THE THEOLOGY OF TERTULLIAN

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To

MY WIFE

WHOSE LOVE AND PATIENCE
MADE THIS WORK POSSIBLE

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INTRODUCTION

The Literature of the Subject

No attempt has been made in recent times, as far as the writer is aware, to deal in a systematic manner with the theology of Tertullian as a whole, and with due regard to the chronological order of his writings. Various phases of his teaching have been treated, e.g. his doctrine of the soul, his ethics, and his view of the Trinity; but the expositions of these phases of his teaching have often been vitiated by the failure on the part of the expositors to place the writings in their chronological order, and to recognize the development in Tertullian's thought. Harnack, for instance, notes the frequency of contradictory statements in the writings of Tertullian, without allowing sufficiently for the changing outlook of one who passed through various stages of growth, from that of a pagan who was initiated into the Christian community, to that of the mature Christian theologian and the devoted disciple of the Paraclete. Some inconsistencies and contradictions there were, inevitably, in the writings of one who endeavoured to reconcile the traditional teaching of the Church and the authority of the Scriptures with the inspiration of the Paraclete and his prophets, and these endured to the end; but many of the so-called contradictions in Tertullian's writings are no more than the reflections of a changing and advancing exposition of the Christian position by one who lived in a period of transition, who came under the influence of various currents of thought, and who himself was a remarkable example of growth in the knowledge of Christian truth.

The only English scholars who have endeavoured to deal in a systematic manner with the writings of Tertullian as a whole are Bishop Kaye (*The Writings of Tertullian*, third edition, 1845), and Fuller (*Dictionary of Christian Biography*, vol. iv., pp. 818–64). Kaye is content to divide the writings

of Tertullian into four classes: (1) Works probably written while Tertullian was yet a member of the Church; (2) Works certainly written after he became a Montanist; (3) Works probably written after he became a Montanist; (4) Works concerning which nothing certain can be pronounced. It is a sufficient commentary on such a classification to note that *De Spectaculis* and *De Idololatria* are classed among those probably written after he became a Montanist. Kaye's work contains a great deal of interesting information, but its usefulness is limited by the following considerations: (1) The chronological arrangement of the books is unsatisfactory; (2) The design of the work is to illustrate Mosheim's outline of the history of the period; (3) The plan of using the writings to illustrate and support the doctrines of the Church of England, as set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles, tends to give the reader a wrong perspective.

Fuller (1887) has given a summarized statement of the contents of Tertullian's writings, but has contributed nothing to our understanding of his theology. In his view of the chronology of the writings he follows Kaye mainly, but introduces some modifications suggested by Bonwetsch. He divides the works into: (1) Those written while Tertullian was still a member of the Church, (*a*) Apologetic writings, (*b*) other writings of this period (197–9) but of less certain date; (2) Montanistic writings, (*a*) defending the Church and her teachings, (*b*) defending the Paraclete and his discipline. He also gives a brief sketch of the times in which Tertullian lived, and a concise characterization of the Carthaginian as he reveals himself in his writings. As a brief review of the writings of Tertullian, Fuller's article is useful, but some of his statements need to be accepted with caution in view of later research.

Antignostikus; or, the Spirit of Tertullian, by Dr. Augustus Neander (1849, translated into English 1851), is a brilliant exposition of the writings of Tertullian. He divides the writings into: (1) Those which were occasioned by the relation of Christians to the heathen, (*a*) prior to his becoming a Montanist, (*b*) after he had embraced Montanism; (2) Writings which relate to Christian and Church life, and to ecclesiastical discipline, (*a*) pre-Montanist, (*b*) Montanist; (3) The dogmatic and dogmatic-polemical writings, (*a*) pre-Montanist, (*b*) Montanist. Neander is more favourably

disposed towards chronological data than Kaye, but in broad outline he, too, is content with the distinction between pre-Montanist and Montanist writings, and the fact that he places *Adversus Judaeos* and *Adversus Hermogenem* among the Montanist writings is sufficient to show the unsatisfactory nature of this classification. Neander's method is to expound the thought of each book in turn. This method has its advantages, but, while it saves time for the writer, it throws upon the reader the task of correlating the views of Tertullian upon any subject or topic. It has the further disadvantage that it allows Neander to develop the thought of Tertullian on a subject without paying due regard to the qualifications which are necessary in the light of expressions and statements found in other of the author's writings.

The problem of placing the writings of Tertullian in their chronological order was faced by Uhlhorn (*Fundamenta Chronologiae Tertullianeae*, 1852), Bonwetsch (*Die Schriften Tertullians nach der Zeit ihrer Abfassung*, 1878), Harnack (*Zeitschrift fur Kirchengeschichte*, 1878), and Noeldechen (*Die Abfassungzeit der Schriften Tertullians*, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, vol. 5). These perceived the importance of the problem and approached it in a scientific manner, and the latest statement of the case by Noeldechen has gone far towards establishing the order of the writings as definitely as is possible with the data at our service. The latter also (*Tertullian dargestellt*, 1890) has endeavoured to establish, with the aid of hints in the writings themselves, a life of Tertullian, and has expounded the teaching of the writings in chronological succession. In his task of building up a life of Tertullian he has profited by, and improved upon, the attempts of Hesselberg (*Tertullians Lehre*, 1848), Grotemeyer (*Ueber Tertullians Leben und Schriften*, 1863), and Hauck (*Tertullians Leben und Schriften*, 1877). But the work of these writers was confined to questions of literary and historical significance. With the theology of Tertullian they did not deal.

Of the books which deal with the special aspects of Tertullian's theology the chief are Esser's *Die Seelenlehre Tertullians*, 1893, Ludwig's *Tertullians Ethik*, 1885, and Rauch's *Der Einfluss der stoischen Philosophie auf die Lehrbildung Tertullians*, 1890. Esser's work is a careful and sympathetic exposition of the teaching of Tertullian on the soul, and is based upon the

treatise *De Anima*, together with such reflections of the subject as appear in other writings (mainly *De Carne Christi* and *De Resurrectione Carnis*). Ludwig has given an ample exposition of the ethical teaching of Tertullian, while Rauch has shown the influence of Stoicism upon his psychology, theology, and ethics.

Of books which treat of Tertullian's theology in relation to the general development of Christian thought the most helpful are Harnack (*History of Dogma*, English translation, vols. ii. and v.), Loofs (*Leitfaden*), and Bethune-Baker (*Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*), while the treatment of Tertullian in Bishop Bull's *Defence of the Nicene Creed* is worthy of careful consideration. Harnack's treatment of Tertullian is not over sympathetic, and some of his conclusions appear to be arrived at hastily, but his treatment of the treatise *Adversus Praxean* is masterly. Loofs' treatment of the teaching of Tertullian is brief, but as a sketch of the historical relation of that teaching to earlier and later developments of Christian thought it is admirable. Bethune-Baker also has given a lucid, though brief, statement of Tertullian's contribution towards the solution of the great problem of Christian doctrine—the Trinity.

With a few exceptions the translations of Tertullian and other writers given are those of the Ante-Nicene Library, while the Latin and Greek readings, which have been given only where essential, are from the Patrologia edition of Migne.

I

THE PLACE OF TERTULLIAN IN THE HISTORY OF THEOLOGY

The position of Christian doctrine—The influence of Gnosticism—Irenaeus and the Rule of Truth—The *lex fidei*: its threefold statement—The canon of Scripture—The services of Tertullian in relation thereto—Quotation—Relation to the Rule of Faith. Reserve or 'Oikonomia'—Allegorical method—Changing attitude—Valentinianism—Marcion—Montanism—Monarchianism.

TERTULLIAN belongs to that period in the history of Christianity when it was developing doctrinally into a defender of the 'Rule of Faith,' when the Scriptures were in process of being formed into a select body of writings, when the episcopal office was assuming importance as an ecclesiastical function, when the reaction which is associated with the name of Montanus was being felt, when the Monarchian controversy was agitating the Church, and when Greek philosophy and Christianity were in process of gradual fusion.

In such a period Tertullian played an important part. He rendered great service as a defender of the 'Rule of Faith' against Gnosticism and Marcionitism; he assisted in establishing the authority of the writings of the New Testament, and in indicating the principles of interpretation; the episcopal office was both lauded and derided by him, in his earlier and his later days; in the Montanist reaction he was a leading figure; and in the clash between Greek philosophy and Christianity, which resulted in the assimilation by the latter of all that was best in the former, his services were valuable.

Towards the middle of the second century an interesting stage in the formulation of Christian doctrine had been reached. It was no longer sufficient or safe to proceed without some definite statement of what Christians believed. Hence the baptismal confession of belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit assumed a new significance. It became, not simply the formula,

confession of which was a necessary preliminary to the acceptance into the Christian community of the would-be Christian, but the embodiment of the doctrine handed down from Christ and the Apostles. In the Roman Church certainly, and in other churches probably, the baptismal confession thus became the statement of the creed of the Church. But a further necessity arose of defining what that creed meant. Of what explanations was it susceptible? Which of those explanations was correct? Hence the question of the interpretation of the creed was of the utmost importance.

The Gnostic movement was of great significance, in that it forced the Christian Church to determine and to define what its own beliefs were. By introducing a cosmogony and a theology which claimed to be compatible with the Christian religion, Valentinus and Marcion in particular made it imperative that the leaders of Christian thought should face the problem of deciding what were the doctrines which were based upon that authority.

In the task of confuting the doctrines of Valentinus and Marcion, and of defending the beliefs of the Christian Church, Tertullian took a leading part. Irenaeus had already taken his stand in declaring what the Christian Church believed. He held that the truths expressed in the Roman baptismal confession were the Rule of Truth of the Church. They were derived from the apostles, and had been held as the faith of Christians ever since. They included belief in the 'unity of God; the identity of the supreme God with the Creator; the identity of the supreme God with the God of the Old Testament; the unity of Jesus Christ as the Son of the God who created the world; the essential divinity of Christ; the incarnation of the Son of God; the prediction of the entire history of Jesus through the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament; the reality of that history; the bodily reception of Christ into heaven; the visible return of Christ; the resurrection of all flesh; the universal judgement.'[1]

Tertullian adopted virtually the same position, save that he employed the name 'the Rule of Faith' to indicate the content of the Christian belief. He has given that 'Rule of Faith' in three places, which may here be quoted for the sake of comparison and comment.

[1] Harnack, vol. ii., p. 29, English translation.

De Praescriptione Haereticorum, c. 13: The Rule of Faith is 'that which prescribed the belief that there is one only God, and that He is none other than the Creator of the world, who produced all things out of nothing through His own Word, first of all sent forth; that this Word is called His Son, and, under the name of God, was seen "in divers manners" by the patriarchs, heard at all times in the prophets, at last brought down by the Spirit and Power of the Father into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh in her womb, and, being born of her, went forth as Jesus Christ; thenceforth He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, worked miracles; having been crucified, He rose again the third day; (then), having ascended into the heavens, He sat down at the right hand of the Father; sent instead of Himself the power of the Holy Ghost, to lead such as believe; will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyment of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, and to condemn the wicked to everlasting fire, after the resurrection of both these shall have happened, together with the restoration of their flesh.'

De Virginibus Velandis, c. 2: 'The Rule of Faith, indeed, is altogether one, alone immovable and irreformable, the rule, to wit, of believing in one only God omnipotent, the Creator of the universe, and His Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised again the third day from the dead, received in the heavens, sitting now at the right (hand) of the Father, destined to come to judge quick and dead through the resurrection of the flesh as well (as of the spirit).'

Adversus Praxean, c. 2: 'We, however, as indeed we always have done (and more especially since we have been better instructed by the Paraclete, who leads men indeed into all the truth), believe that there is one only God, but under the following dispensation, or οἰκονομία, as it is called, that this one only God has also a Son, His Word, who proceeded from Himself, by whom all things were made and without whom nothing was made. Him (we believe) to have been sent by the Father into the Virgin, and to have been born of her . . . being both man and God, the Son of Man and the Son of God, and to have been called by the name of Jesus Christ; (we believe) Him to have suffered, died, and been buried, according to the Scriptures, and, after He had been raised by the Father

and taken back to heaven to be sitting at the right hand of the Father, (and) that He will come to judge the quick and the dead; who sent also from heaven from the Father, according to His own promise, the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, the Sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost.'

A comparison of these three statements and their context prompts the following observations:

(1) Tertullian claims that this Rule of Faith has 'come down to us from the beginning' (*Adv. Prax.*, 2), that it is 'constant,' 'immovable and irreformable' (*De Virg. Vel.*, 1), and was 'taught by Christ' (*De Praes. Haer.*, 13); and yet, even by his own statement of the Rule of Faith at different times, it is evident that it varies, not only in form, but in content. According to one statement (*De Praes. Haer.*), God is omnipotent; from the other statements this attribute is omitted. Two of the statements (*De Virg. Vel., De Praes. Haer.*) say that He is the Creator, but one of them (*De Praes. Haer.*) states that He produced all things out of nothing, while the other omits this point. The third (*Adv. Prax.*) attributes the creation of the universe entirely to the Son. Again, one only (*De Praes. Haer.*) states that Jesus Christ 'preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven and worked miracles,' while one (*Adv. Prax.*) introduces the οἰκονομία of God and the Paraclete, 'the Sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost.'

(2) They include some additions to the Rule of Truth as it is stated by Irenaeus. These are: (*a*) The universe was created out of nothing; (*b*) The preaching by Christ of the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven; (*c*) The Logos, or Word, was first of all sent forth before all things were created, and was the Agent of the Father in the work of creation; (*d*) The οἰκονομία of God; and (*e*) the Paraclete.

(3) Hence we conclude that the Rule of Faith was not as 'constant,' and 'immovable and irreformable,' as Tertullian would have us suppose. In regard to some of the central truths—such, for instance, as those found in the brief statement in *De Virginibus Velandis*, the substance is common to Tertullian and earlier Apologists. But Tertullian did not

hesitate to import into it whatever was necessary to refute the views of heretics or to convey his own opinions. Thus against Hermogenes he introduces the statement that God made the universe out of nothing, and against *Praxeas* he introduces the statement that God must be believed to be one, but, according to His οἰκονομία, while, in confirmation of his theory of the Paraclete, he inserts after 'and in the Holy Ghost' the addition: 'the Paraclete, the Sanctifier of those who believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost.'

Thus, as far as the Rule of Faith is concerned, Tertullian adopted it in essentials from his predecessors, but he added to it, the chief additions being the priority of the Son to all creatures, and His agency in the work of creation, and the qualification of the assertion of the Unity of God by the introduction of the notion of the divine οἰκονομία.

About the middle of the second century the canon of Scripture was in an interesting state. Earlier, the Scriptures were the Old Testament, and even the four Gospels were not yet invested with canonical authority. To the Old Testament were added the words of Christ and the teaching of Christian prophets. But the conflict with Gnosticism led to the formation of a canon of writings which could be authenticated as apostolical, and to which appeal could be made. The question became acute as a result of the fact that there were writings which claimed to be apostolical and to which the Gnostics appealed. The defenders of the Christian faith, therefore, were driven to make the claim that they alone had apostolic writings, and which those writings were had to be decided. They came to the conclusion that they were those which were habitually read in the churches, and which ecclesiastical tradition ascribed to the apostles. Further, they could only accept those whose teaching was in accord with the Rule of Faith.

We have no direct evidence of the detailed growth of the canon of the New Testament, but in Tertullian we find that it is already fixed, and he takes up the attitude that none but Christians have any right to appeal to the Christian Scriptures in support of their teaching. This is the teaching of his treatise *De Praescriptione Haereticorum.*

The services which Tertullian rendered in this direction are

not at all comparable with those of Origen. He complained that the heretics were corrupting the text of Scripture to suit their own ends, but he did nothing in the way of criticism of the text to establish the true readings. Possibly the situation was not so acute in the West at this time as it became soon after in the East. But the fact that Tertullian complains of the corruption of the text shows the direction in which things were trending. He is content, however, to aver that the Christian Church has the correct text. He also complained that the heretics were appealing to writings which were not legitimate sources of truth, but he does not state which writings are legitimate and which are not. He does, however, indicate by his quotations which writings were accepted by the Church in his time.

Positively, his contribution to the discussion of the place and authority of the Scriptures may be summed up under five heads:

(1) His quotation of Scripture is profuse. He quotes or refers to all the books of our Old Testament except Ruth, Ezra, Obadiah, and Zephaniah, and all the books of our New Testament, while of the Apocryphal books he quotes the Book of Wisdom, 2 Esdras, 1 Maccabees, Tobit, Baruch, and Bel and the Dragon.

(2) He maintained that appeal should be made, not to the Scriptures, but to the Rule of Faith. Tradition, which was handed down from Christ through the apostles and the Churches, provided the test by which even the Scriptures were to be tried. In pursuance of this idea, Tertullian forbade the heretics the use of the Scriptures. The Church alone knew what the Scriptures meant, and alone had the right to use them in argument. But the Rule of Faith and the Scriptures are in perfect harmony. 'Now what is there in our Scriptures which is contrary to us?' 'What we are ourselves, that also the Scriptures are from the beginning' (*De Praes. Haer.*, 38).

(3) He opposed the doctrine of 'Reserve,' or οἰκονομία, according to which Christ taught the apostles secret doctrines which were not revealed to ordinary Christians. He rebutted this idea of the Gnostics by expounding the texts upon which it was based, i.e. 2 Cor. xii. 4; 1 Tim. vi. 20; and 2 Tim. i. 14. These texts do not support the idea of the Gnostics, of a secret doctrine, and the apostles taught the whole truth to the

whole Church. 'Openly did the Lord speak, without any intimation of a hidden mystery,'[1] As for the apostles, they in their Epistles 'besought men that they would speak one and the same thing, and that there should be no divisions and dissensions in the Church, seeing that they, whether Paul or others, preached the same things.'[2]

(4) He used the allegorical method of interpretation, e.g. 'There is one flesh of man (that is, servants of God but really human), another flesh of beasts (that is, the heathen of whom the prophet actually says "Man is like the senseless cattle"), another flesh of birds (that is, martyrs who essay to mount up to heaven), another of fishes (that is, those whom the water of baptism has submerged)' (*De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 52). The prayer for daily bread is to be understood spiritually: 'For Christ is our Bread, because Christ is life and bread is life . . . and so in petitioning for daily bread we ask for perpetuity in Christ and indivisibility from His body' (*De Oratione*, c. 6). The first Psalm is not only a description of a just man of old, it is an interdicting of the shows, for 'divine Scripture has ever far-reaching applications; after the immediate sense has been exhausted in all directions, it fortifies the practice of the religious life, so that here also you have an utterance which is not far from a plain interdicting of the shows' (*De Spect.*, c. 3; cf. also *Adv. Marc.*, II. 19, 21, 22, III. 5, 6, 14, 19, V.1).

But Tertullian does not emphasize the difference between the plain and the figurative sense of Scripture, and certainly is no supporter of the idea that there are different meanings of Scripture for different classes of men, after the manner of the Gnostics and the Alexandrian theologians. Whatever is plain narrative is such for all men, and where a figurative meaning is to be discovered it is open to all.

(5) His attitude towards the Scriptures underwent a change. In his earliest writings Scripture proof is deemed so necessary that he wrests a passage to support his theme (*De Spect.*, 3). A little later the voice of the Spirit is sufficient without the support of the written word (*De Idololatria*, c. 4).[3] In *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* the Scriptures are overshadowed

[1] *De Praes. Haer.*, 26. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] 'Why recall anything more from the Scriptures? As if . . . the voice of the Holy Spirit were not sufficient.'

by the Rule of Faith. By the time that *De Corona Militis* was written the sufficiency of custom where Scripture proof fails is affirmed, while at the close of his life he became so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the New Prophecy that to him it constitutes a new and final authority, whose relation to the Scriptures he has not clearly set forth.

It remains briefly to outline the attitude of Tertullian towards three movements of his time—Gnosticism, Montanism, and Monarchianism.

Gnosticism was largely the outcome of the endeavour of men of a philosophic turn of mind to blend the Christian revelation with Oriental speculation in order to build up a religious philosophy of life. Despite its apparently fantastic speculations, and the ultimately immoral conclusions of some of its teaching, it was an honest attempt to solve the problem of evil and its relation to God. It took a variety of forms which defy clear classification. The two exponents of Gnosticism whom Tertullian set himself to oppose chiefly were Valentinus and Marcion.

Against the followers of Valentinus he wrote a special treatise.[1] He says that they have fabricated their theories out of Scripture, but are most difficult to engage in argument, because they either assume an air of ignorance or affirm that they entirely agree with their opponents. They, however, brand the Christians as simple folk, as though wisdom could not co-exist with simplicity. Tertullian then exposes the absurdity of their doctrines, believing that that method in itself is enough to discredit them. In so doing he follows, as he says, Justin, Miltiades, Irenaeus, and Proculus. He enumerates the aeons and emanations of this theory, and indulges in much raillery at their expense. The conception of the Demiurge, the travesty of Christ and the Holy Spirit, the three natures of man (spiritual, psychical, material), the resulting confusion of moral values, and the Judgement, are subjects for Tertullian's mirth, satire, and denunciation. He concludes with a few short chapters dealing with the varieties in doctrine among the followers of Valentinus.

Against Marcion he composed five books.[2] The main point in the theory of Marcion was that the God of the Old Testament was not the God represented in the New Testament.

[1] *Adversus Valentinianos.* [2] *Adversus Marcionem* I., II., III., IV., V.

The God of the Old Testament was just, but he was not good. Tertullian's first book against Marcion was directed against this 'God' of Marcion. He maintains that there can be only one supreme God, and then exposes the contradictions and absurdities in which Marcion's theory involves him. He also shows the danger to morality and religion attaching to such a doctrine.

In Book II. Tertullian makes the point that the Creator, the Demiurge, whom Marcion belittles, is none other than the true God, and is identical with the God of the New Testament. In Book III. he proves that Christ is the Son of God, that He was the Agent of God in Creation, that He was foretold by the prophets, and that He became incarnate. Book IV. continues the argument concerning Christ, and is based upon the third Gospel, which was the only one whose genuineness was acknowledged by Marcion. Book V. carries the argument further by showing that the Epistles of Paul, so far from supporting Marcion, as the latter claimed, are entirely on the other side. Paul's God is the God of the Old Testament.

The importance of Tertullian's combat with Marcion, however, does not lie so much in the discrediting of the arguments of the latter as in the fact that from the impetus which it gave to his mind he was led to state with clearness the Christian position, and to work out in various directions the implications of the doctrines held in the Church.

The movement associated with the name of Montanus owes its importance in the first place, as Harnack shows, to the fact that it coincided with a reaction among the Phrygian Christians against the generally accepted ecclesiastical position, and in favour of a return to the primitive apostolic Christianity; and, in the second place, to the fact noted by Neander that it won the support of Tertullian. It originated with Montanus, but his character and abilities were not such as to give it much weight. The principle, however, that underlay his teaching was one of far-reaching importance. Briefly stated, the principle was that the continuance of the prophetic spirit in the Church to the time of Montanus was maintained. The Christian Church was settling down to the conviction that revelation was a thing of the past. The Scriptures were closed, and the work of the Church in regard to them was one of interpretation merely. The Church was an organization with

traditions, but with no creative power, and it was hardening into a definite mould. Against this state of things the Phrygian Church in particular was revolting. It stood for the belief in the free operation of the Spirit; and in the Montanist movement. with its doctrine of the Paraclete, and the emergence of a new order of prophets, it found an opportunity of giving expression to its own convictions.

With Tertullian himself it was very much the same. The growing hierarchical spirit of the Church was uncongenial to his nature. The free creative spirit of the Montanist movement appealed strongly to him, and as the years went by the breach between him and the mother Church grew wider. He said nothing of the extravagant claims of Montanus, but gave himself with unstinted ardour to the movement. For a long time the two tendencies, so opposite in their direction, were found side by side in him. He strove hard to reconcile them, but, though he went over ultimately to the Phrygian sect, and yet never forsook the general teaching of the Church on important doctrines, he failed in the end to reconcile them, and his latest writings show this failure.

Monarchianism developed in opposition to Gnosticism, and in its inception was an orthodox movement. The teaching of the Gnostics imperilled the doctrine of the unity of God. Hence the need arose for defending that doctrine, and the simpler folk in particular were led to emphasize their belief in the μοναρχία, or sole sovereignty of God. But it was soon evident that such emphasis was likely to react in turn against the belief in the true divinity of Christ. When the attempt was made to solve the problem of how to relate the unity of God with the divinity of Christ, a diversity of opinion arose. Some upheld the divinity of Christ, but reduced His person to no more than a mode of existence of the Father. Others upheld the divinity of Christ, but made it a divinity of power only. The former are known as modalistic Monarchians, the latter dynamic Monarchians. The one whom Tertullian found it necessary to oppose belonged to the former class.

Praxeas would have been odious to Tertullian in any case, since he was an opponent of the Montanists. He further aroused the ire of Tertullian by his Monarchian teaching. 'He did two things for the devil at Rome,' said Tertullian.

'He drove out prophecy and introduced heresy, put to flight the Paraclete and crucified the Father.'[1]

Against this man and his teaching Tertullian wrote a treatise, in which he set forth the relation of the Son to the Father. He maintained that God is to be thought of as one, but in connexion with His own economy, and so Tertullian developed his doctrine of the Trinity. Tertullian was the first to apply the term 'Trinitas' to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,[2] and his doctrine is a remarkable foreshadowing of the orthodox position reached at the Council of Nicaea. It has some crudities, and is in some respects less carefully stated than the later doctrine of the Church, but it is so complete a statement of the doctrine that it is difficult to realize that Tertullian belongs to the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries.

[1] *Adversus Praxean*, 1.

