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ARTICLE V.

PAGANIZED ECCLESIASTICISM, THE CHIEF ANTAGONIST OF
THE MODERN MISSIONARY.¹

By Rev. Joseph P. Thompson, New York.

THAT a *school of theology* should also be a *school of missions*, accords alike with the philosophy and the history of Christianity. If, as a late writer² on the History of the Apostolic Church suggests, we are yet in the Pauline age, intermediate between the age of ceremonial order and the age of sympathetic fusion, then do we but imitate our great Apostolic type in blending the missionary spirit with the polemical. The greatest of theologians was also the first and the greatest of missionaries.

In studying Christianity under its missionary aspect, our thoughts at once revert to ANTIOCH, the historic centre of Christian missions. That luxurious capital of the Macedonian kingdom of Syria — then the seat of the Roman government in the East, and the third city of the empire, rivalling Alexandria in wealth and population, and vieing with Rome itself in the magnificence of its festivals — was the first city of the Gentiles in which Christianity gained a footing, and gathered a church without the pale of the synagogue. The converts of the Pentecost, scattered from Jerusalem by the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled northward along the sea-coast of Phoenicia, visited the adjacent island of Cyprus, and found a refuge in Antioch, three hundred miles distant from the Jewish capital, where, under the immunities granted to the Jews by the Seleucidae and confirmed by the Caesars, this new sect of Judaism, as it was regarded, might grow without molestation. Here, in the old exclusive spirit of the circumcision, they “preached the word to none but to the Jews only,” until certain Hellenists from Cyprus and the northern coast of Africa, not sharing in the exclusiveness of the Palestinian Jews, “spake openly to the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.”

¹ An Address before the Society of Inquiry in Andover Theological Seminary, July 31, 1854.

² Dr. Philip Schaff.

The marvellous report of this first open movement without the synagogue, hastened to Antioch Barnabas from Jerusalem, and Paul from Tarsus; who labored together at Antioch for a whole year. So numerous were the converts to the Gospel, that, even in a population of two hundred thousand, they became conspicuous as a distinct and self-existent community; and they whom the Jews had stigmatized as "Galileans" and "Nazarenes," and who were known to each other as "the disciples," "the brethren," and "the saints," were there for the first time called "Christians," by the contemptuous Greeks. And now the genius of Christianity for sympathy and diffusion began to be developed. Contributions for the relief of the brethren in Judea, then suffering by famine, were sent to Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul; and, on the return of the apostles from this ministration, they were inaugurated by the Holy Ghost, through the church at Antioch, for the work of missions to the Gentile world. As Jerusalem was the seat of development, so was Antioch the centre of propagation.

For centuries the Syrian capital maintained the distinction thus conferred upon it as the mother of missions; and the mother of all Roman Asia, whom Cicero celebrates for men of learning and for the cultivation of the arts, became eminent for the eloquence of her bishops, the heroism of her martyrs, and the abundance of her Christian charities. Here Ignatius presided over the church for forty years, until he was led in chains to Rome to seal his testimony with his blood; and here, of the wise and holy Anthusa, was born and nurtured the golden-mouthed bishop of Constantinople. In this gorgeous seat of idolatry, where the shades of Daphne, tuneful with fountains and redolent of odors, allured a luxurious people to the sensual rites of Apollo and Diana; where the Delphic oracle was reproduced, and the Olympic games were imitated at immense cost, Christianity won to itself a hundred thousand disciples, established schools of learning, and maintained annually three thousand poor.

Such are the memories of Antioch, that carry us back to this historic centre of Christian missions. We go back of Mills, and Nott, and Hall, of Carey, and Martyn, and Brainerd; we go back of Reformers and Crusaders; of missionary bishops and wandering monks; we go back even of martyrs and confessors whose blood was as scattered seed; we go back to Barnabas and Saul, the head of that illustrious catalogue whom the Holy Ghost hath

separated to Himself for this work; and, traversing that same Mediterranean upon which the Gospel first launched forth on its mission to all nations, to where the broad bay of Issus sweeps the battle-field of Alexander and Darius, and casting anchor in the choked and deserted harbor of *Seleucia*, that once cradled the commerce of the Euphrates and the Indies borne westward through the passes of Lebanon, and from which the first missionaries to the heathen embarked, with a richer freight than that of Ormus and of Ind, we there inquire for the fruits of missionary enterprise; for its stability through the changes of empire; for its labors, its obstacles, and its successes; for the record of the Gospel in the city where the disciples were first called Christians and first became missionaries. Alas! that same Antioch now calls for some Barnabas and Saul to rebuild her wastes. Above her ruin towers, as of old, the majestic front of Lebanon, and by her side still rushes the Orontes, bearing the mountain snows and torrents to the sea. The grove of Daphne is no more; the Castalian fount is silent; and the marble statue of the God of Light with his golden bow lies in indistinguishable dust among the ruins of his temple. But the church where Paul preached, where Ignatius ministered, and where Chrysostom was nurtured, is no more. Christianity is dead in the city where first she was baptized. The minaret of the Prophet beetles over the ruins of the Roman wall, the Grecian temple, and the Christian church. Nay, sadder still; the heathenism that Paul there vanquished, has entered into the form of Christianity itself, and, in all that eastern world, a PAGANIZED ECCLESIASTICISM confronts the missionary of the cross with an opposition more intense and a barrier more formidable than did ever the original idolatry there enshrined. This now is everywhere throughout the East, and this is destined to be everywhere throughout the world, the mightiest foe of a free and pure Gospel. Where the old Paganism is dead, where Mohammedanism is wasting away, this Paganized Ecclesiasticism stands, the unrelenting adversary of the faith of Christ.

In one form or another — Romish, Greek, Armenian, Copt —
* this is now the chief antagonism to the Gospel in the eastern world. The forces encountered by Paul when he traversed that same region, were a Pharisaic Judaism, a speculative and sceptical philosophy, and a corrupt and vindictive Paganism. Now Judaism as an organized and hostile force has disappeared; the

dialectic schools of Greece have vanished; and Paganism, throughout the East, has fallen before the name of Christ. The Koran, indeed, holds nominal sway over more than a hundred millions of men; but Mohammedanism exists rather as a political and social barrier to any foreign religion, than as a vital religious antagonism to the Gospel of Christ. As a tangible system of faith, Mohammedanism is well-nigh *effete*. Its genius for propagandism has burnt itself out. It makes no advances; it gains no converts and no territories. It doggedly yields to the destiny that decrees its doom. The crescent pales before the cross; not that Nicholas is a Godfrey, or Napoleon a saint, but that Islam himself is an unbeliever.¹

Not so that gigantic usurpation of the Christian name which holds at once the chairs of apostles, the thrones of emperors, and the seats of gods. In this a Pharisaic Judaism and a persecuting Paganism still live, and live in vigorous hostility to the same primitive faith that they opposed in their separate forms. Here is an antagonism to the Gospel that Paul found not, either at Jerusalem, at Antioch, at Ephesus, at Corinth, or at Rome; but that now is found "all round about from Jerusalem to Illyricum," in all continental Europe, in South America, in Asia, in Africa, in the islands of the sea; wherever the missionary goes, the most formidable because the most subtle and unscrupulous of all his adversaries. This opposition Paul foresaw, but could not himself experience. The modern missionary must encounter it, and illy is he prepared for his work who has not measured its strength and its subtleties. In the cities where Paul successively encountered Judaism, Theosophism and Paganism, at Jerusalem, at Athens, and at Rome, this conglomerate formed of the detritus of systems that the Gospel then crushed, is set up in their stead in the name of Christianity. Inverting the order of these chief cities, we may trace from Rome to Jerusalem the power of a PAGANIZED ECCLESIASTICISM, through all the coasts and cities where the Apostle to the Gentiles "fully preached the Gospel of Christ."

