

## GLYCERIUS THE DEACON.

### THE STORY OF A HERESY.<sup>1</sup>

A CLASSICAL scholar owes an apology to the society for presuming to address it on such a subject; but you will probably all agree with me that, if Dr. Westcott thought I might have something to say worth the time that he and you devote to me, it was right for me to take his wish for an injunction. I am also buoyed up by the belief that, if I have anything worth saying, you will see in it a proof that great results may be expected for the history of society, and of the influence that Christianity exercised on it in early times, from systematic exploration of the Eastern lands by competent travellers. Everything that I have to say, every idea that I have on the subject, is gained from study of the documents that I have myself found in the country, and which I was in honour obliged, at first much against my own will, to edit. The subject lay quite apart from the sphere of my previous interests and studies, and also far apart from the work which has been required by my situation in life.

In so far as I fail to carry conviction to your minds, I shall be only too grateful for criticism. In treading on ground unfamiliar to me, I lack the surefootedness of the specialist in his own department. I know well that year-

<sup>1</sup> The following paper was read, nearly *verbatim* as here printed, to the Cambridge Clerical Society on October 17th, 1889. It was intended for publication; but want of time to complete many sentences, of which only the first half was written, and to add a few notes and occasional sentences, has delayed the publication. The paper, being addressed to a university audience, takes in part the form of a plea for a wider range of classical studies.

long familiarity with a subject in all its aspects is needed in order to use the exactly correct words that shall express one's meaning and no more: seeking to avoid one error, the unwary scholar passes into the opposite error; writing from one point of view, he is unconscious of the effect of his words from another. In so far then as I want that sureness of touch that long familiarity with the subject alone gives, I shelter myself behind Dr. Westcott's invitation.

There has existed, and even still exists, a wide-spread opinion that such subjects as I wish to place before you lie out of the pale of what is called humane letters, and that the classical scholar has nothing to do with them. But we are all only too prone to bound the realm of humane letters by the limits of our individual interests; and the terms "narrow" and "specialist," as some of us occasionally use them, mean simply that the so called "specialist" finds some interest beyond the limits of our traditional circle. But probably it is unnecessary, in the university where J. E. B. Mayor is professor, to plead that a classical scholar may justifiably spend some part of his time in reading such authors as Cyprian or Tertullian as interpreters of the society in which they lived, or such authors as Basil of Cæsareia or Gregory of Nazianzos, if he wishes to understand the history of Roman Asia Minor. In becoming Christians, these writers did not cease to be men: they only found that element of thoroughness, sincerity, and enthusiasm, the want of which is so unpleasant in later classical literature; and if they directed these qualities into different channels from those which are most natural now, every unusual direction of our common human nature must be studied and explained by the circumstances of its time. History only deepens in intensity and interest as we pass from the classical and come down towards the present time. The only reason why it sometimes appears less interesting is that the strands of life become more numerous as time

goes on, and the effort to comprehend them separately, and bring them together in the mind to form the complicated thread of human history, grows more serious.

There are many interests of the most fascinating kind in the history of the Roman empire, when we turn away from the battles and sieges, the murders and suicides, the crimes of one emperor and the lofty character of another—in short, from all the great things of history. The machinery by which for the first time in human history there was constructed a great and stable empire, more permanent than the strong arm of the despot who held it together; the remarkable system by which such a splendid series of provincial administrators was produced and trained, administrators of whom one of the greatest scholars Cambridge has ever produced—a scholar whom we all grudge to the politics that absorb him—says that we can among them find examples occasionally of cruelty, occasionally of rapacity, but never of incompetence: <sup>1</sup> that magnificent system is a fascinating study, but it is inferior in human interest to the study of social phenomena. The widest democracy of ancient times was a narrow oligarchy in comparison with our modern states. But the ideas which have realized themselves among us as the rights of the poorest and lowest classes were at work under the Roman empire; and the central point in the study of Roman imperial society is the conflict of the new religion with the old. By a study of Roman imperial society, I do not of course mean superficial talk about Juvenal and the society he describes. What Juvenal considered to be society was merely the slowly dying governing caste of earlier Rome, the nobles who had conquered the world, who had long maintained their pre-eminence by absorbing into their number every person of vigour and power enough to raise him above the level of the lower class, but who at last paid the penalty,

<sup>1</sup> Waddington, *Fastes des Provinces Asiatiques*, p. 18.