[2] Theophilus had used the term 'Triad' (τριάδος), but the Triad of which he speaks is 'God, and His Word, and His Wisdom'—'In like manner also the three days which were before the luminaries are types of the Trinity (τριάδος), of God, and His Word, and His Wisdom.' (*Ad Autolycum*, c. 15).

II

THE CAREER OF TERTULLIAN AND ITS INFLUENCE UPON HIS THEOLOGY

The statement of Jerome—Tertullian's father a centurion in the service of a Pro-consul—Military metaphors—Home surroundings—School days—Legal studies and their reflection in his writings—Visits to Rome—Pagan experience—Relation to Mithraism—Conversion—Study of Scripture—Marriage—Social standing—Voyage to the East—Growth in Christian standing—Literary activity. Montanism: reflections of its growing influence upon him—Closing days.

TERTULLIAN, in whom 'the character and future of the Latin Church were already announced,'[1] was a native of Carthage. We are told by Jerome[2] that he was the son of a Pro-Consular centurion, that he was of a sharp and vehement temper, that the period of his prominence fell in the reigns of Severus and Caracalla, and that he wrote numerous works. Cyprian, so Jerome had heard, held him in high esteem. He became a presbyter, whether at Rome or at Carthage it is impossible to say, and remained one until past middle life. Then he was driven by the envy and contumelious treatment of the Roman clergy to embrace the opinions of Montanus. He composed several treatises specifically against the Roman Church, and he was reported to have lived to an advanced age.

That is all that we know of the life of Tertullian from the writings of early times, but it is possible to fill in this outline with some confidence from our knowledge of Tertullian's writings and from the history of the times. It has been held that Jerome deduced the statement that Tertullian's father was a centurion of Pro-Consular Africa from the statement (in *Apologeticus*, c. 9) that 'children were openly sacrificed in Africa to Saturn as lately as the Pro-Consularship of Tiberius, who exposed to public gaze the priests suspended on the sacred trees overshadowing their temple, so many crosses on which

[1] Harnack. [2] *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum.*

the punishment which justice craved overtook their crimes, as soldiers of our country still can testify who did that work for that very Pro-Consul.' According to Rigault, the reading of one MS. is ' the soldiers of our father.' Whether that was the source of Jerome's opinion or not, the information has the support of other passages in Tertullian's writings. His fondness for military metaphors is most marked, e.g. ' But we were called to the warfare of the living God in our very response to the sacramental words. Well, no soldier comes out to the campaign laden with luxuries, nor does he go to action from his comfortable chamber, but from the light and narrow tent, where every kind of hardness and roughness and disagreeableness must be put up with ' (*Ad Martyras*, c. 3). ' When you go over to the enemy's camp, you throw down your arms, desert the standards and the oath of allegiance to your chief ' (*De Spect.*, c. 24). ' Well, it is quite true that it is our desire to suffer, but it is to suffer in the way that the soldier longs for war ' (*Apol.*, c. 50). ' It is our battle.' ' This victory of ours.' ' It is our victory robe, it is for us a sort of triumphal car ' (*Apol.*, c. 50). ' What soldier, after his discharge, makes satisfaction for his former brands ? ' (*De Poenit.*, c. 6). ' Serving as a soldier under this oath, I am challenged by the enemy. If I surrender to them, I am as they are. In maintaining this oath, I fight furiously in battle, am wounded, hewn in pieces, slain. Who wished this fatal issue to his soldier but he who sealed him by such an oath ? ' (*Scorpiace*, c. 4).

These metaphors, with which Tertullian's writings abound, may well be explained as reminiscences of his early days, when he moved among the military surroundings of a centurion's home.

That home was not a Christian home. There is no reflection in Tertullian's writings of the influence of a father or mother of Christian character. On the other hand, there are evidences that he held it to be all but impossible for a Christian to hold office in the service of a Roman dignitary (*De Idol.*, c. 17). Military service he held to be absolutely forbidden to Christians. ' There is no agreement between the divine and the human sacrament, the standard of Christ and the standard of the devil, the camp of light and the camp of darkness. . . . The Lord, in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier ' (*De Idol.*, c. 19).

It was probably a typical home of a Roman centurion in the service of a provincial Pro-Consul, and derived something of tone from its association with an important official.[1] It boasted a nurse, who related to the child such fables as that of the Tower of Lamia and the horns of the sun (*Adv. Valent.*, c. 3).[2] She told him of apples that grew in the sea, and fishes that grew on trees (*Adv. Valent.*, c. 20).[3]

In that home the only religion was the paganism of Rome. There the tutelary deities reigned, Consevius and Fluviona, Vitumnus and Sentinus, Diespiter and Candelifera, Postverta and Prosa, each with its appropriate part to play in the process of birth. Farinus and Locutius presided over the function of infant speech. Cunina protected the child's slumber. Potina and Edula supervised the child's eating and drinking, Statina taught it to stand, and Adeona and Abeona led its footsteps to and fro (*Ad Nationes*, II. 11).

All the paganism against which Tertullian contended in his defence of Christianity was found in the surroundings of his own boyhood. The public shows and games, the circus, the theatre, and the amphitheatre, the feasts in honour of the gods and those in honour of men, the public holidays, the decorating of houses and public buildings, formed the ordinary surroundings of the boy's life.

Then there were the school days, in which the religion of Rome was not neglected. The schoolmaster taught the boys about the gods of the nations, 'their names, genealogies, honourable distinctions, all and singular.' He exhorted them to keep all the solemnities and festivals. The pupils paid for their instruction, and it was usual for the schoolmaster to consecrate the first payment to Minerva.[4] At the feasts the school was wreathed with flowers (*Idololatria*, c. 10).

Here Tertullian made the acquaintance of literature. Homer, of course, was the Bible of those days, and received due attention.[5] Menander, Cato, Ennius, Vergil, Lucretius, if

[1] Cf. Noeldechen, *Tertullian dargestellt*, p. 14.

[2] 'in infantia inter somni difficultates a nutricula audisse lamiae turres et pectines solis.'

[3] 'puerilium dicibulorum in mari poma nasci et in arbore pisces.'

[4] Cf. *Augustine Confessions*, book i.: 'Appointing a salary *beside the scholars' payments*.'

[5] 'I was forced to learn the wanderings of one Aeneas . . . and to weep for dead Dido' (*Ibid.*). 'The wooden horse lived with armed men.' 'For Homer also curiously wove the like fictions and is most sweetly vain' (*Ibid.*).

we are to judge from his writings, supplied the subject-matter of his studies. Poetry seems to have fallen on evil days at this time. Tertullian himself tells us (*De Praes. Haer.*, 39) of the poetasters, commonly called Homerocentones and Vergiliocentones, who flourished in his time. They pilfered from Homer and Vergil, and made 'patchwork poetry' by piecing together lines and phrases in miscellaneous confusion.[1] Subject matter and verse were alike borrowed, and spoiled in the borrowing. It is not surprising that such a perversion of the poetic art did not appeal to Tertullian. He says that Ennius claimed that he had dreamt that Homer remembered that he had once been a peacock. But, says Tertullian, 'I cannot for my part, believe poets, even when they are wide awake' (*De Anima*, c. 33).

The foundation of his education having been laid in the study of literature, he then entered the rhetorical school, where the theory and art of oratory and some amount of philosophy were acquired. In after years he ridiculed one of his teachers in this rhetorical school. 'In the schools of Carthage there was once a certain Latin rhetorician, an excessively cool fellow, whose name was Phosphorus. He was personating a man of valour, and wound up with saying, "I come to you, excellent citizens, from battle, with victory for myself, with happiness for you, full of honour, covered with glory, the favourite of fortune, the greatest of men, decked with triumph." And forthwith the scholars began to shout for the school of Phosphorus, φεῦ (ah)!' (*Adv. Valent.*, c. 8). Here is an indication of the state to which the art of rhetoric had fallen. It had become little more than the empty repetition of sentences in the form of declamation.[2] The old dialectic of the time of Cicero had gone, and declamation had been imported from Greece to take its place. Tertullian acquired his rhetoric in such a school. The theory was acquired in the class-room, and visits were then paid to the forum in order to acquire the atmosphere, and to observe the practical application of what had been taught in theory.

[1] Irenaeus (I. 9) gives illustrations of this curious art: 'Thus saying, there set forth from his house deeply groaning' (Od. K. 76). 'The hero Hercules conversant with mighty deeds' (Od. p. 26). 'Eurystheus, the son of Athenelus, descended from Perseus.' 'That he might bring from Erebus the dog of gloomy Pluto' (Il. O. 368) (Il. T. 123). 'And he advanced like a mountain-bred lion confident of strength' (Od. J. 130). 'Rapidly through the city, while all his friends followed' (Il. w. 327).

[2] See *Augustine Confessions*, book i., for a description of this oratory.

Though Tertullian nowhere expressly says that he studied law, as he tells us that he studied medicine and philosophy[1] (cf. *De Carne Christi*, c. 20; *De Anima*, c. 25; *Adv. Marc.*, II. 16), it is evident that he must have devoted to it the serious study of one who meant to make it his life's work. His fondness for legal metaphors is most marked, even more so than his predilection for military metaphors. Such terms as *satisfacere*, *offendere*, *promereri*, *acceptare*, and *rependere*, play an important part in his theology. God is portrayed at length as a Judge, and the relationship of men to Him is pre-eminently that of criminals to a judge. Law, too, is an important concept in his view of things, while, as we shall see, legal ideas have affected his exposition of such terms as *substantia*, *persona*, and *status*, and have influenced his ethical teaching.

His readiness to deal with the defence of the Christians from the point of view of criminal procedure and his frequent reference to points of law may be easily explained on the assumption that he had received a legal training. But perhaps the most convincing evidence of his legal training is to be found in his obvious mastery of every artifice of the advocate. His clever reasoning, his powerful declamation, his proneness to special pleading, his ability to pull an opponent's theses to pieces and to reduce him *ad absurdum*, his *argumentationes ad hominem*, all reveal the erstwhile advocate.

The influence of Tertullian's legal training upon his theology is particularly noticeable in his treatise *De Poenitentia*. The nature of the subject here dealt with is such as to illustrate admirably the legal cast of his thought. But the same legal cast may be illustrated freely from his other writings also.

God is the Judge administering justice. 'Well, since God as Judge presides over the exacting and maintaining of justice, which to Him is most dear, and since it is with an eye to justice that He appoints all the sum of His discipline, is there room for doubting that, just as in all our acts universally, so also in the case of repentance, justice must be rendered to God?' (*De Poenit.*, c. 2).

[1] *De Anima*, c. 2: 'Now I am not unaware what a vast mass of literature the philosophers have accumulated concerning the subject before us, in their commentaries thereon—what various schools of principles there are, what conflicts of opinion, what prolific sources of questions, what perplexing methods of solution. Moreover, I have looked into medical science also, the sister (as they say) of philosophy.'

God is, however, not only the Judge who administers the law; He is the Giver of the law. It is because He has commanded that man must obey. 'What God enjoins is good and best. I hold it audacity to dispute about the "good" of a divine precept, for, indeed, it is not the fact that it is good that binds us to obey, but the fact that God enjoins it' (*De Poenit.*, c. 4). At the same time, what God enjoins is rational. 'Reason, in fact, is a thing of God, inasmuch as there is nothing which God, the Maker of all, has not provided, disposed, and ordained, by reason; nothing which He has not willed should be handled and understood by reason' (*De Poenit.*, c. 1).

The fundamental relation of man to God is that of fear (*timor*). 'For, if the ground on which you had repented of having sinned was that you had begun to fear the Lord, why have you preferred to rescind what you did for fear's sake, except because you had ceased to fear?' (*De Poenit.*, c. 5).

'A sinner is bound to bemoan himself before receiving pardon, because the time of repentance is coincident with that of peril and fear' (*De Poenit.*, c. 6). 'As soon as you know the Lord you should fear Him' (*ibid.*). 'For the first baptism of a learner is this, a perfect fear' (*ibid.*). 'Thus he fulfilled not repentance either, because he lacked the instrumental agent of repentance, that is fear' (*ibid.*).

To sin is to offend (*offendere*) God. 'Let him therefore who would not have God offended' (*De Poenit.*, c. 5) 'Whereby He who is to furnish (the gift) is ever offended' (*De Poenit.*, c. 7). 'It is intolerable, forsooth, to make satisfaction to the offended Lord' (*De Poenit.*, c. 10). 'I am drooping, and wasting, and torturing myself, that I may reconcile God to myself, whom by sinning I have offended' (*De Poenit.*, c. 11; cf. *De Patientia*, c. 5).

On the other hand, to do good is to satisfy (*satisfacere*) God. 'Thus he who through repentance for sins had begun to make satisfaction to the Lord, will, through another repentance of his repentance, make satisfaction to the devil' (*De Poenit.*, c. 5). 'What soldier, after his discharge, makes satisfaction for his former brands?' (*De Poenit.*, c. 6). 'You have One whom you may satisfy' (*De Poenit.*, c. 7).

The means whereby God is satisfied is the merit of men. 'For God, never giving His sanction to the reprobation of

good (deeds), inasmuch as they are His own . . . is in like manner the acceptor of them, and if the acceptor, likewise the rewarder' (*De Poenit.*, c. 2). 'A good deed has God as its debtor, just as an evil has too' (*De Poenit.*, c. 2). 'All being competitors for salvation in earning the favour of God' (*De Poenit.*, c. 6). 'Or how will there be many mansions in our Father's house, if not to accord with a diversity of deserts?' (*Scorp.*, c. 6). 'No one will hesitate to believe that the soul undergoes in the "lower world" some compensatory discipline' (*De Anima*, c. 58). 'For, strictly speaking, there cannot any longer be aught against the martyrs, by whom in the baptism life itself is laid down' (*Scorp.*, c. 6).

Legal ideas have also affected Tertullian's exposition of such terms as *substantia*, *persona*, and *status*. The use of these terms in the language of law furnished a simple and clear distinction, which Tertullian carried over into his theology. *Substantia* was, in Roman law, a term of clear definition. It signified the property or possessions of one who was qualified to hold them. The one who was recognized by Roman law as qualified to hold such possessions was a *persona*. The position, or condition, or standing, of such a *persona* as possessing such *substantia* was his *status*. It is easy to understand how such concepts, applied to theological terms, enabled Tertullian to state his views of the relationship of the three Persons in the Trinity, and of the two natures in Christ, with clearness and simplicity.

If *substantia* stood for property or possessions, and *persona* for one who had the right of property, and *status* for the condition of such a *persona*, then the idea of one *substantia* in which three *personae* have equal rights is plain. It is likewise clear that, if divinity is one *substantia*, and humanity another *substantia*, that one *persona*, Jesus Christ, may possess equal rights in both.[1]

The following passages will illustrate this use of the terms by Tertullian, but it must be noted that he does not, as a rule, speak of two *personae* or three *personae* but of 'two' or 'three' simply (*Adv. Valent.*, c. 4); 'personal substances' (*personae substantiales*) (*Adv. Prax.*, c. 7). 'The Son likewise acknowledges the Father, speaking in His own substance' ('Filius ex sua persona profitetur patrem'). 'But you will not allow Him

[1] It is misleading, however, to over-emphasize the legal element in Tertullian's conception of *substantia* as Harnack seems to do. See chapter vi. for a full statement of Tertullian's view.

to be really a substantive being by having a substance of His own, in such a way that He may be regarded as an objective thing and a person' ('Non vis eum substantivum habere in re per substantia proprietatem ut res et persona quaedam videri possit'). 'Whatever, therefore, was the substance of the Word, that I designate a Person' ('Quaecumque ergo substantia sermonis fuit, illam dico personam'). 'In the same manner, the other passages also establish each one of several persons in His special character, addressed as they are in some cases to the Father, or to the Son, respecting the Son, in other cases to the Son, or to the Father concerning the Father, and again, in other instances, to the Spirit' ('Sic et cetera quae nunc ad Patrem de Filio, vel ad Filium, nunc ad Filium de Patre, vel ad Patrem, nunc ad Spiritum pronuntiantur; unamquamque personam in sua proprietate constituunt') (*Adv. Prax.*, c. 11).

'In what sense, however, you ought to understand Him to be another. I have already explained, on the ground of personality, not of substance, in the way of distinction, not of difference' ('Alium autem quomodo accipere debeas, jam professus sum; personae, non substantiae nomine; ad distinctionem, non ad divisionem') (*Adv. Prax.*, c. 12).

As bearing upon the two natures in Christ, the following passages may be noted. 'Let us examine our Lord's bodily substance (*corporalem substantiam Domini*), for about His spiritual (*spiritali*, i.e. divine) nature all are agreed' (*De Carne Christi*, c. 1). 'Christ possesses the two substances both of the flesh and of the spirit' ('Utramque substantiam Christi, et carnis et spiritus') (*De Carne Christi*, c. 18). 'The condition of the two substances which He Himself bears' ('Conditio duarum, substantiarum') (*ibid.*). 'We see plainly the two-fold state, which is not confounded, but conjoined in one person—Jesus, God and Man' ('Videmus duplicem statum non confusum sed conjunctum in una persona') (*Adv. Prax.* c. 27).

The influence of legal conceptions may also be traced in Tertullian's endeavour to set forth the relation of the person in the Trinity under the figure of a monarchy. The idea was suggested by the word which was already current, it is true, but the application of the idea (which is perhaps strictly rather political than juristic) to the question of the Trinity of Persons in the divine unity was the work of Tertullian.

To the legal training of Tertullian is to be attributed also the

distinction which he drew between *consilia* and *praecepta dominica* (counsels and precepts of the Lord), between goodness that is due, and goodness that is gratuitous (*debita et indebita bonitas*), and between the two wills of God, the hidden and the manifested. These all have their root in the idea of a legal relation between God and man. This makes it possible for Tertullian to distinguish between what God may in justice demand of men as His right, and what He may counsel as going beyond the strict limits of justice, and so earning His special favour. ' Therefore in this case especially, if we do not obey, we run a risk, because one may with more impunity neglect an advice than an order, in that the former springs from counsel and is proposed to the will ; the other descends from authority and is bound to necessity ' (*Ad Uxorem*, II. 1).

It is from the legal analogy that he can deduce that there is a goodness to be rendered as a debt owed in return for goodness received, and also a goodness which goes beyond what can be demanded. ' That is rather a primary and perfect goodness which is shed voluntarily and freely upon strangers without any obligation of friendship. . . . The requirement of the undue is an augmentation of the due benevolence ' (*Adv. Marcion*, I. 23).

Finally, when the distinction between *consilia* and *praecepta* is pressed back to the mind of God, it involves the distinction of two wills in Him—the higher hidden will and the lower manifested one. ' Therefore, since the only thing which is in our power is volition—and it is herein that our mind toward God is put to proof, whether we will the things that coincide with His will—deeply and anxiously must the will of God be pondered again and again, I say, (to see) what even in secret He may will. For what things are manifest we all know ' (*De Exhort. Castitatis*, c. 2).

Probably it was for the purpose of studying law that Tertullian first went to Rome, but there is no direct confirmation of a visit to Rome for this purpose in his writings. That he did visit Rome from time to time, and knew it fairly well, is evident from various references in his works.[1] The first intimation which we have of such a visit is found in *Apologeticus* (c. 25). When dealing with the various Roman gods,

[1] For Tertullian's acquaintance with Rome cf. Hesselberg, *Tertullian's Lehre*, pp. 25 ff., Noeldechen, *Tertullian dargestellt*, pp. 25 ff.

he there refers to what is evidently a recent incident, which does not reflect any credit upon Cybele. 'Why, too, even in these days, the Mater Magna has given a notable proof of her greatness, which she has conferred as a boon upon the city, when after the loss to the state of Marcus Aurelius at Sirmium, on the sixteenth before the Kalends of April, that most sacred high priest of hers was offering, a week later, impure libations of blood drawn from his own arms, and issuing his commands that the ordinary prayers should be made for the safety of the Emperor already dead.' The whole context suggests that this is being written in Rome, and the passage itself bears evidence of being penned shortly after the event to which it refers. 'In these days' and 'the sixteenth before the Kalends of April' certainly indicate the nearness of the date of writing to that of the death of Marcus Aurelius. The death of Marcus occurred on the 17th of March, A.D. 180. Therefore, Tertullian was probably at Rome at the time or soon after.

Another indication of his being in Rome is found in his narration of an interesting problem which Fuscianus, the Prefect of Rome, had had to decide 'recently.'

'It was from such a source, too, that so flagrant a tragedy recently burst upon the public as that which the Prefect Fuscianus had judicially to decide.' A boy of noble birth had been lost or kidnapped. Arriving in Asia, he was brought up until of full age and then taken back to Rome and exposed for sale. His own father bought him, and treated him in the degrading fashion in which slave-boys were treated. Eventu ally, however, his identity was discovered, and the parents, finding that the father had abused his own son, in their despair hanged themselves, while the property was given to the boy.

Here, again, the context favours the supposition that Tertullian had heard this story in Rome itself, and had used it in his argument with the opponents of Christianity.

Another trace of the presence of Tertullian in Rome is found in the treatise *De Pudicitia*. Combating the custom that had arisen of calling confessors who had suffered in any degree for their faith 'martyrs,' he speaks of these martyrs in terms which certainly appear to have a personal reference to Callistus.[1] The latter, it is said, had in early life been a slave

[1] The story of Callistus is told in Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, book IX., c. 7.

at Rome in the service of Carpophorus, had been involved in some shady transactions of a financial character, and had deliberately attempted to obtain the honour of martyrdom by disturbing a synagogue service. For this he was condemned to the mines in Sardinia, but obtained his liberty when, by the intercession of Marcia, the Christians there were set free. Though Tertullian does not expressly mention these things, it is probable that they were in his mind when he penned *De Pudicitia*, and that he had been in Rome when these doings of Callistus were in progress.

The reference which Tertullian makes to Praxeas and his work in Rome (*Adv. Prax.*, c. 1) also leaves the impression that he was there when that heretic performed his 'two services for the devil at Rome.' Other echoes of events at Rome, which took place when in all probability Tertullian was there, are found in 'between the laurel trees'[1] (in reference to the death of Commodus), 'bolder than any Tigerii and Parthians' (in reference to the death of Pertinax).[2] When he speaks of the deification of Roman Emperors (*De Spect.*, c. 30) he probably has in mind the ceremony at which Pertinax was raised to the rank of the gods, and which he himself witnessed. He definitely refers to one visit to Rome, when he saw 'the nobility of gems blushing in the presence of our matrons at the contemptuous usage of the Parthians and Medes' (*De Cultu Feminarum*, I. 7), while he speaks of the temple of Pompey, and of the shows at Rome and their pomp, as one who was familiar with them.

We may note here briefly the fact that Tertullian knew the pagan life of his time from experience. He asserts the fact in *De Spect.*, c. 19: 'As to Christians, I will not insult them by adding another word as to the aversion with which they should regard this sort of exhibition, though no one is more able than myself to set forth fully the whole subject, unless it is one who is still in the habit of going to the shows.' His reference to adultery ('I, for myself, am quite sure that it is in no other flesh than my own that I have committed adultery'),[3] however, is not to be taken too seriously. It may be simply a generalization in which he includes himself in order not to give offence to his readers, or it may be that in accordance with his strict view of morality he here identifies

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 35. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *De Resurr. Carnis*, c. 59.

the impure impulse with the overt act. But the whole picture which he draws of pagan life is the picture of one who had known it intimately. He knew the power of pleasure to bias men's judgement as to what was lawful, and knew the arguments which naturally commended indulgence to those who took part in them. The technical parlance of the shows is made to suit the purpose of his argument. Speaking of the application of the first Psalm to the question of attendance at the shows, he says, 'They call the spaces between the seats going round the amphitheatres and the passages which separate the people running down, *ways*.[1] The place in the curve where matrons sit is called a *chair*.[2] Therefore, on the contrary, it holds unblessed is he who has entered any *council*[3] of wicked men, and has sat in any *chair* of scorners' (*De Spect.*, c. 3). After dealing in academic fashion with the origin and history of the shows, the circus, and the theatre, Tertullian speaks in familiar fashion of their effect upon those who visit them. 'The show always leads to spiritual agitation' (*De Spect.*, c. 14). As for the circus, 'See the people coming to it already under strong emotion, already passion blind, already agitated about their bets. The *praetor* is too slow for them; their eyes are always rolling, as though along with the lots in his urn, then they hang all eager on the signal; there is the united shout of a common madness. Observe how "out of themselves" they are by their foolish speeches. "He has thrown it!" they exclaim, and they announce each one to his neighbour what all have seen.' The theatre is in like manner vividly portrayed. The buffoon, the pantomime, and the harlot, the last especially, are drawn from life. The descriptions of the racecourse and the amphitheatre also have vivid and lifelike touches, while the conclusion of the topic—'I would rather withal be incomplete than set memory a-working'—clinches the argument that the author has been drawing upon his own recollections.

An interesting though not important point is raised by the question whether Tertullian was ever initiated into the mysteries of Mithraism. It is possible that he was, for Mithras-worship was well known in Rome at this time. It had been introduced from the East by Pompey, and attained the height of its popularity under Commodus. There were elements in

[1] *Vias.* [2] *Cathedra.* [3] *Consilium.*

Mithraism which would naturally appeal to the young Tertullian, dissatisfied as he was with the emptiness of the paganism of his day.

The notices which he makes of this religion in his writings are neither numerous nor lengthy, and they may here be quoted with advantage. 'The lions of Mithras are philosophical sacraments of arid and scorched nature' (*Adv. Marc.*, I. 13). 'If my memory still serves me, Mithras there (in the kingdom of Satan) sets his mark on the forehead of his soldiers, celebrates also the oblation of bread, and introduces an image of a resurrection, and before a sword wreathes a crown' (*De Praes. Haer.*, c. 40). 'Blush, ye fellow servants of his, henceforth not to be condemned even by him, but by some soldier of Mithras, who at his initiation in the gloomy cavern in the camp, it may well be said, of darkness, when at the sword's point a crown is presented to him, as though in mimicry of martyrdom, and thereupon put upon his head, is admonished to resist, and cast it off, and if you like transfer it to his shoulder, saying that Mithras is his crown' (*De Corona Militis*, c. 15). These passages read like the words of one who is not repeating rumours, but calling to remembrance things that he has seen; and when we remember that the mysteries of Mithras were jealously guarded secrets, it need cause us no surprise that, if Tertullian had known something of them from his own experience, he yet said very little about these mysteries.