As Paul was led into the Roman Forum under the escort of Julius toward the Pretorium on the Palatine hill, he saw, as at

¹ Notwithstanding the present success of the Turks against the Russians, in which every friend of missions must rejoice, Mohammedanism is destined soon to fall, either through foreign conquest, or by concessions to foreign alliance, or from inherent weakness.

Athens, a city filled with idols. To the right of the Sacred Way, that from the days of Romulus had been consecrated to processions in honor of the gods, on the far northern side of the crowded area, where the forums of Augustus and of Caesar joined upon the original forum of the people, he would see the magnificent temple reared by Augustus to *Avenging Mars*; and that famed temple of *Venus Genetrix*, where the conqueror of Egypt, himself vanquished by the "fair frailty" of the Ptolemaic Queen, had erected a statue of Cleopatra

"Oerpicturing that Venus, where we see
The fancy outwork nature;"

and where the conqueror of Gaul, demanding with imperial pomp the homage of the conscript fathers, had kindled that fire of hate that was quenched only with his blood.

On his immediate left, where the palace of Nero, sweeping down to the base of the Palatine mount, almost encroached upon the Forum, he would see the elegant portico of the temple of Castor and Pollux, then the vestibule of the new palace, with its gilded equestrian statues of the twin divinities; and, in advance of this, and almost on the line of the Sacred Way, adjoining the superb senate-house of Augustus, the temple of *Minerva Chalcidica*, built by the same emperor, the chief ornament of the Forum, as its fragmentary remains are now the chief model of the architect. Around the southern slope of the Palatine, bearing off toward the Tiber, he would see the little circular temple of *Romulus*, enclosing the bronze statue of the suckling wolf which Cicero has immortalized, and which you may still see in the Capitol; and the memorable temple built by the second king of Rome, where vestal virgins fed the sacred fire, and guarded the Palladium brought by Aeneas from the siege of Troy. Here, also, were the sacred wood and the fountain of *Juturna*, where the twin deities had rested on their hasty and mysterious visit to the city, and whose waters gave forth healing virtue; and just beyond, upon the edge of the marshy *Velabrum*, the temple of *Jupiter Stator*, another monument of that Imperial Augustus, who "found Rome brick and left it marble."

Such was Paul's first glance at Pagan Rome, as he walked up the Sacred Way toward the palace of that Caesar to whom he had appealed his cause. But all this imposing array of temples, like the majestic propylaea of Carnac, served only to adorn

the way to the central group upon the Capitoline Hill; where, facing the Forum in close contiguity, stood the granite temple of Saturn, the repository of the sacred treasury and the archives of the State; the ancient temple of Concord, renowned in the trial of the Catiline conspirators; and the gorgeous votive temple of Augustus to the Thundering Jove,¹ commemorative of the bolt that felled his servant but left himself unharmed; while upon the northern brow of this double-crowned eminence stood the oldest religious structure of the capital, the massive temple of JUPITER FÆRETRIVS of the date of Romulus; and on the other front, the pride and wonder of ancient Rome, that triple temple of the Capitol, known as the *Jupiter Capitolinus*, but dedicated to *Jupiter*, to *Minerva*, and to *Juno*, whose several cellæ were under one façade, enriched in the highest style of art, when art was at its zenith; a marble structure, two hundred feet in length and of nearly equal breadth, with double rows of columns upon either side, and, where it faced the Forum, a triple row of majestic pillars of Pentelic marble, the plunder of the temple of Olympian Jove, on which Paul had looked on the banks of the Ilissus; the whole surface of the mount being thus adorned with sacred edifices, which, in number, in riches, and in splendor, as well as in arrangement and effect, were rivalled only, scarce excelled, by the immortal group of the Acropolis at Athens.

A residence of two years at Rome as a prisoner at large, with no further restriction upon his personal liberty than the presence of the soldier to whom he was chained, made Paul familiar with those temples of Pagan worship whose ruins the traveller now seeks as memorials of antiquity, and as landmarks of the ancient city. In those two years he may have witnessed an oration to some victorious general returning from a foreign campaign; some Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian or Titus, then just rising into fame, and who afterwards in such quick succession followed the tyrant Nero on the throne; and here upon the Capitol, where the bronze statue of the Father of the gods sat with extended foot to receive the homage of the world, he must have seen the imposing pageants of the worship of the imperial city to Imperial Jove.

Rome, like Athens, was crowded with the symbols of idolatry. Not only was the Capitoline, like the Acropolis, converted into

¹ The site of the temple of *Jupiter Tonans* has been much disputed; but it was either on the Capitoline or near its base.

one vast temple embraced within the citadel as the symbol of Divine protection over the State; not only was the *Forum*, like the *Agora*, lined with temples, as if the gods had made this their habitation, and emperors and people had made their *cultus* the beginning and the end of life; but everywhere within the circumference of eight miles traced by the walls of the city, and even without the walls, were temples to divinities under every name and character, and commemorative of all great events of the State as kingdom, republic and empire; each marking some era of historic interest and appropriating the guardian offices of some new divinity, and all spread out in one imposing panorama from the summit of the Capitoline hill. On the island of the Tiber towered the mast-like obelisk of the huge nautiform temple of Aesculapius, whose serpent there deposited, had stayed the plague in the fifth century of Rome. In every *curia* or ward, Vesta had her unique shrine, her consecrated virgins, and her sacred fire. Apollo, Juno, Minerva, Venus and Hercules, Hope, Piety and Modesty, Ceres, Proserpine and Fortune, even Isis and Serapis, borrowed from Egypt, had their several temples, and the dome of the ethereal Pantheon imaged the abode of all the gods.

But while Paul found idolatry thus entrenched at Rome, he found there also not a few who loved that Saviour whom he preached. The mention by name, in the Epistle to the Romans, that preceded by some years his visit to Rome, of twenty-eight persons and households in that city already favorably known to Paul as the servants of Christ; and the allusion to other brethren and saints, and to the church meeting in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, show that the Gospel had a strong hold in the capital. No Apostle had there preceded Paul, nor as yet is there any mention even of bishops and deacons;¹ but the faith of the *saints* in that city "is spoken of throughout the whole world;" and their zeal and courage were displayed when they went in a body a distance of forty miles to meet the illustrious prisoner upon the Appian way.

The toleration of the Roman empire toward the divinities and the rites of conquered nations, so long as these did not conflict

¹ If Peter had ever been at Rome, it is impossible that Paul, who is a model of courtesy, should have omitted to allude to him in this Epistle; or if there was a bishop there, that he should have omitted to salute him, as he does the bishops at Philippi.

with the established religion, had brought idolatry into contempt by putting in competition for religious homage the heterogeneous divinities of the whole world. Judaism was tolerated also, because, while intensely hostile to idolatry, it was exclusive and not proselyting; and Christians were at first regarded only as a minor sect among the Jews. Rome was an inviting field to the Apostle of the Gentiles; and, during the long delay occasioned by the non-appearance of his prosecutors, and by the indifference of the emperor to a question of religion, "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, **NO MAN FORBIDDING HIM.**" The soldier to whom he was chained made no complaint of his preaching; and even some of the emperor's own household were begotten in his bonds.

When, however, it became apparent that the Christians were not a mere sect of the Jews, but the teachers of a "new way," and that a way which threatened to subvert all existing forms of religion; that Christianity was propagandism against the religion of the State, not with proud and impotent scorn, but with earnest and effective zeal, then the inoffensive prisoner brought from Caesarea became a marked man, and was dragged from his private house to the dungeon of Tullius. Here he felt that the idolatry of the Forum was no empty form.

