

THE  
CHURCHMAN

MARCH, 1890.

ART. I.—DR. DÖLLINGER ON MEDLÆVAL SECTS.

*Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters* von IGN. v. DÖLLINGER. Erster Theil; *Geschichte der gnostisch-manichäischen Sekten*. Zweiter Theil; *Dokumente vornehmlich zur Geschichte der Valdesier und Katharer*. München, 1890. C. H. Beck. Pp. 259, 736.

THIS work, quite independently of its contents, has an intense and pathetic interest. It is the very last which was published by the venerable theologian who has just been taken away from us to the rest which he had so richly earned; it is the last labour which he was allowed to complete at the end of a life of over ninety years, of which more than man's allotted three score and ten were devoted to learning and literature. He died in harness. The last illness, ending in a stroke of paralysis, which in a few hours proved fatal, overtook him as he was striving to finish a work which for more than twenty years had been one of his favourite studies—a vindication of the Knights Templars from the charges brought against them when the Order was suppressed by Pope Clement and Philip the Fair. The present writer found him at work on this generous task last July. "I am glad that I never published this treatise earlier," he said, "for now I believe that I can *demonstrate* the innocence of the Templars. The Pope comes out of the inquiry even worse than I had expected. I confess that even I was not prepared to find that his conduct was as bad as it is proved to be." But before the last touches could be put to the work, the most learned and most capable of modern theologians and historians passed quietly away on the evening of Friday, January 10th. The writings which he has left behind him give a most impressive, but quite inadequate, idea of the knowledge which he possessed. Only those who have had the privilege of being constantly in his society know how enormous this was, and how completely

he was master of it. It was not merely that he knew exactly where to find the required information on his own well-filled bookshelves, or in his own note-books. In an immense number of cases he had it all stored up in his gigantic memory, not in bare outline or as regards general results, but in detail. He knew universal history, especially since the Christian era, better than most men know their own period, and he knew immense tracts of ecclesiastical history better than they have ever been known before.

He was very fond of "by-works." Side by side with the main subject to which he was devoting himself, he loved to have two or three minor themes, round which to group portions of the knowledge which he was continually storing up. Such were the subject of the Suppression of the Templars, just mentioned, Mediæval Fables respecting the Popes, the position of the Jews in Europe, Dante, Bellarmine, Madame de Maintenon, Mediæval Prophecies, and the like. The treatise before us is one of these "by-works," and one of the most considerable of them. It is the result of many years of study and research; research often undertaken for other purposes, but happening to prove very fruitful as regards this subject, which quite early in his life became a favourite one with him. Eighteen years ago, during one of many walks with the present writer, Dr. Döllinger poured forth a mass of information respecting the tenets and history of mediæval sects which was simply amazing. Sect after sect was taken up and compared with others as regards its creed, and its fortunes, and its treatment by Church and State; and all this in the wettest of weather, streaming rain by no means putting a stop either to his marvellous powers of conversation, or to his habit of standing still to talk when he became specially interested in a question that was being put to him or in his own discussion of it. But who cared for being wet through when one had such an instructor to share the discomfort, or, indeed, to make one almost forget all about it? Years afterwards his servant would laugh at the figures which instructor and pupil presented when they returned home at the end of the walk; and the drenched pupil little thought under what sad circumstances he would one day be endeavouring to make known to others the volumes which are to preserve for posterity the knowledge of which so abundant an amount was produced upon that occasion.

The two volumes, as the paging quoted at the head of this article shows, are of very unequal size, the second being nearly three times as long as the first. The first is the more interesting to the general reader; the second the more valuable to the historical student. The second volume consists entirely of documents illustrating the history of mediæval sects, especially the Cathari and Waldenses. Many of these documents have never

been published before ; and of the remainder a good many were very little known when Dr. Döllinger first began to make use of them. But this work has been for so many years in preparation, that in the interval some of the material, which he would otherwise have been the first to make known to the world, has been published by other scholars. He was not one to be jealous of those who thus forestalled him, or to hurry before the world with imperfect work in order to have the credit of bringing into notice a hitherto neglected or unknown source of information.