Of Tertullian's conversion neither he nor Jerome has spoken, so that we can only conjecture from what we know of his early life and his character and from stray hints in his writings. It was evidently a change over from paganism, since we have seen that his early life was not spent in Christian surroundings. He speaks, indeed, of 'the sins of our early blindness,' and acknowledges that 'these things (the truths of the Christian religion) were once with us, too, a theme of ridicule.' His conversion led to a changed attitude towards the pagan life of Rome, and doubtless to a moral change in his own life. How was such a change effected? It was not by a careful comparison of the various philosophical systems, leading to the rejection of them one by one, and to the acceptance of Christianity as the best philosophy of life, after the manner of Justin Martyr. To Tertullian, Christianity was

not a philosophy; it was a revelation. It was simply an amplification of the knowledge of God which had been given to the natural, untutored human soul—an amplification given by Christ. It was not an achievement of the human intellect; it was a gift of God received by faith. It was along these lines that Tertullian's conversion came. There was no thought of the sacrificial death of Christ, no mystical union with Him, and no transference of His merit. It was rather a transaction between God and himself, in which he received the fuller revelation of God given to the Christian Church, and, once for all, determined to order his life in accordance with the teaching of that Church. But that is not to say that there was not a real spiritual experience involved. It may have been that the young man, who could find no satisfaction in the superficialities of Roman religion, turned to Mithras, and there found something which appealed to his heart, but yet failed to give abiding satisfaction. Later he turned to the Christian religion, and found the fullness of revelation and peace of mind for which he yearned. Whether it came by way of vision, as might be suggested by his statement 'Most men come to God by visions,'[1] or in less dramatic fashion, it had on his part a great fear, and on God's part a perfect righteousness, tempered with mercy to the soul that came to Him.

Tertullian had not read the Scriptures before his conversion, but he must have given himself to an earnest study of the sacred writings some time between that event and the appearance of his earliest treatises. We are able, however, to trace the results only; the process is hidden. Soon we find him appearing as a Christian writer. His first effort was the little tract *De Baptismo*. One point of importance for the filling in of his life-story is found here. We know from his later writings that he was married, since he addressed two of them to his wife. The probability is that he was already married when he wrote *De Baptismo*, since he there says that the unmarried ought not to be baptized, because of the danger of their lapsing into sin, with the added temptations of married life. We are able to form some idea of his social standing. He was the son of a centurion in the service of a provincial Pro-Consul, but in later times he had attained to the rank of knight, and

[1] *De Anima*, c. 47: 'Et major pene vis hominum ex visionibus Deum discunt' (Migne); 'Per visa et insomnia ad fidem christianam vocantur' (Rigault).

it is possible that this enhancement of his social position is to be connected with his marriage.

There are many indications that he was well-to-do. Such phrases as ' our very domestics,'[1] ' our slaves,'[2] and the fact that he nowhere favours the liberation of slaves, but is against the equalizing of social conditions,[3] are indication of the class to which he belonged. He speaks of ' store-room and pantry '[4] and of kindling perfume in his house when he desires it,[5] with the air of refinement, while he does not trouble to hide his contempt for the vulgar poor. He thought it worth while making a will,'[6] and complained of the burden of taxation just when the propertied classes were affected most severely.[7] He never sides with those who regard riches as in themselves wrong from the Christian point of view, though he does admit that riches in themselves are not important. Liberality was evidently not a strong point with him. The expense of banquets caused him to sigh,[8] and he complained that the hand cannot always be open.[9] The poor Christians, he says, are God's loved ones[10]—but he was not among them, and when he says that in the house of God few are rich,[11] he leaves the impression that he belonged to the minority.

At all events, Tertullian seems to have been free from the necessity of working for a living, and thus able to devote himself to the work of combating heresy and establishing the claims of the Christian religion. To this work he gave the best years of his life.

His easy circumstances enabled Tertullian to undertake a journey to the East. Travelling in those days was no uncommon thing, and the Christians certainly were infected with the ' wanderlust.' He visited the chief cities of Greece,[12] but whether his stay was long or short we cannot say. It was sufficient to give him some knowledge of Grecian life, both Christian and pagan, and to make himself acquainted with

[1] *Apologeticus*, 7.
[2] *De Cultu Feminarum*, II., 5, 10; *Ad Nationes*, I., 7; *De Resurr. Carnis*, 16.
[3] *De Patientia*, c. 15 (cf. cc. 7, 10); *De Idololatria*, c. 18.
[4] *Ad Uxorem*, II. 4.
[5] *De Corona Militis*, 10.
[6] *Ad Uxorem*, I. 14.
[7] *De Fuga in Persecutione*, c. 12.
[8] *Apologeticus*, 6.
[9] *Adv. Marcionem*, IV. 16.
[10] *De Poenit.*, c. 9.
[11] *Ad Uxorem*, II. 8; *De Cultu Feminarum*, II. 13.
[12] *De Exhort. Cast.*, c. 13.

the movement which took its origin from the Phrygian Montanus. That movement had a great attraction for him, and gradually won his complete allegiance. That Tertullian's journey to the East was made at an early stage in his career as a writer is evident from the fact that he mentions the synods which were held in Greece (they were held from A.D. 192–194), and from the reflections of his experience which are found in his writings from this time onwards.

He wrote on various aspects of the Christian life—on baptism, prayer, penitence, modesty, patience.[1] He fought with his pen the case of the Christians against the heathen populace and against the authorities of the Roman Empire. He contended with heretics, and with the philosophies that underlay their teaching, and in so doing expounded the dogmatic teaching implied in the Christian Rule of Faith. Finally, he embraced the teaching of Montanus, and turned his apologetic ability into a contest with the Roman Church on account of its moral laxity.

This last phase of Tertullian's activity demands some notice. By this time he was well known far beyond the circle of the Christian community at Carthage. He greatly desired to see the Catholic Church following the example of the Phrygian community. That community had fallen under the influence of the teaching of Montanus, and had learnt to give to the activity of the Spirit the chief place in its worship, while the communications of the Spirit were written down, and, being regarded as authoritative revelations, were given a place at least equal to that occupied by the Scriptures. Tertullian had a great deal of secret sympathy with this teaching, and its influence begins to peep through in his treatise *Adversus Valentinianos*.

It is important to notice that he still adheres to the Catholic Church as the authentic Church. He quotes as his authorities 'Justin, philosopher and martyr, Miltiades, the sophist of the churches, and Irenaeus, that very exact inquirer into all doctrines.' But he also puts side by side with them the Montanist Proculus, 'our own Proculus, the model of chaste old age and Christian eloquence' (*Adv. Valent.*, c. 5).

Through the three earliest books against Marcion, and *De Pallio*, and *De Anima*, the same quiet introduction of the

[1] See Appendix I.

teaching of the 'New Prophecy' is continued. At the close of *Adv. Marc.*, I., Tertullian discusses the question of marriage, and refutes the Marcionite doctrine, not from the standpoint of orthodox Church teaching, but from the point of view which he has acquired from Montanism. He shows that the effect of Marcion's doctrine is to proscribe marriage entirely, and to that he opposes the doctrine of the Paraclete on the subject. 'For,' he says, 'we do not reject marriage, but refrain from it. Nor do we prescribe sanctity as the rule, but only recommend it, observing it as a good, yea even the better, state, if every man uses it carefully, according to his ability; but at the same time vindicating marriage whenever hostile attacks are made against it as a polluted thing, to the disparagement of the Creator.' The Christian rule, which prescribes the limitation in the matter of marriage to one is 'maintained by the authority of the Paraclete' (*Adv. Marc.*, I. 29).

Similarly, towards the end of *Adv. Marc.*, III., an incidental reference to the 'New Prophecy' shows in what direction Tertullian is moving. Speaking of the divinely built city of Jerusalem let down from heaven, he says, 'This both Ezekiel had knowledge of, and the Apostle John beheld. And the word of the New Prophecy, which is a part of our belief, attests how it foretold that there would be for a sign a picture of this very city exhibited to view previous to its manifestation. This prophecy, indeed, has been very lately fulfilled in an expedition to the East' (*Adv. Marc.*, III. 24).

In *De Pallio* he seeks to justify his adoption of the ascetic's mantle instead of the gown. He closes his justification for such a step by saying of the mantle, 'I confer on it likewise a fellowship with a divine sect and discipline' (*De Pallio*, c. 6).

In *De Anima* Tertullian brings in, to prove his doctrine of the corporeity of the soul, the evidence of a Montanist sister, who was in the habit of receiving visions. He professes his belief in spiritual charismata. 'We acknowledge spiritual charismata or gifts.' The visions are, he claims, well tested, and their content is offered by him as indubitable proof of the corporeity of the soul.

At the close of *De Anima* he says, regarding his belief that the soul undergoes some compensatory discipline in the 'lower world'[1] without prejudice to the final resurrection, 'This

[1] '*in infernis*' (*De Anima*, c. 48).

point the Paraclete has also pressed home on our attention in most frequent monitions, whenever any of us has admitted the force of His words from a knowledge of His promised spiritual disclosures.'

In these passages Tertullian speaks as one who has definitely accepted the doctrine of the 'New Prophecy,' it is true, but who nevertheless has no quarrel with the Catholic Church on that account. The new doctrine has by no means superseded the general Church doctrine. It has scarcely even coloured it. It is more in the nature of an addendum to the faith than a change in it, and the spirit which animates Tertullian is that of one who finds in the Church a brotherhood which includes the Romans and the Phrygians.

With the next series of writings, however, we meet a different spirit. The times have changed externally, and questions have arisen in which the Montanist fervour of Tertullian leads him to adopt an attitude towards these questions which is the reverse of the attitude of a large number, not only of the rank and file, but of the officers of the Catholic Church. Persecution is impending, and the question whether Christians ought to hide their convictions, or publicly adhere to them and suffer the consequences, becomes acute. The majority were for protecting their lives at any cost of principle, and the officers of the Church were amongst the foremost in precaution and flight. Tertullian was for maintaining his principles, and suffering, if need be, for the faith, though he does not counsel rash and foolish courting of martyrdom. It is fidelity for which he stands. The coward earns his contempt. 'Their pastors are lions in peace, deer in the flight,' and the members are 'making ready their luggage, are equipped for fleeing from city to city' (*De Corona Militis*, c. 1). 'But when persons in authority themselves—I mean the very deacons and presbyters and bishops—take to flight, how will a layman be able to see with what view it was said, "Flee from city to city"?' (*De Fuga*, c. 11).

The source of the difference in attitude in Tertullian's mind is plain. 'It is plain that as they have rejected the prophecies of the Holy Spirit they are also proposing refusal of martyrdom' (*De Corona Militis*, c. 1). 'If any one recognizes the Spirit also, he will hear Him branding the runaways' (*De Fuga*, c. 11). 'It is not asked who is ready to follow the broad way,

but who the narrow. And therefore the Comforter is requisite, who guides into all truth and animates to all endurance. And they who have received Him will neither stoop to flee from persecution nor to buy it off ; for they have the Lord Himself, One who will stand by us to aid us in suffering as well as to be our mouth when we are put to the question ' (*De Fuga*, c. 14).

Here the influence of Montanism upon Tertullian is evident, and the difference with the Catholic Church is plainly leading to a divergence in doctrine upon some questions which have mainly to do with practical life.

A further stage is reached in the latest of Tertullian's writings, *De Virginibus Velandis*, *Adversus Marcion*, book V., *Adversus Praxean*, *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, *De Monogamia*, *De Jejunio*, and *De Pudicitia*. Here the references to Montanism are so abundant that the conclusion lies near that Tertullian believes the doctrine of the Paraclete to be, not merely a desirable addendum to the Christian faith, but the maturity of the Christian revelation. Hence it assumes a new importance, for it brings in a distinction between the *spiritales*, who, as the followers of the Paraclete, are superior, and the *psychici*, or carnal Christians, who are inferior.

The effect of this fully developed Montanism upon Tertullian's theology may now be briefly described. The most important question from a theological point of view is to determine how far his Montanism has affected his doctrine of God. In *Adversus Praxean* we have a definite avowal that our author is a disciple of the Paraclete, and is, as such, opposing the heresy of Praxeas. ' We, however, as we always have done (and more especially since we have been better instructed by the Paraclete, who leads men, indeed, into all the truth), believe that there is one only God, but under the following dispensation or οἰκονομία.' Then Tertullian repeats the Rule of Faith of the Catholic Church as he has given it before, and in essentials it is the same. The only noteworthy feature is that, instead of ' the Holy Ghost ' simply, he now writes ' the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, the Sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost.'

In his exposition of the relationship of the three Persons in the Godhead Tertullian argues the question without showing any Montanistic bias, and, even while dealing (briefly, it is

true) with the Holy Spirit, there is nothing to indicate that he identified the latter with Montanus. He speaks of him as the Paraclete, but here, as elsewhere, Tertullian seems not to have taken from Montanism its grotesque features, but simply to have accepted the teaching that the Paraclete, or Holy Spirit, is the third Person of the Godhead, sent from the Father at the prayer of the Son, to continue and complete the work of the Son in revelation. Together with this, however, Tertullian has accepted the doctrine of ecstasy, according to which those who believe in the Holy Spirit may in a state of trance receive divine revelations.

In relation to other questions, however, such as chastity, marriage, divorce, fasting, Tertullian's views are very much coloured by his Montanistic predilections. He can no longer speak in glowing terms, as in *Ad Uxorem*, of the beautiful fellowship of married believers. Marriage is not unlawful, but it is not ideal. It is better to be continent throughout life.[1] Divorce is prohibited according to the teaching of Christ.[2] Frequent fasting is enjoined. The objection to the Paraclete and his prophets arises, not from doctrinal considerations, but from the fact that they enjoin fasting.[3]

Jerome says that Tertullian is reported to have lived to a very advanced age. Like Origen, he missed the glory of martyrdom for the faith, though, like him, he had exhorted others to stand fast in the faith, and to seal their testimony with their blood.[4]

[1] *De Monogamia, passim.* [2] *Ibid.*, c. 9. [3] *De Jejunio*, c. 1.
[4] Tertullian, *Ad Martyras*; Origen, *Exhortation to Martyrdom.*

III

THE RELATION OF TERTULLIAN TO EARLIER WRITERS

The Stream of Christian Tradition

Justin Martyr.—Indications of Tertullian's knowledge of his writings—Reflections of thought—Theology—Attitude towards Philosophy—Its basis in the teaching of prophets—Logos-teaching—The Holy Spirit—Free will—Atonement—Description of Christian assemblies—Baptism—The Eucharist—Eschatology.

Athenagoras.—Indications of Tertullian's knowledge of his writings—His theology—Attitude towards philosophy—Christian belief founded upon revelation—Foreshadowing of the Trinity—The Logos doctrine—The Holy Spirit—The resurrection.

Tatian.—Indications of Tertullian's knowledge of his writings—His theological teaching—Attitude towards philosophy—Christianity is revealed truth—Doctrine of God—The Logos—Creation of the world out of nothing—Nature of man is threefold.

Minucius Felix.—Dispute as to the priority of Tertullian or Minucius—Resemblances to the Octavius in Tertullian's writings—Attitude towards philosophy—The theology of Minucius.

Irenaeus.—Indications of dependence in Tertullian—Difference in point of view from the apologists—The theology of Irenaeus—His doctrine of God—The Logos—The Spirit—The Incarnation—The nature of man, body and soul—The resurrection—The judgement—The reign of the saints on earth.

Clement of Alexandria.—The dependence of Tertullian confined to minor matters—Indications of his acquaintance with the writings of Clement.

With the stream of Christian tradition as it flowed through the apologists, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Melito, Tatian, Irenaeus, and Minucius Felix, Tertullian was evidently acquainted. Even his earlier writings, e.g. the *Apologeticus*, show that he had read the writings of the earlier apologists. He himself tells us that he used the writings of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Miltiades. ' Nor shall we hear it said of us from

any quarter that we have of our own mind fashioned our own materials, since these have been already produced, both in respect of the opinions and their refutations, in carefully written volumes, by so many eminently holy and excellent men . . . for instance, Justin, philosopher and martyr, Miltiades, the sophist of the churches, Irenaeus, that very exact inquirer into all doctrines ; our own Proculus, the model of chaste old age and Christian eloquence. All these it would be my desire closely to follow in every work of faith, even as in this particular one ' (*Adv. Valent.*, c. 5). His writings show us that he also knew Athenagoras and Melito, Tatian and Minucius Felix, and Clement of Alexandria.

JUSTIN MARTYR, a seeker after truth and God, failed to obtain satisfaction in the teachings of the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, and the Platonists (cf. *Dialogue with Trypho*), embraced Christianity, and became the first of the Christian philosophers. His apology for the Christians, addressed to the Roman Emperors, is courteous, while it is yet far from being servile. It addresses the Emperors as those who are said to be pious and philosophers, guardians of justice, and lovers of learning, but it also adds : ' If ye are indeed such, it will be manifested ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 2).

Tertullian tells us that he is depending upon Justin and others in his task of refuting the Valentinians,[1] and Justin informs us that he had composed a treatise against all the heresies.[2] As this treatise is not extant it is not possible to estimate the indebtedness of Tertullian to Justin in dealing with Valentinianism. There are many points of similarity between the apologies of the two, so that Harnack affirms that Justin is Tertullian's chief master in the realm of apologetics, but some of the points of similarity are common to most of the apologists. The following, however, seem to be definite references to Justin's writings : ' When you install in your Parthenon Simon Magus, giving him a statue with the title Holy God ' (Tert., *Apol.*, c. 13). ' He (Simon) was considered a god, and as a god was honoured by you with a statue, which statue was erected on the river Tiber between the two bridges, and bore the inscription in the language of Rome, " Simoni, Deo Sancto " ' (Justin, I. *Apol.*, c. 26). The Roman standards are symbols of the Cross (Tert., *Apol.*, c. 16 ; Justin, I. *Apol.*, c. 55). The

[1] *Adv. Valent.*, c. 5. [2] I. *Apol.*, c. 26.

Magi are the 'Spoils of Samaria' (Tert., *Adv. Jud.*, c. 9; Justin, *Dial. c. Trypho*, c. 78). Compare also the fanciful allusions to the form of the Cross, adduced by both Justin and Tertullian as evidence of the prediction of Christ's death in the Old Testament; and the connexion of Isa. viii. 14 and vii. 4. The explanation follows the same lines in both.

The great merit of Justin is that he was the first to attempt a systematic presentation of Christian thought. His attitude towards Greek philosophy is something new in Christian circles. For Socrates and Plato he has the greatest admiration. All those who lived reasonably (μετὰ λόγου) before the coming of Christ were Christians (I. *Apol.*, c. 46). He compares Christ with Socrates, but, as Harnack indicates, there is a great difference. 'In virtue of reason Socrates exposed superstition, in virtue of the same reason this was done by the teacher whom the Christians follow. But this teacher was reason itself; it was visible in Him, and, indeed, appeared bodily in him' (Harnack, *Hist. Dogma*, vol. 2, p. 181). Christ was the incarnate reason of God.

The basis of such a doctrine is to be found in the writings of the Christians. These writings show that the appearance of Christ was foretold in prophecy. Writings which are older than anything the Greeks possess are the source of the belief of Christians concerning their Leader. These predicted the coming of Christ, the place and the manner of His birth (I. *Apol.*, c. 32–35), and even the crucifixion (*ibid.*, c. 41). Such prediction was not human, but divine. It was the 'Spirit of prophecy' or 'the Divine Word' that spoke. 'But when you hear the utterances of the prophets spoken, as it were, personally, you must not suppose that they are spoken by the inspired themselves, but by the Divine Word who moves them' (I. *Apol.*, c. 36).

It is necessary, accordingly, that what is communicated by the prophets and by Christ must be accepted. The relation of the question of interpretation to such a position did not arise. Nor did Justin consider the relation of Scripture teaching to other grounds of authority, such as reason, custom, tradition, the Church. Reason and Christ were synonymous, and the teachings of Christianity were therefore the perfect truth.

The Logos doctrine of Justin is a noble attempt to set forth the cosmological significance of the Person of Christ. He

assumes that the God who appeared to Moses, and Abraham, and Jacob, is distinct from God the Father, and this distinction is supported by reference to Proverbs viii. 21 ff. Here, from the Scriptures, Justin proves that 'God begat before all creatures a Beginning, who is called by the Holy Spirit, now the glory of the Lord, now the Son, again wisdom, again an angel, then God, and the Lord and Logos' (*Dial. c. Trypho*). This may be understood by a human analogy, 'for when we give out some word we beget the word, yet not by abscission, so as to lessen the word which remains in us when we give it out' (*ibid.*). Similarly, 'when fire is kindled from fire, that from which it is kindled is not diminished' (*ibid.*). 'When God said, "Let us make," He conversed with some one who was numerically distinct from Himself, and also a rational being' (*ibid.*, c. 62).

But there is another aspect of the Logos teaching of Justin that is very important. Christ is the first-born of God, and is the Logos of whom all races have in a measure partaken (I. *Apol.*, c. 46). He was the spermatic Word who was disseminated among men (II. *Apol.*, c. 13). All who lived comformably to reason (μετὰ λόγου) were therefore Christians before Christ.

As to the humanity of Christ, the teaching of Justin is not developed. He speaks of Christ as having been born, and as having grown up to manhood (*Dial. c. Trypho*, c. 102), and his language is that of one who believed in the real humanity of Christ without having ever treated the subject at any length. He does, it is true, speak of Christ as consisting of σῶμα, λόγος, and ψυχή, and the suggestion has been made that he regarded the Logos as taking the place of πνεῦμα. But there is no evidence to enable us to decide whether Justin accepted the twofold (body and soul), or threefold (body, soul, and spirit) division of man's nature, and, unless he accepted the latter, the difficulty does not arise. The most reasonable position to take up is that, since he nowhere indicates that he questioned the true humanity of Christ, he probably accepted the twofold division of human nature into body and soul.

On the Holy Spirit the teaching of Justin is meagre and undeveloped. He says that 'we reasonably worship Christ, having learned that He is the Son of the true God Himself, and holding Him in the second place, and the prophetic Spirit

in the third ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 13 ; cf. c. 60. An ambiguous passage in I. *Apol.*, c. 6, makes the same distinction, and seems to rank the ' prophetic spirit ' with the angels).

The free will of man, as opposed to fate, was vigorously asserted by Justin. He does not enter into the question of motive, or of habit and character, as determining or influencing the will. It is sufficient to assert the free, untrammelled choice of good or evil. ' If it has been fixed by fate that one man shall be good and another bad, the one is not acceptable, the other is not blameworthy. And, again, if the human race has not power, by a free moral choice, to flee from the evil and to choose the good, it is not responsible for any results, whatever they may be ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 43).

Justin has not given any systematic teaching on the atonement, but there are indications that certain points of view had been considered by him. The view that the work of Christ was that of a teacher is strongly emphasized. He is the διδάσκαλος, and He saves men by imparting the truth to them and delivering them from false gods ; ' becoming man according to His will, He taught us these things for the conversion and restoration of the human race ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 23). ' And His strong word has prevailed on many to forsake the demons, whom they used to serve, and by means of it to believe in the Almighty God, because the gods of the nations are demons ' (*Dial. c. Trypho*, c. 83).

But other views are indicated, too. The Logos did not become man simply to teach, but also to endure with men, and to cleanse those who believe on Him. The Lamb of the Passover, the fine flour, the bells on the priest's robes, were figures respectively of Christ, the Eucharist, and the apostles. The lamb which was roasted was a figure of the suffering of the Cross which Christ was to undergo. That suffering ' He endured on behalf of those who are purified in soul from all iniquity, in order that we may, at the same time, thank God for delivering us from the evil in which we were, and for utterly overthrowing principalities and powers, by Him who suffered according to His will ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 41). ' For the salvation of those who believe on Him, He endured both to be set at naught and to suffer, that, by dying and rising again, He might conquer death ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 63).

In the same chapter he says that the sufferings of Christ

were inflicted upon Him by the 'senseless Jews, who were instigated by the devils.' But there is no doctrine of an alienated God, or of satisfaction to justice, or of a ransom to the devil, in the writings of Justin. The idea that Christ was cursed of God because He was hanged upon a tree is a product of the most irrational mind of the Jews. The truth is that 'no curse lies upon the Christ of God, by whom all that have committed things worthy of a cross are saved' (*Dial. c. Trypho*, c. 95 ; cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 10).

Justin has no doctrine of the Church. He describes some of the customs of the Christians in their assemblies, but that is all. The Christians, he says, keep together, and the wealthy help the needy. They gather together to one place on the day called Sunday, the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, and the president gives verbal instruction and exhortation. All rise together and pray, bread and wine is brought, and, after the president has offered prayer, the elements are distributed and partaken of, and a portion is sent by the deacons to those who are absent. Sunday is the day of common assembly, because it is the first day on which God began the creation of the world, and on it Christ rose from the dead (I. *Apol.*, c. 67).

Regarding baptism, Justin tells us both how it was celebrated and what was its significance (*Apol.*, c. 61). The baptisands are instructed to pray and fast for the remission of the sins that are past, the Christians praying and fasting with them. They are then taken to a place where there is water, and are regenerated 'in the same manner as we have been regenerated.' They receive the washing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The significance of the ceremony was learnt from the apostles. It is to secure the remission of sins formerly committed. It is also called illumination, because it effects the enlightenment of the understanding of those who are washed.