At the north-western angle of the Forum, sunk in the rocky base of the Capitoline hill, without light or air, save such as might creep in at the aperture by which prisoners were lowered into them, were the dungeons of the Mamertine prison. Here, while the area above was thronged with the spectators of some idol-feast, and perchance even the noise of sacrifice or the revelry of the Saturnalia penetrated his dungeon walls, upon his pillar of stone, cold, hungry, dark, weary, yet triumphant in a living faith, lay the expectant martyr, "ready to be offered; and knowing that the time of his departure was at hand."

If after this he was set at liberty awhile, and visited Spain, and possibly Britain, he returned to Rome just when Nero, having feasted his fiendish passions with a burning city, determined to expiate the crime with the blood of the saints. Then Paul, the aged, no longer willing to abide in the flesh, departed to be with Christ. But whenever and however he yielded up his mission, we know that for two whole years, under the dominant

Paganism of Rome, Paul preached in that city the kingdom of God, with all boldness, no man forbidding him. How fares the Gospel now, in the city where the first missionary finished his work? What forces now favor, and what oppose, that truth for which he died?

No turbulent synagoge of the Jews is here; no imperial Paganism now gluts the passions of the mob with the sight of Christians burnt alive in coats of bitumen, or torn asunder by furious beasts. Here is the nominal centre of Christendom. Yet here, also, is the real centre of that PAGANIZED ECCLESIASTICISM, which, more than Jew or Pagan ever could, crushes out the life of a free and spiritual Christianity. The picture of modern Rome laid over that of the Rome of Paul's age, will present at once the fact and the argument. The picture is taken at the point which commemorates the inauguration of the Christian religion in the world.¹

We are in Rome on Friday, the 24th day of December. Following the Corso, the main street of the city, which marks the old Flaminian way, we pass over or around the Capitoline hill, and enter the Forum, whose straggling columns and disturbed foundations still witness for the grandeur of ancient Rome. The first thought that strikes us is, that the idolatry that Paul here saw enshrined in a score of temples, has passed utterly away, and that the religion of Christ is built upon its ruins; for, on the site of ruined temples, and built of their materials, are churches dedicated to the Christian martyrs, and crowned with the glittering symbol of the cross. The golden palace of Nero on yonder slope is supplanted by the villa of an English gentleman; and a Franciscan convent faces the Forum on the Palatine hill, now nearly overgrown with cultivated vines and wild acanthus weeds. Every outward sign would indicate that we are in a Christian city. Here, where Paul witnessed the licentious orgies practised at this season in honor of Saturn; here, where he saw the gorgeous processions of priests sweeping from temple to temple, and heard the boisterous mirth of the multitude let loose, to riot in the name of religion, we find no vestige of the Pagan empire that then ruled the world, save here and there an arch, a column, or a half-effaced inscription on a broken tablet. If here is the arch of Titus, whose bas-reliefs commemorate the triumph of Pagan arms over the city and the people of God, yonder is the

¹ The writer was in Rome during Christmas week in 1852.

arch of Constantine that commemorates the first Christian emperor of Rome, who abolished idolatry by imperial edict, and emblazoned on his standard the symbol of the cross. Beyond the Forum we enter the Colosseum, that stupendous arena erected for the gladiatorial shows of Rome; within whose walls more than eighty thousand spectators were wont to assemble to see the hated Christians thrown to the infuriated beasts. In the centre of this arena, perhaps on the very spot where Ignatius of Antioch was devoured by the lions, stands a lofty cross, and around it statues of our Saviour's passion. Papal benediction has consecrated the Colosseum to the memory of its own martyrs; and here, on every Friday, from a rude pulpit, a monk preaches where those martyrs bled. This surely is a Christian city. How would Paul rejoice at such a contrast with the old Saturnalia of Rome!

But let us see if *things* have changed with names. Yonder is a score of beggars, lame and blind, climbing up the pedestal of the cross and kneeling to kiss the sacred symbol. We draw near and read: "For every kiss an indulgence of two hundred days." These statues of Christ, rude, barbarous as works of art, are they not regarded with a veneration even more gross and stupid than that with which the statues of Pagan divinities were here honored? Is this after all a Christian city? Is the old Paganism quite dead?

The bells now summon us across the Tiber to the modern centre of power and of religion in Rome; and hurrying thither we enter the vast and beautiful *piazza* of St. Peter's. In the centre of a paved semicircular area, whose chord measures seven hundred and fifty feet, stands an obelisk brought by Caligula from Heliopolis in Egypt, and dedicated to heathen memories, but now surmounted by the cross, and covered with Christian inscriptions. On either side of it fountains are playing. A fine colonnade, sixty feet in width, encompasses the *piazza* on either hand, and leads you to the portico of St. Peter's, which crowns the arc of the *piazza* with its majestic façade of Corinthian columns, surmounted by colossal statues of Christ and his Apostles. Another step, and you are within that stupendous structure, which is to the Christianity of modern Rome what the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was to the Paganism of ancient Rome, its material embodiment and its highest expression. Here you behold the triumph of Christian art, from Raphael and Michael Angelo to Bernini; an art fostered by the wealth and piety of

centuries, aided by the contributions of a continent, and by the levies of indulgences from the realms of the dead and the ages of futurity.

“Since Zion’s desolation, when that He
 Forsook his former city, what could be,
 Of earthly structures, in his honor piled,
 Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
 Power, glory, strength, and beauty — all are aisled
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.”

“Undefiled?” That is our query. But we may not now linger in the church, for, though the brilliant array of carriages along the colonnades betokens some religious service, that is just now in another place. It is the hour for Vespers at the Sistine Chapel, in the adjoining palace of the Vatican. Entering the colonnade on the right, we pass an armed guard stationed at the foot of the grand staircase; for the prayer-meeting to be conducted by the head of the Catholic Church, can be entered only through a file of soldiers. Half-way up the stairs is a guard of another sort; a master of dress, who requires us to lay aside overcoats, umbrellas and canes, and who denies admittance, if gentlemen are in frock-coats, and ladies are in bonnets; a dress-coat for gentlemen, a veil for ladies, being the etiquette of the Pope’s prayer-meeting. But one should not cavil at this, since, in some Protestant churches of New York, dress-coats, white kid gloves, and well-trimmed coiffures are understood to be the order, especially on Confirmation days. Passing through the grand lobby or audience chamber of the Pontiff, decorated with frescoes commemorative of the triumphs of the church — and among these the Massacre of St. Bartholemew — and wedging our way through ranks of soldiers and a throng of spectators, we gain a position near the inner railing of the lofty oblong apartment of the chapel. Before us is the grand judgment scene of Michael Angelo; above us are his frescoed stories of the Old and New Testaments; but we are here for worship, not for art. We stand facing the altar; on the other three sides of the chapel sit the dignitaries of the church, in their brilliant costume of scarlet and gold, each with an attendant to adjust his robes. On the left, near the altar, is a throne-chair for the Pontiff, and opposite, in a small gallery, is the famous choir, whose unnatural tones betray the crime against humanity that here subserves the piety of the Christian, as elsewhere it subserves the jealousy of the Turk.

At the entrance of the Pope, the cardinals severally bow before him, kissing his covered hand. Next, sundry attendants adjust his mitre and robes, which are changed several times during the ceremony; so that, with robing and disrobing, shifting mitres, smoothing down vestments, and the homage of attendants passing and repassing the papal chair, the attention is quite divided between the devotions of his Holiness and his toilet. Other attendants bring to him the books of the Gospels and Epistles, or reverently lead him to the reading-desk, and hold the candles while he reads. The Pope and cardinals being duly perfumed with incense, the mass is chanted, and the host is consecrated with idolatrous homage, all worshippers saluting it on bended knee.