During the half century (1823-1872) that he was lecturing at Aschaffenburg and Munich, he used to devote much of his autumn vacations to the ransacking of public libraries at Munich, Paris, Vienna, Florence, Rome and elsewhere. The MSS. which are stored in such places were the objects of his search, especially those which throw light upon the subject which perhaps, more than any other, has occupied him during his long life, and in knowledge of which he stood absolutely and utterly alone—viz., the history of the development of the papacy. But, as has just been indicated, while pursuing this main object, he kept his eye upon many side topics, and cherished a hope that he would be able to collect materials which would serve to clear up some of the obscure spots, and fill some of the gaps in the by-paths of ecclesiastical history. This hope has been abundantly fulfilled. Readers of the CHURCHMAN<sup>1</sup> already know something of the light which Dr. Döllinger has recently thrown upon the internal history of the company of the Jesuits in his *Geschichte der Moralstreitigkeiten in der römisch-katholischen Kirche* ; and before the world of scholars has had time to digest that great work, the significance of which has been by no means adequately grasped, we are presented with another from the same master hand, which, if not equal to the other in general interest, exhibits the same thoroughness of research, and the same acute use of original and unknown, or little-used materials.

The contents of the first volume are as follows : Chap. I. The External History of the Sect of the Paulicians ; II. The Doctrine of the Paulicians ; III. The Armenian Paulicians—The Thondracians—The Melchisedekians ; IV. The Bogomiles ; V. The Spread of Oriental Sects in the West until near the Close of the Eleventh Century ; VI. Peter of Bruys and Henry of Toulouse ; VII. The Apostolics—Eon de l'Etoile ; VIII. Tanchelm ; IX. The Cathari ; X. The Doctrine of the Cathari : the Dualists ; XI. The Doctrine of the Cathari : the Monarchians ; XII. The Doctrine of the Cathari : their General Doctrine ; XIII. The Organization and Religious Ordinances of the Cathari ; XIV. The Cathari in Slavonic Countries.

---

<sup>1</sup> (The CHURCHMAN, April, 1889.)

Probably the very names of some of these sects and promoters of sects are unknown to not a few of our readers. Their activity for the most part lies out of the main stream of ecclesiastical history; and it is quite possible to have a fair knowledge of the general outlines of the history of the Church without knowing anything of these strange and perplexing phenomena. The marvellous thing is that such fantastic ideas should ever have occurred to any human mind. That persons should have been found who not only believed them, but endeavoured to induce others to believe them also, is still more marvellous. And yet those who are acquainted with the tenets of the wild Gnostic and Manichæan sects, which were the plague of the Church during the second and third centuries, will not be greatly surprised at the monstrous speculations of these mediæval sects. Indeed, not a few of them, and especially the earlier among them, are the direct offspring of Gnosticism and Manichæism. These modes of thought, although they abated considerably during the fourth century, yet never entirely perished. They still lingered on in various centres, and were constantly bursting out into fresh activity in frequently changing forms. What kept them alive was not the extraordinary character of these external forms, which, however, may have been attractive to many, in spite of the grotesqueness and repulsiveness which they have for ourselves, but the fact that, in however crude a way, they afforded some kind of a solution to problems which will never cease to vex the human mind, and some kind of a gratification to that love of the marvellous which is inherent in most of us. Moreover, some of them directly pandered to the lowest elements in man's nature, by teaching that indulgence in the basest forms of sensuality is innocent, or even meritorious. Several of the sects of the Middle Ages remind us in these respects of the monstrous features which disgraced the teaching of the Cainites and the Carpocratians. Besides all these points, which contributed to the vitality and development of these tenets, must be mentioned the fact that the holders of them were frequently persecuted, sometimes with great cruelty; and persecution, unless it goes the full length of absolutely destroying all who profess the condemned opinions, almost invariably promotes rather than checks the cause of the persecuted.

Several of these points are illustrated in the history of the Paulicians, who form one of the chief connecting links between the Gnosticism and Manichæism of the second and third centuries, and the kindred forms of error in the Middle Ages. The origin of their name was unknown to themselves. Outsiders said that it was a corruption of "Paulojohannians," this name being derived from Paul and John, sons of Callinice, who were supposed to have preached Manichæan doctrine near Samosata

in the fifth century. But the Paulicians would not allow this origin, and when called upon in later times to repudiate the teaching of the sons of Callinice, they did so without hesitation. They themselves derived their name either from a later Armenian teacher of the name of Paul, or from the Apostle of the Gentiles. The actual founder or refounder of the sect, as we find it in history, must be looked for in the seventh century, where in the neighbourhood of Samosata we find a certain Constantine putting forward a system, which in some respects reminds us of the teaching of Marcion. He rejected all the heretical writings of Gnostic and Manichæan origin on which his predecessors had relied, and professed to base the teaching of the new or reformed Paulician community upon a purely Scriptural foundation, selecting for this purpose the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. As an intimation of the Pauline character of his doctrine he changed his name to Silvanus; not meaning thereby that a transmigration of the soul of Silvanus into the body of Constantine had taken place, but simply that he professed to be as loyal a disciple of St. Paul as one who had actually heard the words and shared the labours of the Apostle. Other Paulician leaders adopted the names of St. Paul's disciples.

