

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



*Buy me a coffee*

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

PAULINE AND OTHER  
STUDIES

IN EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY

BY

W. M. RAMSAY, HON. D.C.L., ETC.

PROFESSOR OF HUMANITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

LONDON MCMVI

V

THE WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN MARY  
AT EPHESUS



## V

### THE WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN MARY AT EPHESUS

#### I. THE HOUSE OF THE VIRGIN

THE recent discovery of the so-called House of the Virgin at Ephesus, where the mother of the Saviour spent the latter part of her life, and where she died and was buried, forms a curious and interesting episode in the history of religion—not indeed the history of the Christian religion, for it hardly touches even the fringe thereof, but certainly the history of Anatolian religion or religiosity. Briefly put, the story is that an uneducated woman in a German convent saw in a vision the place in the hills south of Ephesus where the Virgin Mary had lived, and described it in detail, immediately after she had the vision; that her vision was printed and published in Germany; that after the lapse of fifty years the book came in 1890 into the hands of some Roman Catholics in Smyrna, by whom the trustworthiness of the vision was keenly discussed; that a priest in Smyrna, who took a leading part in controverting the authority of the vision, made a journey into the mountains in order to prove by actual exploration that no such House existed; that on the third day of continuous search in the rugged unknown mountains, on Wednesday, 29th July, 1891 (the Feast of St. Martha), he found the House exactly as it was described

in the published account of the vision, some miles south of Ephesus, amid surroundings which were also accurately described therein; and that he returned to Smyrna convinced of the truth against his previous judgment. A Roman Catholic festival has since the discovery been arranged and celebrated annually at the holy spot. Though the justifiability of this festival is warmly disputed by other Catholics outside of the neighbourhood of Smyrna and Ephesus, it may perhaps gradually make its way to general recognition and ultimately receive official authorisation.

What seems to be the most real point of interest in this story is that through this strange and roundabout method the permanence of Anatolian religion has asserted itself. Those Catholics who maintain that this is the House of the Virgin have really restored the sanctity of a locality where the Virgin Mother was worshipped thousands of years before the Christian era, and have worked out in perfection a chapter in the localisation of Anatolian religion. We do not mean by this that there has been any deception in the gradual evolution of the "discovery". When the story was first told to the present writer at Smyrna in 1901, the highest character was attributed by quite trustworthy and unprejudiced informants to the Catholic priest who finally made the discovery of the House. He was described as an engineer, a man of science and education, who had entered the priesthood in mature years after a life of activity and experience, and also as a man of honour and unimpeachable veracity; and his original attitude of scepticism and strong disapproval in face of the statements narrated in the vision, at the time when the book first became known in Smyrna, was said to have been a public and well-authenticated fact. There seems to be no reason

(apart from the fixed resolve to disbelieve) for doubting his good faith and his change of opinion when he went and saw for himself.

Equally improbable is it to suppose that there can be any bad faith or deception in the earliest stages of the evolution of this modern legend. The earliest publication of the visions of the German nun, Anne Catharine Emmerich, is not accessible to the present writer, and Professor A. Souter finds that it is not in the Bodleian Library; but a translation in English was published long before the actual discovery took place; and any person may with a little trouble satisfy himself of the existence of the printed record of this and other visions in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Nor is it a reasonable supposition that Anne Catharine Emmerich had access to any careful description of the localities south of Ephesus. Those hills have been unexplored and unknown. Although the sacred place is not far from the site of the ancient city, yet the scanty population of the modern village Ayassuluk (Hagios Theológos, St. John) have no interest or knowledge in such matters; and western explorers had never penetrated into the hill

<sup>1</sup> The fundamental authority seems to be the publication of C. Brentano on the *Life of the Blessed Virgin founded on the Visions of A. C. Emmerich* (Cotta, Stuttgart, 1841). See also the *Life of A. C. E.* by Helen Ram (London, Burns & Oates, 1874); and also various works published after the "discovery," *Panaghia-Capouli, ou Maison de la Sainte Vierge près d'Éphèse* (Oudin, Paris and Poitiers, 1896); *Éphèse ou Jerusalem Tombeau de la Sainte Vierge* (*id.*, *ib.*, 1897); *The Death of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her Assumption into Heaven*, from the Meditations of A. C. E.: translated from the French by Geo. Richardson (Duffy & Co., Dublin, 1897). I have seen only the third and fourth of these five books; also a Greek counterblast by Archdeacon Chrysostomos, printed at Athens and published at Smyrna in 1896, under the title of *Καπουλή-Παναγία*. I have visited Ephesus with a French translation of the first in my hands.

country, which was extremely dangerous as a resort of brigands until a quite recent date. Moreover, the nun is described as having had little education: she was the daughter of poor peasants of Westphalia, who is said to have had an aversion to reading, and rarely to have touched a book. Her visions, so far as we know them, confirm this account. They are the imaginings of a simple mind, trained in the popular Roman Catholic ideas and traditions about the Saints, Anna, Joachim, and the rest, and weaving slightly elaborated forms of the ordinary tales. There are also some evident traces of information gained from reading or hearing descriptions of Ephesus (as distinguished from the hills south of Ephesus), and this information is not always accurately worked up in the details.

One who was bent on finding deception in the incidents would seize on the circumstances in which the visions were committed to writing. The nun's fame came to the knowledge of the world when there appeared marks on her body like those on the body of the Saviour; and medical and ecclesiastical examination vindicated her personal character. Count Stolberg's letter to a friend, describing his visit to her, was printed, and attracted the attention of the poet Brentano. The latter went to see her for the first time on 24th September, 1818; and in subsequent visits he wrote down her visions, which he afterwards published. Probably the literary power of the amanuensis improved the literary quality of the visions; but we may justifiably refuse to think that Brentano invented anything, or made pure additions to the words of Anne. It is, however, true that a considerable interval elapsed between his hearing the visions from Anne and his publication of them. Anne died in 1824, and Brentano's book appeared only in



1841. But even those who would maintain that the visions are the highly idealised memory or the invention of Brentano, and not the imaginings of Anne, only put the difficulty one step away. They explain nothing. There is no reason to think that Brentano could have had access to any peculiar source of knowledge of Ephesian localities and mountains, from which he could learn anything important about the history of that nook among the hills during the Middle Ages.

The remarkable fact, quite inexplicable by the hypothesis of fraud or deliberate invention, remains that there is a sacred place where the House was discovered: it has been a sacred place, to which the Orthodox Greek peasants went on pilgrimage, throughout later Christian times: in the present article an attempt will be made to prove that it was a sacred place in the remote pre-Christian times. It seems a more credible thing that the vision of a secluded and imaginative maiden should have suggested the search and the discovery of this obscure locality than that the fanciful invention of a German poet should do so.