The service over, you retire, with a confused impression of gorgeous frescoes, rich green carpets and red cushions, scarlet cloaks with ermine collars, glittering mitres, fragrant incense, unnatural music, bowings, prostrations, trailing robes and brisk attendants; but with no impression of solemnity as in the presence of God, or of religious joy as at the advent of the Saviour of the world.

At evening you wend your way to the church of *St. Maria Maggiore*; the principal of some twenty churches in Rome consecrated to the Virgin Mary. The site of this building, we are told, was indicated by a miraculous fall of snow in August, covering the exact space whereon it should be built; a poor imitation of the old Pagan legend of a shower of stones upon Mt. Alba in token of the displeasure of the gods at the neglect of their worship.

The street leading to the church is illuminated with torches and with numerous lights of various colors; soldiers are marching, bands are playing, crowds are hurrying on; and, as you enter the great area in front of the church, where stands another obelisk brought from Pagan Egypt to Pagan Rome, now covered with Christian inscriptions, and look upon the huge edifice, whose doors are thronged with the masses from town and country, eager to witness the ceremonial of the nativity, you catch for a moment the enthusiasm of the scene, and feel that surely the Christian faith has life and power in Rome. Here, as at the Sistine, you enter through a guard of soldiers; and feel yourself under military surveillance. The church impresses you with its adaptation, not for preaching or for united worship, but for reli-

giou's spectacles. The simple grandeur of the architecture, the splendor of the decorations, the wealth of marble, jasper, porphyry, silver and gold lavished upon the side chapels, the massive carving and gilding of the roof, the altar of porphyry surmounted by six bronze angels, the marble columns festooned with red cloth, the blaze of gilt candelabras hung from pavement to ceiling, the intoning of the service, with the responses of the choir; all this arrests you on the moment, and prepares you for a ceremony of no ordinary significance. A commotion at one extremity of the church attracts you thither; and there, seated under a crimson canopy, borne slowly upon the shoulders of men, preceded by a military guard, and surrounded by a shoal of ecclesiastics bearing lighted candles and various insignia, moves the Pope, bestowing his benediction upon the people, who kneel on all sides to receive it. He halts to render homage at the gorgeous chapel of Sixtus V., and then is borne to the choir to participate in the service at the high altar.

Long and wearisome is the chanting, unintelligible from the distance; manifold are the bowings and crossings at the altar as the mass proceeds; till, after some three hours' waiting, you again observe a commotion at the chapel where the Pope did homage. But now the stir is not for him. In that chapel is said to be kept the cradle of Christ, encased in a silver crib, and this is now to be exhibited for the adoration of the people. On each side of the nave, which measures 280 feet in length by 50 feet in width, is stationed a file of grenadiers to keep clear a passage for the grand procession. Some fifty ecclesiastics in canonicals, walking two and two, each carrying a huge lighted candle, some looking demure and scholarly, others gross and sensual, others light-minded and chatty, move slowly up the nave to the sound of chanting, and herald the advent of the silver cradle. This, with its doll bedecked with finery and jewels, is borne aloft on poles, and deposited upon the high altar. The common people do it reverence as it passes, and, at the altar, the officiating clergy bow to this doll in its silver cradle, as the Magi bowed in adoration before the babe in the manger.

Is this a Christian service, or some old Pagan rite revived? This is not merely the act of ignorant peasants, to whose superstition something might be pardoned; it is an act in which the Pope himself participates; the civil head of the Roman State, and the ecclesiastical head of the Roman Catholic Church, hav-

ing himself received the homage of his subjects, now renders homage to the doll in the silver cradle. This holy cradle has assigned to it the most sacred spot in all the church. Upon the high altar, before which the priests kneel in their daily offices, and which none may pass without saluting, this cradle stands on Christmas day to claim the homage of each worshipper. At Bethlehem pilgrims kiss the manger in which Christ was laid; at Rome the manger of stone is transmuted into a cradle of silver. Is Rome a Christian or a Pagan city?

We renew the inquiry in front of the church. The colossal obelisk, surmounted with the cross, boasts the triumph of Christianity over Paganism; but beside this is a marble pillar, surmounted with a bronze statue of the virgin *Mary*, standing upon the half-moon, now worshipped in place of the virgin *Diana*, who, with the crescent on her head, was worshipped here as the queen of heaven. Is the religion of Rome changed except in name?

The morning of Christmas is ushered in with roar of artillery from the castle of St. Angelo, and Rome awakes to know a Saviour born. At nine o'clock we repair to St. Peter's. We are yet early for the mass, and will spend a moment in taking in a conception of the place in which we stand. If the nave of St. Maria Maggiore seemed vast, this is stupendous; twice as long, twice as high, and four times as wide as the nave of the Crystal Palace in New York; you could place within it twelve Broadway Tabernacles in double row.¹ The dome, wider by half than the dome of the palace, and at its apex four times the height of that from the pavement, rests on four piers of stone, each 230 feet in circumference. Under the dome is the tomb of St. Peter, illuminated night and day with lamps of silver and gold. Beyond the tomb is the high altar, with its stupendous canopy of bronze, adorned with forty thousand dollars world of gold. Against the rear wall of the church is the stone chair of St. Peter. The chair is superbly dressed with red cloth, and carpeted. Here are two thrones for the Pope, at different elevations, and seats for the cardinals. On each side of the tomb of St. Peter, a space is railed off for visitors, who are admitted only in full dress. No frock-coat, though of the scantiest pattern, no bonnet, though it cover less than half the head, can enter that sacred enclosure;

¹ We speak here of the nave only; without estimating the whole superficial area of the basilica.

but skirts pinned inward, and black silk aprons tortured into veils, will pass the scrutiny of the guard.

Just by one of the pillars of the dome, near the tomb of Peter, is an unsightly bronze statue of that Apostle, which antiquaries allege to be the statue of Jupiter from the Capitoline hill, the thunderbolt exchanged for keys. The faithful kiss the toe of this image and salute it with their foreheads. Is the religion of Rome changed but in name? Is not its Ecclesiasticism Paganized?

A long line of grenadiers now prepare the nave for the entrance of the procession. Rude soldiers thrust back the curious crowd. First comes the Swiss guard, in fantastic dress, with helmets and halberds; next ecclesiastics, two and two, some in black robes, some in red; next dignitaries in purple and gold, in scarlet and ermine, in white lace and purple; the triple crown — rich jewelled mitres — borne in State; the illuminated cross; the sword of State; the cardinals, in scarlet robes and stockings, with capes of white lace and gold, and mitres of white damask and silver; and, last of all, the Pope, arrayed in white satin trimmed with gold, wearing a tiara of jewels, seated in a crimson chair upon a platform borne on the shoulders of twelve men clothed in scarlet, beneath a canopy of white silk embroidered with silver. On each side of him is borne aloft an immense fan of peacock's feathers, a symbol that the eyes of the Pope are over all the earth. As the chair approaches, the soldiers present arms and fall upon their knees, while the people cast themselves to the ground to receive the passing benediction of the Holy Father.

On entering the choir, the Pope descends from his tottering elevation, knells before the altar, and is then conducted to the lower throne. The cardinals advance in order, and salute him by kissing his hand; then follow the bishops, who bow slowly before him to receive his blessing; and, after these, a lower order of ecclesiastics prostrate themselves at the footstool and kiss the extended toe of the right foot, as they just now kissed the toe of Peter's statue.¹ This homage to the supreme Pontiff consumes nearly an hour.