which every privileged class seems always to pay, in corruption and gradual death. Tacitus and Juvenal paint the deathbed of pagan Rome; they have no eyes to see the growth of new Rome, with its universal citizenship, its universal Church (first of the emperors, afterwards of Christ), its "alimentations," its care for the orphan and the foundling, its recognition of the duty of the State to see that every one of its members is fed. The empire outraged the old republican tradition, that the provincial was naturally inferior to the Roman;<sup>1</sup> but this, which was its greatest crime in the eyes of Tacitus, is precisely what constitutes its importance in the history of the world. What we are in search of is the historian who will show us the state of things beyond the exclusive circle of aristocratic society, among the working classes and the thinking classes, and who will discuss the relation between the Christian and his next-door neighbour who sacrificed to Rome and the emperor, and amused himself with the pageantry of Jupiter and Artemis. I want to be shown what the middle classes of the community were doing, and still more what they were thinking. I care little for the university scholar, who immured himself in the university, and dabbled in elegant literature and gave showy lectures; but I want to see the man of high university training who went out to move the world. I get little for my purpose among the pagan writers; and I must go to the Christian writers, whom I find full of social enthusiasm, though expressed in strange and to me sometimes repellent forms. They weary me often with doctrine, when I want humanity; but even beneath their doctrine the man appears, and when they

<sup>1</sup> On Horace's protest against this tendency of the empire, of which he was vaguely conscious, see Mommsen's speech to the Berlin Academy on the birthday of the two emperors, Frederick and William II., in the year 1889. Horace, though an adherent of Octavian, never really abandoned his old republican view: he admired Augustus as the restorer of old Rome, not as the maker of new Rome.

condescend to the affairs of the world, they are instinct with burning human feeling.

I want then for a time to take Church history out of the theological domain, and have it written from another point of view. When it is treated by writers whose interests are either theological or anti-theological, there is inevitably a tendency to treat controversies between sects and struggles between opposing churches as a matter purely of religious dogma. The diversities of opinion on points of doctrine, often sufficiently minute points, are related in great detail, by the theologians with the interest of love, by the anti-theologians with the interest of ridicule. But, to take an example from my own country, the historian of Scotland who described the differences of doctrine, often barely discernible by the naked eye, between our innumerable sects, and left the reader to infer that these were the sole, or even the chief, causes of division between the sects, would give a very inadequate picture of the facts. He must also describe and explain many social and political differences; *e.g.* he must not leave his readers ignorant of the fact that one church as a body took one political side, another as a body took the opposite side.

So in earlier Church history, it has often been the case that differences of race or manners were the cause of division between churches and sects, and slight differences of doctrine or ritual were merely badges on the banners of armies already arrayed against each other. I do not maintain that this is the whole matter, I do not even say that it is the chief matter; but I do say that it is a side that deserves and will reward study, and that it has not yet received its fair share of attention.

To come to the particular case of the country with which I am most familiar, we want to catch the Cappadocian Christian of the fourth century, the Phrygian Christian of the second and third centuries, and to acquire some con-

ception of his character, his ways, and his thoughts, and how he got on with his non-Christian neighbours. In studying this subject, I have been gradually led to the opinion that a distinction must be drawn among the Christians. In the period between 150 and 400, the history of Christianity in Asia Minor, when treated as a branch of the history of society, is a long conflict between two opposing tendencies, or, as they may be called, sects or churches. I desire to avoid the use of the term orthodox for one of these churches and heretic for the other. One of these churches was of native growth, the other represented the dominant tone of the Christian world; one was loose in organization and separatist in character, the other was strictly organized and vigorously directed to secure absolute uniformity of the Church in all parts of the world; one was the native provincial church, the other was the Roman church.

From the theological point of view, these provincial churches are divided into many classes and called by many names; but they have all one feature, they tended towards separatism and diversity, in opposition to the unity of the Church catholic, which was the guiding principle of the Roman church.

In these remarks I use the term Roman church, not in any doctrinal sense, but as indicating the whole body of Christians who looked to Rome as the governing centre of the Church. Some of the characteristics which I imagined to have belonged to that church will be brought out in the course of the following remarks, in which I attempt to indicate some small part of its action and influence in Asia Minor.

The history of the Roman church has varied greatly in different districts of Asia Minor. In some it never touched the popular heart, and was barely maintained by external influence; in others it achieved an easy victory; and in

some cases only a faint echo of any conflict has reached us. My position is, that there was, in every case throughout Asia Minor where any evidence is known, such a conflict; that the first Christians of the country did not look to Rome as centre and head of the Church; that they were not organized in a strict fashion, but were looser communities, in which personal influence counted for much and official station for little; and that the careful and strict discipline of the Roman church put a stop to the disintegrating tendency, in a political and a religious point of view alike, of the provincial churches, organized the whole Church in a strict hierarchy of territorial character, parallel to the civil organization, and enabled the Church to hold together the Roman empire more firmly than the worship of the emperors could ever do.<sup>1</sup>

We should gladly be able to answer the question why some districts of Asia Minor should have resisted the Roman church so persistently, and others have adopted it so readily; why, *e.g.*, if I may use the question-begging terms, Cappadocia was orthodox and Phrygia heretical.