But it is really an unimportant detail whether the nun saw in her ecstatic meditation the House among the Ephesian hills (as it seems to us most probable that she did), or the poet invented the description by reconstructing into a poetic picture with happy power the elements which he had gained from reading and study. Either of these theories is almost equally remote from the one practical fact, *viz.*, the process whereby the unity of Ephesian religion worked itself out, turning to its own purposes certain Christian names and forms, and trampling under foot all the spirit of Christianity.

The brief reference to this subject in the present writer's

*Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*, p. 218, has caused some inquiries, and this episode in the history of religion seems worthy of more careful and detailed study.

## II. THE SURVIVAL OF PAGAN CULTS

The fundamental fact, *viz.*, the continuity of religious history in Asia Minor, is one which there is no need to prove. Yet it forms so remarkable a chapter in the history of religious ideas, that we may profitably give a sketch of the prominent facts.

The introduction of Christianity into the country broke the continuity for the moment. But the old religious feeling was not extirpated: it soon revived, and took up the struggle once more against its new rival. Step by step it conquered, and gradually destroyed the real quality of Christianity. The old local cults took on new and outwardly Christianised forms; names were changed, and outward appearance; a show of Christian character was assumed. The Iconoclasts resisted the revival for a time, but the new paganism was too strong for them. The deep-seated passion for art and beauty was entirely on the side of that Christianised paganism, into which the so-called Orthodox Church had degenerated; and architecture together with the painting of images (though not sculpture) was its chosen servant. Whereas the rhetorician Aristides in the second century had invoked in his sickness the guidance and healing power of Asklepios of Smyrna, the emperor John Vatatzes, in the thirteenth century, when he was afflicted by disease, went to invoke the Christ of Smyrna.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ὅπως τῷ ἐκείνῳ προσκυνῆσθαι Χριστῷ, *Acrop.*, p. 91. See *Histor. Geogr. of Asia Minor*, p. 116, *Church in R. Emp.*, p. 466. I know no other case in which the person of Christ is degraded into a mere local deity. As a general

The old Greek sailors and Roman merchants, when voyaging or about to voyage in the changeable weather of the Black Sea (where dangerous and sudden storms might occur at almost any season of the year and where there was no sure season of fair weather, such as could be calculated on with confidence in the Aegean or the Mediterranean), had appealed to Achilles Pontarches, the Lord of the Sea (Pontus), to protect and guide them. The sailors of the Christian period appealed to St. Phocas of Sinope for aid. Similarly the sailors of the Levant, who had formerly prayed to the Poseidon of Myra, afterwards invoked St. Nicholas of Myra.<sup>1</sup> There is little essential difference in religious feeling between the older practice and the new: paganism is only slightly disguised in these outwardly Christianised cults.

Examples might be multiplied. They occur in all parts of the country, as exploration enables us to gather some idea of the religious history of the different districts. Local variety is inevitably hostile to the Christian spirit, because Christianity is unity, and its essence lies in the common brotherly feeling of the scattered parts of a great single whole. In the centre of Cappadocia one of the greatest sanctuaries of the land was that of Zeus of Venasa (where the name Zeus is the Hellenisation of a native

rule, some saint takes the place of the old local impersonation of Divine power, and the figure of the Saviour stands apart on a higher plane; but here (and perhaps in other cases unobserved by me) the analogy of Asklepios the Saviour has been seductive. Zeus the Saviour would also be a tempting analogy.

<sup>1</sup>*St. Paul the Traveller* (1895), p. 298. Add to the remarks there given a reference to *Mélanges Pervot* (1902), p. 25, where M. Bourguet remarks that the existence of a Church of St. Nicholas at Castrì, the ancient Delphi, would alone have been a sufficient proof that Poseidon had a worship there in old time, but that now epigraphic proof has been discovered of the existence of a shrine of Poseidon called Poteidanion.

Cappadocian divine idea); his annual progress through his own country was one of the greatest festivals of the year; and it may be taken for granted that in the usual Anatolian style the chief priest wore the dress and even bore the name of the god. In the fourth century, when we find that a Christian deacon at Venasa takes the leading part in a festival of somewhat orgiastic character accompanied by a dancing chorus of women celebrants, and that this leader does not appear in his own character, but wears the dress and plays the part of the Patriarch, we recognise the old pagan elements in a slightly varied garb. This particular manifestation of the reviving paganism was put down by the strict puritan spirit of Basil the Great; but it was rare that such tendencies, which broke out broadcast over the land, found a champion of Christian purity to resist them. The feeling of the mass of the Cappadocian Christians seems rather to have been against Basil in this case, though his energy and intense fervour of belief, combined with his authority as supreme bishop of the province, swept away all opposition, and converted lukewarm friends or even opponents into his agents and servants in resisting the new paganism.<sup>1</sup>

On the frontier of Pisidia and Phrygia there is a fine fountain of cold water beside the village of Yassi-Euren. The village is purely Mohammedan; but the Christians once a year come on pilgrimage to it as a sacred fountain, or Ayasma, and this Christian name is applied to it even by the Mohammedan villagers. Finding there a Latin inscription dedicated to Hercules Restitutor, we cannot doubt that Hercules (who is often known as the god of

<sup>1</sup> On the whole episode see *The Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. xviii., p. 443 ff.

medicinal, and especially of hot, springs) was regarded as the Divine power who restored health to the sick by means of this healing spring, Hercules being, of course, merely a Latinised expression for the native Anatolian god of the healing power. Article VI. gives other cases.

Frequently the same saint is, through some natural and obvious association, selected in widely different localities to be the Christian embodiment of a pagan deity. The choice of St. Nicholas at Delphi, already quoted, may be a case of transference and imitation. But the choice of St. Demetrios in place of the goddess Demeter in various parts of Greece was probably suggested separately and independently in several different places; and the cause must have been pure resemblance of name, since the sex differs and there is no other apparent correspondence. Moreover, in Anatolia, the Great Mother, the Meter, experiences the same transformation, and, beyond all doubt, the same reason caused the selection of this particular Christian substitute; thus, for example, the holy Phrygian city, Metropolis,<sup>1</sup> the city of the Mother goddess, was transformed into the Christian Demetrioupolis.

For a totally different reason the correspondence of the goddess Artemis to the Virgin Mary was equally striking and widely recognised. In both cases the virgin nature was a fundamental principle in the cult, and yet in both cases motherhood was an equally, if not more, deep-seated element of the worship on its mystic side. For reasons

<sup>1</sup>The proof seems now fairly complete and convincing that the site of this Metropolis was a few miles farther north than I formerly placed it. It was the city centre of the territory in which were the great monuments of early Phrygia, the tombs of Midas and the other kings of the archaic dynasty, the true metropolis of early Phrygia.

that have been fully explained often elsewhere<sup>1</sup> the Virgin Artemis was the divine mother and teacher and guide of her people. It will not be difficult to show that there was a similar thought underlying the worship of the Virgin in Anatolia.