When at last it is over, the choir begin the chants for the day, and respond to the fine recitative of his Holiness. The mitre

¹ It is pretended that they kiss the cross on the slipper; but why is a cross embroidered on the toe of the slipper and this always extended for homage?

and the vestments of the Pope are changed with every transition in the service. At length he is led to the higher throne, whence he walks reverently to the high altar and consecrates the host. The music swells forth its loudest, sweetest strains; and, as he adoringly elevates the host and three times displays the jewelled chalice in sight of all the people, the silver trumpets sound a blast that quivers through the dome; the soldiers present arms and drop upon their knees, the cardinals kneel amid clouds of incense, and the people fall to the ground in awe of the mystic body and blood of the Lord. This is the culminating point of the worship of modern Rome. Is it Christian or Pagan? Mark now as the Pope descends from the altar, the *same* prostrations of soldiers, ecclesiastics and people, just now rendered to the incarnate Godhead, are repeated to him; and, instead of staying the idolatry as did Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, he accepts it graciously; and, resuming his throne, "he exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

Raised again upon his moving throne, the Pontiff is borne through the church to his palace, receiving homage and dispensing blessings on the way. Would you comprehend this pompous ceremonial? Go to *Thebes*, and there, in the sculptures of four thousand years ago, you see the king borne under a canopy upon men's shoulders, with the *flabella* waving upon either side;¹ you see the monarch descend and offer incense to the idol, and then resume his throne to receive incense, offerings and homage from the priests; you see almost the exact type of this Christian service at Rome in the Pagan ceremonials of Egypt. To complete the picture, look out on the piazza and see that gorgeous display of carriages and livery; carriages of crimson or of blue profusely decorated with gold, and furnished each with three or five footmen in scarlet cloaks and stockings of the costliest material. The State processions of the queen of England and the emperor of France, present nothing so brilliant as this show of the holy men of Rome going to and from their devotions at St. Peter's.

But while the cardinals and bishops thus roll in splendor, where meantime are the people? Few of the common people were seen in the church. Its area that would hold fifty thousand seemed almost bare. Soldiers, ecclesiastics, visitors were there,

¹ The Pope is the only sovereign who retains this symbol.

but where are the people? Just here, emerging from poverty-stricken streets to stare or scowl at the gaudy carriages of the cardinals. While every third man is a soldier or a priest; an equal proportion are malcontents and beggars.

But are none of the people devout? O yes; they were at the *Maggiore* last night to see the silver cradle; and now, if you go to the church on the Capitol, that stands upon the site of the temple of Jupiter,¹ you will see them in crowds; for there is the famous *Bambino*, a doll cut from olive-wood at Jerusalem, painted by Luke when the carver was asleep, and, after many miraculous adventures, dropped as from heaven into the convent adjoining this church. This doll works miraculous cures, and is often carried to the sick with solemn procession. Now it is dressed up with satin and jewels, and exhibited together with effigies of Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds, accompanied with the recitation by children of the pious drama of the nativity. Here are the people, and this is their religion.

Or we will enter this church of the Virgin near by. Here is a marble statue of Mary, the toe of which is worn by kissing; here are crowds of women on their knees awaiting their turn to draw near and kiss the sacred foot; the image is so laden with votive offerings, gold and silver hearts, chaplets of flowers, pictures, all manner of gewgaws, that you can hardly see its outline; while the pillars and walls are all glittering with offerings, among which are the crutches of cripples whom the statue has restored. Yes, here are the people, making their bows, saying their prayers, offering candles and other gifts, kneeling, bowing, kissing, crossing, counting their beads, or waiting for a drop of sacred healing oil from the cruse of the Virgin.

In the church of *San Teodoro* in the Forum, you will see mothers carrying sick children to be healed, just as the mothers of Pagan Rome brought their children to be healed at the temple of Romulus, near the fountain of *Juturna*, on that very spot. Indeed, so strong is the resemblance of the modern religion to the ancient, that a similarity of the rites of any church to those of an ancient temple, guides the antiquary, almost infallibly, to the site of that temple. In the Pantheon, which retains unchanged its Pagan form, you find a statue of the sybil, worshipped as the Virgin Mary.

¹ *Ara Cœli.*

At St. John Lateran, the oldest basilica of Rome, you see the poor people gazing reverently at the urn that contains the head of Peter; at the porphyry slab on which the lots were cast for the garments of our Lord; at two columns from Pilate's house; and at the table on which the last supper was celebrated; though, as we have seen the latter at Nazareth also, we would caution you not to be too credulous.

Here, too, you will see poor creatures toiling, on their hands and knees, up the stairs by which Jesus ascended to the judgment-hall of Pilate; twenty-eight steps of marble transported hither miraculously from Jerusalem for the convenience of the faithful. In the midst of the gorgeous ecclesiasticism around them, are not these poor people *Pagans*?

Christmas is followed by the Sabbath. The shops are open. The people are idling in the markets, or sunning themselves in the piazzas. The landlord, the vetturino, the laundress, who would not do anything for you yesterday, because it was a festival, now come to you with all sorts of business, because it is only Sunday. There is no aspect of religion in the streets. Where shall we find the Christian Sabbath? Not in ecclesiastical Rome made Pagan. In the private house of the American legation, under the flag of the United States, is the only meeting of Protestant Christians allowed within the walls of Rome. Here is an upper chamber, unadorned, fitted up with a plain pulpit and settees, in which some sixty persons are met to worship God. Nothing could be more simple than their service. They sing a hymn; the Scriptures are read in their native English; prayer is offered, and a man in citizen's dress, taking for his theme a verse of the Bible, delivers a brief and simple discourse upon faith in Christ as the alone medium of access to God. When the service is ended, the congregation disperse, with the exception of a few who are bound to each other by a peculiar tie. Before them is a table covered with a plain white cloth; which, when removed, exhibits a plate of bread and a cup of wine. After prayer, they partake of these, each and all alike in remembrance of their common Lord.

How wide the contrast between this scene and the High Mass at St. Peter's yesterday; both intended to commemorate Christ as the Saviour of mankind. There the Pope, the highest ecclesiastic in the world, the head of all spiritual dignity and power, robed in full pontificals of satin and gold, and crowned with a

mitre glittering with jewels, took from a rubied cup of gold the wafer he had transmuted into the body of Christ, and ate it alone, only the sacristan first tasting it to assure him against poison; and a military band announced with a flourish of trumpets the moment of consecration. Here a few persons, male and female, sitting side by side, pass from hand to hand a plate and a cup, that each may call to remembrance the body and the blood of Christ. Never was a mass more gorgeous; never was a communion more plain. The one was the height of the artistic and the ceremonial; the other the extreme of the simple and the spiritual.

On that day there were seen at Rome the types of three religions: the old Paganism in its surviving monuments; the gorgeous ceremonialism of St. Peter's; the simple faith of the upper chamber. The first two are one. The Pope represents Ecclesiasticism in its intensest form. The Bambino represents Paganism in its lowest grade. The one is borne upon men's shoulders in a damask chair; the other is borne upon men's shoulders in a silver cradle; and both receive the homage due to God alone.

We have seen how for two years Paul preached at Rome in his own hired house, and gained converts even from the household of Nero. Let him rise again from the scene of his martyrdom, and, in the old Forum, or by the new St. Peter's, or in the church built over his own body to glorify that martyrdom,¹ let him read aloud his own Epistle to the Romans, expounding the great doctrine of justification by faith; let him essay, in any house, to preach to *natives* of Rome the Christ he preached to their ancestors, and would no man forbid him? Before two *days*, his voice would be silenced in a deeper dungeon than that of the bloody and remorseless Nero, and all the refinements of secret cruelty would prolong the sacrifice of the victim, ready, as of old, to be offered for the joy and defence of the faith.