THE EUCHARIST.—After baptism and the offering of prayer, the bread and wine mixed with water are brought to the president. He again offers prayers and thanksgivings, and the deacons give to those present bread, and wine mixed with water, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion (I. *Apol.*, c. 65). But the bread and wine are not received as common bread and common drink, but 'as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the word of God, had both

flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and by which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh ' (I. *Apol.*, c. 66).

ESCHATOLOGY.—Justin wrote a treatise on the resurrection, parts only of which are extant.[1] From these fragments we may gather that he believed in the resurrection of the flesh. The defects of the body in individuals will not recur in the resurrection body, which will be entire. Such a process as the resurrection of the flesh is not impossible, for the God who could create the body of man in the first instance can raise it again after death. The objection that the flesh cannot arise because it is sinful loses its force, inasmuch as it is the soul which is the predominant partner in sin. The resurrection of the body of Christ is an earnest of the resurrection of the bodies of Christians.

Justin's teaching as to the second advent and the millennium is specific and definite. Jesus had said that He would appear again in Jerusalem, and would eat and drink with His disciples (*Dial. c. Trypho*, c. 51). He admits that there are some Christians who do not agree with him on this point (*ibid.*, c. 80), but seems to identify them with those who deny the resurrection. But he and others, ' who are right-minded Christians,' believe that there will be a resurrection of the dead and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be rebuilt, adorned, and enlarged. This standpoint he defends by reference to the prophecy of Isaiah and to the Apocalypse.

ATHENAGORAS was an apologist of far different temperament from that of Tertullian. He wrote a letter (*Legatio pro Christiania*) to the Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in defence of the Christians. It is couched in tame and flattering terms ; it even goes so far as to describe the Emperors as ' excelling all others in intelligence and in piety towards the true God ' (τὸ ὄντως θεῖον). He also wrote a treatise on the resurrection (*De Resurrectione*). Despite the difference in temperament between the amiable Athenagoras and the vehement Tertullian, it is fairly certain that the latter was acquainted with the writings of the former.

[1] The authenticity of this is questioned. Harnack says that it is not Justin's, but Zahn, on the other hand, thinks that it is rightly attributed to him.

The refutation of the charge of atheism (Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, c. 24) reminds one strongly of Athenagoras' *Legatio*, c. 4. Both Tertullian and Athenagoras remark that poets and philosophers are allowed freedom of inquiry concerning the gods (Athenagoras, *Legatio*, c. 5, 6; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, c. 46). Both aver that the poets and philosophers have failed to apprehend the full truth because they have depended upon speculation rather than upon revelation (Athenagoras, *Legatio*, c. 7; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 49). It was Orpheus and Homer who gave both genealogies and names to the gods (Athenagoras, *Legatio*, c. 17; Tertullian, *De Spect.*, 18, *Ad Nationes*, II. 7.) Both take the same view of the activities of demons and angels (Athenagoras, *Legatio*, cc. 26, 27; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 22). In both the freedom of men and angels is arbitrary choice (Athenagoras, *Legatio*, c. 24; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 22). There is a great similarity in their doctrine of God,[1] in their treatment of mythology,[2] and in their views of marriage and celibacy[3] and their estimation of physical beauty.[4]

Athenagoras takes up a decidedly different position from that of Justin on the relation of Christianity to Greek philosophy. He claims for Christianity the same toleration as that accorded to the various philosophies (*Legatio*, c. 2). What the State punishes is practical atheism (*Legatio*, c. 4), and the teaching of Christianity is very far from being that. Furthermore, it is essentially reasonable, and Athenagoras does not hesitate to leave out anything that might be objectionable to the emperors in the doctrines of Christianity. The philosophers were not capable of knowing God because they depended upon themselves, whereas the truth was a revelation from God (*Legatio*, c. 7).

The Christians believe in one God. In this belief they have the support of philosophers (*Legatio*, c. 7), but these depend upon their own power to discover the truth, whereas the Christians have the assurance of the prophets, who were guided by the Spirit of God. Nevertheless, the doctrine thus given by the prophets can be substantiated by argument. The possibility of two Gods is unthinkable. There is no room for a second God. The Christians, therefore, 'acknowledge one God, uncreated, eternal, invisible, impassible

[1] Cf. Athenagoras, *Legatio*, cc. 7, 8.
[2] Cf. *ibid.*, c. 22.
[3] Cf. *ibid.*, c. 34.
[4] Cf. *ibid.*, c. 34.

incomprehensible, illimitable, who is apprehended by the understanding only and by the reason ' (*Legatio*, c. 10).

But there are also distinctions within the unity of God. The Christians know ' God and His Logos, what is the oneness of the Son with the Father, what the communion of the Father with the Son, what is the Spirit, what is the unity of these three, the Spirit, the Son, the Father, and their distinction in unity ' (Legatio, c. 12).

In setting forth his doctrine of the Logos, Athenagoras shows a greater appreciation of the eternal distinction between God and the Logos than Justin, and, indeed, than any of the apologists : ' The Son of God is the Logos of the Father in idea and in operation, for after the pattern of Him, and by Him, were all things made. And the Son being in the Father, and the Father in the Son, in oneness and power of spirit, the understanding and reason (νοῦς καὶ λόγος) of the Father is the Son of God ' (*Legatio*, c. 10). He also expressly guards against the thought that the Logos was generated simply with a view to the creation of the world. ' He is the first product of the Father, not as having been brought into existence (for, from the beginning, God, who is eternal mind—(νοῦς)—had the Logos in Himself, being from eternity instinct with Logos—(λογικός).' The Holy Spirit, too, is eternally related to the Father : ' The Holy Spirit Himself also, which operates in the prophets, we assert to be an effluence of God, flowing from Him and returning back again like a beam of the sun ' (*Legatio*, c. 10 ; cf. c. 24).

The humanity of Christ, and anthropology, are subjects which Athenagoras does not discuss ; nor does he give us any light upon the Church and the sacraments. But the resurrection is discussed fully in a separate treatise. It is not impossible, for He who could create men can also raise up the dead. The resurrection is bodily, but the body is reconstituted. It is in accordance with the original purpose manifested in the creation of men, which was, that of the goodness and wisdom of God he should realize his true happiness in viewing the grandeur and wisdom of God. Athenagoras draws an analogy between sleep and death. The necessity for judgement implies that the body shall be raised up, as well as the soul, else justice could not be maintained.

TATIAN.—Unlike Athenagoras, Tatian was a writer with

whom Tertullian had much in common temperamentally, and there are clear indications that Tertullian knew Tatian's writing, *Ad Graecos*. They are both inclined to laugh at the absurdities of their opponents' opinions (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, cc. 2, 32; Tertullian, *De Anima*, 32, *Adv. Valent.*, 6). They refer to Heraclitus in very similar terms (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 3; Tertullian, *Ad Martyras*, c. 4, *De Anima*, c. 2), to Busiris (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 3, Tertullian, *De Pallio*, c. 4), and to Anytus and Miletus (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 3; Tertullian, *De Anima*, c. 1). Both assert the priority of Moses to the Greek poets (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 21; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, c. 22), and speak of the subject of fate and free will (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, cc. 9, 11; Tertullian, *De Anima*, 21, *Adv. Marc.*, II. 5–7).[1] Their anthropology is very similar (cf. Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, 12–15; Tertullian, *De Anima*, *passim*). Both hold that God is not the Author of evil things, but of good (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 17; Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, c. 24). The perversion of the creation is due to demons (Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 17; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, c. 22). The description of the doctrines of Christianity as fables—like those of the Greeks (Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, c. 21)—is reminiscent of Tatian (*Ad Graecos*, c. 21). A certain rationalistic temper and antipolitical tendency is characteristic of both. Tertullian's Logos theory is evidently drawn from Tatian in some respects.[2]

Tatian, the pupil of Justin, goes beyond his master in depreciating the value of philosophy as compared with Christianity. He indulges in violent denunciation of all Greek philosophy, and considers it a virtue in Christianity that it emanates from the barbarians. He also takes up the position that Christianity is revelation, and as such is superior to philosophy. At the same time it does not bring anything that is new; it only restores what had been lost through the influence of the demons (*Ad Graecos*, c. 7). It is of ancient date (*ibid*, c. 31), more ancient than Homer, and it is so plain that every one can grasp it.

His doctrine of God is briefly and simply stated: 'God is a Spirit, not pervading matter, but the Maker of material spirits and of the forms that are in matter. He is invisible

[1] Tertullian wrote a treatise *De Fato* which is not extant.

[2] Tatian, *Ad Graecos*, c. 5: κατὰ μερισμὸν οὐ κατ' ἀποτομήν. Cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.*, c. 8: prolatum dicimus Filium a Patre, sed non separatum.

and impalpable, being Himself the Father of both sensible and invisible things' (*Ad Graecos*, c. 4). He is known by His Works in creation.

The Logos doctrine (*Ad Graecos*, c. 5) of Tatian is not so satisfactory as that of Athenagoras. He conceives of the Logos in relation to creation and in the work of revelation merely, and fails to perceive the eternal distinction in the Godhead. The Logos existed potentially in God, just as did other beings who have come into actual existence, but there is no hypostatic distinction between God and the Logos, and the Logos has no personal pre-existence. This is the statement of Tatian: 'God was in the beginning, but the beginning (ἡ ἀρχή we have been taught, is the power of the Logos. For the Lord of the universe, who is Himself the necessary ground (ὑπόστασις) of all being, inasmuch as no creature was yet in existence, was alone; but inasmuch as He was all power (δύναμις), Himself the necessary ground of things visible and invisible, with Him were all things; with Him, by Logos power (διὰ λογικῆς δυνάμεως), the Logos Himself also who was in Him subsists, and by His simple will the Logos springs forth; and the Logos, not coming forth in vain, becomes the first-begotten work of the Father. Him (the Logos) we know to be the beginning of the world. But He came into being by participation, not by abscission; for what is cut off is separated from the original substance, but that which comes by participation, making its choice of function, does not render him deficient from whom it is taken. For, just as from one torch many fires are lighted, but the light of the first torch is not lessened by the kindling of many torches, so the Logos, coming forth from the Logos-power of the Father, has not divested of the Logos-power Him who begat Him. I myself, for instance, talk, and you hear; yet, certainly, I who converse do not become destitute of speech (λόγος) by the transmission of speech, but by the utterance of my voice I endeavour to reduce to order the unarranged matter in your minds' (*Ad Graecos*, c. 5).

Tatian definitely states that matter was created by God. 'For matter is not, like God, without beginning, nor, as having no beginning, is of equal power with God; it is begotten, and not produced by any other being, but brought into existence by the Framer of all things alone' (*Ad Graecos*, c. 6).

Of the humanity of Christ Tatian says nothing, but his

anthropology is noteworthy, and forms a strong link of connexion with Tertullian. God created both angels and men with the power of choosing evil or good. Thus there is no fate, but the free play of will. Men were made in the likeness of God, but fell through the folly of worshipping the most subtle of the angels, and that subtlest of the angels became a demon, as did those who followed him (*Ad Graecos*, c. 7).

The nature of man, according to Tatian, is threefold—body, soul, and spirit. The soul is not immortal by nature, but may become so by knowing the truth (*Ad Graecos*, c. 13). If it knows not the truth, it dies, and is dissolved with the body, receiving death by punishment in immortality. The soul originates from beneath ; the spirit from above. If the soul unites with the spirit (or the Spirit), it may ascend to the higher regions. This doctrine of Tatian is evidently derived from the Gnostics.

MINUCIUS FELIX.—Minucius Felix, so Jerome tells us (*De Viris Illustribus*), was an advocate at Rome prior to his conversion to Christianity, but little else is known concerning him. The date of the composition of his one known writing, *Octavius*, is disputed. Monceaux (*Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, vol. I., p. 484), Massebieu (*Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 1887, vol. XV., No. 3), and Harnack (*History of Dogma*, vol. II., p. 196) hold that it was written later than Tertullian's time, and that it borrowed from his writings. Adolf Ebert (*Tertullian's Verhaltnis zu Minucius Felix*), on the contrary, argues that Tertullian is the later, and this is the view of Noeldechen. It is certainly difficult to believe that Minucius, with even the earliest works of Tertullian before him, could have formulated an argument in which so little of the dogmatic teaching of Tertullian (such as that of the Logos in *Apologeticus*, cc. 17–21) is recognized. That one of the two writers is dependent upon the other is obvious from the similarity in subject-matter, in manner of treatment, and even in style. There is, however, a great difference in their temperaments. Tertullian is hasty, intolerant, and narrow. Minucius Felix is large, tolerant, and generous in his outlook.

The writings of the two men may be compared in the following points. Both mention the national rights of worship, and the local gods recognized within the Roman Empire (*Octavius*,

c. 6 ; Tert., *Apologeticus*, c. 24). Their description of the heathen view of the Christians is very similar. The latter despise the worship and neglect the temples of the Romans (*Oct.*, c. 8 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 10) ; they worship a crucified man (*Oct.*, c. 9 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 16) ; they are said to worship an ass's head (*Oct.*, c. 9 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 16) ; they hold impious feasts, slaughter children, and commit incest (*Oct.*, c. 9 ; *Apol.*, c. 8). The Christians teach that a final conflagration will overtake the world (*Oct.*, c. 10 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 32). The common expressions of the people are ' O God,' ' God is great,' ' God is good,' and ' If God permit ' (*Oct.*, c. 18 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 17). The poets and philosophers are treated in very similar fashion (*Oct.*, c. 19, 22 ; Tert., *Apol.*, cc. 46, 47, 49). The gods are wiped, cleaned, and scraped, and subjected to other indignities (*Oct.*, c. 24 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 13). The Roman Empire did not grow as a result of the favour of the gods, but for other reasons (*Oct.*, c. 25 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 25). The treatment of demons, and the defence of the Christians against their opponents, take a similar course in both writers (*Oct.*, cc. 28–31 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 22). Both retort the accusations levelled at the Christians upon their traducers (*Oct.*, c. 31 ; Tert., *Apol.*, c. 9). The public shows and the prevalence of idols referred to in *Octavius*, cc. 37, 38, are dealt with at greater length, but in similar strain, in Tertullian's *De Spectaculis* and *De Idololatria*.

With Minucius Felix we come to a change in attitude towards philosophy. There is a decided leaning towards Stoicism in him and in Tertullian. The sceptical attitude of the Academic philosophers is opposed—in Minucius Felix indirectly, in Tertullian openly. Caecilian, the opponent of Christianity in the *Octavius*, is a Platonist ; his Christian antagonist argues from a Stoic point of view. In one place Minucius blurts out a direct statement of his opposition to the Academic philosophers. ' Let all the multitude of the academic philosophers deliberate ; let Simonides also for ever put off the decision of his opinion. We despise the bent brow of the philosophers, whom we know to be corrupters, and adulterers, and tyrants, and ever eloquent against their own vices.' Plato and his fellow philosopher are, in Tertullian's view, the patriarchs of heresy and the dissemblers of the truth. Their scepticism is a matter for contempt.

Though Minucius does not state his views so clearly and explicitly as Tertullian, his attitude towards philosophy seems

to be very much the same. The truth is revealed truth. Where philosophers have apprehended the truth they have borrowed from the prophets; 'they from the divine announcements of the prophets imitated the shadow of the corrupted truth' (*Octavius*, c. 34). Nevertheless Minucius does not disdain to claim the support of the philosophers for his views when he can, and the Stoics are the most helpful in this direction. 'Theophrastus, and Zeno, and Chrysippus, and Cleanthes, are indeed themselves of many forms of opinion; but they are all brought back to the one fact of the unity of providence. For Cleanthes discoursed of God as of a mind, now of a soul, now of air, but for the most part of reason. Zeno, his master, will have the law of nature and of God, and sometimes the air, and sometimes reason, to be the beginning of all things. . . . Chrysippus says almost the same. He believes that a divine force, a rational nature, and sometimes the world and a fatal necessity, is God.' He even approves of the testimony of Plato where that philosopher discards his scepticism. 'Plato has a clearer discourse about God, both in the matters themselves and in the names by which he expresses them; and his discourse would be altogether heavenly if it were not occasionally fouled by a mixture of merely civil belief' (*Octavius*, c. 19). In fact, all the philosophers who contribute anything to the support of the revelation given to the Christians through the prophets are approved just so far as they do so. 'I have set forth the opinions almost of all the philosophers whose more illustrious glory it is to have pointed out that there is one God, although with many names; so that any one might think either that Christians are now philosophers or that philosophers were then Christians' (*ibid.*).

The theology of Minucius as expressed in *Octavius* is rudimentary. He has no Logos doctrine at all, and the significance of the Person of Christ to the Christian religion is not realized. The only mention of Him, in fact, is found in the assertion of the heathen that the Christians worship a crucified man (c. 9). and in the refutation of that allegation (c. 22).

God is known through nature. 'For what can possibly be so manifest, so confessed, and so evident, when you lift your eyes up to heaven, and look at the things which are below and around, than that there is some deity of most excellent intelligence, by whom all nature is inspired, is moved, is nourished,

is governed ' (*Octavius*, c. 17). He is known too through His providential ordering of the universe, which reveals the care of a Parent for His children, or of a Father for His household (*ibid.*, c. 18), The heathen testify to His existence when they say ' O God,' ' If God permit,' ' God is good,' and ' God is great ' (*ibid.*). Poets and philosophers, also, have testified to the existence and unity of God.

The evil in the world is the work of demons—evil spirits who fell from their primal innocence, and, becoming stained with earthly lusts, perverted the creation of God. They are the instruments of magic art, and the authors of the evils that have befallen the Christians. They have spread the foul reports that the Christians are guilty of incest and infanticide.

The world shall come to an end. It shall be consumed by fire. The dead shall rise again, the flesh being restored ; for the God who could create the bodies of men in the first instance can bring the elements of which they were composed together again. The wicked shall be tormented in everlasting fire. ' The intelligent fire burns the limbs and restores them.' But they who know God are better, and shall fare better. Nothing more definite than that is predicted of their destiny.

IRENAEUS.—Our examination of the relation of earlier writers to Tertullian will not be complete without some reference to Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria. From the former he has admittedly borrowed ; from the latter he has derived some of his teaching on minor points.

In *Adversus Valentinianos* (c. 6) Tertullian says that he intends to follow, among others, ' Irenaeus, that very exact inquirer into all doctrines,' and a comparison of that treatise with the *Adversus Omnes Haereses* (I., cc. 1–12) shows that the extent of his indebtedness is considerable. It is little more, in fact, than a translation of the work of Irenaeus. In addition, the following points may be noted. The account of Simon Magus and Helen (Tertullian, *De Anima*, c. 34) is evidently copied from Irenaeus (I., c. 23). The account of Menander (Tertullian, *De Anima*, c. 50) is also obviously inspired by the same chapter of Irenaeus. Both complain that the heretics follow neither Scripture nor tradition (Irenaeus, III. 3 ; Tertullian, *De Praes. Haer.*, 17, 32). Both mention the continuous

succession of bishops in the Churches (Iren., III. 3; Tert., *De Praes. Haer.*, 32). That the Church alone has the true doctrine is asserted by both (Irenaeus, III. 4; Tertullian, *De Praes. Haer.*, 26–29), that heresies are of recent growth (*ibid.*), and that Christ and the apostles delivered the truth without deception (Ireneaus, III. 5; Tertullian, *De Praes. Haer.*, 27). The systematic use of Scripture in Tertullian's later works is along the lines followed by Irenaeus throughout. Both state that the heretics derived their opinions from the philosophers (Irenaeus, II. 14; Tertullian, *De Praes. Haer.*, c. 7, *Apol.*, c. 47). Both also refer to the Homerocentones (Irenaeus, I. 9); Tertullian, *De Praes. Haer.*, c. 39).

With Irenaeus one is immediately conscious of a far different atmosphere theologically from that of the apologists. The Logos doctrine sinks into the background, Gnosticism in its various forms becomes the sole antagonist, the Scriptures attain a new prominence, and the historical Christ as the incarnate Logos is the central idea.

Some approach to a systematic presentation of Christian theology is found in Irenaeus, but it is not so much a science of theology that he works out as a systematic exposition of the Christian faith in opposition to Gnosticism. He, accordingly, begins his positive contribution to Christian thought in book II. with a statement of his idea of God; 'It is proper, then, that I should begin with the first and most important head, that is, God the Creator, who made the heaven and the earth, and all things that are therein, and to demonstrate that there is nothing either above or after Him; nor that, influenced by any one, but of His own free will, He created all things, since He is the only God, the only Lord, the only Creator, the only Father, alone containing all things, and Himself commanding all things into existence.' It is impossible that there can be a second God. That would imply the limitation of the one God, and, in fact, destroy His deity, for He would cease to be omnipotent. The world, therefore, was not created by angels, or by a second God, but by the Father through the Logos. He needed no other instrument. This God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ (II. 2). Irenaeus, however, deprecates too much speculation as to the nature of God, 'For thou wilt not be able to think Him fully out' (II. 25). It is better to attain to nearness to God by means of love (II. 26). Some things belong

to God; others are within the capacity of our own knowledge. The way of wisdom is to confine ourselves to the latter.

The Logos is the Agent of God in the creation of the world (II. 1). Irenaeus is familiar with the twofold idea of Logos among the Greeks. 'There is among the Greeks one Logos which is the principle that thinks, and another which is the instrument by which thought is expressed.' But he says that in God this duality is transcended, since in Him there is no pause between thought and speech. 'God, being all Mind and all Logos, both speaks exactly what He thinks, and thinks exactly what He speaks. For His thought is Logos, and Logos is Mind, and Mind comprehending all things is the Father Himself' (II. 28).

The one supreme God is the God of the Christians revealed in the Scriptures, i.e. in both the Old and the New Testament. Jesus Christ was the only-begotten Son of God. He was perfect God and perfect man (III. 16). Together with the Father and the Son, Irenaeus mentions the Holy Spirit. The Son and the Spirit are the two hands of God with which He made man. 'Now man is a mixed organization of soul and flesh, who was formed after the likeness of God, and moulded by His hands, that is by the Son and Holy Spirit, to whom also He said "Let us make man."' (IV. Preface). The Spirit dwelt in the prophets, as also did the Son. 'For the Spirit (of God) is truly (like) many waters, since the Father is both rich and great. And the Word, passing through all these (men), did liberally confer benefits upon His subjects, by drawing up in writing a law adapted and applicable to every class (among them)' (IV. 14). The Spirit descended upon Christ (III. 17), and the Spirit also was conferred upon the Church (*ibid.*).

The Word became incarnate in Jesus Christ, and the purpose of the incarnation was that man who, through sin, had lost the gifts of immortality and incorruptibility, should have them restored to him. 'For it was to this end that the Word of God was made man, and He who was the Son of God became the Son of Man, that man, having been taken into the Word, and receiving the adoption, might become the son of God. For by no other means could we have attained to incorruptibility and immortality. But how could we be joined to incorruptibility and immortality, unless first incorruptibility and immortality had become that which we also are, so that the corruptible might be swallowed up by incorruptibility,

and the mortal by immortality, that we might receive the adoption of sons' (III. 19).

The unity of the divine plan as revealed in the Scriptures is plainly and repeatedly stated by Irenaeus. Creation and salvation are closely bound together. Adam failed to attain his true destiny, which was that he should grow into the likeness of God, and so did all others after him until Christ came. The attainment of immortality became an impossibility. But Christ, by entering into all the experiences of human life, gave a perfect revelation of God. He took up the broken course of development and completed it. And so, for all the race, what had been lost in Adam was restored in Christ. The purpose of God, which had been frustrated by Adam's sin, was fulfilled in Christ (V. 1.) Through Him men may attain their true destiny by means of the eucharist (V. 2), and still more by the vision of God (V. 34).

Man is, according to Irenaeus, composed of body and soul (II. 29). Salvation is bestowed upon the whole nature of man, body and soul, for the Word took upon Him the flesh of man and adorned it with the gifts of the Holy Spirit (V. 6, 14). Resurrection is of the body and the soul, and the pledge of the resurrection of the flesh is found in the fact that Christ rose in our flesh (V. 7). After the resurrection all shall appear before Christ, the Judge. In the meantime, the souls of the faithful are in a state of expectation of their final reward. The unbelieving shall be punished with separation from God—which is the exclusion from all good, not the infliction of any evil. Believers shall enter into the communion with God which is light and life. The judgement is no arbitrary action of God, but is the inevitable result of the action of those who have chosen of their own free will either to walk in the light, and dwell in communion with God, or to walk in darkness and, having loved the darkness rather than the light, to become blind. After the resurrection and the judgement, the saints shall dwell in the terrestrial kingdom of the New Jerusalem; for the earth will not be destroyed, but will be accommodated to the new conditions.

CLEMENT.—Of Clement of Alexandria little need be said. His outlook was very dissimilar to that of Tertullian, and the temperaments of the two men furnish a decided contrast.

Tertullian was acquainted with the writings of Clement, and made use of them in the only direction possible to him—that is, in minor points of exposition, and in the discussion of the attitude of Christians towards heathen customs.

In *De Spectaculis*, c. 3, Tertullian takes the first Psalm as a scriptural basis for attacking those Christians who were in the habit of attending the public shows. His mind was doubtless turned in this direction by the hints given in Clement's works. In the *Paidagogos*, c. xi., the latter discusses the public spectacles, and affirms that one 'might not inappropriately call the racecourse and the theatre "the seat of plagues"; for there is evil counsel as against the Just One, and therefore the assembly against Him is execrated.' This is a reference to Psalm i. 1 in the LXX. Similarly, he expounds the same verse in *Stromateis*, II. 15., and, after rejecting the application of the words to heresies, approves of their application to theatres and tribunals. 'The "chair of pestilences" will be the theatres and tribunals.'