The best authority for the early stage of the worship of the Virgin Mother of God at Ephesus is the Acts of the Council held there in A.D. 431 (on which see below, § iii.). A sermon delivered in A.D. 429 by Proclus, Bishop of Cyzicus, apparently at Constantinople, forms a sort of introduction to the Acts of the Council. The occasion and sacred ceremony at which the sermon was delivered is there formally entitled "The Panegyris of the Virgin" (*παρθενικὴ πανήγυρις*).

The subject of the sermon is "celebrating the glorification of the race of women"; it is "the glory of the Female,"<sup>2</sup> due to her "who was in due time Mother and Virgin". "Earth and Sea<sup>3</sup> do honour to the Virgin." "Let Nature skip in exultation: women are honoured. Let Humanity dance in chorus: virgins are glorified. The sacred Mother of God, Mary, has brought us here together." She is called, in terms hardly distinguishable from the language of paganism, "the fleece very pure, moist from the rain of heaven, through whose agency the Shepherd put on Him (the form and nature of) the sheep,<sup>4</sup> she who is slave and mother, virgin and heaven, the sole bridge by which God passes to men."

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Hastings' *Dictionary*, art. "Diana," and "Religion of Greece and Asia Minor".

<sup>2</sup> Τοῦ γένους τῶν γυναικῶν καύχημα τὸ τελούμενον ἀπὸ δόξα τοῦ θήλεος.

<sup>3</sup> Capitals are needed here to express the strong personification, which approximates to the pagan conception of Gaia and Thalassa as deities.

<sup>4</sup> Ὁ τοῦ ἐξ οὐρανῶν ὑετοῦ καθαρῶτατος πρόκος, ἐξ οὗ ὁ Ποιμὴν τὸ πρόβατον ἐνεδύσατο.

It seems impossible to mistake or to deny the meaning implied in this language. The Anatolian religious feeling desiderated some more clear and definite expression of an idea dear to it, beyond the expression which was otherwise contained in the rites and language of Christianity. That idea was the honour, the influence, the inevitableness in the world, of the female element in its double aspect of purity and motherhood. "Purity is the material,"<sup>1</sup> but purity that is perfected in maternity. The Virgin, the Mother, the purity of motherhood, was to the popular Anatolian religious sentiment the indispensable crown of the religious idea. This beautiful and remarkable sentiment shows on what a real and strong foundation the worship of the Virgin in Anatolia rested, and how the Iconoclast movement was weakened by its opposition to a deep-seated Anatolian sentiment. Perhaps in the West the worship of the Virgin rests on a different basis. So far as I am aware her character has been regarded in the West rather as a mere adjunct or preparation for the Divine nature of her Son, while in the Anatolian cult (if I am right) it has been looked at and glorified for its own sake and as an end in itself, as the Divine prototype of the nature and duty of womanhood in its most etherealised form.

It would be an interesting and useful task to investigate how far the view which was taken in the West can be traced as guiding the writings of the great writers and theologians who championed the worship of the Virgin in the Eastern Church. There was, certainly, a marked diversity in the East between the popular view and what may be called the sacerdotal view, held by the educated

<sup>1</sup> Ἐχει γὰρ ἀγνείας ὑπόθεσιν.

theologians. The former was much more frankly pagan. The latter took on a superficial adaptation to Christian doctrine, and for this purpose the person of Christ had to be made the central, governing thought and the Mother must be regarded only as subsidiary. But this subject lies outside the scope of this article, and beyond the powers and knowledge of the present writer. It may be added, however, that the divergence can probably be traced down to the present day in the cult of the Virgin Mother at Ephesus. The Greek sacerdotal view seems never to have been that the Virgin Mary lived or died at Ephesus, though it recognised the holiness of the sacred place and regarded it as specially devoted to the person of the Virgin and as a special abode of her power. The popular view desired her personal presence there during her life, and maintained in a half-articulate fashion the idea that she came to Ephesus and lived there and died there. The sacerdotal expression seems in some cases to have shrunk from a frank and pointed contradiction of the popular view, while it could not formally declare it in its thoroughgoing form. In the Acts of the Council of Ephesus this intermediate form of expression seems to rule. As we shall see in § iii. there is nothing said there which can be taken as proving that the belief in the real living presence of the Virgin Mary at Ephesus was held. But the champions of Mariolatry relied on the popular support; and, in the Council which was called to judge and condemn the views of Nestorius, the opponent of Mariolatry, they were unwilling to say anything that could be seized on by him and his followers as telling against the worship of Mary, or that might tend to alienate popular feeling.

It is equally impossible to overlook the fact that some-



thing approximating to that idea of the sanctity and Divine authority of the maternal and the feminine element was peculiarly characteristic of Anatolian religion and society in all ages and variations of the common general type. The idea was not so beautifully expressed in the older religion; the ritual form was frequently allied to much that was ugly and repulsive; it was often perverted into a mere distortion of its original self. But in many cases these perversions allow the originally beautiful idea to shine through the ugliness that has enveloped it, and we can detect with considerable probability that the ugliness is due, at least in part, to degradation and degeneration. The article "Diana of the Ephesians," in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, suffers from the failure to distinguish between earlier and later elements in the Anatolian ritual; the writer attained to a clearer conception of the subject in preparing the article in the same work on the "Religion of Greece and Asia Minor," though even there it is not expressed with sufficient precision and definiteness.

Closely connected with this fundamental characteristic in Anatolian religion is the remarkable prominence of the female in the political and social life of the country. Many of the best attested cases of *Mutter-recht* in ancient history belong to Asia Minor. Even under the Roman rule (when Western ideas, springing from war, conquest, and the reign of violence and brute strength were dominant), the large number of women mentioned as magistrates and officials, even in the most Hellenised and Romanised cities of the whole country, strikes every student of the ancient monuments as an unusual feature. It can hardly be explained except through the power of that old native belief and respect for the mother and the teacher. The Mother-

Goddess was merely the religious prototype and guarantee and enforcement of the social custom.<sup>1</sup>

An indubitable example of the Virgin Artemis transformed into the Christian Mother of God is found at the northern end of the great double lake, called Limnai in ancient times, and now known by two names for the two parts, Hoiran-Göl and Egerdir-Göl. Near the north-eastern corner of the lakes there is still said to be a sacred place of the Christians, to which they come on pilgrimage from a distance, though there is no Christian settled population nearer than Olu-Borlu (the ancient Apollonia). A large body of inscriptions has been collected from the neighbourhood, showing that there was here a peculiar worship of the goddess Artemis, which preserved the native Anatolian character unimpaired through the Greek and Roman periods, and to which strangers came from great distances.