The success of Constantine after some twenty-seven years of teaching (A.D. 653-684) was such as to attract the attention of the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus, who sent a commissioner named Symeon to investigate the matter. Symeon collected the Paulicians together and commanded them to stone "Silvanus." Justus, the adopted son of the leader, was the only one to obey, and his stone proved fatal. The Paulicians were then distributed among various Churches, in the hope that, when dispersed, they would abandon their errors. So far from this being the case, they made converts of others, and among them of their persecutor Symeon, who, after making his report to the Emperor, secretly left Constantinople and set himself at the head of the Paulicians under the name of Titus. A dispute between him and Justus as to the interpretation of Col. i. 16, made Justus appeal to the Bishop of Colonia; and this appeal had the effect, and perhaps was intended to have the effect, of once more attracting the attention of the Emperor to the revival and spread of the sect. Justinian II. ordered that all Paulicians should be arrested, and that those who refused to abjure their opinions should be put to death. A scaffold was erected on the spot where Constantine had been stoned, and there Symeon and many of his followers were executed A.D. 690.

There was, perhaps, more excuse for the persecution of the sect by the emissaries of Michael I. (A.D. 811-813) and Leo the Armenian (813-820). About that time a creature of the name of Baanes, to whom was given the appropriate designation of

"the Filthy" (ὁ βυπαρός), was head of the Paulicians. Like Carpocrates, he was a man of abominable private life, and advocated sensuality of the most shameless kind upon principle. No doubt there were plenty of people ready to adopt such teaching, and the hideous immorality which was the result excused, if it did not justify, the violent measures which were taken to stamp out the mischief.

Baanee the Filthy was followed by a man of a very different stamp. In the double-edged sarcasm of Gibbon<sup>1</sup>: "The virtues, the apparent virtues, of Sergius, in a pilgrimage of thirty-three years, are reluctantly confessed by the orthodox historians." By carefully keeping in the background those Paulician tenets which plainly contradicted Scripture, and by clothing the rest in Scriptural language, he won many adherents; but his attempts to counteract the grossly immoral teaching of Baanes caused a schism among the Paulicians. Swords were drawn, and many Baanites were slain. To the outside world Sergius called himself Tychicus, the disciple of the Apostle; to the initiated he professed to be the Paraclete. Many clergy, monks, and nuns joined him, and women and children left their homes to follow him. Not a few of these were taken as slaves by the Saracens, or in other ways perished miserably. In A.D. 835 Sergius himself was slain.

The fact that the Paulicians were iconoclasts made some of the iconoclast Emperors inclined to favour them; but when the Empress Theodora threw her influence on the other side, and restored images in the churches, the worst times of the Paulicians began. To those of them who had not taken refuge among the Saracens, and externally conformed to Mahometanism, she offered the alternative of a profession of orthodoxy or death; and the Greek historians, probably with some exaggeration, estimate the numbers of those whom her commissioners put to death at 100,000. First Carbeas, and then Chrysocheres, his son-in-law, headed the Paulicians who were under Saracen protection, and inflicted very heavy losses upon the Greeks. But in A.D. 872 their army was overtaken as it was returning laden with Greek spoil, and utterly routed. Chrysocheres was slain,

<sup>1</sup> It is of interest to remember that Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" was one of the first English works which the young Von Döllinger read at the time when he was learning the language. The study of it no doubt did something, and perhaps a good deal, towards strengthening the passion for historical study which has been one of his chief characteristics. Dr. Döllinger admired Gibbon, but thought him greatly wanting in the power of throwing himself back in thought to the times which he described. Everything was judged from the point of view of himself and his own surroundings. (See two very interesting papers on "Dr. Döllinger" by "H. P. L." and "R. B." in the *Guardian* of January 22, 1890.)

and the Paulician stronghold Tephrika was destroyed. The sect still continued to exist, but it never recovered from this blow. In 1116 we find large numbers of them being converted, not by persecution, but by argument. After that the sect gradually sank into obscurity.

