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“They call Him King. They mourn o’er His eclipse,
 And fill a cup of half-contemptuous wine;
 Foam the froth’d rhetoric for the death-white lips,
 And ring the changes on the word ‘divine.’
 Divinely gentle—yet a sombre giant;
 Divinely perfect—yet imperfect man;
 Divinely calm—yet recklessly defiant;
 Divinely true—yet half a charlatan.
 They torture all the record of the Life;
 Give what from France and Germany they get,
 To Calvary carry a dissecting-knife,
 Parisian *Patchouli* to Olivet.”

But satire, after all, is not argument; there are, indeed, many who honestly doubt His divinity. It is hard, they say, to deify a man. It would indeed be hard for us to raise a man like ourselves to a Divine position. But if one were not altogether like ourselves, if one were superhuman, should we not give Him His Divine honours? The divinity of Jesus has been believed for nearly two thousand years; the burden of proof, therefore, fall upon those who declare Him to be but human. Let them fairly prove that He was so; and without depending on such questionable theories as legend, tendency, vision, and hypnotic power, let them explain the uniqueness of His personality, the triumph of His cross, the marvellous perfection of His character and revelation, and that never-dying principle of spiritual regeneration which He has been, and is, and shall be to the end of the chapter.

F. R. MONTGOMERY HITCHCOCK.

ART. VII.—BIBLIOMANCY.

BIBLIOMANCY, or divination by the Bible, was introduced into the Church as early as the third century, and has prevailed more or less since then in every part of Christendom. In proportion to the ignorance of the people has been their resort to this superstition. Goethe acutely remarks: “Superstition is a part of the very being of humanity; and when we fancy we are banishing it altogether, it takes refuge in the strangest nooks and corners, and then suddenly comes forth again as soon as it believes itself at all safe.” Divination by the Bible was named “Sortes Sanctorum,” or “Sortes Sacræ,” (the Lots of the Saints, or Sacred Lots), and consisted in suddenly opening or dipping into the Bible, and regarding the passage that first presented itself to the eye as revealing or predicting with a kind of Divine certainty the future lot or fortune of the inquirer. We have known persons ourselves who in perplexity or trouble sought comfort or guidance in this way, and were

alarmed or quieted according to the nature of the passage of Scripture which met their eye!

This peculiar species of augury, like some other practices in the Christian Church, has been borrowed from Paganism. The heathen used to divine by a sort of lots which they called "Sortes Homericæ," or "Sortes Virgilianæ." They took the work of one of their famous poets, as Homer or Virgil, and wrote out different verses on separate scrolls, and afterwards drew one of them; or else, opening the book suddenly, they regarded the first verse that presented itself as a prognostication of future events:

"What gains or loses, hangs or saves;
What makes men great, what fools or knaves."

Thus we are told that Hadrian had the empire foretold to him by drawing his lots out of Virgil, for the first words that appeared, "Missus in imperium magnum," portended that he should become the Roman Emperor. And so Lampridius, in his "Life of Alexander Severus," says: "That Emperor also understood by this sort of divining lots out of another verse of Virgil that he should obtain the government of the Roman Empire." And in modern times there is an instance of a Persian General who twice decided upon besieging cities by opening upon verses of the poet Hafiz which he thought warranted that course.

As the Jews of old "mingled among the heathen, and learned their works," so it was with the Christians. Those of them who came under the influence of superstition in the early centuries argued that this sort of divination might be much better made by the use of Holy Scripture, so they forthwith substituted the Bible for Virgil or Homer, to learn their fortune by sacred lots in the way we have pointed out. The principle of casting lots was recognised in Scripture as an appeal from the ignorance of man to the providence of God. A successor to Judas was chosen by lot. Under the Old Testament lots were regarded as of Divine appointment, and therefore final and conclusive. No appeal was permissible from them (Acts i. 26; Prov. xvi. 33, xviii. 18). It seems that some of the clergy at an early age, moved by a lucrative spirit, encouraged the practice and made a trade of it as do gipsies and fortune-tellers of the present day. Prideaux says it mostly obtained in the West, especially in France, where for several ages it was the custom on the consecration of a new Bishop to consult the Bible concerning him in this way of divination, judging from the result his character, life, and future conduct. It was therefore found necessary to ordain in the Council of Vannes, held A.D. 465, "That whoso-