In all Rome Paul would not now find as many native believers, as he there found converts from heathenism in the infancy of the Gospel. For centuries the Papacy has had absolute control over one of the fairest portions of the globe. Enthroned in the ancient capital of learning, of art, and of political power; wielding the power of the State, the power of Art, and the wealth of

¹ The church of St. Paul without the walls is one of the most magnificent structures of Rome. It is particularly rich in mosaics.

ages, over a simple, pliant and poetic people; what fruits has it produced to the glory of God? Architecture, whose magnificence rivals the monuments of Pagan Rome; painting and statuary, that form a distinct school of art; ceremonials unsurpassed in the golden empire; and with these a squalid, beggared population, the most oppressive, the worst-managed government in the civilized world; and superstition and idolatry as frivolous and debasing as marked the worship of the old Pagan divinities. Where Paul preached, witnessed and suffered; where the noble army of martyrs, whose simple memorials are yet found in the catacombs, witnessed a good confession; where Christianity was at length inaugurated in the seat of empire and proclaimed the religion of the world; there the reader of the Bible is imprisoned and the preacher of the cross forbidden; there nothing but the presence of foreign flags hinders the persecution of all believers; there Ecclesiasticism rules supreme and enacts the rites of Paganism over its fallen shrines.

From Rome we pass to ATHENS, in the inverted order of Paul's missionary tour, and there study the phases of Christianity in the old and in the new. When Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill, he was surrounded with the most glorious memories of Athenian history, the proudest schools of Athenian philosophy, and the most perfect models of Athenian art. "Nothing," says Wordsworth,¹ "could present a grander, and, if we may so speak, a more *picturesque* and *scenic* illustration of his subject than the objects with which he was surrounded. In this respect, Nature and Reality painted, at the time and on the spot, a nobler cartoon of Paul's preaching at Athens than the immortal Raphael has since. . . . Visible behind him, at no great distance, was the scene of Athenian glory, the island of Salamis." Nearer flowed the Cephissus, upon whose banks yet lingered the groves of the Academy. "Before him was the crowded city itself. In the city, immediately below him, was the circle of the Agora, planted with plane trees, adorned with statues of marble, bronze and gilded, with painted porticoes and stately edifices, monuments of Athenian gratitude and glory," so crowded with idols that it were easier to find there a god than a man; a little beyond was the Pnyx, fresh with the memories of Themistocles, Pericles and Demosthenes; "and, above all, towering to his left, rose the

¹ "Athens and Attica;" the most picturesque and eloquent description of ancient Athens.

stately Acropolis itself, faced with its Propylaea as a frontlet, and surmounted with the Parthenon as a crown. The temple of the Eumenides, with its sacred fountain, was immediately below him." Further on was the yet perfect Theseum, whose "solid yet graceful form looks as if it had been quarried, not from the bed of a rocky mountain but from the golden light of an Athenian sunset." The honeyed Hymettus towered upon the east, and the marble mass of Pentelicus to the north marked the adjacent site of Marathon. On the margin of the Ilyssus, and hidden by the Acropolis from Mars Hill, stood the yet unfinished temple of Olympian Jove, whose progress had marked the history of Athens for six hundred years, and whose columns were gone to grace the Capitoline hill before they had cast a completed image over the Ilyssus. Turning toward the Acropolis, he would see the beautiful votive temple of *Victory*, divested of her wings and sandals, that she might abide with the heroes of Marathon, Salamis and Plataea; the temple of *Minerva Polias*, that enclosed the sacred olive; and, "towering over the city from its pedestal on the rock of the Acropolis, the bronze colossus of Minerva, armed with spear, shield and helmet, as the Champioun of Athens. Standing almost beneath its shade, he pronounced, that the Deity was not to be likened either to that, the work of Phidias, nor to other forms in gold, silver or stone, graven by art and man's device, which peopled the scene before him; and that God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

Laying now the map of the modern over the ancient, the grove of the Academy is a pleasure garden, the porches of the Epicureans and the Stoics are in ruins, the idols are no more; and the majestic Parthenon crumbles amid the ruins of a rude Venetian tower and the dismantled bastions of a Turkish fort. But, though the Pagan philosopher and the Mohammedan iconoclast are gone, a Pagan and persecuting Ecclesiasticism usurps the name of Christianity, and by its pompous ritual conceals that "unknown God" whom Paul declared. In the Byzantine chapels that have survived the Mohammedan rule, and in the yet unfinished Cathedral of Otho, you witness the adoration of an ignorant superstitious multitude to pictures of saints, and the sacrifice of the mass; you see the consecrated wafer administered to the infant of three months, already regenerate by baptism; and, while fasts

and festivals consume two-thirds of the working-days of the year, the Sabbath is desecrated by the royal head of the church for the review of his guards; and gardens and markets are opened for the gala. There, too, a Paganized Ecclesiasticism opposes, by fraud and by violence, the reading and the teaching of the Bible in the common tongue;¹ and denounces *Jonas King* as "an imp of the devil spewed upon the shores of Greece from the belly of hell." In the city where Paul proclaimed one supreme and spiritual Jehovah, the alone object of intelligent and believing worship, a Christian missionary is mobbed, stoned, imprisoned, and threatened with exile, for denying that *Mary* is fitly styled the mother of God, and entitled to religious veneration; and that a wafer is transformed into God by the incantations of a priest. *Mury* has usurped the place of *Minerva* in her own city; and, where the Epicurean and Stoic are forgotten, and the gorgeous idolatry of Greece lies in fragments, an ecclesiastical hierarchy, usurping the name of the church of Christ, and paganized in spirit and in worship, persecutes the faith that *Dionysius the Areopagite* received at the lips of Paul. And this same Greek Ecclesiasticism rules over fifty millions of souls; and, led by the autocrat of all the Russians, now threatens to overwhelm the freer constitution of the Turk, and to destroy the fruits of Christian missions throughout the eastern world.

Passing on from Athens to JERUSALEM, we there find this same Ecclesiasticism in a fourfold form, still paganized and persecuting, installed over the cross and the sepulchre of our Lord. No Sanhedrim now holds its midnight conclave against the prophet of Nazareth, or in open day incites the mob to the murder of Stephen. No cowardly Pilate condemns the innocent to be crucified. The scourge, the prison, and the cross are gone; but only because the Moslem,² not the ecclesiastic, holds the keys of Jerusalem. And even now, by subtlety, the ecclesiastic thwarts the missionary, and has driven him by violence from Bethlehem on the very festival of the birth of Christ. There is wanting only the political power of Pope or Czar, to revive in Jerusalem itself the persecutions of the martyr age. There *Paganized Ecclesiasticism*, Greek, Latin, Armenian, Copt, kisses

¹ Among the books lately seized and proscribed by the Greek ecclesiastics were several consisting entirely of selections from the Holy Scriptures.

² The good faith of the Turk, in his protectorate of the holy places, is worthy of all praise. The compact of Suludin is held inviolate.

the stone and kneels before the socket of the cross; venerates images, pictures and relics; worships the Virgin; makes invocation to the saints; adores the sacrifice of the Mass; matches with frenzied zeal the vestal fire from the sepulchre; dispenses its indulgences for sin; exalts itself above all that is called God; and flashes its impotent hate against the meek disciple of the meek and holy One.

The picture of the East as it is, overlying the picture of the East as it was, gives you the fact and the argument of our subject. Have we not justified to you by facts the assertion that, everywhere throughout the Eastern world, a Paganized Ecclesiasticism, centred in Rome and in Athens, and ramified over all Continental Europe and Western Asia, is now the grand antagonism of the Gospel? Where the first missionaries from Antioch preached that Gospel to the subverting of the old idolatry, Ecclesiasticism has usurped the name of Christianity, and has restored the rites and offices, the very images and symbols of Paganism under the baptism of Christ and the symbol of his cross.