The answer seems obvious in the case of Cappadocia. The group of great Church leaders, Basil, Amphilochius, and the three Gregories (for I think Gregory, the bishop of Nazianzos, may fairly rank along with his far more famous son),—this group of leaders carried the country with them. But this answer only puts the difficulty one step back: can any reason be suggested why the great Cappadocian leaders followed the Roman church, whereas the most striking figures in Phrygian ecclesiastical history opposed it?

<sup>1</sup> The modern Greek people has been held together through centuries of slavery, not by the tie of blood, for we find Cappadocians, Pisidians, Isaurians (the last only in one single tiny village, unknown to the geographers and travellers), Albanians, etc., all united in feeling as Greeks, nor by the tie of language, for the larger number of Greek communities either lost their Greek for Turkish, or never even knew Greek, but only Albanian: it has been held together solely by the Church.

The history of Basil of Cæsareia, Gregory of Nyssa, and the distinguished family to which they belonged is closely connected with the city of Iborra in Pontos. A glance at the biography of the various members of the family shows that a number of questions with regard to the circumstances of their life, and the exact meaning to be placed on the language of many of their letters and of the incidents they describe, depend on the locality and surroundings. But the name Iborra is still floating in air, and has not set foot on the ground; and for all reasoning that depends on local circumstances, on the relation of city with city, district with district, and civil governors or bishops with each other, it would be as useful to say that Basil's family owned an estate beside Cloud-Cuckoo-Town, as to say that they were landed proprietors near Iborra. But any one who attempts the task of reconstructing a picture of the society in which Basil, the Gregories, and Amphilocheus moved, and their relations with it; the state of education in the country, and the attitude which young graduates of the University of Athens assumed to the home-trained Cappadocians or Pontians—an historian of that class, when such a one arises, will find many investigations stopped by uncertainty as to the situations in which events were transacted. The operations of the English Asia Minor Exploration Fund have now cleared away much of the uncertainty that hung over the localities in which the great events of Cappadocian religious history took place, and have made it possible to face fairly the problem of describing the circumstances of that critical period, 350-400, when the character of the Cappadocian church was determined. Here is a period about which a great body of evidence remains in the writings of the principal agents on the victorious side. Their account of their opponents, of course, has to be accepted with caution; but in weighing it we can, at least, always have the cer-



tainty that they are not too lenient in their judgment, or flattering in their description, of the opposite party.

In the year 370 Basil was appointed bishop of Cæsareia, metropolitan of Cappadocia, and exarch or patriarch of the Pontic *diæcesis*. He was appointed in spite of the resistance of the majority of his bishops, in spite of the dislike and dread of many of the people, in spite of the open opposition of the government. He was elected by the strenuous exertions of a few influential individuals; and the authority of the Church outside the province was needed in order to put down the disaffected within it. The cause of the catholic Church was involved in his election; without the hand of a vigorous organizer there was extreme danger that "heresy"—Eunomianism, Arianism, and so on—would triumph in Cappadocia. We want to learn what this means to the student of society. Did the Eunomian differ from the Catholic only in certain points of doctrine, being otherwise undistinguishable from him? or do these words indicate a difference in private life, in political feeling, and in Church organization? The question may be answered fully, when the historian is found who will face the problem as it has just been sketched. I can only express the hope that in this university something may be done to solve it. The later Greek and Latin writers are full of material uncollected and unvalued for the history of society. Why should almost all the natural ability and admirable training of the classical scholars of Cambridge be directed towards such a narrow range of authors? Every one who has toiled through a Byzantine historian in the edition of the Berlin Academy—that *dauernde Schande der deutschen Philologie*—compelled, as he does so, slowly and without critical material, to remake his edition for his own use, and has then run joyously through De Boor's admirable Theophanes, every one who has done that knows what need

there is for the wider employment of learning and skill. Why should traditional belief—or, shall I say, traditional ignorance?—exclude all Christian Fathers or Byzantine historians from the classical scholar's interests, and almost confine him to producing the 143rd edition of one out of about a score of writers? When he has got something to say about Homer or Cicero that he must say, then let him say it; but might not some of the good scholarship of this university be more profitably employed? I am not ungrateful for the large amount of help that I have had from Cambridge scholarship, but what I have had only makes me wish for more.

I shall try to give an example of the human interest of this subject by examining one single episode in Cappadocian history, about 371–374, and showing what light is thrown by it on the character of the Cappadocian Christians at the time. The incident is related by Archdeacon Farrar in his *Lives of the Fathers* as follows. His account agrees with that given by Canon Venables in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, with Tillemont, and with the Migne biography; and may be taken fairly as representing the usual interpretation.

