

should they allow the supposed prettiness of an accompanying tune to allure even the smallest company gathered in the name of Christ into the singing of an erroneous or feebly truthful composition. Constantly should they endeavour to secure a sufficient offering of direct adoration to the Triune God, and as unceasingly should they take heed to an ample setting forth of the glory of EMMANUEL: that whilst disciples of JESUS in these "last days" are repeating, with New Testament clearness, the songs of the Old Testament on the death and victory over death of the long-expected Redeemer, they may as distinctly follow the ancients in anticipating the day of His coming again in glory, and the "new song" which shall be sung by every creature when "of His kingdom there shall be no end."

DAVID DALE STEWART.

Coulsdon Rectory, Surrey,
October 18, 1888.



ART IV.—"BY THE HAND OF A MEDIATOR."

WE are informed by various writers that there are more than four hundred interpretations of this passage, Gal. iii. 19, 20, whose difficulty is considered to arise from its brevity. It would be very presumptuous in me to suppose that the view I am about to present may not be found among so many; that, in fact, it is altogether new. Such can scarcely be said to be the case. In the differences of opinion that exist among expositors, and the reasons they assign for their differences, so far as they have come under my observation, I have detected what appears to me to be the key of the interpretation: and from their ways of dealing with it, I have been led to an exposition altogether different from what any, at least of our modern exegetes, maintain. So diverse are the views of these magnates of exposition, that if we lesser folk hold any opinion at all, we are compelled to reject what some of them propound. And if, finding it impossible to accept all interpretations, we alike reject all, we cannot be charged with daring presumption, for we are only so far following the examples of those who deal similarly with others, fully their equals in learning and judgment.

The passage for consideration is, "It (the Law) was ordained (or administered) by (or through) angels *ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου*. 'Ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἐνδὸς οὐχ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ Θεὸς ἓίς ἐστιν." The translation of which is, A.V. and R.V., "in (R.V. by) the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one; but God is one." Now, it may be considered very daring in me to assert that the difficulty with merely English readers arises from the mis-

translation of *ὁ μεσίτης*; the article being almost if not altogether ignored; and, consequently, what is very definite is treated as being very indefinite, a mediator, *any* mediator. The Apostle is thus represented as making a statement about mediators in general, whose office is to go between antagonistic parties and to reconcile them. Applying this to St. Paul's argument, the two parties between whom the mediator intervenes are God, on the one hand, and Israel on the other, as considered by some to be implied in the words, “God is one,” viz., one of the parties between whom the mediator goes. I know that this application of the words is vigorously repudiated by others; but it is a general opinion, and arises out of setting aside the article, and treating *ὁ μεσίτης*, to use Alford's explanation, as “generic, which does not belong to one party (masc.), but to two, as going between one party and another.”

The Dean of Chester, in the “Speaker's Commentary,” quotes with approval from an unpublished sermon by the Rev. Canon Evans, of Durham, as follows:

Some two or three hundred interpretations go upon the misconception that the meaning is, A mediator is a mediator not of one party, but of two parties, and God is one of these two parties. This is, I strongly suspect, quite a mistake; the structure of the Greek excludes it. The word “one” clearly points not to *number*, but *quality*; and so the sense will be: A mediator has nothing to do with what is one, whatsoever be the number of individuals constituting that unit, but God is pre-eminently ONE—one with Himself. As in essence, so in will . . . one in His own method of dealing with all.

I may not rightly apprehend the drift of this, but it seems to me to introduce into the argument a totally irrelevant consideration.

On the other side, Dr. Sanday, in Bishop Ellicott's Commentary, writes: “The very idea of a mediator involves two parties at least. The Law had a mediator, therefore the Law involves two parties. In other respects it is a covenant. On the other hand, God, the giver of the promise, stands alone, therefore the promise is *not* a contract, and resting on God is indefeasible.” He had previously said: “When there is a contract, there must be also conditions, and if these conditions are not observed, the whole falls to the ground. Such was the Law; the Law was not kept, and therefore the blessings annexed to it were forfeited. On the other hand, the promise depends upon God alone. He gave, and He will assuredly keep it, no matter what man may do. God alone is concerned in it.” Further, of this interpretation he says: “At the present moment there is a tendency to acquiesce in that given above, which, it is hoped, will be thought satisfactory.” Dr. Sanday is evidently not sure of the ground on which he stands.