Whence comes this stupendous usurpation that has transformed the missionary Christianity of Antioch into the Paganized Ecclesiasticism of Rome, of Athens, and of Jerusalem; that rules the consciences of two hundred millions of our race; and that on every soil confronts the missionary with its subtle and deadly hostility? What is the secret of its growth and strength? How shall this antagonism, unknown to Barnabas and Paul, be met by those who shall follow in their track? No question at this day is so important to a Society of Missionary Inquiry; and if, by picturing the strength, the ubiquity, and the resources of this adversary, we shall stimulate your minds to grapple with this great question, the practical end of this argument will be attained.

How came it to pass, that the living Christianity that superseded a fossil Judaism, has itself been stiffened into an Ecclesiasticism more inflexible than that of chief priests and pharisees; and the Christianity that subverted Paganism, has itself become paganized in its forms, its observances, and its spirit? If we can trace the origin of this now monstrous perversion, we shall better understand its remedy.

I. The first cause of this change was the departure from the idea that the church of Christ, whether in its general or its local forms, is a *simple and an equal brotherhood of believers*. When

Christ appeared, the religious systems of the world were alike hierarchical in their structure and their administration. Whether through some common tradition, or by the urgency of universal guilt, expiatory sacrifices were the prominent feature of all religions. But for sacrifices there must needs be priests; and with the priesthood comes the idea of mediation; until at length a seeming divinity is attached to him who fulfils the office of reconciliation between man and God. The Jewish system had this feature by Divine institution, and by way of type. It had its high priest standing between Jehovah and the people. Pagan Rome had its altars, its priests, and its *Pontifex Maximus*. This lies in human nature, and in the nature of the case. When Christ came, he answered herein the universal want of the human soul. He was the complete and all-sufficient atonement for sin. He now is the one living and prevailing Mediator. Nothing remains for us as relates to ourselves, but to believe in Christ, and accept him as our atonement and priest; and nothing as relates to others, but to proclaim Christ as their Saviour. This is all that one can do under the Gospel: *believe in Christ for himself, and persuade others to believe in him also*. Christ abolished the law of commandments in ordinances, nailing it to his cross. But that law was not so easily abolished from the human heart. How long it was before the immediate disciples of Christ, with all the advantage of his daily teaching, could comprehend the spirituality of his mission, and see in him the fulfilment and the end of the ceremonial law. How large a portion of the Apostolic writings is given to the proof, that types and ceremonies, altars, priests and sacrifices are superseded by the atonement and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If Christ made an atonement for the world, no other can be needed; if Christ is Mediator, none other can be recognized or accepted. Hence in the first Christian Society there was one Lord and Master, even Christ, and a company of brethren. The common office and duty of these as disciples, was to make other disciples. No one was lord over the rest; no one had prerogatives higher than the rest; but all were brethren.¹ Such a community did not accord with the existing constitution of society, either political or religious. It was contrary to the edu-

¹ The utter silence of the Evangelists and the other Apostles as to the primacy of Peter, is proof that they did not regard the memorable saying of Christ: "Thou art Peter," etc., as investing him with such primacy.

cation and the habits of all mankind, to all hereditary opinions and usages. It gave no scope to ambition; it testified against castes and hierarchies; and, while it excited the jealousy and the enmity of the great, it failed to satisfy the love of prodigy, pomp and mystery in the ignorant and superstitious. Just here the crafty, the "conservative," and the compromising took advantage of the moral power of the new religion, and of the excitement it had produced, to bring in the old elements of the supernatural and the hierarchial under new forms. Judaizing teachers sought to enforce the observance of the Levitical law; while Pagan casuists, converted into Christian fathers, grafted upon the Gospel their speculative philosophy, together with such usages borrowed from heathenism as they deemed innocent, or as might serve to attract the multitude. In particular, the natural and world-wide notion of a priesthood, a sanctified order in the church, was thus grafted upon Christianity, and that door once opened, there was no limit to the usurpations of spiritual despotism.

By degrees the metropolitan pastor grew to the dignity of a diocesan over the pastors of dependent churches; and when, at length, the name "Christian" ceased to be a reproach and a signal for persecution, and close upon the bloody decrees of Diocletian and the cruel proscription of Galerius, came the *Labarum* of Constantine, consecrating the imperial banner with the symbol of the cross, and investing Christianity with the protection and the patronage of the State, it was natural that the temples and statues of the old idolatry should be baptized with new names; that Christian bishops, impatient to convert the tolerant emperor, should trace resemblances between his Apollo and their Christ; that the religious festivals that belonged to the national and social life, should put on a new dress; that the Saturnalia and the festival of the winter solstice should be transformed into Christmas;¹ and *Sun-day* and the Sabbath be made coincident; and that the bishop of Rome should make his position in the seat of imperial power an argument for ecclesiastical supremacy. Especially, when Constantine proclaimed Christianity the religion of the empire, and transferred his capital

¹ There is no trace of Christmas earlier than the third century. It is an offshoot of Pagan Rome. Vide Neander, Gieseler, Mosheim, and even *Cove*. Chrysostom argues for it as an appropriate festival, though of recent origin. Other fathers advocate it as a substitute for the Saturnalia.

from the Tiber to the Bosphorus, did the bishop of Rome seek to fortify himself against his eastern rival by the traditional supremacy of the mistress of the world. When the emperor crept out of the shell of authority that the incrustation of ages had formed about Rome, the Pope quietly crept in.¹

The hierarchical constitution of the Papacy rests upon the idea of priestly intercession as its chief corner-stone. Once admit that in the church of Christ there is a consecrated order, having official sanctity and prerogatives; that there is in the Christian brotherhood any other distinction than that which superior talent, and practical wisdom, and high virtue must command — a superiority that is moral and personal, and not official — once create a priesthood, and the Pope is a logical necessity. You must have an apex to your pyramid. Many priests make diversity; these must have superiors, and these, other superiors, till you reach the calminating point of unity and sanctity in the chief priest or Pope.

Herein the Roman Catholic system is a unit; more complete than the Armenian or the Greek. It is the great granite pyramid of Cheops compared with the huge misshapen mounds of brick at Dashour.² This system is profoundly adapted to human nature, both logically and artistically. The artistic effect of High Mass in St. Peter's would be improved by abbreviating the homage, and by following the elevation of the Host immediately with the benediction. But even now, in its artistic points, it is the most gorgeous and imposing ceremonial in the world; and, given the premises that underlie it, it has also a fine religious effect. Yet all this pomp of ritual lies in the doctrine of a human priesthood as in a germ. "The idea," says Coleridge,³ "that the church meant the clergy — the hierarchy exclusively — constituted the first and fundamental apostasy." And Arnold⁴ declared: "the great cause of hinderance to the triumph of Christianity to be in the corruption not of the religion of Christ, but of the church of Christ." That church he defines to be, not an institution of the clergy, but a living society of all Christians. And he elsewhere says: "The laity is the church minus the clergy, as the people are the State minus the nobility and the

¹ This fine point, we believe, is original with Rev. Leonard Bacon, D. D. of New Haven, in his unpublished lectures on Church History and Polity.

² Known commonly as the false pyramids.

³ Aids to Reflection.

⁴ *Life*, by Stanley.

king; this is the view taken of the church in the New Testament, and between this and its opposite the difference is incalculable." That one difference makes the two extremes of our picture. Take away our simple faith in Christ as our atoning priest, and our respect and affection for all his disciples as our equals in the congregation of believers, and we must go to Rome to satisfy our conception of a consecrated order between man and God. Ecclesiasticism and evangelical faith cannot dwell in unison. He, therefore, who would successfully oppose the ecclesiasticism that overspreads the eastern world, must have no fellowship with its rudimental doctrine of a priesthood in the church of Christ.