Our view is that the similar Virgin Artemis of Ephesus, who in the mystic ritual was set before her worshippers as the mother, nurse, governor and leader of her swarming people, the great Queen-Bee, was transformed into the Ephesian Mother of God; and that the same change was made independently all over the Anatolian land. She is shown in Greek and Anatolian ideals on and facing p. 160.

But the question may be asked whether the view advocated in this article is not prejudiced and one-sided. Are we not advocating too strongly the Anatolian element and neglecting the possibility of development within the bounds

<sup>1</sup> A young French scholar, who collected with much diligence from inscriptions examples of the custom surviving in the Roman time, advanced the theory as an explanation that these magistrates were rich women whom the people wanted to wheedle out of their money; P. Paris *Quatenus feminae in Asia Minore r. p. attigerint:*

of Christianity? The dogmatic side may safely be left to others. There are plenty of able advocates always ready to discuss matters of dogma and systematic theology, and the present writer never has presumed to state an opinion on such lofty matters. But there are some historical points which may be briefly noticed in the following § iii.

As I sit writing these lines and looking out over the site of the Temple of the Ephesian goddess, I have before me a small terra-cotta image which was found in the excavations now going on amid the ruins of that famous Temple. This statuette, which is given below, p. 160, represents the goddess sitting and holding an infant in her arms. This rather rudely formed expression of popular belief was taken at the first moment of discovery by some of those who saw it as a mediæval image of the Madonna and Child, though more careful contemplation showed that it must have been made several centuries before the time of Christ. It is a complete proof, in its startling resemblance to the later Christian representation, of the perfect continuity of Anatolian religious sentiment amid outward differences.

There is, therefore, in this popular tendency a real cause, continuously and effectively operative, in many, doubtless in all, parts of the Anatolian country. It was strenuously opposed by a party in the Church. The conflict between the two opinions lasted for many centuries; but finally the popular opinion was victorious and established itself as the "Orthodox" principle, while the more purely Christian opinion became the "heretical" view and its supporters were proscribed and persecuted; and the division seriously weakened the Christian Empire in its struggle against Mohammedanism.

The view which this paper is intended to support is that

the establishment of the cult of the Virgin Mother of God at Ephesus is a critical, epoch-making date in the development of Byzantine government and religion. The whole process by which it was established is an important page in the history of the Empire. Ephesus, which had long been the champion of a purer faith<sup>1</sup> and the touchstone of error, as both John and Ignatius emphatically declare, was now made the stronghold of an Anatolian development, a recrudescence of the old religion of the Divine Mother.

### III. EARLY WORSHIP OF THE MOTHER OF GOD IN EPHESUS<sup>2</sup>

The Ephesian tradition has all the appearance of being a popular growth, frowned on at first by the Church, and never fully and cordially accepted, but only permitted as a concession to popular feeling. The Orthodox Church gained the general support of the populace in the fifth century by tacitly (or even sometimes openly) permitting the reinvigoration of the old paganism under outwardly Christianised forms, freed from the most debasing elements and accretions which were formerly attached to it. The views of the people about the world and the life of man and the constitution of society were dominated by certain ideas and principles, which had been wrought into form by the experience of many generations and thus had sunk deep into, and almost constituted the fabric of, their minds. In the old pagan religion those ideas were envisaged and ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to the Seven Churches*, pp. 239-242.

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted to my friend and old pupil, Professor A. Souter of Mansfield College, for much help and all the quotations which are here printed. The article had to be written far from books during the journey, in the course of which I visited Ephesus at the beginning of May, 1905.

pressed to them as gods and guides of their life; and the Christianised people began to long once more for Divine figures which might impersonate to them those ideas. The Divine Mother, the God-Son, were ideas that came close to the popular nature and lay deep in the popular heart, and the purely Christian theology and ethics were too remote and incomprehensible to insufficiently educated minds. The old paganism, amid much that was ugly and hateful, had contained in its hieratic forms much of the gradually elaborated wisdom of the race. The rules of worship and ritual were the rules of useful practical life and conduct in the family and society. The ugliest part was due to degeneration and degradation.<sup>1</sup> The earlier steps in this recrudescence of pagan ideas in the Christian Church of Asia (a growth which was vainly, and not always wisely, resisted by the various Iconoclastic<sup>2</sup> sects) cannot now be traced. In the fifth century the traces become clear and evident: in the fourth century they can be guessed.

The oldest allusion to the worship of the Virgin Mary at Ephesus as already a popular cult (perhaps the earliest<sup>3</sup> in the whole of Anatolia) is contained in the Acts of the Council or Synod which met at Ephesus in A.D. 431.<sup>4</sup> The sermon, which had been preached by Proclus, Bishop of

<sup>1</sup> This is a brief, and therefore too dogmatic and harsh, *résumé* of the thesis which was gradually worked out in the process of writing the article on "Religion of Greece and Asia Minor" in Hastings' *Dictionary*, vol. v.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Iconoclastic" is used here generically.

<sup>3</sup> The allusion in the epitaph of Avircius Marcellus (St. Abercius), *c.* A.D. 192, shows great respect for her, and places her relation to Jesus among the most sacred and fundamental articles of the Christian faith, without the slightest trace of worship; but that stage is already clearly marked in the letters of Ignatius.

<sup>4</sup> Several extracts from the exordium of this sermon have been quoted on page 134 f.; for the complete sermon, see Migne, *P. G.*, lxx., p. 680 ff.

Cyzicus, in 429, is incorporated in the record of the Council ; and this fact seems to show that the proceedings and the sermon must be read in the light which each throws on the other. The sermon was considered to be a fair statement of the view which the Council regarded as right ; and thus we must interpret the formal business of the Synod, which was really a protest by the "Orthodox" party against the depreciation of the worship of the Virgin Mother of God by Nestorius and his followers. The circumstances in which the Synod was called are as follows :—

Theodosius II. had summoned Nestorius from Syrian Antioch to be patriarch of Constantinople ; and he brought with him Anastasius, a presbyter of Antioch. The latter in a sermon had declared that the title "Mother of God" ought not to be applied to Mary, inasmuch as God cannot be born of woman ; Mary was the mother only of the man Jesus, while the Divine Jesus was the Son of God alone. Mary, as he said, was only the mother of Christ, not Mother of God (Christotokos, not Theotokos). The orthodox majority of the Church rose in horror against this duplication of the person of Christ, and condemned the authors at the Council of Ephesus. Along with this condemnation it was inevitable that the actual worship of the Virgin Mother of God (as she was henceforward officially called) received new strength in the popular mind, as if it had been now formally sanctioned.

The Council assembled at Ephesus "in the most holy church which is called Maria". The very existence of a church bearing such a name is in itself proof that a strong idea of the divinity of the Virgin Mother of the Saviour had already fixed itself in the popular mind at Ephesus.