The two little books *De Cultu Feminarum* also were inspired by Clement's *Paidagogos*. The objection to coloured clothing, the desire of women to please their husbands, the condemnation of the practice of dyeing the hair and of painting the face, are all reminiscent of Clement; though the Alexandrian was milder and more tolerant than the Carthaginian. In *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* Tertullian discusses the command of Christ (Matt. vii. 7), 'Seek and ye shall find,' in relation to speculation. This is an echo of the discussion of the same command by Clement in relation to the same question (*Stromateis*, VIII. 1). The treatment of the question of 'crown-wearing' in *De Corona Militis* affords further evidence of Tertullian's acquaintance with the *Paidagogos* of Clement.[1]

[1] Cf. *Paidagogos*, II., c. 8.

IV

THE ATTITUDE OF TERTULLIAN TOWARDS GREEK PHILOSOPHY

Apparent contradiction leading to opposite verdicts—The antagonism of Tertullian to philosophy—Christian truth is revealed—The influence of his Montanistic leanings—Basis for resolving the apparent contradiction—The 'soul by nature Christian'—Tertullian's relation to Stoicism—The corporeity of all being—Opposition to Plato—Anthropology—Pervasion of the body by the soul—Sleep and dreams—Theory of perception—Relation to Plato, to the Stoics, and to the Epicureans—The theology of Tertullian and Stoicism—God—The Logos—Ethics.

TERTULLIAN apparently presents so variable an attitude towards Greek philosophy that scholars have been led to such opposite conclusions regarding it that one can aver that he is no philosopher, while another asserts that in him such a philosophic spirit lived as is found in no other writer in Latin literature of his time, and that he was one of the first men who philosophized in the Christian sense. The former judgement is based upon apparently clear and plain evidence. The latter, which is nearer to the truth, is not so obvious.

The antagonism of Tertullian to philosophy is evident. Philosophy is the parent of heresy[1] and the philosophers are the patriarchs of heresy.[2] Valentinus was of Plato's school[3]; Marcion learnt of the Stoics[4]; the idea that the soul dies came from the Epicureans[5]; the denial of the resurrection of the body is traced to all the schools of philosophers in general[6]; the notion of the equality of matter with God springs from the teaching of Zeno.[7] The same subject-matter and the same arguments are used by philosophers and heretics, and to Tertullian heresy is the arch-enemy.

[1] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 7.
[2] *De Anima*, c. 3.
[3] *De Anima*, c. 18; *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 7.
[4] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 7.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*

He accuses the philosophers of filching the truth from the Jewish Scriptures. 'Whence is it, I pray you, that you have all this so like us in the poets and philosophers? The reason simply is that they have been taken from our religion' (*Apologeticus*, c. 47). But in reality the philosophers are 'mockers and corrupters of the truth,'[1] who merely pretend to care for the truth; what they really care for is the glory. The moral life of philosophers is no better than their writings.[2] They 'bark out against the rulers' of the empire. Socrates could, even at the point of death, order a cock to be sacrificed to Aesculapius[3]; moreover, he was called a corrupter of youth. Diogenes and Speusippus were immoral, the one in desire, the other in act.[4] They are ambitious, unchaste, untrustworthy, insincere, extravagant, traitorous. Tertullian even quotes approvingly the dictum that Socrates was actuated by a demon.[5]

The relation of philosophy and Christianity is such that the adherents of the latter can have nothing to do with the former. 'So, then, where is there any likeness between the Christian and the philosopher? between the disciple of Greece and of heaven? between the man whose object is fame and whose object is life? between the talker and the doer? between the man who builds up and the man who pulls down? between the friend and the foe of error? between the man who corrupts the truth and one who restores and teaches it? between its thief and its custodier?' (*Apologeticus*, c. 46).

This antagonistic attitude towards philosophy is in accord with the view which Tertullian takes of Christian truth. It came originally from Christ Himself, through the apostles and the Churches.[6] Its substance is found in the *regula fidei*, and that has been transmitted without reserve and without corruption.[7] That revealed and transmitted truth must be accepted without condition or alteration. The only speculation that is legitimate is that which moved within the circle of the ideas contained in the Rule of Faith.[8] It is all that is necessary. 'To know nothing in opposition to the Rule of Faith is to know all things' (*De Praes. Haer.*, c. 14). 'That which is learned of God is the sum and substance of the whole thing' (*De*

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 46. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.* [5] *De Anima*, c. 1. [6] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, cc. 13, 20.
[7] *Ibid.*, cc. 22, 26. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 14.

Anima, c. 2). He even goes so far as to say that the Rule of Faith ought to be accepted before the reason for accepting it is known: 'I praise the faith which has believed in complying with the rule before it has learnt the reason for it' (*De Corona Militis*, c. 2); and crowns his claim by demanding that the truth that the Son of God died is to be believed because it is absurd, and the fact that He rose again is certain because it is impossible.[1]

The Montanistic tendency of Tertullian's later days was also inimical to philosophy. It strengthened the view already taken by him that the truth is a matter of revelation, and the revelation, which had been corrupted by the heretics under the influence of philosophy, is now clarified and amplified by the Paraclete and his prophets. No doubt now remains as to the meaning of Scripture or tradition. 'He has accordingly now dispersed all the perplexities of the past, and their self-chosen allegories and parables, by the open and perspicuous explanation of the entire mystery through the new prophecy, which descends in copious streams from the Paraclete. If you will only draw water from His fountains you will never thirst for other doctrine, no feverish caring after subtle questions will again consume you' (*De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 63). Tertullian is careful to point out (*De Virginibus Velandis*, c. 1) that the Rule of Faith is constant, and that it is only within its limits that the activity of the Paraclete is exercised. 'The law of faith being constant, the other succeeding points of discipline and conversation admit the novelty of correction; the grace of God, to wit, operating and advancing even to the end.'

Though the opposition of Tertullian to philosophy is thus evident, it is no less evident that there is another aspect to be considered. He does not hesitate to claim the support of the philosophers when it suits his purpose. He makes the point that Zeno confirms the Christian view that the Logos is the Creator of the universe, and that Cleanthes maintains that the Spirit is the Creator of the universe.[2] Christians believe in demons and angels, but so also do Socrates and Plato (*Apologeticus*, cc. 21–22). In *De Anima*, c. 5, he boldly says: 'I call on the Stoics also to help me, who, while declaring almost in our very terms that the soul is a spiritual essence, will yet have no difficulty in persuading us that the soul is a corporeal

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 5. See note at end of this chapter. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. 17.

substance.' Moreover, the frequency with which Tertullian quotes the philosophers is itself an indication that the subjects with which they deal are far from being uninteresting or unimportant to him. He even admits that 'philosophers have sometimes thought the same things as ourselves,'[1] 'while in *Adversus Praxean* he adopts the "prolations" of the Gnostics for the purpose of his own explanation of the "economy" of the divine nature.'[2]

A basis for resolving the apparent contradiction is found in the assertion of Tertullian (*Apologeticus*, c. 17) that the soul is by nature Christian. It bears testimony simple, true, universal, commonplace, and natural, to the existence of God, 'His goodness and law and the final end both of itself and its foe.' Nature is the teacher of the soul, and God is the teacher of nature. Sin has darkened but has not obliterated this natural knowledge of the soul. When (*De Anima*, c. 16) we are further told that the rational element in the soul is its natural condition, impressed upon it from its very first creation by its Author, who is Himself essentially rational, and that the irrational element has come later from the instigation of the serpent, we are well on the way towards understanding Tertullian's position. It is God whose truth is revealed in the Rule of Faith, and it is God who has created rational human nature. Hence it is that reason and revelation are harmonious and not contradictory. Reason, it is true, has gone astray on account of sin, but in revelation the way of wisdom is shown to it. Thus reason finds its full freedom in the domain of revealed truth. What contradicts that truth is false and futile. What has no relation to that truth is useless. Thus philosophy has gone astray in purposeless search, but at the same time it has not been entirely corrupt. Now, however, since the fuller revelation of Christianity has come, the only philosophy that has any value is Christian philosophy. To that Tertullian devotes his intellectual powers; for the other, it is not surprising that he shows contempt.

When, however, Tertullian comes to build up a Christian philosophy, it is evident that what he accepts from the older philosophies is far from being inconsiderable. His dependence upon Stoic philosophy is particularly noticeable. His theology, psychology, and ethics are full of its influence.

[1] *De Anima*, c. 2. [2] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 8.

His use of Stoic teaching is discriminating. He does not accept anything simply because it is taught by the Stoics. The fact that they taught a doctrine is more likely in his view to be a reason for rejecting it. He derides Marcion for being an admirer of the Stoa, and says (*Adv. Hermogenem*, c. 1) that Hermogenes had learnt from the Stoics to make matter equal to God. He also definitely opposes the Stoic doctrine as to life after death (*De Anima*, cc. 54, 55). Even the assumption of philosophic doctrines into Christianity is a thing that evokes his scorn. 'Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition' (*De Praes. Haer.*, c. 7). But when he expounds a doctrine that is within the Rule of Faith, he does not disdain the help of philosophy and dialectic, and it is the Stoic doctrine that is at once congenial to his mind and helpful in his task, though he does not disdain either to use conceptions borrowed from Plato, Epicurus, and others.

The basic idea of Tertullian's philosophy is that of the corporeity of all beings. 'For nothing it (the soul) certainly is if it is not a bodily substance' (*De Anima*, c. 7). 'Everything which exists is a bodily existence *sui generis*. Nothing lacks bodily existence but that which does not exist' (*De Carne Christi*, c. 11). 'For Spirit has a bodily form in its own kind, in its own form.' These are clear and explicit statements of a thought which lies at the basis of Tertullian's reasoning. It reveals itself, as we shall see, in his doctrine of God and of the Logos, and in his view of the nature of the soul of man.

This idea is clearly borrowed from the Stoics. They held the corporeity of all things, with the exception of empty space, place, time, and thought.

Let us first consider the influence of Stoicism upon the anthropology of Tertullian. As a Christian writer he was a pioneer in dealing with the subject of human nature, and prepared the way for the great work of Augustine in this department of Christian theology. He was a dichotomist. According to him, man is composed of two parts, the body and the soul. In *De Anima* he gives a full treatment of the nature of the soul and its relation to the body.

First he claims that his doctrine is derived from the biblical account of the creation of man. 'We relied . . . on the

clear direction of the inspired statement which informs us how that " the Lord God breathed on man's face the breath of life, so that man became a living soul " ' (*De Anima*, c. 3). But, having asserted so much, he at once indicates his indebtedness to the Stoics. ' But I call on the Stoics also to help me, who, while declaring almost in our very terms that the soul is a spiritual essence (inasmuch as breath and spirit are in their nature very near akin to each other), will yet have no difficulty in persuading us that the soul is a corporeal substance ' (*De Anima*, c. 5).

He approves of Zeno's argument for the corporeity of the soul. Zeno's argument is thus stated by him : ' That substance which by its departure causes the living being to die is a corporeal one. Now it is by the departure of the spirit, which is generated with (the body), that the living being dies, therefore the spirit which is generated with (the body) is the soul ; it follows, then, that the soul is a corporeal substance ' (*De Anima*, c. 5).

He claims the support of Cleanthes in that the latter speaks of the transmission of characteristics of soul from parents to children. Such transmission is only possible, Tertullian claims, if the soul is corporeal. ' It is therefore as being corporeal that it (the soul) is susceptible of likeness and unlikeness ' (*De Anima*, c. 5).

Chrysippus also is brought in to support Tertullian's view. ' Chrysippus also joins hands in fellowship with Cleanthes when he lays it down that it is not at all possible for things which are endowed with body to be separated from things which have not body, because they have no such relation as mutual contact or coherence ' (*De Anima*, c. 5). The soul, therefore, Tertullian concludes, is endued with a body, for if if were not corporeal it could not desert the body (*ibid.*).

This belief in the corporeity of the soul is in plain contradiction to the teaching of Plato. That philosopher had declared that the soul is pre-existent and incorporeal. The fundamental idea of the corporeity of all existences is also the direct contrary of the fundamental conception of Plato's philosophy. According to the latter, all reality is ideal. The material world is but a putting forth in image and form of an ideal world. Everything material has an ideal, and therefore real, counterpart.

The idea reflected in Tertullian's statement that the soul is a spiritual essence (inasmuch as breath and spirit are very near each other)—is a clear reflection of a Stoic usage. That is just what is meant by them when they maintain that the soul is πνεῦμα.

The same may be said of his description of the soul as a *flatus dei*. It is easily recognized as a Christianized statement of the Stoic idea that the soul is a warmer breath.

Another idea which Tertullian derived from the Stoics is that of the pervasion of the body by the soul. They believed that as the world soul permeates the world, so the human soul permeates the human body. Tertullian maintained that the soul has a form and shape identical with that of the body which it inhabits. 'It must needs be that every individual body, of whatever size, is filled up by the soul, and that the soul is entirely covered by the body. How, therefore, shall a man's soul fill an elephant? How, likewise, shall it be contracted within a gnat?' (*De Anima*, c. 32).

The union of body and soul is a most intimate one. 'Well, then, has He placed, or rather inserted and commingled it, with the flesh? Yes, and so intimate is the union that it may be deemed to be uncertain whether the flesh bears about the soul, or the soul the flesh, or whether the flesh acts as apparitor to the soul, or the soul to the flesh. It is, however, mo e credible that the soul has this service rendered to it, and has the mastery, as being the more proximate to God' (*De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 7).

When he treats of the question as to whether there is a supreme or directive principle in human nature or not, he follows those Stoics who believe in such a directing and governing principle, and who place it in the heart. But here, as elsewhere, he agrees with the philosophers, because they agree with the Scriptures. 'We are taught by God concerning both these questions, namely, that there is a ruling power in the soul, and that it is enshrined in one particular recess of the body, i.e. in the heart' (*De Anima*, c. 15).

Tertullian notes incidentally, when dealing with this subject, that Plato agrees with him in believing that there is a supreme directive principle in the soul, but disagrees with him in that he places this principle in the mind.

Tertullian's teaching concerning sleep and dreams is confessedly in agreement with that of the Stoics. Concerning sleep he says, ' Our only resource, indeed, is to agree with the Stoics by determining sleep to be a temporary suspension of the activity of the senses, procuring rest for the body only, not for the soul' (*De Anima*, c. 43). This is the foundation for Tertullian's theory of dreams. They are the activity of the soul, but of the soul which is not in control of itself. Dreams are, in fact, a form of ecstasy. But Tertullian will not agree that they are a supplement to the natural oracles. In so far as they are from God they are a substitute for the profane oracles. But they may be demon-inspired, or they may have no moral significance.

Turning to Tertullian's theory of perception, we find that he welcomes the fact that the Stoics do not agree with Plato in discrediting the evidence of the senses altogether. ' The Stoics are more moderate in their views, for they do not load with the obloquy of deception every one of the senses at all times' (*De Anima*, c. 17). But the Epicureans are still nearer to the truth, in that they maintain that the senses are all equally true in their testimony, and regularly so. From this point Tertullian proceeds to state his own views, which are that in illusions of various kinds it is neither the soul which is at fault nor the senses. The soul forms an opin on based upon the evidence of the senses. But there is sometimes a discrepancy between the report of the senses and objective reality. That is due to objective causes; e.g. the apparent break in the line of a stick partly immersed in water is due to the different qualities of air and water through which it is viewed. ' Now if special causes mislead our senses, and so our opinions also, then we must no longer ascribe the deception to the senses, which follow the specific causes of the illusion, nor to the opinions we form; for these are occasioned and controlled by our senses, which only follow the causes' (*De Anima*, c. 17).

The whole trend of Tertullian's discussion of the reliability of the senses is in direct opposition to the Platonic doctrine, according to which the evidence of the senses is not to be depended upon. Plato had asserted in the *Timaeus* that the operations of the senses are irrational. He used the illustrations of oars immersed in water, of the apparent converging

of parallel lines, of the seemingly variable contours of objects according to the distance from which they are viewed, of the confusion of noises heard, and of the apparent fading of perfumes and tastes after the first impression has passed. In the *Phaedrus* he had averred that he himself could not know himself, and that knowledge of the truth is postponed until after death. In the *Theatetus* he had said what amounted to a denial of the possibility of sensations and knowledge. The logical sequence of such a theory was that Plato should not have philosophized, since his philosophy could thus have no value at all. But in practice Plato refused to draw that conclusion, and so Tertullian condemned him for his want of consistency. Here Tertullian was well aware of the bearing of the Platonic theory upon Christian truth. It would have nullified the witness of Christ, and would have favoured the docetic view of His Person.

A few other points of contact between the teaching of Tertullian on the soul and the teaching of Greek philosophy may be noted.

As to the nature of the soul, he avers that ' it is essential to a firm faith to declare with Plato that the soul is simple ; in other words, uniform and unconfounded ; simple, that is to say, in respect of its substance.'

With regard to Aristotle, Tertullian opposed his distinction between the soul and the mind as two separate things. They are intimately associated, and suffer together. Aristotle mentions as one of the two natural constituents of the mind a divine principle which is impassible, or incapable of emotion, thus removing it from all association with the soul (for Aristotle see *De Anima*, 12, 19).

The division of the soul into its rational and irrational elements by Plato is a point that meets with the approval of Tertullian, but with an important distinction. To Tertullian these are not two parts of the nature of the soul. The soul is by creation rational, in accordance with the nature of its Maker, who is Himself rational. But the irrational element accrued later by the instigation of the serpent. But when Plato further sub-divides the rational element into the irascible and the concupiscible, Tertullian is cautious as to how far he can agree. He will not agree that the irascible element in man is cognate with the irascible element in the

beasts, and the concupiscible element in man cognate with the concupiscible element in insects. The rational element in man is what he shares with God, not with the lower creation, and that rational element has its irascible and concupiscible parts, as is shown in the indignation of Christ, and in His desire to eat the Passover with His disciples. But there is an irrational irascibility and an irrational concupiscibility in man. That belongs to the other, depraved, side of his nature.

Tertullian holds that all the natural properties of the soul are inherent in it, and grow and develop along with it, and here he quotes Seneca, ' whom we so often find on our side.' ' There are implanted within us,' says Seneca, ' the seeds of all the arts and periods of life, and God, our Master, secretly produces our mental dispositions.' From that statement Tertullian develops his theory of the development of the soul according to circumstances of birth, health, education, and condition.

In setting out to confute the heresies connected with the origin of the soul, Tertullian perceives that their theories are derived ultimately from Plato. ' I am sorry from my heart that Plato has been the caterer to all these heretics ' (*De Anima*, c. 23). He forthwith attacks him directly. Plato teaches the ' pre-existence of the soul,' ' anamnesis,' and ' recollection.' Tertullian objects that the soul is not capable of such a loss of memory as is implied by Plato (*De Anima*, c. 25). He opposes the view of the Stoics and of Plato that the soul is inhaled with a child's first breath, and exhaled with the last gasp of life (*De Anima*, c. 25). He likewise opposes the opinion of Plato that two souls cannot co-exist in one body, and that hence the soul does not dwell in the pre-natal body.

In the same manner he rejects the teaching of Epicurus and that of Seneca on the subject of death. Epicurus says there is no death. That which is dissolved lacks sensation, and that which lacks sensation is nothing to us. The natural inference from this is that life is nothing to us also. Seneca says : ' After death all comes to an end, even death itself.' It is obvious that Tertullian could never agree with an opinion of that kind.

On the question of the future abode of the soul, Tertullian disdains the opinions of Plato and the Stoics, as, indeed, he does those of all the philosophers, and resorts to the teaching

of Scripture. But he welcomes the fact that the philosophers testify to the soul's immortality. Seneca, indeed, says: 'After death all things come to an end, even death itself' (*De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 1; *De Anima*, c. 42), and there is nothing after death, according to the school of Epicurus. 'It is satisfactory, however, that the no less important philosophy of Pythagoras and Empedocles and the Platonists take the contrary view, and declare the soul to be immortal, affirming, moreover, in a way which most nearly approaches (to our own doctrine), that the soul actually returns into bodies, although not the same bodies and not even those of human beings invariably' (*De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 1).

It is not, however, Tertullian's anthropology alone that is influenced by Stoic teaching. His theology likewise shows its influence. The conceptions of God and the Logos are worked out by him from a scriptural basis, with such a seemingly exclusive reference to that source that it is easy to infer that the source is Scripture alone. As far as the teaching of the unity of God is concerned, this seems, indeed, to be the case. The ground is fundamentally and exclusively scriptural. But in other respects an undercurrent of Stoic influence is clearly at work.

God, in Tertullian's view, is both body and spirit. 'For who will deny that God is a body although God is a spirit?' (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 7). The Stoic doctrine of the corporeity of all existence is applied by him without hesitation to God, but he finds support for this idea in the anthropomorphic presentation of God in the Bible. God is there spoken of as having hands and feet and eyes and ears. At the same time Tertullian is careful to draw a distinction between the bodily members of God and those of men. The former are spiritual, while the latter are material. The spiritual has, however, with Tertullian a material cast. It is like breath or air.

There is something, too, of Stoic origin in his portrayal of God as the great Supreme (*Adv. Marcionem*, I. 35). It is a spatial conception, and is allied to the Stoic conception of spirit. Tertullian seems never to rise to the thought of God as pure spirit, but he does not draw the pantheistic conclusion of the Stoics. The influence of his Scripture reading keeps him from that.

He with equal readiness applies the notion of corporeity to

the Logos. 'I, on the contrary, contend that nothing empty and void could have come forth from God, seeing that it is not put forth from that which is void and empty, nor could that possibly be devoid of substance which has proceeded from so great a substance, and has produced such mighty substances, for all things which were made through Him, He Himself made. How could it be that He Himself is nothing without whom nothing was made? How could He who is empty have made things which are solid, and He who is void have made things which are full, and He who is incorporeal have made things which have body?' There is, however, this important distinction to remember; the Stoics made the Logos but another name for God. In reality they were identical. Tertullian never confuses them. His fault is rather that he accentuates the distinction between the Logos and God.

Another indication of Stoic influence is seen in the distinction which Tertullian draws between *ratio* and *sophia* and *sermo*. The Stoics made a distinction, which was later developed by Philo between the immanent and the proceeding Logos, λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and λόγος προφορικός, the former indicating the Logos as existing in the divine nature, and the latter indicating the activity of the divine power in creation. Though Tertullian does not use the terms, the distinction between them is reflected in his view of *ratio* and *sophia* or *sermo*. He agrees with the Stoics in making ratio the original essence of God. 'Yet not even then was He alone, for He had with Him that which He possessed in Himself, that is to say, His own Reason. For God is rational, and Reason was first in Him' (*Adv. Praxean*, c. 5). But in the *sermo* that Reason is hypostatized, and *sermo* is the later. 'It is now usual with our people, owing to the more simple interpretation of the term, to say that the Word was in the beginning with God, although it would be more suitable to regard Reason as the more ancient, because God had not Word from the beginning, but He had Reason even before the beginning' (*Adv. Praxean*, c. 5). At the same time the Word existed before the creation, 'For although God had not yet sent His word, He still had Him within Himself both in company with and included in His very Reason' (*ibid.*). That this distinction was influenced by the Stoics rather than by Philo is probable, because Tertullian shows no other traces of Philonism but many of Stoicism.

To the influence of Stoicism upon Tertullian's theology and his anthropology must be added its influence upon his ethics. There is a fundamental difference between Stoic and Christian morality.[1] The one is in essence self-sufficient and proud, the other humble and self-effacing. Tertullian's ethics are not Stoic ethics, but Christian. But that does not exclude the possibility that traces of Stoic influence may be found in his ethical views.

One direction in which such a trace is to be found is in Tertullian's view of nature. Nature is essentially the creation of the rational God, and bears the stamp of His character. To go against nature is to go against God. It is so certainly the work of the rational God that the terms Nature and Reason are practically interchangeable (cf. *De Corona Militis*). 'Everything which is against Nature deserves to be branded as monstrous among all men, but with us it is to be condemned also as sacrilege against God, the Lord of Nature.' What is this in essence but the Stoic doctrine of 'living agreeably to Nature'?

Closely bound up with this view of Nature and Reason is the belief that all men everywhere are endowed with reasonable souls, and form a community of fellowship; a belief which is common to Tertullian and the Stoics. The Stoics also believed in the manifestation of goodness in the ordering of the world. This point is developed by Tertullian, but it is also a fundamental biblical idea.

NOTE

Tertullian's Conception of the Relation of Faith and Reason

The famous dictum of Tertullian: 'Mortuus est Dei Filius; prorsus credibile est quia ineptum est; et sepultus resurrexit; certum est quia impossibile est,' is apt to convey a wrong impression of Tertullian's view of the relation of faith and reason, especially when—as so frequently is the case—it is quoted apart from its context. In the first place, allowance must be made for his love of paradox. The man who could say of heretics, 'Their very unity is schism,'[2] and 'How great might their offence have been if they had not existed,'[3] who could aver that 'God is great when little,'[4] and who could

[1] A clear statement of the points of resemblance and of contrast in the teaching of Stoicism and Christianity may be found in Fisher, *The Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief*, pp. 130–137. Compare also Davidson, *The Stoic Creed*.

[2] *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 42.

[3] *Ibid.*, c. 1.

[4] *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 2.

advise Christian women 'Belie somewhat of your inward consciousness, in order to exhibit the truth to God alone,'[1] is obviously one whose statements at times demand a cautious interpretation. Tertullian would be the last to believe in a literal sense that a thing is true because it is absurd.[2] The main ground of his refutation of the doctrines of Valentinus, Marcion, Hermogenes, and Praxeas, is that they are absurd. In the second place, the context must be examined in order that the train of thought which led Tertullian to employ such an expression may afford some guidance as to what he intended to convey by it. In the third place, the general attitude of the man towards the question of the relation of faith and reason must be taken into consideration.