Lightfoot maintains that Moses is the mediator, and that he

fulfils the conditions of St. Paul's argument. He states, however, that Origen—and a vast number of later commentators following him—maintained that the mediator is Christ, being misled, he says, by 1 Tim. ii. 5, and that, much earlier than Origen, Marcion would seem to have entertained this view.

Of verse 20 he gives an interpretation of which he is not so sure, but which "appears to him the most probable." He translates thus: "No mediator can be a mediator of one," thus giving the most general reference of the passage possible. He adds: "The very idea of mediation supposes two persons at least, between whom the mediation is carried on." The two powers here are, "God on the one hand, and the Jewish people on the other."

All this proceeds on the ignoring of the article, and consequent giving an indefinite sense to ὁ μεσίτης. But if we give its due place and weight to the article, we shall translate thus: "In the hand of a mediator. Now *this* mediator is not the mediator of one." We thus identify ὁ μεσίτης with μεσίτου as one and the same Being.

Lightfoot notices the article in this way: "The definite article with μεσίτης expresses the idea, the specific type." Is not this view negatived by the close connection between μεσίτου and μεσίτης? As we read, "a mediator. Now (or But) this mediator." We have a similar instance of this use of the article in James ii. 14, where a certain faith is specified, followed by μή δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν; "Can that faith save him?" (R.V.).

Referring to Origen's view, and that of the vast number of ancient expositors, that the mediator is Christ, Dr. Sanday remarks they "were thus thrown out in their interpretation of the whole passage." Is this so certain as to justify the statement? Were they wrong? Some argument has been had recourse to in proof that Moses is the mediator; perhaps it is more correct to say that of late it has been confidently and generally assumed, and some show of argument advanced in its favour. And there are some grounds for it. The circumstances were these. God Himself prepared the first two tables of stone on which he wrote the Law, the Ten Commandments. Thus given, there was nothing to characterize it but strict unbending justice. Its language was: This do, and live; transgress, and die. Mercy was altogether alien to it—no forgiveness for any, even the slightest, violation. Israel transgressed. "They made them gods of gold." Moses descended from the Mount with the Law in his hands. He beheld the idolatry; he saw that under that law the people were condemned; no mercy could be extended to them; therefore he dashed the tables from his hands, and broke them

beneath the Mount. It was not the result of momentary passion; it was a deliberate act. Under the Law so given the people could not live; the Covenant was at an end.

On the morrow Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, "Oh! the people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold; yet now if Thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." Here, I presume, we may consider Moses acting as a mediator. But can this fulfil the statement that the law was administered in the hand of a mediator?

In what sense are we to understand the words "in the hand"? In the "Speaker's Commentary" we read: "It (the Law) was not given directly, but through the intervention of angels, and it was placed in the hands of a mediator, who is Moses." Are we to understand "placed in the hands" to be the exposition of ἐν χειρὶ—in the hand? In Exodus xxxii. 15 it is said that Moses "went down from the Mount, and the two tables of the Testimony were in his hands;" and Moses himself said, "I came down from the Mount, and the Mount burned with fire. And the two tables of the Covenant were in my two hands" (Deut. ix. 15). On his first receiving the tables he was not acting in any sense as a mediator. His mediation only commenced after the first tables were broken. Yet on both occasions it was the moral precepts of the Law, the Ten Commandments, that were placed in his hands. Can this satisfy the statement that God's moral law was administered in the hand of a mediator? "In the hand" surely must mean in the power of; as we read of Elijah (and others): "the hand," *i.e.*, the power, "of the Lord was on" him. Can we conceive, otherwise than in type and figure, God's moral law administered by any being save Himself, God in Christ? The words, moreover, imply a constant and continued administration of the Law. This evidently occurred to Lightfoot, for he remarks: "The reference in St. Paul seems to be to the first giving of the Law; if extended to its after-administration the μεσιτης would then be the High Priest; but the extension does not seem to be contemplated here." He is not quite certain, he can only say "seems to be"—"does not seem to be." But why? Do the words insinuate the thought that, after all, Moses might not have been the mediator?