“The extraordinary story of the deacon Glycerius illustrates the aberrations due to the fermenting enthusiasm and speculative curiosity which marked the Eastern church, and which were fostered by the dreamy idleness of innumerable monks. Glycerius was a young man whose early vigour Basil viewed with so much favour, that he had ordained him deacon of the church of Venesa (?) about 372. Puffed up by his ordination, the young deacon proceeded to gather round him a band of devoted young ladies, whose admiration he won by sleek and soft religious arts, and who supported him by their offerings. Severely reprov'd by his presbyter, his *chorepiscopus*, and lastly by Basil, Glycerius left the town by night with a band of these girls and some youths, and scandalized the country by wandering about with them in a disorderly manner, dancing and singing hymns; amid the jeers of the coarse rustics. When their fathers came to rescue the girls, Glycerius ignominiously drove them away. Finally, the whole band took refuge with a bishop named Gregory, whom even the Benedictine

editor is inclined to think *may* have been Gregory of Nyssa. Basil treated the vain, mischievous, and deluded deacon with much fatherly forbearance, and promised to deal with him kindly if he would dismiss the votaries he was leading, not to God, but to the abyss. Strange to say, the bishop, whoever he was, either failed to second Basil's efforts, or only did so in a lukewarm and inadequate way."

Let me now read to you the letters from which all our knowledge has to be gathered. I hope that, through my bald translation, something of the fire and vigour of the original may appear. Few writers can compare with Basil in directness: not a word can be spared without a distinct loss of effect. He does indeed use *iva* with conjunctive in a way to make a classical scholar's hair stand on end; but if classical Greek disdained the usage, so much the worse for classical Greek.<sup>1</sup> It is true that it does not occur in Demosthenes, but it is stamped by a greater than that man of words, the man least capable of understanding his time of all that have ever paraded in history as statesmen.

#### I. BASIL TO GREGORY (EP. CLXIX. [CCCCXII.]).

THOU hast taken a reasonable and kindly and compassionate course in showing hospitality to the captives of the mutineer Glycerius (I assume the epithet for the moment) and in veiling our common disgrace so far as possible. But when thy discretion has learned the facts with regard to him, it is becoming that thou shouldst put an end to the scandal. This Glycerius who now parades among you with such respectability was consecrated by ourselves as deacon of the Church of Venasa, to be a minister to the presbyter there and to attend to the work of the church; for though he is in other respects unmanageable, yet he is clever in doing whatever comes to his hand. But when he was appointed, he neglected the work as completely as if it had never existed. Gathering together a number of poor girls, on his own

<sup>1</sup> There is too great proneness to stamp one period of Latin, one period of one dialect of Greek, as correct, and everything that differs as wrong. But the real cause of the inferiority of style in later pagan writers lies, not in the words, but in the want of life and spirit in the men. The question has yet to be asked and answered, how far the language used by Basil is less fit to express clearly and vigorously his meaning than that used by Demosthenes.

authority and responsibility, some of them flocking voluntarily round him (for you know the flightiness of young people in such matters) and some of them unwilling, he set about making himself the leader of a company: and taking to himself the name and the garb of a patriarch, he of a sudden paraded as a great power, not reaching this position by a course of obedience and piety, but making it a livelihood, as one might take up any trade; and he has almost upturned the whole Church, disregarding his own presbyter, and disregarding the village-bishop and ourselves, too, as of no account, and ever filling the civil polity and the clerical estate with riot and disorder. And at last, when a slight reproof was given him by ourselves and by the village-bishop, with the intent that he should cease his mutinous conduct (for he was exciting young men to the same courses), he conceives a thing very audacious and unnatural. Impiously carrying off as many young women as he could, he runs away under the cover of night. This must seem to thee quite horrible.

Think too what the occasion was. The festival of Venasa was being celebrated, and as usual a vast crowd was flocking thither from all quarters. He led forth his chorus, marshalled by young men and circling in the dance, making the pious cast down their eyes, and rousing the ridicule of the ribald and loose-tongued. Nor is this all, serious as it is; but further, as I am informed, when the parents could not endure to be orphaned of their children, and wished to bring them home from the dispersion, and came as weeping suppliants to their own daughters, he insults and scandalises them, this admirable young fellow with his piratical discipline.

This ought to appear intolerable to thy discretion, for it brings us all into ridicule. The best thing is that thou shouldest order him to return with the young women, for he would meet with allowance if he comes with letters from thee. If that be impossible, the young women, at any rate, thou shalt send back to their mother the Church. Or, in the third place, do not allow them that are willing to return to be kept under compulsion, but persuade them to come back to us.

Otherwise we testify to thee, as we do to God and men, that this is a wrong thing, and against the rules of the Church. If Glycerius return with a spirit of wisdom and orderliness, that were best; but if not, he must be removed from the ministry.

