphia, 1847. 8vo. 2 vols.*
4. *The Baccalaureate Address in Miami University, August, 1842, by Rev. GEORGE JUNKIN, D. D. President, on the Bearings of True Religion upon Republican Government.*