Moses, like all other officers of the law, was typical, a typical mediator, and it was as such that he "hewed out two tables of stone like unto the first," on which God wrote the Ten Commandments the second time; and being thus prepared by and placed in the hands of Moses as such mediator in type, a halo of mercy surrounded the Law, and forgiveness for transgression was possible. And as the lamb, whose blood was offered

in atonement for sinners, was the type of "the Lamb of God," and the blood was the blood of propitiation, yet only in type, for no blood but that of the Christ Himself was the real blood of propitiation, so was Moses only in name a mediator, the true Mediator being the Christ, even the Mediator of the Law; ever, too, its Administrator among the people, and not merely when first delivered to Moses.

This view is confirmed by the words following, *ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἐνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν*, "Now this mediator is not of one," that is, giving its weight to the article. The question now forces itself on us, The mediator of one—what? We get our answer from what precedes. The Apostle writes to establish the complete deliverance of God's people from the bondage of the Law, as delivered on Sinai. He does this by reference to the standing of Abraham. Abraham was in the Gospel Covenant. The inheritance was his by promise. St. Paul designates this promise a covenant, and a covenant is a contract. This fact I find almost entirely overlooked by commentators, who deal exclusively with the promise character of the Abrahamic dispensation, even contrasting promise with covenant or contract, Yet Paul writes, "though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. . . . And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before by God, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect." Here promise and covenant are used interchangeably; the promise was a covenant, and the covenant was a promise.

In various comments the Law is spoken of as a parenthesis. But the users of this most suitable designation seem to forget that on the termination of a parenthesis, as a matter of course, the former state is resumed. Here the Covenant of the Gospel was before the Law, and it succeeds it; and it had a Mediator from the first, and that Mediator was Christ; for the Gospel, resumed after the parenthesis, is spoken of as a covenant with a Mediator; "He (Christ) is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Heb. viii. 6). Now, these promises are those made to Abraham. The covenant established on these promises preceded and succeeded the parenthesis of the Law; its Mediator was, and is, Christ. There could not be two mediators in the one covenant, the one Gospel, the one promise. Any attempt to contrast the Promise with the Law, and to say, while the Law as a covenant has two parties, the promise has only one, and that one is God, is futile with the Apostle's argument before us.

As well as the Gospel is a covenant, so is the Law, and it also must have its Mediator, and Christ is the Mediator, not of

one covenant only, but of both, not of that only which preceded and succeeded the parenthesis, but of the covenant of the Parenthesis too; and it was in His hand, as its true, not typical, mediator that the Law was administered. “Now this mediator is not the mediator of one covenant only, but of both.” The Apostle’s statement comes to this, as he expresses it to Timothy, “There is one mediator between God and man, a man, *even* Christ Jesus” (or, Christ Jesus, who is Himself a man). It is not very clear why Lightfoot remarks, “It will be seen that St. Paul’s argument here (Gal. iii. 19, 20) rests in effect on our Lord’s Divinity as its foundation. Otherwise he would have been a mediator in the same sense in which Moses was a mediator. In another and a higher sense, St. Paul himself so speaks of our Lord (1 Tim. ii. 5).”¹

Of the words immediately connected with those we have been considering, *ὁ δὲ Θεὸς εἷς ἐστίν*, we have two renderings in the A.V.: in Galatians, “God is one;” in James ii. 19, “There is one God.” I do not see that anyone positively asserts that the latter is an incorrect rendering, but all writers say, “rather, God is one.” The R.V. adopts a different reading, as does Alford—*εἷς ἐστίν ὁ Θεός*, “God is one.” Alford’s reading is somewhat different, but with the same rendering, *εἷς ὁ Θεός ἐστίν*. The R.V., in margin, *εἷς Θεός ἐστίν*, “There is one God;” so Alford in his notes *in loco*. If we could fairly translate Galatians as James is translated in A.V., we should have between the two parts of our passage, in another form, St. Paul’s declaration to Timothy, already partly quoted: “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, a man, *Who is*, Christ Jesus.” Notwithstanding some slight difficulty—if any, it is only slight—which may stand in the way of so rendering Galatians, I cannot but think that the same idea underlies both the sayings of St. Paul. At the same time, I must add that, whichever of the two is the more correct rendering, there is no ground for the interpretation that God is one of the parties with whom the Mediator has to deal; this is not in the words before us,

¹ A difficulty is suggested by *ἐνός* being either masculine or neuter, while *διαθήκη* is feminine. The reason to me is obvious; both genders could not have been expressed, and *νόμος*, the last named, rules *ἐνός*. “Now God is one,” or “Now there is one God” (both express the truth of God’s unity), are alike in meaning. “The Lord our Elohim is one Jehovah” (Deut. vi. 4). The necessity for asserting the unity of God arises from this, that it might be admitted that there is only one Mediator, and at the same time it be asserted that He is the Mediator between man and the many gods of the Gentiles. Hence one Mediator and one God; the unity of the Mediator and the unity of God being mutually dependent upon, and establishing each other. If *ἐνός* be considered neuter, it is so, as embracing both genders, since both could not have been expressed.