Tertullian was combating the opinions of Marcion, who regarded the notion that Christ could have possessed human flesh as one that was dishonouring to God. In pursuance of this purpose he employed Paul's statement that 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.' Those foolish things are not 'the conversion of men to the worship of the true God, the rejection of error, the whole training in righteousness, chastity, mercy, patience, and innocence.' Such things are certainly not 'foolish.' But 'believing in a God that has been born, and that of a virgin, and of a fleshly nature, too,' is foolish. And if anything more foolish is to be imagined it is that God should be crucified and buried. 'For which is more unworthy of God, which is more likely to raise a blush of shame, that (God) should be born, or that He should die? that He should bear the flesh or the cross? be circumcised or be crucified? be cradled or be coffined? be laid in a manger or in a tomb?' But even of this Tertullian is not ashamed, for 'Whatsoever is unworthy of God is of gain to me. I am safe if I am not ashamed of my Lord.' Then follows the startling statement, 'The Son of God was crucified; I am not ashamed because men must needs be ashamed (of it). And the Son of God died; it is by all means to be believed, because it is absurd. And He was buried, and rose again; the fact is certain, because it is impossible.'

Related thus to its context, the passage is seen to bear a different interpretation from that which finds in it nothing more than a mere negation of human reason. What Tertullian is rejecting is not the enlightened Christian reason, but the unenlightened reason of the world, as evidenced in Marcion's attitude. To Marcion the process of human birth is objectionable, to Tertullian it is 'the reverend course of nature.' On Marcion's premisses the birth and death of Christ are 'absurd' and 'impossible,' since the Creator and His creation were not good, and though Christ might 'appear' as man, He certainly could not in reality so far submit Himself to the Creator as to be born and to die. But Tertullian has other premisses which make the incarnation and the crucifixion reasonable enough. The Creator is good, and Christ is the Creator's Son, and as such He loved, and lived and died for, His Father's creature—man. 'Christ, at any rate, has loved even that man who was condensed in his mother's womb, amidst all its uncleannesses. . . . For his sake He came down "from heaven," for his sake He preached, for his sake

[1] *De Virginibus Velandis*, c. 16.

[2] *Adversus Marcionem*, V., c. 1: 'I who at the same time can believe nothing, except that nothing ought to be believed hastily (and *that* I may further say is hastily believed, which is believed without any examination of its beginning), I, in short, who have the best reason possible for bringing this inquiry to a most careful solution.'

He humbled Himself even unto death—the death of the cross. He loved, of course, the being whom He redeemed at so great a cost. If Christ is the Creator's (Son), it was with justice that He loved His own (creature). . . . Well, then, loving man, He loved his nativity also, and his flesh as well. Nothing can be loved apart from that through which whatever exists has its existence. Either take away nativity, and then show us (your) man ; or else withdraw the flesh, and then present to our view the being whom God has redeemed, since it is these very conditions which constitute the man whom God has redeemed.' If Marcion's standard of wisdom and foolishness is accepted, Tertullian is quite prepared to acknowledge that the truth that the Son of God was born and died is foolishness. The very fact that in Marcion's opinion it is absurd and impossible is a reason why it should be believed and accepted as certain from the Christian point of view.[1]

But alongside of this train of thought another proceeds in Tertullian's mind. The wisdom of God is accounted foolishness by the world. Yet the world acknowledges that the worship of the true God, and righteousness, and virtue, are not foolish. But according to the world's standard the thought that God was born and died is foolishness. This Paul had noted, and it is present to the mind of Tertullian. Apart from the love of God it is inexplicable Tertullian did not in general grasp the New Testament idea of the love of God, but here he does perceive the necessity of the love of Christ as the motive which made the incarnation and the cross conceivable, as the passage quoted above shows.

So we may gather from the context that Tertullian was very far from thinking that the Christian faith has no more solid foundation than the absurd and the impossible. He was perfectly conscious of the solid foundation of what to Marcion and to the heathen world appeared shameful and foolish. ' Other matters for shame find I none which can prove me to be shameless in a good sense, and foolish in a happy one, by my own contempt of shame.'

On the general question of the relation of faith and reason in the view of Tertullian it is sufficient to say that he accepted the Rule of Faith, and expected others to accept it unconditionally as a revelation of God in contrast to the knowledge of the philosophers, which was acquired by the unaided human intellect (except where it had been filched from the Christian Scriptures). But within the circle of ideas contained in the Rule of Faith the Christian had a right and a duty of exercising his reason,[2] and within these limits Tertullian himself exercised his dialectical powers to the full.[3] Reason

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 27 : ' What in your esteem is the entire disgrace of my God, is in fact the sacrament of man's salvation. God held converse with men, that man might learn to act as God. God dealt on equal terms with man, that man might be able to deal on equal terms with God. God was found little, that man might become very great. You who disdain such a God, I hardly know whether you *ex fide* believe that God was crucified. How great, then, is your perversity in respect of the two characters of the Creator ! '

[2] Cf. *De Baptismo*, c. 1 : ' A treatise on this matter will not be superfluous . . . instructing . . . them who, content with having simply believed, without full examination of the grounds of the traditions, carry (in their mind), through ignorance, an untried (and merely) probable faith.'

[3] ' So long, however, as its (i.e. that of the Rule of Faith) form exists in its proper order, you may seek and discuss as much as you please, and give full rein to your curiosity, in whatever seems to you to hang in doubt, or to be shrouded in obscurity ' (*De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 14).

and faith could not—in his view—clash. The revelation of God brought by Jesus Christ, and transmitted through the apostles and the churches and embodied in the Rule of Faith, was a perfect revelation, and it came from God. The rational faculty in man was implanted by God, who is Himself rational. 'Reason, in fact, is a thing of God, inasmuch as there is nothing which God the Maker of all has not provided, disposed, ordained by Reason—nothing which He has not willed should be handled and understood by Reason. All, therefore, who are ignorant of God must necessarily be ignorant also of a thing which is His, because no treasure-house at all is accessible to strangers' (*De Poenitentia*, c. 1). Therefore reason finds its true sphere within the Rule of Faith.[1] In so far as the human mind retains the likeness of its original creation it is rational,[2] but the facts of experience show that the traces of the original creation are very faint. What was lost in Adam, however, was restored in Christ. He revealed anew, and in more ample fashion, the rational[3] truth of God. Apart from that revelation it is foolish and futile for the human mind to strive after the truth. The only wisdom is to accept it in faith. 'I praise the faith which has believed in the duty of complying with the rule before it has learned the reason of it.'[4] Once accepted, however, the revelation given by Christ leads the minds of men in those paths of truth which are rational.

[1] 'What you have to seek, then, is that which Christ has taught' (*De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 10). 'Let our seeking, therefore, be in that which is our own, and from those who are our own—that, and only that, which can become an object of inquiry without impairing the rule of faith' (*ibid.*, c. 12).

[2] *Apologeticus*, c. 18: 'But that we might attain an ampler and more authoritative knowledge at once of Himself, and of His counsels and will, God has added a written revelation for the behoof of every one whose heart is set on seeking Him, that seeking he may find, and finding believe, and believing obey.'

[3] *Apologeticus*, c. 21: 'But how deeply they have sinned, puffed up to their fall with a false trust in their noble ancestors, turning from God's way into a way of sheer impiety . . . their present national ruin would afford sufficient proof. . . . Accordingly, He appeared among us, whose coming to renovate and illumine man's nature was pre-announced by God . . . I mean Christ, that Son of God. And so the supreme Head and Master of this grace and discipline, the Enlightener and Trainer of the human race, God's Son, was announced among us.'

[4] *De Corona Militis*, c. 2.

V

TRACES OF DEVELOPMENT IN TERTULLIAN'S THEOLOGY

i. The Order and Date of the Writings.
ii. The Theological Contents of the Writings in this Order.
iii. The Lines of Development in Tertullian's Thought.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

SHOWING THE ORDER AND THE DATE OF THE WRITINGS OF TERTULLIAN

	A.D.		A.D.
De Baptismo	195	*De Pallio*	209
Adversus Judaeos	195–6	*Adversus Marcionem*, II., III.	
De Spectaculis	196	*De Anima*	211
De Cultu Feminarum, I., II.		*De Corona Militis*	211
De Oratione.		*Ad Scapulam*	211
De Idololatria	197	*De Fuga in Persecutione*	212
Ad Martyras	197	*Scorpiace*	213
Ad Nationes, I., II.		*Adversus Marcionem*, IV.	213 to 217
Apologeticus	197	*De Carne Christi*	
De Testimonio Animae	190 to 200	*De Resurrectione Carnis*	
De Praescriptione Haereticorum		*De Virginibus Velandis*	
Adversus Hermogenem		*Adversus Marcionem*, V.	
De Poenitentia	204 to 207	*Adversus Praxean*	217 to 221
De Patientia		*De Exhortatio Castitatis*	
Ad Uxorem, I., II.		*De Monogamia*	
Adversus Valentinianos		*De Jejunio*	
Adversus Marcionem, I.		*De Pudicitia*	

BEFORE it is possible to trace the development of Tertullian's theology it is necessary to come to some conclusion as to the order in which his writings were penned. This introduces a difficult and intricate question. In earlier times it was usually deemed sufficient, e.g. by Kaye and Neander, to decide which of Tertullian's writings were certainly composed after his conversion to Montanism, and which were certainly and

obviously pre-Montanistic, while those which were doubtful were placed in a separate class. That was, perhaps, as much as could be done by those who depended upon the information given by later writers, by definite historical references in the writings themselves, and by indications of Montanism which are plainly found in some of the books.

But the application by Uhlhorn, Bonswetsch, Harnack, and Noeldechen of the principles which had proved so fruitful in the study of the writings of the Old and New Testaments has led to results which, if not absolutely conclusive, are at least highly probable. By approaching the subject in a scientific manner, and by making use of every kind of evidence available, it has been found possible to place the whole series of Tertullian's writings in a definite order. Strange though it may seem at first thought, the problem of placing the whole series of writing in a definite order is really less difficult, and more satisfactory in its results, than is the problem of deciding merely which writings are pre-Montanistic and which were written after Tertullian became a Montanist.

Some of the means used to decide the order of the writings are: (1) References in the writings themselves to historical events; (2) Quotations of Scripture, of earlier writers, and of Tertullian's own earlier writings in his later ones; (3) Indications of modesty as characteristic of earlier literary activity, and of self-conscious authority as characteristic of later times; (4) The people to whom the writings are addressed—catechumens, mature Christians, the heathen populace, political governors, heretics, and philosophers; (5) Likenesses and differences of style as indicative of nearness to, or remoteness from, one another of various writings; (6) Varying attitude towards the same question; (7) And last, but by no means of least importance, the development of theological conceptions and their treatment will serve to confirm our conclusions.

When these and other lesser indications are employed their cumulative effect is convincing, but at the same time it is necessary to state that the priority in time of one writing to another has often to be decided by a nice balancing of probabilities which appeal with varying force to different minds. The principle upon which we shall proceed is to fix definitely the date of a few writings, whose date and occasion of writing is fairly certain, and to move backwards and forwards from these,

fitting in the less certain one by one until the whole series is complete.

'APOLOGETICUS.'—The date of this appeal to the authorities may with confidence be fixed as the latter part of the year A.D. 197. It must have been written before the Parthian war, since Tertullian refers to the Parthians as a less formidable foe than the Christians might be if the latter chose to use cunning and force.[1] On the other hand, it must have been written after the execution of the twenty-nine by Severus, since it contains a reference to that event.[2] The Parthian campaign commenced in the autumn of the year A.D. 197,[3] and the execution of the twenty-nine took place in the year A.D. 196. So the *Apologeticus* must be dated between these two events. In chapter 35 there is a reflection of the *Saturnalia* of A.D. 196.[4] The latter part of A.D. 197 is, therefore, probably the time when this Apology was written.

This fixing of the date is supported by a variety of considerations. The persecutions are not confined to the mob, as they were earlier, but are sanctioned by the authorities, the 'rulers of the Roman Empire,' to whom the tract is addressed.[5] The Christians are being joined by those of every rank and condition, whereas earlier writings reveal a different state of affairs.[6] Christians pray for the safety of the empire.[7] The persecutions have by this time issued in actual martyrdoms.[8] All these considerations indicate that the *Apologeticus* finds a suitable setting in the later part of the year A.D. 197.

'AD NATIONES,' I. AND II.—The correspondences and differences between these books and *Apologeticus* strengthen the reasons for placing the latter in A.D. 197. That the *Ad Nationes* and the *Apologeticus* are closely related is obvious from the fact that some have assumed the former to be a rough draft of the latter. But the variations are sufficient to show that the author had a different purpose in view in the two works. The *Ad Nationes* is addressed to the common people, the *Apologeticus* to the governors of the Roman Empire, and the general tone of the two writings is in accord with this. The *Ad*

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 37. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 35; cf. *Dion Cassius*, c. 76 (8).
[3] So Bonwetsch, Noeldechen, and Harnack agree against Mosheim, who refers it to A.D. 198.
[4] Cf. *Dion Cassius*, c. 76 (4).
[5] *Apologeticus*, c. 1; cf. *Idololatria*, c. 14, *De Spectaculis*, c. 27.
[6] *Ibid.*, c. 1; *De Idololatria*, cc. 13, 14.
[7] *Ibid.*, c. 30; cf. c. 32. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 50.

Nationes employs rough calculations, which are sufficient for the uninstructed multitude,[1] but these are omitted from the *Apologeticus*, as being unsuitable to the intelligence of the persons addressed. The reasons which lead us to premise the priority of the *Ad Nationes* are: (1) The promise made in the *Ad Nationes*, that the doctrines of the Christian faith will be set forth later, is fulfilled in *Apologeticus*.[2] (2) A mistake made in *Ad Nationes* is corrected in *Apologeticus*. According to the former, the absurd notion that the worship of the Christians is paid to an ass's head is traced to a suggestion of Tacitus in the fourth book of his Histories.[3] In *Apologeticus* this is corrected to the fifth book of Tacitus.[4] (3) The reference to Onocoetes, 'a nine days' wonder,' is abbreviated in *Apologeticus* in such a manner as to indicate that the 'nine days' wonder' has already ceased to have any significance.[5] (4) The *Apologeticus* is less bitter in tone than the *Ad Nationes*, probably owing to the fact that the persecution was beginning to wane.

A further indication that the *Ad Nationes* belongs to the year A.D. 197 is found in the veiled allusion to Hercules Commodus.[6] This allusion, which was quite apposite in A.D. 197, when Severus returned from Gaul and glorified Commodus, and the latter was deified, would be out of place at any other time.

'AD MARTYRAS.'—The reference to the death of the twenty-nine with which this tract closes[7] naturally leads us to suppose that it was written in A.D. 197. That supposition is supported by other considerations. Tertullian says, 'Not that I am specially entitled to exhort you,'[8] a form of address whose modest tone betokens the diffident writer of early days. He speaks of 'our lady mother the Church,'[9] addresses the readers as *benedicti*,[10] refers to the world as a prison,[11] quotes Ephesians iv. 30,[12] mentions that 'some have sold themselves to run a certain distance in a burning tunic'[13]—all of which form links with other early writings of Tertullian. He also reveals the

[1] *Ad Nationes*, I. 7, 9.
[2] *Ad Nationes*, I. 15; cf. *Apologeticus*, c. 9.
[3] *Ad Nationes*, I: 11.
[4] *Apologeticus*, c. 16.
[5] *Ad Nationes*, I. 14; cf. *Apologeticus*, c. 16.
[6] *Ad Nationes*, II. 10; cf. *Dion Cassius*, 76 (8): 'To Commodus, whom but recently he was wont to abuse, he gave heroic honours . . . he introduced a defence of Commodus, and inveighed against the Senate for dishonouring him.'
[7] *Ad Martyras*, c. 6; cf. *Dion Cassius*, 76 (8): 'He (Severus) condemned to death twenty-nine men.'
[8] *Ibid.*, c. 1; cf. *De Idolo.*, c. 4.
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 1; cf. *De Baptismo*, c. 20.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 1, cf. *De Oratione*, c. 1, *De Baptismo*, c. 20.
[11] *Ibid.*, c. 2.
[12] *Ibid.*, c. 1.
[13] Cf. *Ad Nationes*, I. 18.

elementary nature of his theology by speaking of the living God as the superintendent of the struggle which Christians are making, the Holy Ghost as their trainer, and Jesus Christ as their Master, who leads them by His Spirit.[1] The fact that, apparently, no martyrdoms have yet taken place, since the writer refers to heathen examples of endurance only, indicates that this writing preceded *Ad Nationes* and *Apologeticus*, which both indicate that Christians have suffered death for the faith.[2]

'DE IDOLOLATRIA.'—While *Ad Martyras* certainly indicates that Christians were imprisoned, but affords no evidence that they had suffered martyrdom, *De Idololatria* gives no indication that Christians were even imprisoned, so that it was probably written before *Ad Martyras*. It does, however, reflect the hostility of the populace to the Christians, and reproves the latter for mingling with the crowds in attendance at the games, where 'the name is blasphemed.'[3] The festive days are not known to the heathen.[4] This indicates an earlier date than the *Apologeticus*. Tertullian speaks of himself as a man of limited memory,[5] and cries, 'Why quote Scripture? Is not the voice of the Spirit enough?'[6] This shows an advance from the point of view in *De Spectaculis*, where Tertullian goes out of his way to find Scripture proof.[7] The attitude which the author adopts towards the question of the relation of Christians to idolatry is extreme and unpractical. He would preclude, for example, a Christian from acting as a schoolmaster, on the ground that he would have to teach his pupils about the gods of the heathen,[8] and he would have the Christians refrain from the service of dignities and powers as inimical to Christ.[9] The Carthaginian Aqueduct was contemplated at this time, but was evidently not yet commenced, or Tertullian would have had no need to indicate in what directions those who objected to undertake work associated with idolatry could find employment.[10] In *De Idololatria* Tertullian refers to the angels who were deserters of God.[11]

[1] *Ad Martyras*, c. 3. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 5; cf. *Apologeticus*, 16, 50; *Ad Nationes*, I. 14.
[3] *De Idololatria*, c. 14.
[4] *De Idololatria*, cc. 13, 14; cf. *Apologeticus*, c. 1.
[5] *De Idololatria*, c. 4; cf. *Apologeticus*. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[7] *De Spectaculis*, c. 3; cf. 15, 18, 19.
[8] *De Idololatria*, c. 10. [9] *De Idololatria*, c. 17.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 8. It was completed in A.D. 203. [11] *Ibid.*, cc. 4, 9.

In *Apologeticus*[1] they are spoken of again, and the similarity of the passages indicates the proximity in time of the writings. A further reference, which agrees with the year A.D. 197 as the date of *De Idololatria*, is found in chapter 15, where the author speaks of a sudden rejoicing. This could not have been any of the recognized festivals, on account of its suddenness, but the book reflects also the close proximity of the feasts which took place between September, 196, and March, 197 A.D., so that we should look for some festival which occurred suddenly between September and December A.D. 196. Such a festival is found in the rejoicing over the slaughter by Lyons. The mention of baptism in chapter 6 is an echo of the treatise on baptism which Tertullian had already written. A similar echo is found in *De Spectaculis*,[3] *De Oratione*,[5] and *Adversus Judaeos*.[4]

'DE SPECTACULIS.'—Mention is made in this book of idolatry, and it is made in connexion with baptism.[8] No evidence is to be found of martyrdom as an accomplished fact, nor even of imprisonment. The phrases 'Governors of provinces, too, who persecuted the Christian name,'[6] 'Christians a sort of people ever ready to die,'[7] 'Glory in the palms of martyrdom,' which seem at first sight to be reflections of present martyrdoms, are capable of other explanations. They have no immediate temporal or local reference. Those who suffer in the amphitheatre are not Christians but heathen, who, for the most part, suffer as criminals. Hostility to the Christians belongs, not to the authorities, but to the populace. The Christians are not personally known to the mob.[8] The 'other-worldliness' which is reflected in Tertullian's quotation of St. Paul, 'For what is our wish but the apostle's, to leave the world and to be taken up into the fellowship of our Lord,'[9] finds an echo in *De Idololatria*,[10] but is far different from the later sentiment of *De Anima*: 'Now we must needs go out of the world if it be not allowed to us to have conversation with them.'[11] Further, 'The world shall rejoice, but ye shall be sorrowful,' is quoted in both *De Spectaculis*[12] and *De Idololatria*,[13] while *Ad Martyras*

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 35. [2] *De Spectaculis*, c. 4. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[4] *Adversus Judaeos*, cc. 8, 13. [5] *De Spectaculis*, c. 4.
[6] *Ibid.*, c. 30. [7] *Ibid.*, c. 29. [8] *De Spectaculis*, c. 27
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 2. [10] *De Idololatria*, c. 24. [11] *De Anima*, c. 35.
[12] *De Spectaculis*, c. 28. [13] *De Idololatria*, c. 13. [14] *Ad Martyras* c 2.

and *De Spectaculis*[1] voice the sentiment that the world is full of idols.

These comparisons show that *De Spectaculis* is closely related to *De Idololatria* and *Ad Martyras*. Certain indications, such as the reference to the circus,[2] the reminiscence of earlier heathen days,[3] and the reference to Varro,[4] which agrees with *Ad Nationes*, point in the direction of Rome as the locality in which this treatise was written.

The use of the first Psalm[5] to prove that attendance at the games was not permissible to Christians shows an earlier attitude towards the Scriptures than that manifested in *De Idololatria*,[6] while the obvious dependence upon the *Paidagogos* of Clement of Alexandria[7] provides a link connecting this book with the two books *De Cultu Feminarum*.

'DE CULTU FEMINARUM,' I AND II.—The treatment of female dress is dominated by the writing of Clement of Alexandria in the *Paidagogos*. Here, too, is to be found Tertullian's justification of the Book of Enoch, which is quoted later in *De Idololatria*[8] and *Apologeticus*.[9] But the *De Cultu Feminarum* must have been written after *De Spectaculis*, since it speaks of the latter as having been written.[10] Moreover, there is the sound of approaching persecution.[11] So it should probably be placed between *De Spectaculis* and *Apologeticus*, i.e. early in A.D. 197.

Further considerations which support this dating of *De Cultu Feminarum* are: (1) Tertullian speaks of himself as 'most meanest' and 'most miserable'[12]; (2) He describes the Christians as those 'upon whom the ends of the ages have met'[13] (3) He uses the expression 'conchs'[14]; (4) '*Cultus et ornatum*' is a phrase which appears here as if first introduced,[15] since it is accompanied by an explanation; and it is then found in others of his early works.

'DE ORATIONE.'—There are many indications in this book that it belongs to the earliest series of Tertullian's writings. We find that here the Christians are addressed as *benedicti*[16];

[1] *De Spectaculis*, c. 8. [2] *De Spectaculis*, c. 16. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 19.
[4] *De Spectaculis*, c. 5; cf. *Ad Nationes*, II., *passim*. [5] *De Spectaculis*, c. 3.
[6] *De Idololatria*, c. 4. [7] *De Spectaculis*, c. 3. [8] *De Idololatria*, cc. 4, 9.
[9] *Apologeticus*, c. 35. [10] *De Cultu Feminarum*, I. c. 8.
[11] *Ibid.*, II., c. 13. [12] *Ibid.*, II. 1. [13] *Ibid.*, II. 9.
[14] *Ibid.*, I. 6, 8. [15] *Ibid.*, I., c. 4.
[16] *De Oratione*, c. 1; cf. *Ad Martyras*, c. 1.

cultus et ornatum is already used[1]; the consummation of things is desired.[2] Tertullian pleads the example and precept of the Apostle Paul for his daring to speak of the topic of woman's dress,[3] as though he felt doubtful of his own authority and ability. There is little to indicate the stage of persecution at the time that it was written, but what is found seems to favour a stage similar to that in the series of books already treated, where the populace is hostile and the prisons are not empty of Christians, while, on the other hand, there is no official persecution and there are no actual martyrdoms.[4]

A correspondence with *Ad Martyras* is found in the phrase '*militia dei*.'[5]

'DE BAPTISMO.'—This book bears evident traces of the novice in Christian thought. We shall deal with that aspect later.[6] But the modesty of the author appears in his reference to his moderate ability and to his intention of dealing with the subject according to the best of his power.[7] It is reflected, too, in his respect for the bishop, emulation of whose office he declares to be the mother of all schisms.[8] The Church is called 'your mother,' a designation which recalls the *mater ecclesia*.[9] Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the witnesses of baptism, as they are in *De Oratione* the recipients of prayer.[10] The daily washings of Israelites are mentioned here, as they are in *De Oratione*.[11] The readers are addressed as *benedicti*, as in *De Oratione* and *Ad Martyras*.[12]

The most probable date of this book is A.D. 195. The following considerations would seem to indicate Rome as the place where *De Baptismo* was written: (1) The use of the titles 'emperor' and 'prefect'[13]; (2) The mention of the Tiber[14]; (3) The 'viper of the Cainite heresy'[15] accords better with Rome than with Carthage, as the heresy referred to does not appear in any of the earliest Carthaginian writings, and when it does appear (in *De Praes. Haereticorum*)[16] it is only as a remotely previous sect; (4) The reference to Mithras

[1] *De Oratione*, c. 20. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 5. [3] *De Oratione*, c. 20.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 29. [5] *De Oratione*, c. 19; cf. *Ad Martyras*, c. 3.
[6] See p. 155–6. [7] *De Baptismo*, cc. 10, 12.
[8] *De Baptismo*, c. 17. [9] *De Baptismo*, c. 20; cf. *Ad Martyras*, c. 1.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 6; *De Oratione*, c. 25. [11] *Ibid.*, c. 15; cf. *De Oratione*, c. 14.
[12] *Ibid.*, c. 20; *Ad Martyras*, c. 1 *De Oratione*, c. 1. [13] *Ibid.*, c. 11.
[14] *Ibid.*, c. 4. [15] *Ibid.*, c. 1. [16] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 33.

worship may be a reminiscence of Tertullian's own heathen days at Rome.[1]

'ADVERSUS JUDAEOS.'—This book must find a place between *De Baptismo* on the one hand, and *Ad Nationes* and *Apologeticus* on the other. Links with the first-named are furnished by the phrases '*Christus sanctificans aquas*'[2] and '*piscina Bethsaida*,'[3] and by the references to the 'tree'[4] and the 'rock.'[5] Evidence of its priority to *Ad Nationes* and *Apologeticus* is found in the absence of any reference to Onocoetes.[6] Another ground upon which the priority of *Adversus Judaeos* to *De Idololatria* may be based is that in the former the unrighteousness of taking up arms is not advanced, whereas in the latter it is.[7] Another ground is found in the fact that *Adversus Judaeos* could not have been written after the Parthian war.[8] Still another significant fact is that when Tertullian was copying Justin Martyr he could not write, 'Damascus belongs to Arabia.'[9] That was the case when Justin wrote, but certainly it was not so later than A.D. 198, and possibly as early as A.D. 194, it was transferred to Syro-Phoenicia. So Tertullian wrote, 'Damascus belongs to Syro-Phoenicia.' Finally, the similarity of its treatment of the Sabbath question[10] to that of *De Idololatria* and *Apologeticus* confirms the early dating of *Adversus Judaeos*. He here agrees with the Western Church, but later adopts the Montanist view.