The name applied to the church called "Maria" was

apparently popular rather than official. The expression used strongly indicates this;<sup>1</sup> and no other origin for the name seems possible. The church was in A.D. 431 not "the church of Maria," or "the church dedicated to Maria"; it was "the church called Maria". Probably the full expression of the meaning of the Greek would be "the most holy church (of God), which bears the name Maria". Popular feeling gave the name, and attached its own character to the worship; but the official or sacerdotal view did not formally approve this, though it went a long way in making concession to it, and in practice apparently gave almost full freedom to it. Where a strong popular feeling is concerned, the Council which condemned the one great opponent of that feeling, and formally authorised, as binding on all Christians, one expression of that feeling (*vis.*, the expression "Mother of God") must be regarded as tacitly permitting those other expressions, public at the time, which it did not condemn. It is of course certain that afterwards the dedication to the Virgin Mary of this and other churches was fully accepted by the priesthood and by most of the Church leaders.

The opinion has been expressed by the present writer in an article on Ephesus (*Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i.) that the "church called Maria" was the double church whose remains must be familiar to all visitors to the ruins, as they form one of the loftiest and most imposing buildings on the site. The recent Austrian excavations have confirmed this opinion. The eastern church in this connected pair, which is the later of the two, has been found to be of the age of Justinian; the older western half was almost certainly in existence before 431, and was dedicated to

<sup>1</sup> ἐν τῇ ἀγιωτάτῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ καλουμένῃ Μαρίας.

the Virgin, and Mr. Heberdey, the distinguished director of the Austrian enterprise, considers it to be the church in which the Council was held. It remains uncertain as yet whether the eastern church also was dedicated to her.

It was only during the fourth century that the leaders or the great writers of the Christian Church seem to have begun to interest themselves in the story of the life of the Virgin Mary for her own sake. Epiphanius about A.D. 375 remarks that the Scriptures say nothing about the death of the Virgin, whether she died or not, whether she was buried or not, and that in the Scriptures there is no authority for the opinion that when John went away into (the Province) Asia, he took her with him.<sup>1</sup>

But from these words of Epiphanius it seems clear and certain that popular tradition had already before his time been busy with her later life. Starting from the one recorded fact that she remained until her death under the care and keeping of St. John, it had woven into this something in the way of an account of her death, and the circumstances connected with it and with the burial. Doubtless it had interwoven some marvellous incidents in the story; and it would be possible to guess how these originated and were gradually elaborated. But the one thing that concerns our purpose is that Epiphanius must have known of the story that the Virgin had gone with St. John to Ephesus; otherwise he would not have taken the trouble to deny that it rested on any Scriptural foundation.

<sup>1</sup>Epiph. *adv. Haer.* III., 1, haer. 78, § 11 (Migne, *P. G.*, xlii., 716b): 'Ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰ δοκοῦσί τινες ἐσφάλθαι, ζητήσωσι τὰ ἴχνη τῶν γραφῶν, καὶ εὗρωσιν ἢν οὔτε θάνατον Μαρίας, οὔτε εἰ τέθνηκεν, οὔτε εἰ μὴ τέθνηκεν, οὔτε εἰ τέθαπται, οὔτε εἰ μὴ τέθαπται. Καίτοι γε τοῦ Ἰωάννου περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν ἐνστελαιμένον τὴν πορείαν, καὶ οὐδαμοῦ λέγει ὅτι ἐπηγάγετο μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν ἁγίαν παρθένον κ.τ.λ.



The popular tradition in Asia is therefore as old at least as the middle of the fourth century. And, whereas in the fifth century the Church leaders (as we have already seen) in the time of the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431, refrained from either contradicting or confirming expressly the popular Ephesian belief, Epiphanius in the fourth century points out that this and all other stories about her death and burial were devoid of authoritative foundation. We are in presence of a popular belief, disclaimed and set aside as valueless in the fourth century, but treated with more careful respect, though not confirmed, in the fifth century. The sacerdotal teaching could not admit the popular belief as authoritative, but it tacitly permitted the belief to reign in the popular mind, and to govern popular action and religion, in the same way as it gradually came to acquiesce, without either affirmation or denial, in most of the popular local cults of saints.

This Ephesian tradition has continued in effective operation to the present day. When the Roman Catholic discoverers of the "House" of the Virgin began to inquire into the situation, they found that the Greeks of Kirkindje, a village among the hills south-east of Ephesus, to which the remnants of the Christian population are said to have retired in the middle ages, regarded the place as sacred, called it Panagia Kapulu,<sup>1</sup> "the All Holy (Virgin) of the Door," and held certain annual ceremonies there. Since the Catholics made the discovery, they have bought a large tract of ground round the ruin; and the Greeks have in some degree lost their devotion to the spot. An English lady, however, who speaks Greek as fluently as she does English, told me that she asked the Greek servant who guided her to the Panagia Kapulu whether the Orthodox

<sup>1</sup> Kapulu is a Turkish word, "possessed of or connected with a door".

Christians<sup>1</sup> held a Panegyris at this place. He replied that they had no Panegyris there, but only a Litourgia; and that in case of trouble or sickness it was customary to take a priest to the place and perform service and offer prayers there. The annual ceremony, therefore, seems to have been abandoned, though popular belief still clings to the holy place, and attracts to it those who are in trouble. But the Greek priests appear not to have held, and certainly now they utterly disclaim, the belief that the Panagia herself ever was there; and they maintain that this House is only a ruined little church dedicated to her.

As to the ruins, the photographs show clearly a small mediæval building, with an apse. One would unhesitatingly set it down as a mediæval church, for the religious needs of the population of the secluded glen in which it is situated.

By an unfortunate accident at Ephesus I was prevented from visiting the Panagia Kapulu after all arrangements had been made; and, while my son went, I had to rest in the house for two days. But, as I understand, a friend of trained and practised experience in archæological research considers that part of the building is older than the walls generally, and might date from as early as the first century.

The glen in which the building is situated is divided from the city of Ephesus by a high, jagged ridge of mountain, along the crest of which ran the south wall of the Grecian city, built by Lysimachus about B.C. 280. This part of the wall is still fairly well preserved: its lofty position and remoteness from the haunts of men have saved it from destruction at the hands of mediæval or modern builders.

<sup>1</sup> In strict Greek expression "Christians" are the Orthodox alone; other sects are Catholics, Protestants, Armenians, etc., but none of these are in popular phraseology denominated Christians.