ever of the clergy or laity should be detected in this art should be cast out of the communion of the Church." And in 578, the Council of Auxerre, amongst other kinds of divination, forbade the "Lots of the Saints," as they were called, adding: "Let all things be done in the name of the Lord." But, notwithstanding, the practice seems to have continued, for Gregory of Tours describes a scene in which with great solemnity, in the presence of Bishops and priests in the celebration of Mass at Dijon, the volumes of the Epistles and Gospels were thus opened, in order to ascertain the fortunes of Kramnus, the son of Clothaire! One Peter of Toulouse, being accused of heresy, and having denied it upon oath, a person who stood near took up the Gospels on which he had sworn, and opening them suddenly, the first words he lighted upon were those of the Devil to our Saviour, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth?" "which," says the chronicler, "agreed well with such a heretic, who, indeed, hath nothing to do with Christ."

On more than one occasion the well-known St. Francis of Assisi resorted to this curious device of bibliomancy for guidance and direction. Bernard de Quintavalle, his first proselyte, was a man of wealth and distinction. "Tell me," said he to Francis, "if a slave should receive from his master a treasure which he finds to be useless to him, what ought he to do with it?" "Let him restore it to his master," was the answer. "So, then," replied Bernard, "I render back to God the earthly goods with which He has enriched me." "We will go together to Church," said the cautious Francis, "and after hearing Mass we will ascertain His will." On their way thither they were joined by Peter of Catania, who, though a Canon of the Cathedral Church of Assisi, was another aspirant after discipleship to Francis. The three knelt together before the altar, and when the Mass had been sung the officiating priest, at their request, made the sign of the Cross over the Missal, and then devoutly opened it. Once on behalf of each of them were these "Sortes Sanctorum" tried. To the first inquiry the response of the oracle was: "If ye will be perfect, go and sell all that ye have." To the second it answered: "Take nothing for your journey." To the third and last was returned the admonition: "He that would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." "Ye have heard, my brethren," exclaimed Francis, "what must be our rule of life, and the rule of all who shall join us. Let us obey the Divine command." And they obeyed it implicitly: Bernard and Peter sold all they had, and gave it to the poor, and having stripped themselves of all temporal wealth as absolutely as their leader, "the Spouse of Poverty," they

put on his austere dress, and avowed themselves his disciples.

There are those who represent St. Augustine's conversion as brought about by the same sort of consultation—divining by sacred lots. But the circumstances which attended that memorable event do not justify such a conclusion. The great Bishop himself, in his "Confessions," gives us a definite and detailed account of the cause which led to his adoption of the Christian faith. He represents it as owing to a providential call like that of St. Paul from heaven. He says he heard a voice, he knew not whence, saying, "Tolle et lege"—"Take it up and read." Accordingly he took the Bible and opened it, and the first words that met his eyes were those in the Epistle to the Romans: "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." He looked upon these words as spoken to himself, and applied them to his own condition, and so by God's grace they became the means of weaning him from a life of sin and sensualism to that sobriety, purity, and Christian temper of which he was so consistent and eminent an example to the end of his days. There is no divination in this, but a wise and prudent application to his own condition and circumstances of an impressive passage of Holy Scripture, in the same way, as he tells us, St. Anthony had done before him in the case of the words: "Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me." In fact, St. Augustine was opposed to this superstitious practice. In one of his epistles he says: "As for those who divine by lots out of the Gospel, though it be more desirable they should do this than run to ask counsel of devils, yet I am displeased at this custom, which turns the divine oracles, which speak of things belonging to another life, to the business of this world, and the vanities of the present life." From which it seems clear that he regarded this sort of augury as a great abuse of the Gospel, though not so bad as going directly to consult devils.