'DE TESTIMONIO ANIMAE.'—Still taking *Apologeticus* as our starting-point, we are able to conclude that three writings which are linked to it are, nevertheless, later in composition. They are *De Testimonio Animae*, *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, and *Adversus Hermogenem*.

The first of these is an expansion of a statement made in

[1] *De Baptismo*, c. 5.
[2] *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 8; cf. *De Baptismo*, cc. 2–5.
[3] *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 13; cf. *De Baptismo*, c. 1, 2.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 10; cf. *De Baptismo*, c. 9.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 13; cf. *De Baptismo*, c. 9.
[6] *Apologeticus*, c. 16, *Ad Nationes*, I., c. 14.
[7] *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 4; cf. *De Idololatria*, c. 19.
[8] *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 7: 'The Germans to this day are not allowed to cross their own limits.' This, with the references to the Parthians in the same chapter, reflects a state of things which had been reached under Severus prior to the Parthian campaign.
[9] Justin Martyr wrote: 'And none of you can deny that Damascus was, and is, in the region of Arabia, although now it belongs to what is called Syro-Phoenicia' (*Dial. c. Trypho*, c. 78). Tertullian's words are: 'Damascus, on the other hand, used formerly to be reckoned to Arabia before it was transferred into Syro-Phoenicia, on the division of the Syrias' (*Adv. Judaeos*, c. 9).
[10] *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 4; cf. *De Idololatria*, c. 14, and *Apologeticus*, 16, and contrast with the later view in *Adv. Marc.*, IV. 13, *De Jejunio*, c. 14.

Apologeticus,[1] as is also the second.[2] The complaint of Tertullian of the limitation of his memory in the face of the vastness of secular literature [3] reminds one of a similar complaint in *De Idololatria* in face of the vastness of the Scriptures.[4] There are also a number of correspondences between *De Testimonio Animae* and *Apologeticus* [5] and between the former and *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*.[6]

'DE PRAESCRIPTIONE HAERETICORUM.'—This, too, is an exposition of a statement in *Apologeticus*. Further, it adopts the same attitude towards philosophy as that found in the latter writing, while it leaves no room for doubt that the Christians had by this time suffered martyrdom.[7] But a wider comparison with earlier and with later writings shows that it followed the former and foreshadowed the latter, so that this is in all probability the position it occupied in the series of Tertullian's writings. Looking backwards, we see in *De Idololatria* mention of the Marcionites,[8] who are treated with some fullness in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*,[9] while at the close of the latter Tertullian promises to deal at another time separately with some of the heresies.[10] That promise is fulfilled in the treatises *Adversus Valentinianos* and *Adversus Marcionem*. In a similar manner, we find in *De Spectaculis*[11] and *De Idololatria*[12] hints that Tertullian's mind is beginning to grapple with the question of the use of Scripture, and in *De Baptismo*[13] it is asserted that heretics have no fellowship in Christian discipline. These two subjects are fully dealt with in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*,[14] which lays down the rule that heretics may not use the Christian Scriptures. The fact that Tertullian had evidently read Book I of the *Stromateis* of Clement of Alexandria and the *Adversus Omnes Haereseis* of Irenaeus before composing *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 17.
[2] *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 1.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 47.
[4] *De Idololatria*, c. 4.
[5] *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 1, '*ructas*'; cf. *Apologeticus*, 23, '*ructando*,' 39, '*ructantibus*.' *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 3, '*interpolatricem*'; cf. *Apologeticus*, 46, '*interpolator*.' *Apologeticus*, 48, '*tu Homo, tantum nomen*'; cf. *De Testimonio Animae*, '*omnium gentium, unus homo nomen est*.' The argument from such similarities of vocabulary must not be pressed. But it may be used in corroboration of attained conclusions.
[6] cf. with [3], *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 7 '*interpolatricem*.'
[7] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 29.
[8] *De Idololatria*, c. 5.
[9] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, cc. 30 ff.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 44.
[11] *De Spectaculis*, 3, 15, 18, 19.
[12] *De Idololatria*, c. 4.
[13] *De Baptismo*, c. 15.
[14] *De Praes. Haereticorum, passim.*

is not without some bearing on the date of this book. The *Adversus Omnes Haereseis* of Irenaeus appeared before A.D. 190, and Book I. of the *Stromateis* in A.D. 193, so that the fact that they are used in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* is no hindrance to our dating this book in A.D. 199.

'ADVERSUS HERMOGENEM.'—The freedom of the Christians from persecution reflected in this book, together with the evident close relation to *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*,[1] forbid our going beyond the year A.D. 202 in seeking to determine its date. In that year the Edict of Severus went forth forbidding any henceforth to become Christians. Tertullian accuses Hermogenes of turning away from Christianity to philosophy, and thereby he reproduces a thought which we met in *Apologeticus* and *De Praescriptione Haereticorum.*[2] He accuses the heretics of wresting the plain meaning of Scripture to suit their own purpose, and so reproduces a thought which is expressed in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum.*[3] These grounds are sufficient to justify our placing *Adversus Hermogenem* here.

'DE POENITENTIA.'—This book supplies us with another fixed date, which will enable us to place a few more books in the order of their appearance. It will be best to note the definite historic events which are reflected in *De Poenitentia*, and then to consider its relation to other books. An eruption of Vesuvius occurred in A.D. 203 and the death of Plautian took place in January, A.D. 204. Both these events are mentioned by Dion Cassius,[4] and both are reflected in *De Poenitentia.*[5] This conclusion is supported by the reference of Tertullian to the sufferings which candidates for public offices underwent.[6] The change of officers was made at the end of the year, so that it is natural that Tertullian should illustrate his point by referring to them if he were writing in the early part of the year.

Other considerations which deserve notice are: (1) The terms indicative of modesty on the writer's part are still found here[7]; (2) a bitterness towards the Church is beginning to

[1] *Adv. Hermogenem*, c. 1, the rule of 'lateness'; cf. *De Praes. Haer.*, 31, 34.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 1; cf. *Apologeticus*, c. 46, and *De Praes. Haer.*, c. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 27; cf. *De Praes. Haer.*, c. 39.
[4] c. 77: 'On Mount Vesuvius a great gush of fire burst out, and there were bellowings mighty enough to be heard in Capua, where I live whenever I am in Italy.'
[5] Eruption of Vesuvius in *De Poenitentia*, c. 12. Death of Plautian, c. 1.
[6] *De Poenitentia*, c. 11. [7] *De Poenitentia*, c. 12; cf. c. 4.

appear[1]; (3) He allows a second repentance, but no more[2]; (4) There is some development of his view of baptism as compared with *De Baptismo*[3]; (5) The term *ratio* and its derivatives are found here, and become abundant in later writings.[4]

'DE PATIENTIA.'—Following the same order of treatment as in the case of the last writing, we find a reflection of an historic event in *De Patientia*. In chapter 77 Dion Cassius refers to the arrest of Bulla Felix, a notorious outlaw, as taking place subsequently to the death of Plautian, and there is a reflection of the activities of that highwayman in *De Patientia*.[5] This, and the echo of the death of Plautian,[6] point to a time later, but not much so, than *De Poenitentia*. This is supported by the links connecting it with the latter writing.[7] In both God is said to be the receiver of good works; in both Tertullian speaks of his love of writing; in both the parables of Luke xv.[8] are treated, and in both there is found a discussion of the relation of religion and morality.

'AD UXOREM,' I. AND II.—The correspondences of these books with *De Patientia* are not many nor great, but, taken in conjunction with other considerations, they are sufficient to establish the contiguity in time of the writings. The books breathe the same atmosphere of persecution. They make no mention of Deductor, or Paraclete, or Psychicos. They do not absolutely forbid second marriages. A strong contrast is presented to the later standpoint of *De Exhortatione Castitatis*. In *Ad Uxorem*, I., the purpose of marriage is said to be the propagation of the race, in *Ad Uxorem*, II., the marriage of a Christian man and woman is extolled as a beautiful thing, but in *De Exhortatione Castitatis* it is maintained that it is foolish to populate the world, since the end is approaching, and second marriages are absolutely forbidden, and even first marriages are but an indulgence of the Lord.

'ADVERSUS VALENTINIANOS.'—On the whole, this is the best

[1] *Ibid.*, c. 5. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 7. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 6; *De Baptismo*, c. 6. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 1.

[5] *De Patientia*, c. 7: 'When, after the manner of wild beasts, they play the bandit along the highway.'

[6] *Ibid.*, c. 5. The reference to Cain is probably (after the manner of Tertullian) a veiled allusion to the death of Plautian.

[7] *De Patientia*, c. 5: 'In edification no loquacity is base'; *Ibid.*, c. 4: 'Every good thing ought, because it belongs to God, to be earnestly pursued with the whole mind by such as themselves pertain to God.' *De Poenitentia*, 12: 'I cannot easily be silent'; *Ibid.*, c. 4: 'To exact the rendering of obedience the Majesty of divine power has the prior right,' &c.

[8] *De Patientia*, c. 12, parables of the sheep and the lost coin; *De Poenitentia*, c. 8, the same parables are similarly treated.

place for *Adversus Valentinianos*, which was probably written at Rome. *De Poenitentia*, *De Patientia*, and *Ad Uxorem*, on the other hand, probably emanated from Carthage. There are correspondences with earlier books, but it is chiefly by contrast with later books that the place of *Adversus Valentinianos* in the series is established. It must have preceded *De Anima*[1] and *Adversus Marcionem*, I.[2] The latter show a deeper appreciation of the Valentinian system and a less satirical character.

Further, though the 'Proculus noster'[3] indicates that Tertullian is a member of a sect, the *Adversus Valentinianos* shows less antipathy towards the Catholic Church than do the later books. It probably marks Tertullian's joining the sect of the Montanists. A decided contrast to the later *Adversus Praxean* is found in the fact that in *Adversus Valentinianos* Tertullian asserts that the difficulty the heathen world has found in discovering the true God lies in the notion of unity, while in *Adversus Praxean* he maintains that number belongs to God.[4] The attitude which he adopts in *Adversus Valentinianos* and in *De Resurrectione Carnis* shows a similar contrast. In the former he despises the 'coat of skins,' in the latter he accepts it.[5]

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' I.—Here again we come to a definite dating-point, from which we can proceed to place a few more writings in the order of their appearance. They are *De Pallio*, *De Anima*, and *Adversus Marcionem*, Books II. and III. *Adversus Marcionem*, I., certainly belongs to A.D. 207 or 208.

[1] Cf. *Adv. Val.*, c. 17: 'Then there arose a leash of natures, from a triad of causes—one material, arising from her passion; another animal, arising from her conversion; the third spiritual, which had its origin in her imagination'; *De Anima*, c. 21: 'Now, if neither the spiritual element, nor what the heretics call the material element, was properly inherent in him . . . it remains that the one only original element of his nature was what is called the animal, which we maintain to be simple and uniform in its condition'; *Adv. Val.*, c. 29: 'That nature (the material) they have pronounced to be incapable of any change or reform in its natural condition'; *De Anima*, c. 21: '(They) deny that nature is susceptible of any change'; *Adv. Val.*, c. 1: 'They have the knack of persuading men before instructing them; although truth persuades by teaching, but does not teach by first persuading'; *De Anima*, c. 2: 'That facility of language . . . which has greater aptitude for persuading men by speaking than by teaching'; *Adv. Val.*, c. 18: 'Like a puppet (*sigillario*) which is moved from the outside'; *Adv. Val.*, c. 12: 'By way of adding external honour also to their wonderful puppet (*sigillarium*)'; *De Anima*, c. 6: 'A sort of internal image (*sigillario*) which moves and animates the surface.'

[2] *Adv. Val.*, c. 36: 'How much more sensible are they who, rejecting all this tiresome nonsense, have refused to believe that any one aeon has descended from another by steps like these . . . but that on a given signal the eightfold emanation . . . issued all at once from the Father and His Thought'; *Adv. Marc.*, I. 5: 'Valentinus was more consistent and more liberal; for he, having once imagined two deities . . . poured forth a swarm of divine essences.'

[3] *Adv. Val.* c. 5.

[4] *Ibid.*, c. 3; cf. *Adv. Praxean*, c. 13.

[5] *Ibid.*, c. 42; cf. *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 7.

In chapter 15 Tertullian says that he is writing in the fifteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Severus, i.e. in A.D. 207 or 208. It is also evident that by this time he is a Montanist, since he refers to the Paraclete.[1]

The following considerations are worthy of note to guide us at this point: (1) The author's use of Scripture is undergoing a change; it is becoming more systematic[2]; (2) The classification Nature, Discipline, Scripture, is coming into use[3]; (3) The distinction of visible and invisible appears[4]; (4) The term rational is employed.[5]

'DE PALLIO.'—Several correspondences between *De Pallio* and *Adversus Marcionem*, I. show their nearness in time.[6] The reference to the three Augusti[7] in *De Pallio* would be ambiguous if there were nothing else to guide us as to the date of this writing. Some have held that they were Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, and Albinus, and others have maintained that the three referred to were Severus, Caracalla, and Geta. The points of contact with *Adversus Marcionem*, I., however, decide the matter in favour of the latter. Looking forward, we find correspondences with *De Anima*,[8] so that this little tract was probably written between *Adversus Marcionem*, I., and *De Anima*, i.e. probably about A.D. 208–9.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' II.—There are correspondences between this and *De Anima*.[9] (1) Tertullian asserts that for the Christian advocate few words are necessary; it is falsehood that calls for loquacity. (Contrast his earlier declared love of writing.) (2) He makes use of antitheses as illustrated in the world. (3) The distinction of *imago et veritas* is prominent. (4) The distinctively Montanistic Sabbath comes to view in both.[10] (5) The development of the 'divine afflatus'[11] and of 'ratio'[12] is also marked.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' III.—This book follows closely

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, I., c. 29.
[2] *Adv. Marcionem*, c. 20.
[3] *Ibid.*, cc. 17, 27.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 16.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 23.
[6] *Adv. Marcionem*, I., c. 13: 'Peacock'; c. 14: Minute creatures referred to; c. 18: 'Tatius Cloacina'; cf. *De Pallio*, c. 3: 'Peacock' (*pavo*); c. 3: Reference to minute creatures; c. 4: 'Cloacinarum.'
[7] *De Pallio*, c. 2.
[8] *De Pallio*, c. 2: 'Silenus'; cf. *De Anima*, c. 2: 'Silenus'; c. 3: 'Mercury' cf. c. 2: 'Mercury'; c. 5: 'Apicus'; c. 33: 'Apicus.'
[9] *Adv. Marcionem*, II. 9; cf. *De Anima*, 37: 'Afflatus Dei.'; *Adv. Marcionem*, II., 9; cf. *De Anima*, 7: 'Veritas et imago.'
[10] *Adv. Marcionem*, II. 21; cf. *De Anima*, 37.
[11] *Adv. Marcionem*, II. 9.
[12] *Ibid.*, c. 6.

upon the heels of Book II. Indeed, there is no indication of an interval between them. The only ground upon which this has been challenged is that there is obviously a close relation between *Adversus Judaeos* and *Adversus Marcionem*, III., a fact which has led some to maintain the priority of the latter. But the reasons for accepting the priority of *Adversus Judaeos* are overwhelming.[1] *Adversus Marcionem* is best dated about A.D. 210.

'DE ANIMA.'—There are three correspondences between this treatise and the little tract *De Pallio* which are of significance when the different nature of the subjects dealt with are taken into consideration.[2] But it is evident that *De Anima* is later than *De Pallio*. The latter speaks of the piping times of peace in which it is written, and of the abundant harvest.[3] *De Anima* is more lugubrious in tone. It speaks of famine and over-population.[4] This famine is mentioned also in *Ad Scapulam*,[5] which we shall find reason to suppose was written in A.D. 211, so that *De Anima* was—at least in part—written in that year.

'AD SCAPULAM.'—With this brief letter, addressed to the Pro-Consul of Africa, we come to another dating-point. Brief though the letter, is, it is full of interesting data for our purpose. It was obviously written in a time of persecution[6] and at Carthage. This is neither the first nor the second persecution reflected in Tertullian's writings, but the third. Further, it was written when Scapula was Pro-Consul, and after the death of Severus.[7] As Scapula was Pro-Consul of Africa in A.D. 208, we should hardly expect this letter to fall later than A.D. 212, and a number of references to peculiar natural occurrences seem to converge upon A.D. 212 as the date. The most important is a reference to an eclipse of the sun.[8] This occurred at Utica, and three eclipses of the sun come within the scope of our inquiry. The first fell in A.D. 207, but that is evidently too early, since Scapula did not become Pro-Consul until A.D. 208.

The second fell in March, A.D. 211, and the third in August, A.D. 211. The latter fits better the description of Tertullian,

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, III. 7: 'Our heretic will now have the fullest opportunity of learning the clue of his errors, along with the Jew himself, from whom he has borrowed his guidance in this direction.' This indicates that Tertullian is here working over the argument of *Adv. Judaeos* again. Cf. also c. 6.

[2] See Note 7, p. 171.

[3] *De Pallio*, c. 1.

[4] *De Anima*, c. 30.

[5] *Ad Scapulam*, c. 3.

[6] *Ad Scapulam, passim.*

[7] *Ibid.*, c. 4.

[8] *Ad Scapulam*, c. 3.

'situated as the lord of day was in his house and height.' The devastating cloud-burst of the 'bygone year' may well have accounted for the dearth mentioned in *De Anima*,[1] which may be dated as late as A.D. 211.

One further point may be noted. In chapter 2 Tertullian mentions the Emperor more than once, so we may have to carry this writing over to the time when Caracalla reigned alone, although, on the other hand, the reference to 'your masters' in chapter 5 may equally well lead us to the time when Caracalla and Geta shared the imperial power.

'DE CORONA MILITIS.'—The attitude of Tertullian towards several questions in this writing shows that it should be placed somewhere near *Ad Scapulam* and *De Fuga in Persecutione*. Flight in persecution is no longer allowed.[2] The Deductor-Spirit and the Phyrgian tone,[3] the anti-Roman feeling,[4] the consideration of the relation of Scripture and tradition,[5] the trinity of Nature, Discipline, Scripture,[6] the prominence of ratio,[7] all indicate that *De Corona Militis* belongs somewhere hereabouts in the series of Tertullian's writings. Whether the writing preceded, was contemporary with, or followed the persecution to which it relates is a question whose determination will help us to fix the date more approximately. On the whole, it accords better with the commencement of the persecution, and this leads us back to A.D. 211.

'DE FUGA IN PERSECUTIONE.'—This writing takes us beyond *Ad Scapulam*, and, being written somewhere about the time of the Saturnalia, it is best dated in December, A.D. 212. The fact that it mentions the finance measure[8] which Dion Cassius[9] informs us belongs to A.D. 212, confirms this dating. The behaviour of the Christians as reflected in this treatise also shows that it is subsequent to *Ad Scapulam*. There Tertullian had affirmed that persecution would result in the death of troops of Christians[10]; here is the lamentable confession that the result has been rather to put them to flight. It is worthy of note that persecution is not, as in the *Apologeticus*, attributed to the devil, but to God's discipline, and has as its end the development of Christian character.

[1] *De Anima*, c. 30.
[2] *De Corona Militis*, c. 1.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 1.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[6] *Ibid.*, c. 5.
[7] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[8] *De Fuga*, c. 12.
[9] *Dion Cassius*, c. 77.
[10] *Ad Scapulam*, c. 3.

'SCORPIACE.'—The correspondences between this book and *De Fuga in Persecutione* are many.[1] There are some traces of Montanism, e.g. the emphasizing of the dignity of prophecy[2] and the reference to baptism of blood.[3] Tertullian is by no means the ardent admirer of simplicity[4] which he once was, and his outlook is very dark. How much of it is to be attributed to objective reality and how much is subjective we have no means of determining.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' IV.—The nearness in time of *Adversus Marcionem*, IV., and *Scorpiace* is evident from their quotation of Scripture passages relating to suffering, e.g. Isa. lvii., but the absence of reference to persecution in *Adversus Marcionem*, IV., shows that it came later, after the subsiding of the vexation.

'DE CARNE CHRISTI' AND 'DE RESURRECTIONE CARNIS.'—These two are so closely bound together that for our present purpose they may be regarded as one. Their close proximity to *Scorpiace* is also evident.[5] In *De Carne Christi* there are definite indications that *Adversus Marcionem* has already been written.[6] Several reflections of historical events also help us to place these books just here. The 'eternal plaguey taxing of Cæsar'[7] reflects Caracalla's device to increase the number of taxpayers by making all the inhabitants of Roman territory Roman citizens. Caracalla is also alluded to by the reference to Cain, the murderer of his brother.[8] *De Resurrectione Carnis* also looks back to the building of the Odeum in Carthage,[9] and this is built and used already in *Scorpiace*.

[1] *De Fuga*, c. 4; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 8: ratio. *De Fuga*, c. 1; cf. *Scorpiace*, cc. 2, 3: attitude towards flight. *De Fuga*, c. 2; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 10: 'A drop of the bucket, dust of the threshing floor; the spittle of the mouth.' De Fuga, c. 7; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 12: 'The lake of brimstone and fire.' *De Fuga*, c. 14; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 6: the relation of suffering to the will of God.

[2] *Scorpiace*, c. 8.

[3] *Scorpiace*, c. 6. Martyrdom here takes the place of a second repentance as a means of rendering satisfaction for post-baptismal sin. Cf. *De Poenitentia*, c. 9.

[4] *Scorpiace*, c. 1. The simplicity of many Christians is here a reproach. Contrast Tertullian's earlier eulogies of simplicity in *De Baptismo*, *De Testimonio Animae*, *De Praes. Haereticorum*, and *Adv. Valentinianos*.

[5] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 48; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 2. *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 45; '*possidere haereditate*.' The hand of God and the breath of God. The confession of Christ before men. Insistence upon the literal meaning of Scripture. *De Carne Christi*, c. 5; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 9. *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 18; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 11.

[6] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 30, shows a development of parabolic interpretation compared with *Adv. Marcionem*, IV., 30. *De Carne Christi*, c. 22, implies the discussion of the gospels in *Adv. Marcionem*, IV., 2.

[7] *De Carne Christi*, c. 2. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 17. [9] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 42.

A backward glance at the emptying of the islands of exile is found in *De Resurrectione Carnis*.[1]

There is no trace of active persecution at this time. The reference to the sufferings of Christians in *De Resurrectione Carnis* has no immediate significance. True, the cry, 'To the lions with the Christians!' is still heard in the circus, but there is no mention of sword and beast and fire. The reference to the ten kings of the Apocalypse is of interest chronologically, since Caracalla is the tenth. *De Corona Militis*, *De Fuga in Persecutione*, and *Adversus Marcionem*, IV., are all brought to mind in *De Resurrectione Carnis*.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' V.—The tenth chapter of this book[2] clearly shows that *De Resurrectione Carnis* was already written, and the ninth chapter develops the argument concerning the duration of bones after death. Further, both books treat of the question of baptism for the dead.[3] The same distinction between 'soul' and 'life' is found in both books, but while in *De Resurrectione Carnis* Tertullian holds that the cup partakes of the guilt of the poisoner, he argues the direct contrary in *Adversus Marcionem*, V.,[4] thus leaving to us the inference that the latter is later by some considerable time. Some of the general characteristics of the later works are evident here. Here he first shows that he knew that Marcion disapproved of allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures.[5] Here also are evidences of the more scientific use of Scripture on the author's part.[6]

'DE VIRGINIBUS VELANDIS.'—Exact precision with regard to the date of this writing is difficult to attain. But that it is rightly placed at about this point in the series is fairly certain. It deals with a subject which was treated as early as *De Oratione*,[7] but while the subject has been glanced at incidentally several times it is now treated systematically and fully. The point of view has changed considerably since *De Oratione* was written. The quotation from Ecclesiastes in chapter I forms a link with *Adversus Marcionem*, V.,[8] and this is strengthened

[1] *Ibid.*, c. 34.

[2] 'Let us now return to the resurrection, to the defence of which against heretics of all sorts we have given, indeed, sufficient attention in another work of ours.'

[3] *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 10; *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 48.

[4] *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 10; *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 16.

[5] *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 1.

[6] *Ibid.*, *passim*.

[7] *De Oratione*, c. 21.