## IV. THE VISION OF ANNE CATHARINE EMMERICH

Now arises the question how far any value as evidence can be set on the vision of the German nun, Anne Catharine Emmerich. In the first place, I should repeat what was already stated in Section I. of this article, that it seems unjustifiable to throw doubt on the honest intentions both of the seer and of the reporter, the poet Brentano. After fully weighing all the evidence, I do not entertain the smallest doubt that she saw those visions or dreams, and that they have been faithfully reported to us. The visions are exactly what a nun in such surroundings as Anne Catharine's would think, and ought to think. But they lie almost wholly within the narrowest circle of commonplace mediæval pseudo-legend, hardly worthy to be called legendary, because it is all so artificial.

The experience of a foreign friend, whose name (if I were free to mention it) would be a certificate of wide reading and literary power, illustrates the probable bent of Anne Catharine's mind. His family travelled for some time in the company of a lady educated in a convent: her conversation generally showed quite remarkable lack of knowledge or interest, but in picture-galleries she displayed an equally remarkable familiarity with lives of the saints, identifying at a glance every picture relating to them, telling the story connected with each sacred picture in the fullest detail, and explaining numerous little points about the symbolism, which might escape even fairly well-informed observers.

In hurriedly reading over the visions about the life of the Virgin in a French translation, while I was visiting Ephesus in the beginning of May, 1905, I have observed only two points which seem to lie outside of this narrow circle.

One of these is the date of the birth of Christ. It is not fixed at Christmas, but on the 24th November. I do not know how far this divergence may be connected with any stories or legends likely to be within the ordinary circle of knowledge of a German nun, of humble origin and without any special education, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But it seems not at all impossible or improbable that she may have come in contact with educated persons, or may have learned in other ways so much of the results of historical investigation as to hear that there is no substantial foundation for the common ceremonial practice of celebrating the birth of Christ at the end of December.

The other and by far the most interesting passage in the whole book is the minutely detailed account of the home of the Virgin and the small Christian settlement in the neighbourhood of Ephesus. It is worth quotation in full.

“After the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, Mary lived three years on Sion, three years at Bethany, and nine years at Ephesus, to which place John had conducted her shortly after the Jews had exposed Lazarus and his sisters on the sea.

“Mary did not live exactly at Ephesus, but in the environs, where were settled already many women who were her friends. Her dwelling was situated three leagues and a half from Ephesus, on a mountain which was seen to the left in coming from Jerusalem, and which rapidly descended towards Ephesus—coming from the south-east the city was seen as if altogether at the foot of a mountain, but it is seen to extend all round as you continue to advance. Near Ephesus there are grand avenues of trees, under which the yellow fruits are lying on the ground. A little to the south, narrow paths lead to an eminence covered with wild

plants. There is seen an undulating plain covered with vegetation, which has a circuit of half a league; it is there that this settlement was made. It is a solitary country, with many small, agreeable and fertile elevations, and some grottoes hollowed in the rock, in the midst of little sandy places. The country is rough without being barren; there are here and there a number of trees of pyramidal form with smooth trunks, whose branches overshadow a large space.

“When St. John conducted to this spot the Blessed Virgin, for whom he had already erected a house, some Christian families and many holy women were already residing in this country. They were living, some under tents, others in caves, which they had rendered habitable by the aid of carpentry and wainscoting. They had come here before the persecution had burst forth with full force. As they took advantage of the caves which they found there, and of the facilities which the nature of the places offered, their dwellings were real hermitages, often separated a quarter of a league from each other; and this kind of colony presented the appearance of a village with its houses scattered at a considerable distance from each other. Mary’s house stood by itself, and was constructed of stone. At some distance behind the house the land rises and proceeds across the rocks to the highest point of the mountain, from the top of which, over the small elevations and trees, the city of Ephesus is visible, [and the sea] with its numerous islands. The place is nearer the sea than Ephesus itself, which lies at some distance. The country is solitary and little frequented. In the neighbourhood was a castle, occupied, if I mistake not, by a deposed king. St. John visited him frequently, and converted him. This place

became, later on, a bishopric. Between this dwelling of the Blessed Virgin and Ephesus a river flowed, winding in and out with innumerable turnings."<sup>1</sup>

What value can be set upon this extremely interesting passage?

It is unnecessary to do more than mention the impossibility of the assumption made in the vision that St. John, going to Ephesus in the sixth year after the Crucifixion, could have found there already a Christian community. This is as absurd as the statement (made at a later point in the book) that before the Virgin's death, less than fifteen years after the Crucifixion, Thomas had already evangelised India and Bactria, Philip Egypt, James Spain, etc. But it might quite fairly and reasonably be argued by any defender of the general trustworthiness of the nun's visions, that, in regard to numbers and estimates of time and distance, her evidence stands on a less satisfactory basis than in other more important respects. Her statements of distance would be regarded by such a champion as only conjectural estimates according to the appearance presented in her vision, and therefore standing, so to say, outside the vision, as her own opinion about what she saw. The lapse of years was expressed as part of the visions: she saw the numbers

<sup>1</sup>*The Death of the Blessed Mary, and Her Assumption into Heaven, containing a Description of Her House at Ephesus, recently discovered. From the Meditations of Anne Catharine Emmerich. Translated from the French.* By George Richardson (Dublin: Duffy & Co., 1897), pp. 1-4. When I read over this extract from the English translation, as it was inserted in the proof sheets by the care of Mr. Souter, I feel that it gives a different impression from the French translation, which I read at Ephesus. I have not the opportunity of comparing the two; but the English (published after the discovery of the House) strikes me as perhaps more in accordance with the localities than the French (published before) seemed to be when I was reading it at Ephesus; but I may be wronging the translator.

of years presented to her eyes in Roman figures,<sup>1</sup> and in relating what she had seen she stated that she saw a V with a I beside it which she understood to mean six, *viz.*, the number of years that the Virgin remained in (or near) Jerusalem after the Crucifixion. Such a defender might point out that the Virgin is described as being in extreme old age, and yet the years of her life are stated as sixty-four; and he might fairly argue that a healthy Jewess of sixty has not the appearance or feebleness of extreme age, and that the numbers must therefore be regarded on a secondary plane, so that St. John's journey to Ephesus with her can be placed at a reasonable and possible date, later than the formation of a Christian Church in Ephesus, and probably even later than the death of St. Paul, when the Virgin Mary was a very old woman, over ninety years of age.

That seems a quite fair method of interpretation; but though it avoids chronological difficulties, it leaves others untouched. The idyllic picture of the Christians living in a little community of their own away from the city, apart from the ways of men, separate from their pagan fellow-townsmen, is the dream that springs from a mind moulded by monastic habits and ideas, but is as unlike as can be to the historic facts. Had Christianity begun by retiring out of the world, it would never have conquered the world. Every inquirer into history knows that the Christians of that first period were involved in the most strenuous and crowded struggle of life. The nun's vision is a picture of

<sup>1</sup>The editor of the French translation mentions this in a footnote, and explains the discrepancy between two statements about the time of the Virgin's residence at Jerusalem (which is given as four years in one passage, and six in another) as due to Anne Catharine's unfamiliarity with Roman symbols, which caused her to confuse between iv. and vi.

quiet seclusion and peace. This alone is sufficient to show that the vision has a purely subjective origin.