## II. BASIL TO GLYCERIUS (EP. CLXX. [CCCCIV.]).

How far wilt thou carry thy madness, working evil for thyself and disturbance for us, and outraging the common order of monks? Return then, trusting in God and in us, who imitate the compassion of God. For, though like a father we have chidden thee, yet we will

pardon thee like a father. Such are our words to thee, inasmuch as many supplicate for thee, and before all thy presbyter, whose gray hairs and kindly spirit we respect. But if thou continuest to absent thyself from us, thou art altogether cast out from thy station, and thou shalt be cast out from God with thy songs and thy raiment, by which thou leadest the young women, not towards God, but into the pit.

These two letters were obviously written at the same time, and sent by the same messenger; the third was written after an interval, and apparently after receipt of a letter from Gregory asking for assurance of pardon for Glycerius.

### III. BASIL TO GREGORY (EP. CLXXI. [CCCCXIII.]).

I WROTE to thee already before this about Glycerius and the maidens. Yet they have never to this day returned, but are still delaying; nor do I know why and how, for I should not charge thee with doing this in order to cause slander against us, either being thyself annoyed with us or doing a favour to others.<sup>1</sup> Let them come then without fear; be thou guarantee on this point. For we are afflicted when the members of the Church are cut off, even though they be deservedly cut off. But if they should resist, the responsibility must rest on others, and we wash our hands of it.

For the right understanding of this incident the only evidence available is contained in (1) these three letters of Basil; (2) a sentence of Strabo (p. 537), describing the village and district of Venasa; (3) an inscription found in 1882 on a hill-top near the village; (4) the map of Cappadocia as now reconstructed. A first glance at the evidence is enough to reveal various details inconsistent with the authorized version; and we may be sure that Basil has not coloured in favour of Glycerius those details that give a different complexion to the incident.

In the first place, the very evident sympathy of Gregory for Glycerius disquiets all the modern interpreters; his sympathy cannot be due to ignorance of the facts of the

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Basil's numerous enemies, who would be delighted that the bishop of Nazianzos should refuse to comply with his wishes.

case, for he was far closer to the spot than Basil himself, and the acts were not hid under a bushel, but done openly, and no doubt widely talked about. The only explanation that can be devised by the interpreters is to deny part of the evidence. The MS. evidence, so far as quoted in the Migne edition, is that two of the letters are addressed to Gregory of Nazianzos. Most of the interpreters say that Gregory of Nyssa must be meant, and that Gregory of Nyssa was guilty of many weak and foolish acts. The answer lies in the map, which confirms the old authority, and disproves the modern suggestion.<sup>1</sup>

In the next place, the presbyter whom Basil represents as having been disregarded and set at naught is in favour of the offender, and beseeches Basil to act kindly to him. Canon Venables indeed says that the presbyter "gravely admonished" Glycerius; but this misrepresents the evidence. The "village-bishop" and Basil himself censured Glycerius; but though Basil says Glycerius showed disrespect to the presbyter, he drops no hint that the presbyter complained about this, but rather the opposite. Basil himself does not even hint at any darker crime than injudiciousness and ambition in the relations of Glycerius to the devotees; and there can be no doubt that the letters omit no charge that could be brought against the rebellious deacon. The evident purity of conduct in this strange band may fairly be taken as necessarily implying that the strictest religious obligations were observed by the devotees. In such a difficult situation, there is no alternative but either strict asceticism, springing from fanatical or enthusiastic

<sup>1</sup> If any change is permitted in the MS. authority, I should understand the elder Gregory, bishop of Nazianzos, and date the letters A.D. 373. At any rate this Gregory was obviously not under Basil's authority, and was therefore under Tyana; whereas Nyssa was under Cæsareia. The tone of the letters also is more respectful and less peremptory than Basil would probably have employed to his brother or his friend Gregory. On the map, see *Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, p. 293.

religious feeling, on the one hand, or license and scandal, on the other.

Now the evident sympathy both of the immediate superior, the presbyter, whose influence had been apparently diminished by the popularity of the deacon, and of the bishop of Nazianzos (whether the older Gregory or his son, who filled his place for a short time after his death in 374), is quite unintelligible if Glycerius had introduced some new and startling features into the religion of the province. It is of course certain that the principles of both the Gregories, father and son, were opposed to such manifestations, as being contrary to the whole spirit of the catholic Church. The reason why Gregory sympathised must be that Glycerius was only keeping up the customary ceremonial of a great religious meeting. Canon Venables indeed says that the band "wandered about the country under the pretence of religion, singing hymns and leaping and dancing in a disorderly fashion," and Archdeacon Farrar agrees with him. But there is no warrant in the letter of Basil for this account. The band is not said either to wander about the country or to dance in a disorderly way. Accurate geography is useful in studying ancient writers, but accurate translation is not without its advantages. Let us scrutinise the facts a little more closely, examining the situation and the probabilities of the case; and I think we shall have to admit that Basil is giving us a picture, coloured to his view, of a naïve and quaint ceremony of early Cappadocian Christianity, which he regarded with horror, and was resolved to stamp out.