The doctrines of the Paulicians are not easily determined beyond a certain point. We are dependent upon orthodox historians, such as Petrus Siculus, Cedrenus, and Photius, and they give only meagre information, and that, perhaps, not very accurate. The Paulicians were reticent, and fond of ambiguous language, and their opponents were prejudiced. But there is no doubt that their main principle was Dualism of the grossest kind. They believed in two gods, of whom one was evil; and it was the latter who created the human body and the material universe, whence he is called "the god of this world" (2 Cor. iv. 4). Hence they denied or explained away the Incarnation and the Passion, decried Mary, and detested the Cross. They retained the formula of the Trinity, but in what sense it is not easy to ascertain. While honouring St. Paul, they abominated St. Peter, and rejected both the epistles which bear his name. Baptism and the Eucharist, as involving material elements, they repudiated; the true bread and wine were Christ's doctrines. They called themselves "Christians," and the Catholics "Romans."

As the Paulicians form the chief connecting-link between primitive and mediæval Gnosticism and Manichæism, so the obscure sect, which was founded towards the end of the eleventh century by the fanatic Tanchelm, serves to connect the early Donatists with the later Waldenses. No Gnostic elements appear in his teaching, any more than in the nearly contemporary Eon de l'Etoile. He combines the principles of the Donatists and the violence of the Circumcellions with the blasphemous licentiousness which disfigures not a few of these mediæval fanatics.

Tanchelm was an illiterate layman, gifted with great powers of popular oratory, who, for some purpose not recorded, went to Rome from the Lower Rhine, in company with a priest named Everwacher. On his return, he came forward in Flanders and the neighbouring countries as the preacher of a new religion. The main element in this was the old Donatist doctrine, that the efficacy of the Sacraments depends upon the spiritual character of the minister—a principle which, at whatever period it has appeared, has always proved a most powerful weapon in the hands of religious demagogues, and a mighty lever for detaching large bodies of men from the Church. No man can give what he does not possess; *therefore* an unholy cleric cannot administer holy Sacraments—a fallacy which assumes that

the minister is not a channel, but a source. Tanchelm maintained that in the general immorality of the clergy the Apostolic succession had been lost. Ordinations by unworthy Bishops were mere sacrilegious ceremonies: and the same might be said of the Sacraments administered by unworthy priests. Such things polluted rather than sanctified those who received them.

The condition of the Church in those districts was only too favourable to such principles. In the great city of Antwerp there was only one priest, and he was living in incestuous intercourse with his niece. The struggle against the concubinage and simony of the clergy had begun, and the Popes themselves had sometimes exhorted the people not to frequent services conducted by shameless priests. From these exhortations to the position that the ministrations of such priests were invalid was not a long journey; for if they were valid, why should the people shun them? And thus Tanchelm's doctrine seemed to be only the natural conclusion of what was openly preached in the Pope's name. When he went on to argue that clergy, whose ministrations were worthless, ought not to be paid, and that no tithe ought to be rendered to them, he found many ready disciples.

His success turned his head, or perhaps quickened germs of madness in him. He bedizened himself with gold and jewels, assumed a bodyguard of 3,000 armed men, terrorized the whole neighbourhood, and caused those who appeared before him without accepting his tenets to be hewn in pieces. With his fanatical followers, men and women, he could do what he pleased; and his conduct towards the latter, married and unmarried alike, was monstrous. He proclaimed himself the equal of Christ, and was believed. The ground on which he had trodden was accounted holy; the water in which he had washed was kept as a relic or drunk as a charm; and a church was erected in his honour. He entertained his followers royally; and as that involved a large outlay, he had himself publicly married to the Virgin Mary, for whom an image stood as proxy, and enriched himself with the wedding presents which were made to him. At last he was imprisoned by the Archbishop of Cologne, and when he escaped was put to death by a priest, A.D. 1115. "*Qui tandem post multos errores et multas cædes dum navigaret, a quodam Presbytero percussus in cerebro, occubuit,*" are the words of the old chronicler, as if he were relieved to have done with him. He adds, however: "*Sed nec post ejus mortem error ipsius tam facile extirpari potuit.*"<sup>1</sup> St. Norbert converted a great many of the Tanchelmians, but they did not for some time become extinct. The principle that Sacraments administered by unworthy clerics are null and void reappears again and again.

<sup>1</sup> "*Roberti Appendix ad Sigebertum, Recueil des Hist. des Gaules et de la France,*" xiii., p. 328; comp. pp. 108 266.