Still more evident is the nature of the vision, when we consider the localities described. The minuteness of detail with which the description is given stands in remarkable contrast to the rest of the book. There is a clear conception of the approach from Jerusalem (through the Mæander valley and) across the mountains, so as to approach Ephesus from the south-east. The view of the city, as one comes near it, is very beautiful; and the description given in the vision, though rather general in its character, is quite good, except in three important respects.<sup>1</sup>

In the first place, at a distance of three leagues and a half no view of the city can possibly be got; the road at that point is still entirely secluded among the mountains: only when one comes within about two or three miles of the south-eastern gate of Ephesus, the Magnesian Gate, does the city come into view.

In the second place, there is not at any point on the road, or near it on the left, this complete view of the city as a whole. From any such point considerable part of the city is hidden behind Mount Pion. This complete view can be obtained only by approaching from the north, as modern travellers and tourists do in almost every case.

In the third place, a winding river is described as running between the approaching travellers and the city. This winding river is the Cayster, now called the Menderez (*i.e.*, Mæander). Its course is quite as circuitous and tortuous as the vision represents it; but it is hardly visible from the south-eastern road, or from a point on the left hand of that

<sup>1</sup> The plan of Ephesus in the writer's *Letters to the Seven Churches* is compared with a map of Kapulu Panagia on p. 124.



PLATE I.

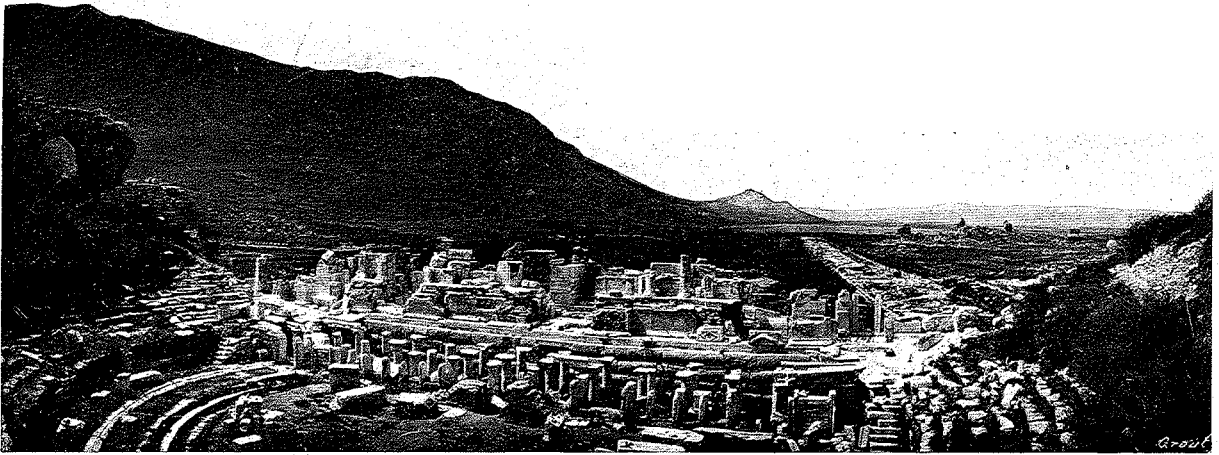


FIG. 1.—Ephesus, looking from the Top of the Theatre (in West Side of Mount Pion) looking down the Street to the City Harbour and Hill of St. Paul. On the left is Mount Coressus, behind which lies the Panagia Kapulu  
*To face p. 152.* (Mr. D. G. Hogarth).

road. It is only as one comes from the north that this river and its wanderings form so striking a part of the scene; and further, one must come over the higher ground in order to get the view perfectly. Moreover, this mæandering river runs on the north side of the city; so that only to the traveller coming from the north does it flow between him and the city.

In the fourth place there are not at the present day numerous islands<sup>1</sup> visible from the peak above Kapulu Panagia. Samos shuts out the view of those beyond it. But in ancient times there were several islets in the gulf of Ephesus (which is now silted up and converted into solid land or marsh), so that the ancient state of things was less unfavourable to the nun's description than the modern state is. It is however uncertain whether the islets in the gulf would be visible from the peak: this point has never been investigated.

It seemed beyond doubt or question to me, as I sat in the Ephesian plain and read the description, that the whole has taken its origin from a description given by some traveller or tourist of his approach to Ephesus. How this came to Anne Catharine's knowledge is uncertain; but there seems no difficulty in supposing that some traveller or some reader of a printed description had talked to her (she is said not to have been a reader); and the narrative had sunk into her mind and moulded quite unconsciously the vision that she saw. Only the appearance from a rising-ground on the north is inaccurately represented as seen by the traveller coming from the south-east. There is, thus, a curious mixture of accuracy and inaccuracy. St. John approaches, as he would in fact do, from the south-

<sup>1</sup> The expression in the French translation, I think, is *innombrables*,

east; but he sees the view that would be presented to a traveller coming from the north, if he diverged a little from the low road to a rising-ground, or if he approached by a short path across the hills.

Again, it is a detail which at first sight seems very impressive that the travellers approaching from the south-east diverged a little from the road towards the left and there found the small Christian community. In such a situation, some miles off to the left of that road, the so-called "House of the Virgin" was found by the Catholic explorers. This House lies among the mountains in a secluded glen, divided by the high ridge of Mount Coressus from the city; and beyond doubt no modern traveller had ever penetrated into those mountains away from the regular paths, until the Catholic explorers went to seek for the House and found it beside the spring.

It is also a striking point that there is a peak over the House, and that this peak is nearer the sea than Ephesus is, just as the vision has it; but from the peak one sees (as I am informed by several visitors) only the site of the temple of Diana outside the city, together with the Magnesian Gate and the walls on the highest ridge of Coressus, while the city as a whole is hidden behind Coressus.

In short, the view of the city which is described in the vision is plainly and certainly the view got from a ledge or shelf on the hills that bound the valley, where they slope down towards the city and the plain, and not from a point shut off from most of the plain by a lofty ridge of mountains. A continuous slope with an uninterrupted view down over the city is described in the vision; and one could almost look to identify the shelf that is described, were it not that such a feature can be found in almost any similar sloping hillside.