One of the most striking features in the whole incident is the important part played by women. Now this is the most striking feature also in the native religion of Asia Minor. From their religion we may safely infer their social condition; and the inference is confirmed by many details

that have already often been collected and described, especially the Lycian custom of formally stating descent by the mother's name. The low position of women, the want of any religious station and duties for them, the general theory that women can do little good, but much harm—all this was a principle that grew stronger as time passed in the Roman church. On the other hand, the ministrations of women, often in positions of great dignity and responsibility, is a feature of several of the provincial churches, or "heresies," in Asia Minor.

The occasion when the most extreme features of this Cappadocian "heresy" were displayed was the great festival at Venasa, when a vast concourse was gathered there. This festival is called by Canon Venables a "fair"; but this is not an accurate translation. The *synodos*, which was held there, was certainly similar to the Armenian *synodos*, held at Phargamous. At Phargamous, in the month of June, a great festival was held in honour of certain martyrs; and such dignitaries as Basil himself, Eusebius of Samosata, and Theodotus of Nicopolis, might be expected at it.

Moreover the *synodos* of Venasa was one of the most ancient and famous religious meetings in Cappadocia. The priest of Zeus at Venasa was second in dignity and power only to the priest of Komana; he held office for life, and was practically a king. A village inhabited by 3,000 *hierodouloi* was attached to the temple, and round it lay a sacred domain that brought in an annual income of fifteen talents (nearly £4,000). Christianity directed the religious feeling of the country towards new objects, but preserved the old seasons and methods. A Christian festival was substituted for the old festival of Zeus, doubtless the occasion when the god made his annual *ἑξοδος*, or procession round his country. Basil unluckily, pitiless of the modern scholar, does not name the month when the festival took place, and the sole memorials of it that remain to complete



the account of Strabo are, first, a brief invocation to the heavenly Zeus, found on a hill-top, to guide us (along with other evidence) to the situation; and, secondly, these letters of Basil, to show how the Cappadocian Christians developed the pagan festival.

At this great religious ceremony of the whole country, Glycerius brought forth his followers, singing and dancing in chorus. Such ceremonies were necessarily a part of the old religious festival of Zeus, and their existence in it, though not attested, may be safely assumed; accordingly there is every probability that they were not now first introduced by Glycerius, but were part of the regular Cappadocian custom. They are a natural and regular concomitant of the earlier and simpler forms of religion, whether pagan or Jewish; and at Venasa they were retained, with some modifications in the words and the gestures. Hymns undoubtedly were substituted for the pagan formulæ, and not a hint is dropped by Basil that the dancing and singing were not of a quiet and modest character. The license of the old pagan ceremonies had been given up; but in many respects there was no doubt a striking resemblance between the old pagan and the new Christian festival. Probably the dancing of the great dervish establishments of Kara Hissar and Iconium at the present day would give the best idea of the festival at Venasa in the time of Basil, though the solemnity and iconoclastic spirit of Mohammedanism have still further toned down the ecstasy and enthusiastic *abandon* of the old ritual. But the strange, weird music of the flute and cymbals, and the excited yet always orderly dancing, make the ceremony even yet the most entrancing and intoxicating that I have ever witnessed. We can through this analogy come to realize the power that might be acquired by a man of natural ability and religious fervour over numbers of young persons. This influence was increased by the character which Glycerius assumed and the

robes which he wore. In the old pagan festival the leader of the festival wore the dress and bore the name of the deity whom he represented. The custom is well-known both in Greece (where the Dionysos festival is the most familiar, but far from the sole, example) and in Asia Minor.<sup>1</sup> Glycerius, as Basil tells us, assumed the name and the dress of a "patriarch." The meaning which this bears to one who is not skilled in ecclesiastical history, and who cannot tell whether there may not be some peculiar profanity in it, is, that the custom of the festival continued to be that the director of ceremonies (who, like the modern dervish sheikh, never danced [himself]) was equipped in a style corresponding to the pagan priest, and assumed the character of the highest religious official, the patriarch.