"God is one." A distinction has been asserted between the two forms of expression. "God is one," it is said, is against polytheism; "There is one God," against atheism. Is there this distinction? On the contrary, are not both alike against polytheism? "God is one," and not many; "There is one God," and not many—one only true God. The natural formula against atheism is, "There is a God;" nay, even "There are Gods," be they many or few, alike negatives the atheism which says, "There is no God."

A few additional observations on the relative standings of the people of God before, while under, and since the Law, will not be out of place, as strengthening my position. The Church in the Abrahamic dispensation, I have before remarked, was in a similar relationship to the Law to that of the Church since the advent of Christ—the Church in the present dispensation. It was under the Gospel, as we are. All the spiritual promises made to Abraham were made to him as "the father of many nations," and while he was yet "in uncircumcision . . . that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned unto them." The Church had its Mediator while in uncircumcision and when in circumcision, and that Mediator could have been no other than Christ. It would require a very clear revelation to lead us to believe that four hundred and thirty years after—that is, after Christ had been the Mediator of the Church for that period, at its close He was superseded by Moses, and that again He resumed the office when the dispensation of the Law had passed away. The Law was a type, in all its officers and ordinances; but the reality lay behind it. Gentile Christians, as well as Jewish, are identified with Abraham as his seed in what I may call the summary given in Gal. iii. 29: "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise;"—in accord with Rom. iv. 13, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed, through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith."

By a homely and telling illustration St. Paul explains the different standings of the Church under the Law and under the Gospel. The knowledge of sin and righteousness having been lost, God deemed it needful to put His people under the instruction and discipline of a pedagogue; hence the Law, as that pedagogue. The training was to continue only for a time. The illustration is in the fourth chapter of this Epistle: "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a bond-slave, though he be lord of all." He is at school during his minority, but as soon as he reaches his majority he is freed from the restraints of "tutors and governors," and enters on

the enjoyment of his inheritance. The Apostle draws the parallelism, "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world"—that is, under the Law. But the Church came of age at the advent of God's Son; hence, "Thou art no more a bondsman, but a son." There is much that is remarkable in this. St. Paul identifies himself and all Jewish believers with the Gentile Christians as one Church, one from the beginning: "We," the Church, were under the bondage of the Law; "Thou," the Gentile believers (the Galatians as a portion of them) art no longer in bondage. How could such language be addressed to Gentile believers, save on the great fact that there is, and has always been, only one Church, one and the same in the days of Abraham, when under the Law, and in the present dispensation?

The Church is thus presented in different circumstances; similarly as the heir is first a slave, then a free man; not two men, but one in different states—the one Church, however different at times its conditions, however changed its constituents. The Church of all ages, "the Holy Church throughout all the world," was, and is, the Church of Abraham. Hence "we" were under the Law; "thou" art no longer under it; "we" (the Church) were bond-slaves; "thou" (the Church) art now free. It matters not that the constituents of the Church were at one time all Israelites, and that now they include both Jews and Gentiles.

The conclusion to which all my reasoning leads is, in the words of St. Paul to Timothy, quoted in a previous part of this paper, εἰς Θεός, εἰς καὶ μεσίτης Θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος, χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς; one God, one Mediator also between God and men—men of every age and every nationality—that Mediator a man; that man Christ Jesus.

THEOPHILUS CAMPBELL, D.D.

ART. V.—SOCIALISM.

IN the last number of THE CHURCHMAN an endeavour was made to establish the position that the discontent out of which the demands of Socialism spring is not only natural, but reasonable, and that no one ought to be satisfied, or can be satisfied, whilst the condition of the poorest classes is such as to be both a peril and a disgrace to our civilization.

In order still further to illustrate and emphasize this position, we propose to quote some extracts from a series of articles on "Tempted London," which appeared in a Nonconformist paper, the *British Weekly*, during the months of May and June