II. A second source of this Paganized Ecclesiasticism is a false theology as to the nature of sin and of holiness, and the method by which a sinful character is changed into a holy character. Borrowing the sensuous philosophy of the old Paganism of the East, it makes sin lie, not in a state of will or in a voluntary state of the affections, but in an inherited vice of constitution, and in overt acts of greater or less turpitude. Hence the sinful essence and its putative sin must be counteracted by a putative sanctity conveyed through the sacraments of baptism and the Mass; and overt sins must be atoned for by a sliding scale of penances. Bodily mortifications and priestly manipulations must work over this vicious and depraved constitution. Given a depravity purely physical to be rectified by a physical regeneration, and the sacraments of the Greek and Roman churches are a logical necessity: and now, as before, the mind seeks for the highest impressiveness and the highest validity in the forms through which sanctification is dispensed, and in the power that grants it absolution.

He who would grapple with such a system, must rightly understand the nature of sin as "the transgression of the law;" and the nature of regeneration as an intelligent change from sin to holiness wrought in the mind itself, by obeying the truth through the Spirit. He must oppose to it something clearer, sharper, bolder, truer far, than the petrified formulas which a late prize writer¹ has set up against it clothed in the impenetrable mists of Scotch philosophy.

III. This system grows out of the substitution of the outward and the ceremonial in religion for the inward and the spiritual.

¹ Gault.

This is the natural and the universal tendency of man in a state of ignorance and corruption. The devotional sentiment, uneducated in the sublimity of that worship announced at Jacob's well, seeks expression through outward symbols, and these in turn react upon the devotional sentiment. Had you asked an intelligent Roman of the age of Augustus, why he worshipped the statue of Venus or kept the *Saturnalia*, he would have answered, that he did not pay his homage to the statue, but to the divinity whom it suggested to his thoughts; and that the *Saturnalia* was a joyous and grateful recognition of the life-giving principle in the earth; and, should you ask an intelligent Roman at this day, why he worships the statue of Mary and keeps the festival of Christmas, he would answer, that he does not worship the image, but the image helps his conception of the Virgin intercessor, and that Christmas is a joyful and grateful recognition of the life and redemption brought to the world through Christ. Yet the old Roman was an idolater. What, then, is the modern Roman? Just in proportion as the mind turns away from an intelligent, personal communion with God, and looks for religious emotion to the outward and the visible; just in proportion as religion is withdrawn from the sphere of the intellect, the will, the conscience, and the heart, into the exclusive sphere of the imagination; does idolatry enter, whether it be in the temple or in the church. A religion of ceremony tends logically to Paganism. It was from this side that Art, born of Beauty and Truth, but corrupted by alliance with Paganism, in turn corrupted Christianity through her own degeneracy. With the early Christian church, observes an able critic,¹ the Saviour was represented "not like the gods of the Pantheon, catching the eye by outward attractions, but conquering the heart by the power of his word. . . . Christianity repudiated every outward aid, which, by alluring the senses, was calculated to sully the purity of her office. . . . But the life and manners of Paganism had been too closely interwoven with artistic forms for the followers of the new faith entirely to disengage themselves from them." Accordingly, as Pagan art lost its representative character in the symbolical, Christianity appropriated its symbols for new ideas; and "Orpheus captivating the wild beasts of the forest by the sound of his lyre, appears very early as an emblem of Christ, and has in early frescoes a distinguished place with Moses and Elijah, with

¹ Kugler, *Handbook of Painting for Italy*; edited by Eastlake.

Peter and John; while in mosaics of the baptism of Christ, in addition to the figures of the Saviour and the Baptist, the river Jordan is represented under the figure of a river-god rising out of the water to wait upon our Lord; an easy interblending of the Pagan with the Christian, though cherished conventional forms of art.

Thus as Justinian brought to the building of St. Sophia, in Constantinople, which he boasted more glorious than Solomon's temple, pillars of porphyry from the temple of the Sun at Baalbec; of granite from the demolished temple of Serapis in Egypt, and of *verd antique* from the temple of Diana at Ephesus, so was the whole Pagan world made tributary to the system of faith and of worship for which St. Sophia was erected; the sacred prestige of hierarchy, the metaphysical subtleties of doctrine, the pomp of ceremony, the embellishments of art, all wrought into one stupendous system that overawes the hundred millions of mankind.

The missionary who would successfully encounter such a system, must oppose to it, both in his teachings and in his life, the simple, severe, sublime spirituality of the Gospel. With all charity for the individual votaries of the system, he must on no account fraternize or compound with the system itself. His office is neither to reform the system nor aggressively to subvert it; but to *evangelize* the people, to convert individual souls to Christ, leaving to God the issue of schism and of overthrow. To priestly sanctity he must oppose a humble spiritual life; to priestly incantations the simple preaching of the Gospel; to the symbols of art, the truths of doctrine and the virtues of obedience; to the organism of hierarchy, the equal fraternity of believers; to ceremonialism, faith; to ecclesiasticism, Christ. In the person and the teachings of the missionary, the theology of Jacob's well goes forth alike against Jerusalem and Gerizim; against Mecca, Athens and Rome. And he who sat on Jacob's well goes with it in the power of an endless life. In the power of that life the cause of missions stands, and by that power it shall prevail. Every adversary shall be slain by the word of his mouth. As Pharisaism and Paganism have perished from the track of Christ and his Apostles, so shall this *Paganized Ecclesiasticism* perish from the track of the missionary of the cross.

Courage, then, ye who would bear that standard back where first it floated on the shores of the Great Sea. Let not the

desolation of Antioch, the vassalage of Jerusalem, the drivelling superstitions of Athens, the apostasy of Rome, shed over you the blight of despondency, as if Paul himself had labored in vain and the work of missions had proved a failure. It was meet that the Mystery of Iniquity should work upon the grandest scale that it might work itself out for all time, and thus, amid the woes and execrations of the world, work out its own destruction. This long apostasy but paves the way for your speedier success. Fear not to meet it with the simple preaching of the Word. For thus shall that Wicked be *revealed* in his true character of deceit and infamy, "WHOM THE LORD SHALL CONSUME WITH THE SPIRIT OF HIS MOUTH, AND SHALL DESTROY WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING."

ARTICLE VI.

NOTES UPON THE GEOGRAPHY OF MACEDONIA.

By Rev. Edward M. Dodd.

THE region about the head of the Sinus Thermaicus, embracing a portion of Thessaly, is both sacred and classic ground. There was situated Thessalonica and Berea, and there are Olympus and the Vale of Tempe.

Thessalonica was originally called *Thermæ* (whence *Sinus Thermaicus*), afterwards Thessalonica, and now Selanik by the Turks, Salonique by the French, Salonico by the Italians, Salonica by the English, and still Thessalonica by intelligent Greeks and by the missionaries.

It is situated at the head of the Gulf of Salonica (*Sinus Thermaicus*) on the north north-eastern shore, upon the slope of a range of hills rising from the sea-shore, its lower walls washed by the waves, and its Acropolis crowning the hill-top. Thus situated, it presents a striking appearance from the sea, surrounded with its white-washed walls, displaying its domes and minarets, and enclosed on either side by its vast burial places.

It has at present a population variously estimated at from 60,000 to 80,000; of these one half are Jews; a few, of almost all other nations under heaven, and the remainder, half Greeks and half Turks.

There can be no doubt that this site of the city has remained unchanged from the apostles' day, and, indeed, much longer. While the upper part of