But a new era began in Cappadocia when Basil became head of the church. It is obvious that abuses might readily, almost necessarily, creep into such ceremonies; and clearly the edict went forth that they must cease. Basil does not hint that any real abuses had occurred. He speaks only of the downcast looks of the pious spectators, and the jests of the ribald and loose-tongued; but he is clearly describing what he conceives to be the inevitable outcome of such ceremonies. The spirit of the Church, whose champion Basil was, was inexorably opposed to such exhibitions. For good or for evil, such prominence given to women in religious ceremonial was hateful to it. The influence acquired by a deacon, his assumption of the robes and name of a patriarch, were subversive of the strict discipline of the Roman church. The open association of a monk with a band of young women was contrary to the rules of the monastic order. The village-bishop, acting doubtless on previous general orders of his superior, reprimanded Glycerius, and his action was confirmed and enforced by Basil. Glycerius, when thus treated, took

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, at Pessinus the priest took *ex officio* the name Attis.

advantage of the recent changes which had curtailed the power of Basil. He crossed the frontier into the adjoining bishopric of Nazianzos, which was now included in the province of Second Cappadocia, under the metropolitan of Tyana. The young women that followed his ministrations fled with him; and as Gregory received and sheltered them all, we cannot doubt that the flight was made in an orderly way, without scandal, and with the air of pious but persecuted Christians. Basil then complained to Gregory in the letter quoted. The reply of Gregory unfortunately has not been preserved; but we can imagine that he gave a different version of the case, stated his views as to the character of Glycerius, and urged Basil to promise complete forgiveness on condition of the immediate return of all the fugitives.

We have the reply of Basil, giving the required assurance, though not with the best grace. One motive that evidently weighed with him was apprehension of the talk that he would give rise to if he continued an intolerant policy. Now all this is inconceivable except on the supposition that, according to the above description, Glycerius was acting in accordance with established custom and the general feeling of the Cappadocian church, while Basil was too hastily and sternly suppressing the custom of the country. The incipient schism, roused by the sternness of Basil, was healed by the mild mediation of Gregory.

The fault in Glycerius which most offended Basil was evidently his transgression of the Church discipline. The full significance of this can be grasped only in its connexion with the whole policy of Basil.

The powerful personality, the intense, uncompromising zeal, and the great practical ability of Basil were of the first consequence in insuring the triumph of the Roman church in Cappadocia. But one man, however powerful, cannot do everything by his own immediate effort, espe-

cially when his personal influence is interrupted by a too early death, as Basil's was. The organizing power which has always been so conspicuous a feature of the Roman church exercised as powerful an influence in Cappadocia as elsewhere. The organization which Basil left behind him completed his work. One great object of Basil's administration was to establish large ecclesiastical centres of two kinds: first, orphanages; and, secondly, monasteries. An orphanage was built in every district of his immense diocese; the one at Cæsareia, with its church, bishop's palace, and residences for clergy, hospices for poor, sick, and travellers, hospital for lepers, and workshops for teaching and practising trades, was so large as to be called the "New City." Such establishments constituted centres from which the irresistible influence of the Church permeated the whole district, as, centuries before, the cities founded by the Greek kings had been centres from which the Greek influence had slowly penetrated over the country round. The monks and the monasteries, which Basil established widely over the country, were centres of the same influence; and though the monks occasionally caused some trouble by finding even Basil himself not sufficiently orthodox, they were probably powerful agents of the Roman church, whereas the solitary hermits and anchorets, whom Basil rather discouraged, though he had been one himself, were perhaps more favourable to the provincial Church, and were certainly a far less powerful engine for affecting the country.

That the monk Glycerius should break through the gradations of office and the spirit of the Church, should parade in the robes of the patriarch, and flee from his superior's jurisdiction in the company of a band of women, was a thing intolerable to Basil.

One other point requires notice: is any external circumstance known that is likely to have directed such men

as Basil towards the Roman church? A strong impulse probably was given them by their foreign education. They lost the narrow, provincial tone; they came to appreciate the unity and majesty of the Roman empire; they realized the destiny of the Church to be the religion of the empire, *i.e.* of the world. They also learned something about that organization by which Rome ruled the world, and they appreciated the fact that the Church could fulfil its destiny and rule the Roman empire only by strict organization and rigid discipline. Men like Glycerius could not see beyond the bounds of their native district, with its provincial peculiarities; men like Basil were perhaps almost intolerant of mere provincialism.

Perhaps a clearer idea of the causes which made Cappadocia orthodox may be gained by looking at Phrygia, which was mainly a heretical country. The cities of the Lycus valley, and of the country immediately east and north-east of it, which were most under the Roman influence, were of the dominant Christian church; but the mass of the country adhered stubbornly to the native forms of Christianity. Probably this has something to do with the fact that in Phrygia so few Christian communities have maintained an unbroken existence through the Turkish domination, while in Cappadocia a fair proportion of the whole population has preserved its religion to the present day. Many of the Phrygians were always discontented with the Byzantine rule, except under the iconoclast emperors. When John Comnenus was invading the Seljuk dominions, he found Christian communities, who so much preferred Turkish rule to Byzantine, that they fought against him, even without support from the Turks, and had to be reduced by force of arms. To a certain extent this was perhaps due to preference of the easy Seljuk yoke to the heavy Byzantine taxation; but it is very probable that religious difference was the chief cause.