Bishop Burnet relates that when Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who was beheaded by Henry VIII., came out of the Tower of London and saw the scaffold, he took out of his pocket a Greek Testament, and, looking up to heaven, he exclaimed: "Now, O Lord, direct me to some passage which may support me through this awful scene." He opened the book, and his eye glanced on the text: "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The Bishop instantly closed the book, and said: "Praised be

the Lord! This is sufficient both for me and for eternity!" An interesting example of Bibliomancy is mentioned by Dr. Macleod in *Good Words* for June, 1895. In the year 1876 three scholars of Balliol College, in for the Ireland Scholarship, thought of trying the "sortes" by opening a "Corpus Poetarum" and taking a line at random. The "sortes" gave them Claudian, "De Laudibus Stilichonis," ii. 251:

". . . totam cum Scotus Iernen
Movit."

"Ierne," meaning "Ireland," made a sufficiently remarkable coincidence in itself. But, in addition, the other name was prophetic. The Ireland Scholarship of that year was gained by Mr. Walter Scott.

Nearly allied to Bibliomancy was the use of the amulets or charms, termed "Periammata" and "Phylacteria," pendants and preservatives to secure from danger and drive away bodily distempers. They were formed of ribands, with sentences of Scripture or some other charm of words written upon them, and hung about the neck as magical remedies against evil. In the early ages of the Church they were worn by many Christians, though we find them frequently denounced by the best and most thoughtful of the clergy as dishonouring to religion and inconsistent with the profession of the faith of Christ. Chrysostom often mentions them, and always with reprehension and abhorrence. The Council of Laodicea (A.D. 364) condemns those of the clergy who pretend to make them, declaring that such phylacteries or charms are bonds and fetters to the soul, and decreeing that those who wore them should be cast out of the Church. St. Augustine thus expostulates with those who used them: "When we are afflicted with pains in our head, let us not run to enchanters and fortune-tellers and remedies of vanity. I mourn for you, my brethren," he goes on to say, "for I find these things done. And what shall I do? I cannot yet persuade Christians to put their trust only in Christ. With what face can a soul go unto God that has lost the sign of Christ, and taken unto him the sign of the Devil?" Basil and Epiphanius make similar complaints, and express equal abhorrence of the practice. At a council held in Rome under Gregory II. (A.D. 721) the phylacteries of the Christians were condemned, and the Council of Trullo forbade the use of all charms or amulets as the relics of heathen superstition still remaining among the weaker and baser sort of Christians, and ordered the makers of them to be cast out of the Church. "For what communion," says the Apostle, "hath light with

darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"

It is not unlikely that these phylacteries of the Christians, though found among the heathen, as the Trullian Council intimates, were really derived and copied from the "tephilin" or phylacteries of the Jews. They were small slips of parchment, or vellum, on which certain portions of the law were written, enclosed in cases of black calf-skin, and tied about the forehead and left arm. The Jews considered them as a Divine ordinance, and founded their use of them on Exod. xiii. 9, and similar passages. The design of them was believed to be, first, to put them in mind of those precepts which they should constantly observe, and, secondly, to give them reverence and respect in the sight of the heathen. These were, however, afterwards degraded into instruments of superstition, and used as amulets or charms to drive away evil spirits. Lightfoot thinks it not unlikely that our Lord Himself wore the phylacteries, in accordance with the custom of the country, and that He condemned not the wearing of them, but the pride and self-sufficiency of the Pharisees, of which they were the conspicuous symbol. Be this as it may, superstition lies at the root and heart of Bibliomancy in all its forms. Lord Bacon well explains the radical defect of divination in his "Essay on Superstition," where he describes it as "the taking an aim at Divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations."

WILLIAM COWAN.

ART. VIII.—THE "MORNING POST" HOME.

SEVERAL London societies are doing highly commendable work for the nation by rescuing boys and girls from vicious and criminal surroundings, and by reclaiming women who have become social outcasts, but comparatively little is done for those unhappy, despairing men who, through misfortune or their own folly, have been rendered homeless and reduced to the verge of starvation. The idea that a tramp is necessarily a rogue and beyond reclamation is far too prevalent. Certainly there are tramps who have no desire for work and refuse it when offered, but there are others, men without character and without friends, who would gladly avail themselves of an opportunity to earn an honest living. Many, despairing of this opportunity ever presenting itself, become in time habitual criminals. It is lamentable, but it cannot be considered surprising. What chance of obtaining work has a clerk discharged for dishonesty? For every vacant clerkship