Eon or Eudo de l'Etoile, was another fanatic of a similar kind, who appeared about the same time in Brittany, and had considerable success. He was probably less of a rogue and more of a madman than Tanchelm. He claimed to be the Son of God, and the Judge of quick and dead. In the formula of exorcism occur the words: "Per eum qui venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos"; and when these words were said in church, the "eum" sounded like "Eon," and Eon said that it was he who was thus mentioned. As a newly-incarnate Christ he appointed Apostles and ordained Bishops, but at last was taken prisoner in the diocese of Rheims, and in 1148 was condemned by a synod to be imprisoned: and in prison he died. There is much discussion as to whether a treatise by Hugo d'Amiens, who was Archbishop of Rouen 1130 to 1164, is directed against the Eonians or not. If it is, then we know a good deal about their doctrines: if it is not, then another wild sect, mentioned by no one else, has to be added to the list. No one who mentions the Eonians says that Hugo wrote against them; and Hugo does not mention that their leader claimed to be the Son of God, a point which no writer would be likely to omit.

These specimens will give some idea of the contents of the first volume. It would not be easy by means of quotations to convey any clear idea of the seventy-three documents contained in the second volume; and all of them are too long to be given entire. Most of them illustrate the history of the Albigenses and Waldenses. They are acts of the Inquisition, or accounts of other trials, or notes or treatises made by private individuals, or confessions by members of the sect, and so forth; forming a treasure-house of information for the student and the historian rather than material for an article or review. These documents prove conclusively that "the ages of faith" have a dark side in the very field of faith itself. Scarcely anything seems to be too monstrous to be believed. An avaricious and sensual clergy prepare the way for perpetual revolts against the religion which they are supposed to teach, and there is scarcely any limit to the wildness both in thought and in action which the revolts may exhibit. Nor are these phenomena peculiar to the Middle Ages. Anyone who has studied the history of Mormonism from its foundation by Joseph Smith, or the worship of Humanity from its foundation by Comte, will be ready to admit that the limits to delusion in matters of religion are very ample indeed.

It was his intimate knowledge of the history of sects and schisms, and of the obstacle which they are to the spread of Christian truth, which gave Dr. Döllinger such a horror of divisions, and such an ardent longing to help towards the reunion of Christendom. Hence his dread that the organization of the Old Catholics would add one more to the grievous rents

in Christ's robe, and his refusal to give it the sanction of his adherence.<sup>1</sup> Hence his noble efforts to bring about a better understanding between Eastern and Western Churches in the Reunion Conferences at Bonn. The fruits of his lifelong struggle for truth and unity are not lost by his death. The richest of them are still to come. And every Christian, by endeavouring to avoid all bitterness, and to acquire more perfect knowledge of the truth for himself and others, can do something to hasten and to increase the harvest.

ALFRED PLUMMER.

---

ART. II.—THE "TWO IMMUTABLE THINGS."

HEB. vi. 17, 18.

περισσότερον βουλόμενος ὁ Θεὸς ἐπιδειῖται τοῖς κληροδόμοις τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τὸ ἀμετάθετον τῆς βουλῆς αὐτοῦ ἐμεσίτησεν ἕρκω, ἵνα διὰ δύο πραγμάτων ἀμεταθέτων, ἐν οἷς ἀδύνατον ψεῦσασθαι τὸν Θεόν, ἰσχυρὰν παράκλησιν ἔχωμεν οἱ καταφυγόντες κρατῆσαι τῆς προκειμένης ἐλπίδος.

"God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed with (or rather, *gave security by*) an oath, that by *two immutable things*, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us."

A GREAT deal of difficulty has been found or made in this passage, especially as regards the "*two immutable things*," through or by means of which it was intended that we, who have fled for refuge to take hold of the hope laid before us, should have a strong encouragement. It seems to me that commentators have steadily and resolutely closed their eyes to the real argument of the writer, and have sought, and sought in vain, for the "*two immutable things*" in the immediate context. The original promise to Abraham was made in Gen. xii. 3, containing the words, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be

---

<sup>1</sup> That this refusal had nothing to do with any doubts about the Vatican decrees is shown by the following extract from a letter to Dr. Nevin in 1879:—"I have only three weeks ago published a lecture (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 6, 7, 8), in which I state in so many words that nobody possessing a scientific culture of mind can ever accept the decrees of the Vatican Council. Having devoted during the last nine years my time principally to the renewed study of all the questions connected with the history of the Popes and the councils, and, I may say, gone again over the whole ground of ecclesiastical history, the result is that the proofs of the falsehood of the Vatican decrees amount to a demonstration. When I am told that I must swear to the truth of those doctrines, my feeling is just as if I were asked to swear that two and two make five, and not four."