How far then can we trace in Phrygia the presence or absence of the causes that made Cappadocia orthodox? In the first place, little trace of such organization as Basil made in Cappadocia can be found in Phrygia. In the life of Hypatius, written by his disciple Callinicus, and corrected by another hand in the time of his third successor, we read that he was born in Phrygia, but was obliged to emigrate to Thrace in order to gratify his wish to live in a church or monastery where he might associate with discreet men; "for there were then no such persons, except isolated individuals, in Phrygia, and if a church existed anywhere, the clergy were rustic and ignorant, though the country has since become almost entirely Christian" (*i.e.* orthodox).

Hypatius flourished in the first half of the fifth century; so that the apparent reform here described belongs to the period 450-500.<sup>1</sup> The organization of Phrygia on the orthodox model therefore is much later than that of Cappadocia, and it was probably not so thorough. It seems only to have been superficial, caused by the government imposing on the country the forms of the catholic Church.

The inscriptions of Phrygia carry back our knowledge of the history of Christianity there more than a century and a half earlier than in Cappadocia. In Phrygia, in the period 150 to 200 A.D., the struggle between the native church and the Roman church, known as the Montanist controversy, was in progress. The prophetesses of Montanism may be compared with the dancing devotees of Glycerius. Though there was no doubt a difference of doctrine between Glycerius and Montanus, corresponding to the difference of period, when varying points were the centre of controversy, yet Glycerianism was a growth of the same general type as

<sup>1</sup> The revision of the biography as composed by Callinicus is said expressly to have extended only to a correction of the bad Greek of a Syrian dialect. The reviser neither added nor took away anything, though he knew various things that might be added (*Acta Sanct.*, June 17th, p. 308 [248]).

Montanism, and might have become important in religious history, if it had not been cut short by the energy of Basil and the tolerance of Gregory.

There remains to us a document of the Montanist controversy, of the highest interest and of indubitable authenticity; for part of it has come down to us on the stone on which it was originally written. It is the testament of one of the prominent figures in the controversy; it was written by him when he felt the end of life approaching, and wished to leave behind him, before the eyes of men, a testimony, brief, clear, emphatic, of the truth for which he contended. In a document like this we may be sure that no word is wasted, no idea expressed that did not appear to the writer to be of critical importance. He had the words engraved, under his own eye, on his tombstone. I do not pretend to understand all that the writer put into the few rugged, but vigorous lines: what I long for is to see them treated thoroughly by the competent hand.<sup>1</sup> But the circumstances I think are alone sufficient to prove that my estimate of the importance of the document is not exaggerated.

I refer to the epitaph of Avircius Marcellus, engraved about 192 A.D. The restoration and interpretation of the text are still a matter of controversy; but I feel confident that the outline given in *THE EXPOSITOR*, 1889, vol. ix., pp. 265-272, approximates more closely than any other to the truth. In particular, growing experience makes me feel only more strongly that a Phrygian bearing the names Avircius (known only in Latin inscriptions of Rome and Gaul) and Marcellus must have been of Italian origin, and have borne also the prænomen of a Roman.

The epitaph of Avircius lays great stress on his travel and experience. After the introductory reference to the spotless Shepherd, he mentions the education which that Shepherd had given him, and describes it in detail. The

<sup>1</sup> The wish cannot now be fulfilled, since Bishop Lightfoot died.

first point in the education is "He sent me to Rome to see the mystic King, and the Church the Queen." It is impossible to mistake, and difficult perhaps to exaggerate the stress which Avircius lays on the name Rome. An omission too is almost equally significant: he travelled in Syria, and saw all its cities, but Jerusalem is not named, only Nisibis. The extreme limit of the Roman power suggests the one name that he actually gives. Avircius went to the metropolis and the extreme east of the empire; and that which struck him most is the unity of the Church. Everywhere he found the Christians united in the same belief and practice with himself. Basil, who had the eye of the governor and administrator, would probably, had he left us such a testament as Avircius has written, not have omitted some reference to the order, the rule, and organization, τὸ κοινὸν διάταγμα, of the Church. Avircius is deeply impressed with its unity, but does not realize the means by which that unity can be carried out in practice. He emphasises it in his testament, describes its doctrines and its mysteries—the writings of Paul, faith as the guide of life and Christ as its food, the immaculate virgin, and the holy sacrament; but he is silent as to its power. No touch indicates how it is to be made universal, except that he declines the prayers of those who disagree with him. The contrast between this last touch and the lenience which Basil was induced to show to Glycerius suggests part of the reason why Avircius could not carry Phrygia with him, while Basil could carry Cappadocia.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Not directly, but by implication.