It is needless to touch on the supposed correspondence between the shape and interior arrangements of the "House" and those described in the vision. To the nun it seemed clear that the Virgin must have lived and died in a building of the nature and shape of a church, having an apse: she had acquired sufficient knowledge of the form of the Eastern churches. It is certain that the mind of the person who saw those visions was fixed steadily on those subjects; and I cannot but think that she must have often conversed and asked about Eastern places and things, and that from the little knowledge she thus acquired, combined with her training in the mediæval Western legends of the saints and the Holy Family, the visions gradually took their form without conscious effort on her part. But she had heard two descriptions of Ephesus, one as the city first appears to the tourist (who always approaches it from the north, as Smyrna is the harbour from which Ephesus is easily accessible) beyond a winding river, the other stating its relation to the road that comes from Jerusalem; and these two descriptions have unconsciously welded themselves together in her fancy into a single picture.

## V. CONCLUSION

We have thus arrived at the result, first, that the Ephesian belief as to the residence of the Virgin Mary in their city, though existing at least as early as the fourth century, rests on no recorded authority, but was a purely popular growth, and is therefore possessed of no more credibility than belongs to the numberless popular legends, which everywhere grow up in similar circumstances; and, secondly, that the nun's vision, interesting as it is, furnishes no real evidence.

The Roman Catholic writer<sup>1</sup> of a book already quoted, *Panaghia-Capouli*, p. 90, while fully admitting that the entire body of Greek clerical opinion has been against that Ephesian tradition, argues that a tradition which persists in the popular mind through the centuries, in spite of the contrary teaching of the clergy, is likely to rest on a real foundation.

We can only repeat what has been shown in detail in Section II., that numberless examples can be quoted of the growth of such popular beliefs without any historical foundation. They spring from the nature of the human mind; and they prove only the vitality of the old religious ideas. Take an example which came to my knowledge after the former part of this paper was printed. Three or four miles south of Pisidian Antioch we found in a village cemetery an altar dedicated to the god Hermes. On the top of the altar there is a shallow circular depression, which must probably have been intended to hold liquid offerings poured on the altar, and which was evidently made when the altar was constructed and dedicated. A native of the village, who was standing by as we copied the inscription, told us that the stone was possessed of power, and that if any one who was sick came to it and drank of the water that gathered in the cup, he was cured forthwith of his sickness. This belief has lasted through the centuries; it has withstood the teaching and denunciation of Christians and Mohammedans alike; but it is not therefore possessed of any real foundation. It springs from the superstitious nature of

<sup>1</sup> Though it has no bearing on the question of credibility, it is right to guard against the impression that general Roman Catholic opinion is in favour of the Ephesian tradition. The ruling opinion in Roman Catholic circles is against it; but as a rule the Catholics of the Smyrna district favour it.

the popular mind, and the stubborn persistence of the old beliefs. You may in outward appearance convert a people to a new and higher faith; but if they are not educated up to the level of intellectual and moral power which that higher faith requires, the old ideas will persist in the popular mind, all the stronger in proportion to the ignorance of each individual; and those ideas will seize on and move the people especially in cases of trouble and sickness and the presence or dread of death.

Such is the nature of the Ephesian tradition. The Virgin Mother in Ephesus had been worshipped from time immemorial; and the people could not permanently give her up. They required a substitute for her, and the Christian Mother of God took her place, and dwelt beside her in the hearts of the people. This belief soon created a locality for itself, for the Anatolian religion always found a local home. The home was marked out at Ortygia in the mountains on the south of the Ephesian valley, where the pagan Virgin Artemis was born, and where probably her original home had been, until she as the great Queen-bee led her mourning people to their new home in the valley by the shore of the sea<sup>1</sup> and became the "goddess and mother and queen" of Ephesus. The Christian worship of the Virgin Mother seems to have originated at so early a period that it could not establish itself directly on the home of the older Virgin Artemis. It could only seek a neighbouring home in the same hilly country a little farther eastwards. When this home was found for the new belief, a sacred legend inevit-

<sup>1</sup>*Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 217. On the map there Ortygia, which lies really outside of the limits of the map, is indicated wrongly. It was necessary to put in the name, but the actual locality is a little south-east of the place where the name stands.

ably grew up around it according to the usual process in the popular religion of antiquity. The legend had to be adapted to the Christian history. It could not imitate exactly the pagan legend that the Virgin was born at Ortygia; but the belief that the Mother of God had lived in old age and died there, grew up and could readily be adapted to the record.

It will always remain a question, as to which opinions will differ widely, how far it is right or permissible to make concessions to so deep-seated a feeling as that belief must have been. On the one hand, a concession which takes the form of an unhistorical legend and a ceremonial attached to a false locality will meet with general disapproval. On the other hand, it seems certain that injudicious proselytising combined with wholesale condemnation and uprooting of popular beliefs has often done much harm in the history of Christianity. The growing experience and wisdom of primitive races wrought out certain rules of life, of sanitation, purity, consideration for the community, and many other steps in civilisation; and these rules were placed under the Divine guardianship, because there was no other way of enforcing them on all. Practical household wisdom was expressed in the form of a system of household religious rites. It is true that these rules were often widened by false analogy, and applied in ways that were needless and useless; but there remained in them the residuum of wisdom and usefulness.<sup>1</sup> It has often been an unwise and almost fatal error of Christian missionaries (an error recognised and regretted by many of them in recent time) to treat all these rules as superstitious and try to eradicate them before any

<sup>1</sup> See "Religion of Greece and Asia Minor" in Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, v., 133 and *passim*. The process of degradation constantly came in to make these rules deteriorate, as is shown in that article.

---

system of habitual good conduct in society and ordinary life had been settled and rooted in the minds of proselytes.

That the belief in the Mother, and especially the Virgin Mother, as the teacher, guide and nourisher of her people, was capable of infinite expansion as a purifying and elevating principle, has been shown in Section I. That it has been of immense influence on Asia Minor is patent in the history of the country; even Turkish Conquest, though it attained its purposes by general massacre, especially of the male population, has not wholly eradicated it. That it is a principle which belongs to a settled and peaceful age and state of society, and that it must be weakened in a state of war and disorder, is evident in itself, and has been shown in detail elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

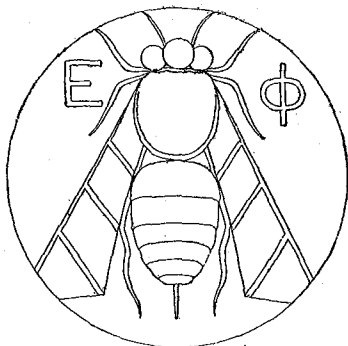
The vision of the nun in Westphalia and the rediscovery of the House of the Virgin form simply an episode in the history of that religious principle and a proof of its vitality.

<sup>1</sup> See the article quoted in the preceding footnote.





3



4

The Hellenic Virgin Goddess of Ephesus and the Anatolian Mother of Ephesus, the Queen-Bee.



5



6

The Anatolian Mother of Ephesus, half anthropomorphized.



FIG. 2.—The Mother-Goddess of Ephesus Anthropomorphized  
(Mr. A. E. Henderson).

*To face p. 160.*

*See p. 159.*