[8] *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 4.

by many other correspondences. The view of the purpose of veils in the two books is not the same, that in *De Virginibus Velandis* being more severe. The quotation of a passage from Genesis and one from Corinthians in both books in the same connexion, and the similarity of the opening of both books, corroborates the evidence already mentioned as to their close temporal relation, while they also both bear marks which show that they are subsequent to *De Resurrectione Carnis*.

'ADVERSUS PRAXEAN.'—This book has most of the characteristics of Tertullian's later writings, while it brings in that anti-Roman tendency which marks the remainder of his writings from this point to the end. The writings of Hippolytus[1] confirm our setting of *Adversus Praxean* here, because he tells us that it was in the time of Callistus that the Monarchianism which Tertullian combats in this work was rife at Rome. Of importance, too, are the fact that Tertullian has by this time not only toned down his anti-Gnosticism, but has become infected in some slight degree with Gnosticism, as his use of 'prolation' shows,[2] and the allusion to the Greeks, which indicates that they are becoming of more importance to him as he moves away from Rome.[3]

'DE MONOGAMIA' AND 'DE EXHORTATIONE CASTITATIS.'—These two books again lie side by side. But first we must notice that there are a few slight connecting-links between *Adversus Praxean* and *De Exhortatione Castitatis*.[4] But between *De Monogamia* and *De Exhortatione Castitatis* the

[1] Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*: 'For they advance statements after this manner—that one and the same God is the Creator and Father of all things; and that when it pleased him, He appeared (though, however, being invisible) to just men of old' (book ix., c. 5). Cf. also the following passages: 'For in this manner he'—Noetus—'thinks to establish the sovereignty (of God), alleging that Father and Son, (so-called), are one and the same (substance), not one individual produced from a different one, but Himself from Himself: and that He is styled by name Father and Son, according to vicissitude of times' (Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, book ix., c. 5). 'But in what sense we call Him "Another" we have already often described. In that we call Him Another, we must needs imply that He is not identical—not identical, indeed, yet not as if separate; *Other* by dispensation, not by division' (*Adv. Praxean*, c. 21). These passages indicate that Tertullian and Hippolytus are contending with the same heresy, and the latter says explicitly that it was in the time of Callistus that it was introduced to Rome (book ix., Preface).

[2] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 8.

[3] *Ibid.*, c. 3.

[4] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 26: 'We have run through John's Gospel'; cf. *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 3: 'I may now follow the course of the Apostle's words.' *Adversus Praxean*, c. 17: 'We do, indeed, definitely declare that two Beings are God . . . according to the principle of the (divine) economy, which introduces number'; cf. *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 7: 'That which is not unity is number. In short, after unity begins number.'

correspondences are many and close.[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis* contains a clear reference to the days of Callistus.[2] In chapter 7 Tertullian quotes an undiscoverable passage from Leviticus: 'My priests shall not pluralize marriages.' *De Exhortatione Castitatis* cannot be dated earlier than A.D. 217. *De Monogamia* is later than *De Exhortatione*, since it corrects a statement made in the latter that Peter was a single man.

'DE JEJUNIO ADVERSUS PSYCHICOS.'—The nature of the subject and the manner of its treatment prove abundantly that this book belongs to the anti-Roman period of Tertullian's literary activity. Two passages remind us of *De Exhortatione Castitatis*.[3] The Phrygian point of view is more marked than ever. Psychicos and spiritales are very numerous. The Phrygian point of view in regard to the Sabbath is also obvious.[4]

'DE PUDICITIA.'—That this is the last of Tertullian's extant works may be presumed from the fact that no other writing makes a backward reference to it. It has many correspondences with *Adversus Praxean*[5] and *De Monogamia*, and points of agreement with Hippolytus[6] also tend to confirm the late date of this writing. In *De Monogamia* Tertullian has mentioned the subject of which this writing treats, but without any indication that he at that time contemplated writing a

[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 3; cf. *De Monogamia*, c. 3: burning and marrying. *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 5; cf. *De Monogamia*, c. 7: 'Lamech.' *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 6; cf. *De Monogamia*, c. 7: 'Grow and multiply.' *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 8; cf. *De Monogamia*, c. 8: 'Marriage of Apostles.'

[2] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 7: 'Thence, therefore, among us the prescript is more fully and more carefully laid down that they who are chosen into the sacerdotal order must be men of one marriage; which rule is so rigidly observed, that I remember some removed from their office for digamy.' Hippolytus says that 'about the time of this man (Callistus) bishops, priests, and deacons, who had been twice married, and thrice married, began (to be allowed) to retain their place among the clergy' (book ix., c. 7). The inference that Tertullian could not have written this prior to the days of Callistus is obvious.

[3] *De Jejunio*, c. 11; cf. *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 4. *De Jejunio*, c. 4; cf. *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 6.

[4] *De Jejunio*, cc. 14, 15.

[5] De Pudicitia, c. 21: The Trinity is mentioned; c. 16. Cf. *Adv. Praxean*, c. 20.

[6] Compare the following: Who, moreover, was able to forgive sins? This is His alone, prerogative; for 'Who remitteth sins but God alone?' (*De Pudicitia*, c. 21). 'And yet those scars graven on the Christian combatant . . . will anew be remitted to such, because their apostasy was expiable! In their case alone is the flesh weak. Nay, no flesh so strong as that which crushes out the Spirit!' (*De Pudicitia*, c. 21). 'The sovereign Pontiff . . . issues an edict, "I remit, to such as have discharged (the requirement of) repentance, the sins both of adultery and of fornication" (*De Pudicitia*, c. 1). 'And he (Callistus) first invented the device of conniving with men in regard of their indulgence in (sensual) pleasures, saying that all had their sins forgiven by himself' (Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, book ix., c. 7).

tract specifically dealing with that topic, so that it is probably separated by some interval from *De Monogamia*.

THE THEOLOGICAL CONTENTS OF THE WRITINGS OF TERTULLIAN IN THE ORDER INDICATED.—Hitherto we have endeavoured to establish the order in which Tertullian's works were written without reference to the theological conceptions contained in them. This method is to be preferred as less arbitrary and more satisfactory in its results than the method of determining the priority of one writing to another by comparing the theological conceptions found in them. But a comparison of the theology of the books in the order in which we have placed them reveals a development of thought that is natural, and thereby confirms the accuracy of our arrangement of the writings. It will be seen that there is a movement from the elements of the Christian faith through ascending stages of difficulty to the most difficult doctrines, and at the same time a development of some at least of the doctrines. We shall also notice the introduction of Montanistic conceptions, which for the most part do not supplant the theology of the orthodox faith, but supplement it. It will further be possible to trace in chronological sequence the various streams of thought under whose influence Tertullian came—those of the earlier apologists, of the Roman tradition, and of the school of Asia Minor.

It will be observed at once that the earliest writings confine themselves to the discussion of such practical questions as baptism, prayer, martyrdom, idolatry, and the attitude of Christians to the world around them. They also contain a statement of the Rule of Faith,[1] and indicate an attitude towards the Scriptures and the Church which underwent a change with the lapse of time.

It is instructive also to notice the absence of anti-Gnosticism, and of any endeavour to treat the questions of the Trinity, the Logos, the Person of Christ, Man, Sin, and the Resurrection, in a systematic manner. No indication of Montanistic ideas or anti-Roman feeling are to be found.

Commencing again with *Apologeticus*, we find a statement[2] of some length as to what the Christian religion really is. It is not so complete a statement as that which Tertullian gives in the Rule of Faith in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, but

[1] *De Praes. Haer.*, c. 13. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. 17.

it is more discursive, and elaborates the first half of the Rule of Faith. The object of Christian worship is defined as the 'one God who by His commanding word, His arranging wisdom, His mighty power, brought forth from nothing this entire mass of our world, with all its array of elements, bodies, spirits, for the glory of His Majesty.' Here it is affirmed that God is the Creator of the world and its inhabitants. Further, Tertullian adds that God is both visible and invisible, incomprehensible yet manifested in grace. He is at once known and unknown, and the crowning guilt of men is that they will not recognize One of whom they cannot possibly be ignorant. The grounds of belief in Him are the evidence of the works of His hands and the testimony of the 'soul by nature Christian.'

It is important to note that we have here; (1) A foreshadowing of the antithesis of visible and invisible, which is, however, not very clearly stated; (2) An intimation that the testimony of the soul was already of some importance in Tertullian's view; (3) Evidence of the proof of the existence of God from the existence of the world. But these are not yet developed.

These proofs are supplemented by revelation in the Scriptures,[1] which speak of God's judgements, and of the reward of eternal life for the worshippers of God, and the doom of fire for the wicked. The resurrection of all men is affirmed. The inspired writers of whom Tertullian speaks with appreciation are the prophets of the Old Testament. The authority of the Scriptures is based upon their antiquity[2] and majesty,[3] but the Christian religion is admitted to be of recent date.

Of Christ it is affirmed that He is the Son of God, the supreme Head and Master of the grace and discipline, the Enlightener and Trainer of the human race. He is the Logos—the Word, and Reason, and Power, by whom God made the world and all that it contains—that same Logos who is said by Zeno to be the Creator, and by Cleanthes to be the pervading spirit of the universe.[4] The illustration of the sun and the ray, the matrix and shoot, is already used. In the Son there is no division of the substance of the Father, but merely an extension. The Son is second in manner of existence, in position not in nature. This ray of God descending into a

[1] *Apologeticus* c. 18
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 19.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 20.
[4] *Apologeticus*, c. 21.

certain virgin, and made flesh in her womb, is in His birth God and man united. 'The flesh formed by the spirit is nourished, grows up to manhood, speaks, teaches, works, and is the Christ.'

The essential elements of the orthodox doctrine of the Person of Christ are contained in this statement. The divine and the human are duly recognized. The unity of substance of the Father and the Son is definitely expressed. But the subject of the Person of Christ is dealt with very briefly, and it is significant that the Holy Spirit as the third Person in the Godhead is not even mentioned.

Two comings of Christ are here[1] mentioned by Tertullian, one in the humility of a human life, the other in all the majesty of God. The latter is imminent.

Another doctrine which is stated in *Apologeticus* is that of the existence of certain spiritual essences.[2] They are demons and angels, whose chief is Satan, and who have fallen of their own free will from a state of grace.

This is the first really orderly statement of Christian doctrine as a whole found in the writings of Tertullian. Before we proceed to trace the development of his theloogy from this nucleus we must supplement the statement found in *Apologeticus* by some notice of theological points found in those writings which preceded the latter.

In *De Baptismo* we find a clear recognition of the Holy Spirit. He is called the Spirit of God[3] who hovered over the waters at the creation—a holy thing over a holy—and it is the Holy Spirit that is given to the baptized after baptism.[4] It is significant, in view of the absence of reference to the Spirit in *Apologeticus*, that the three Persons in the Trinity are named here together. The term Trinity, however, is not found, and it is questionable whether the thought of the Trinity was present to the mind of the writer.

Other points worthy of note in *De Baptismo* are: (1) The over-emphasis of the virtue of water, as such, in the sacrament of baptism[5]; (2) the distinction of flesh and spirit in man is already made[6]; (3) The Church is where the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are[7]; (4) Unction and the imposition of hands are explained[8]; (5) Allegorical and typical interpretations of Scripture

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 21. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. 22. [3] *De Baptismo*, c. 4. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 6.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 1. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 4. [7] *Ibid.*, c. 6. [8] *Ibid.*, cc. 6, 7.

are plentiful[1]; (6) The world is destined to fire[2]; (7) There is a connexion between the death and resurrection of Christ, and the salvation and resurrection of men, but it is not clearly defined[3]; (8) Baptism is an essential of salvation[4]; (9) Martyrdom is a 'second font'[5]; (10) Children are innocent[6]; (11) The Church is 'your mother.'[7]

In *Adversus Judaeos* the matters that call for special notice are a fuller statement of the expectation of Christ[8] and a considerable reference to His passion.[9] The passage, 'Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree,' applies to those who suffered for their sins. But Christ was humble and righteous, and was not hanged upon a tree for His own deserts, but in order that the sayings of the prophets should be fulfilled.

We may also notice as minor points: (1) The description of God as the 'Founder of the universe, the Governor of the whole world, the Fashioner of humanity, the Sower of universal nations'[10]; (2) Death is the result of sin[11]; (3) The law, i.e. the universal law, was prior to Moses[12]; (4) The temporary character of the Jewish Sabbath[13]; (5) The typical interpretation of Scripture is very prominent.[14]

De Spectaculis is, as we should expect, not rich in theological statements, but there are a few which are significant. On the being of God the author says, 'Now nobody denies what nobody is ignorant of (for Nature herself is the teacher of it), that God is the Maker of the universe, that it is good, and that it is man's free gift from his Maker.'[15]

What is wrong in the world is due to man, enticed by the devil.[16] In his search for Scripture support Tertullian makes use of a far-fetched application of the first Psalm.[17] The Holy Spirit is mentioned.[18] It is significant that Tertullian here acknowledges that even the heathen may be good.[19] References to the blood of Christ,[20] to demon possession,[21] and to the speedy approach of Christ's advent,[22] complete the sentences which have any theological significance in *De Spectaculis*.

The only matter of interest to us in our present investigation in *De Cultu Feminarum*, I. and II., is the statement which

[1] *De Baptismo*, cc. 8, 9. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 8. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 11. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 12.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 16. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 18. [7] *Ibid.*, c. 20. [8] *Adv. Judaeos*, cc. 7–9.
[9] *Ibid.*, cc. 10–13. [10] *Ibid.*, c. 2. [11] *Ibid.*, c. 2. [12] *Ibid.*, c. 2.
[13] *Ibid.*, c. 4. [14] *Ibid.*, *passim*. [15] *De Spectaculis*, c. 2. [16] *Ibid.*
[17] *Ibid.*, c. 3. [18] *Ibid.*, c. 15. [19] *Ibid.*, c. 19. [20] *Ibid.*, c. 29.
[21] *Ibid.*, c. 26. [22] *Ibid.*, c. 30.

traces the entrance of sin into the world to the action of the woman, and affirms that the guilt still remains on her sex.[1]

De Oratione opens with a difficult statement: 'The Spirit of God and the Word of God—Word of Reason and Reason and Spirit of Word—Jesus Christ our Lord namely, who is both the one and the other, has determined for us, the disciples of the New Testament, a new form of prayer.' But taken in conjunction with the statement following, that Jesus Christ is approved as the Spirit of God, and the Word of God, and Reason of God, it carries us no farther than the statement of *Apologeticus*.

Other points of minor importance are: (1) The consummation of the age is desirable[2]; (2) The Fatherhood of God is mentioned, and, in conjunction with it, the motherhood of the Church[3]; (3) Christ is the Bread of Life[4]; (4) The clemency of God is remarked[5]; (5) Debt is a figure of guilt.[6]

De Idololatria contains minor points only. They are: (1) The Holy Spirit is mentioned as having led the apostles[7]; (2) Christians have a law[8]; (3) Sabbaths are strange to Christians[9]; (4) The powers and dignities of the world are hostile to Christ.[10]

Ad Martyras furnishes little beyond the fact that the world is a prison[11] and a passing reference to the Church as 'our lady mother.'[12]

Ad Nationes, I. and II., like so many of these earlier writings, give us little of theological importance. Minor points are: (1) The Christian's promise is eternal life, and the threat to the wicked is of eternal punishment[13]; (2) The great God of the Christians is the Dispenser of Kingdoms[14]—a thought which is repeated in *Apologeticus*.

SUMMARY.—The existence of God is set forth as a self-evident truth. The proofs of that existence—if, indeed, proofs are required—are stated to be the evidence of the natural world, and the testimony of the 'soul by nature Christian,' but these proofs are not developed. Of the internal economy of the Godhead we have simply the incidental occurrence of the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with some recognition of the

[1] *De Cultu Fem.*, c. 1. [2] *De Oratione*, c. 5. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 2. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 6.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 7. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 7. [7] *De Idololatria*, c. 24.
[8] *Ibid.*, c. 24. [9] *Ibid.*, c. 14. [10] *Ibid.*, c. 18.
[11] *Ad Martyras*, c. 2. [12] *Ibid.*, c. 1. [13] *Ad Nationes*, I., c. 7. [14] *Ibid.*, II., c. 17.

distinction between the Father and the Son. Of the Person of Christ the divinity and the humanity are affirmed. The nature of man is twofold, flesh and spirit. Sin is attributable to the freewill of man under the influence of the devil. No transmissory devolution of guilt is taught, except in so far as it is implied in the guilt of woman as the inheritance of her sex from Eve. But against this we must place the statement that children are innocent. Some connexion between the resurrection of Christ and the salvation of men is indicated, but what the connexion is, is not made clear. The sufferings of Christ are not regarded as equivalent to the deserts of men. The resurrection of body and soul is stated, but not at any length. The second coming of Christ is imminent, and is associated with the consummation of the age. The Church is the mother of Christians, as God is the Father. Baptism is treated at great length, but the efficacy of the element of water is exaggerated. The eucharist is not mentioned.

'DE TESTIMONIO ANIMAE.'—The brief treatise *De Testimonio Animae* is an amplification of a statement already made in *Apologeticus*. Tertullian lays stress upon the value of the witness to Christian truth of the untutored human soul. It supports the Christian claim that 'there is one God, to whom the name of God alone belongs, from whom all things come, and who is the Lord of the whole universe.'[1] It testifies to the 'judgement' of God, since it fears Him.[2] It also testifies to the existence of demons[3] and to the resurrection of men to a judgement of punishment or reward.[4] Such testimony is not frivolous or feeble, but has its origin in God. He is the teacher of nature, and nature is in turn the teacher of the soul.[5] The soul of man, though fallen, yet retains the memory of its Creator, and His goodness, and His law, the final end both of itself and its foe.[6]

'DE PRAESCRIPTIONE HAERETICORUM.'—This is also an amplification of a position taken up in *Apologeticus*, i.e. that heretics may not discuss the Christian Scriptures, which are the exclusive possession of the Church. The points of importance for our present inquiry are: (1) The Rule of Faith is stated.[7] Comparison of this with the exposition of Christian belief given in *Apologeticus*, c. 17, shows that the former is

[1] *De Test. Animae*, c. 2. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*, c. 3. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 6. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 6. [7] *De Praes. Haereticorum*, c. 13.

more compact and comprehensive. It states within smaller compass what had already been stated in *Apologeticus*, and adds of the Christ that ' having ascended into the heavens, He sat at the right hand of the Father, sent instead of Himself the Power of the Holy Ghost to lead such as believe, will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyment of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, after the resurrection of both these classes shall have happened, together with the restoration of the flesh.' (2) The origin of the Rule of Faith in the teaching of Christ, and its transmission through the apostles and the churches is asserted.[1] (3) It is one and undivided, and has been transmitted without pollution and without reserve.[2]

' ADVERSUS HERMOGENEM.'—The two points which are of importance for our study of the development of the theology of Tertullian are: (1) The defence of the assertion that God made all things out of nothing; and (2) a glimpse of the Logos doctrine.[3] With regard to (1), it is sufficient here to say that Tertullian defends a position which is assumed in the Rule of Faith (as he states it), and which was maintained by him from first to last. With regard to (2), we find here a development of the Logos doctrine in its relation to the creation of the world. The following points are noteworthy: (*a*) The Son of God is identified with ' Wisdom ' as well as with ' Sermo '; (*b*) Wisdom is also called the ' Spirit of God '; (*c*) The passage Prov. viii. 27–31 is quoted and expounded; (*d*) The purpose of the creation of Wisdom was the creation of the world; (*e*) Hence the inference is drawn that the Son is prior to all else, but subsequent to the Father. Two observations must here be made. The first is that Tertullian is obviously affected by the topic with which he is dealing, i.e. that the Father, as the supreme God, is prior to all existence, and the second is that he is likewise influenced by the passage of Scripture which he is expounding. Under these influences it was hardly to be expected that he should have expressed the relations of the Father and the Son in a manner which would be abstractly satisfactory. We shall see, however, that there were other reasons to account for this also.[4]

SUMMARY.—In these three writings a few new subjects are introduced—the Rule of Faith and the relation of speculation

[1] *D.P.H.*, c. 20. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 28. [3] *Adv. Herm.*, c. 18. [4] See pp. 207 ff.

to it, the value of tradition and the conception of the Church, and a foreshadowing of the resurrection of the flesh. Other subjects which are developed are the testimony of the soul, the creation of the world out of nothing, and the doctrine of the Logos. The last-named, however, is dealt with incidentally and very briefly.

'DE POENITENTIA.' In *De Poenitentia* Tertullian takes up the position that baptism is not to be received without repentance,[1] and that a second repentance (but no more) is possible.[2] Moreover, repentance is the price of pardon.[3] It makes satisfaction to God, and the instrumental agent of repentance is fear. Sin is twofold, carnal and spiritual, and Tertullian introduces a distinction here which is to be carried farther.[4] Man consists of body and soul, flesh and spirit.

'DE PATIENTIA.'—This contains a fine passage on the humiliation of Christ. God Himself became man, and gave to man the example of obedience.[5] Patience, like penitence, is twofold, bodily and spiritual, corresponding to the twofold nature of man.[6]

'AD UXOREM, I. AND II.'—These two books reveal Tertullian's views concerning marriage at this time. Marriage is not condemned. In Book I. it is said to be the seminary of the human race.[7] In Book II. a beautiful picture of the married estate of a Christian man and woman is given.[8] Regarding persecution, Tertullian says that it is permissible to flee from it.[9]

'ADVERSUS VALENTINIANOS.'—This book is chiefly of service to us in this connexion as a negative statement. It reveals a strong opposition to a system which Tertullian has but imperfectly apprehended, as compared with the attitude shown in *Adversus Marcionem*, but it shows, too, his antipathy towards freedom of speculation outside the limits of the Rule of Faith. The division of men into three classes is definitely repudiated.

SUMMARY.—In these books the idea of God as just emerges, the motive of fear is prominent, the twofold nature of man is asserted, a second repentance (but no more) is possible. Marriage is eulogized, baptism is associated with repentance, the humiliation of Christ is depicted, and the reality of His

[1] *De Poenit.*, c. 6.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 7.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 3.
[5] *De Patientia.*, c. 3.
[6] *Ibid.*, cc. 13, 14.
[7] *Ad. Uxorem*, I., c. 2.
[8] *Ibid.*, II., c. 8.
[9] *Ibid.*, I., c. 3.

human nature implied. Satisfaction is made by man to God.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' I.—A higher appreciation of the speculations of Valentinus is revealed in this book than in the treatise specially designed to confute that heretic.[1] The unity of God, who is the great Supreme, is asserted.[2] God was revealed by His creation, and by the soul and conscience of man, before He was made known by Moses.[3] The antithesis of visible and invisible is developed.[4] God's goodness is natural[5] and rational.[6] God is just as well as good. Other points of interest to our inquiry are: (1) Tertullian's attitude towards Scripture shows development. (2) He compares Peter and Paul as authorities. The twofold nature of man is again observed.[7] (3) The ends served by baptism are the remission of sins, deliverance from death, the regeneration of man, the bestowal of the Holy Spirit.[8] (4) Marriage is defended against the Marcionite doctrine.[9] Tertullian does not counsel the rejection of marriage as a polluted thing, to the disparagement of the Creator, but he does recommend celibacy as the better state. (5) The authority of the Paraclete is claimed for this view of marriage.[10]

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' II.—The new subjects introduced here are: (1) Man's fall was due to his own free choice[11]; (2) Man is superior to the angels[12]; (3) The soul of man is the divine afflatus with the addition of freewill[13]; (4) The devil was not the creation of God—only the primaeval cherub was His work[14]; (5) In man's recovery the devil was vanquished on his own ground; (6) Man should both love God and fear Him[15]; (7) Evil is of two kinds—*malum culpae* and *malum poenae*[16]; (8) The severity of God is remedial[17]; (9) The law of the Sabbath[18]; (10) Repentance in God[19]; (11) Antitheses in God.[20]

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' III.—The matter dealt with in this book is very similar to that in *Adversus Judaeos*, but it is dealt with from a different point of view. No fresh theological ideas are introduced.

[1] *Adv. Marc.*, I., c. 5.
[2] *Ibid.*, cc. 3, 4.
[3] *Ibid.*, cc. 10, 15.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 16.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 22.
[6] *Ibid.*, c. 23.
[7] *Ibid.*, c. 24.
[8] *Ibid.*, c. 28.
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 29.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 29.
[11] *Adv. Marc.*, II., c. 5.
[12] *Adv. Marc.*, II., c. 8.
[13] *Ibid.*, c. 9.
[14] *Ibid.*, c. 10.
[15] *Ibid.*, c. 13.
[16] *Ibid.*, c. 14.
[17] *Ibid.*, c. 15.
[18] *Ibid.*, c. 21.
[19] *Ibid.*, c. 24.
[20] *Ibid.*, c. 28.

'DE PALLIO.'—This little tract deals with a subject which has no theological importance, and furnishes no matter of service to us in our quest.

'DE ANIMA.'—*De Anima* is a remarkable work on the origin and nature of man. It deals with the subject systematically and fully. To summarize it satisfactorily is difficult, but it may be well to indicate briefly the links with Tertullian's earlier thought, and the new matter introduced. He links this writing with his *Adversus Hermogenem* by the statement that he has in the latter work dealt with the subject of the origin of the soul '*ex flatu Dei*.'[1] We have seen, too, that he has already indicated his dichotomic view of the nature of man, and the close connexion between the body and the soul, in baptism, in repentance, in the exercise of patience, and in the resurrection.

The new matter which he introduces consists of a far fuller treatment of the relation of body and soul, and of the discussion of the following points: the corporeity of the soul,[2] the simple nature of the soul,[3] its supremacy,[4] its seat,[5] its parts,[6] the relation of soul and intellect,[7] sleep,[8] dream,[9] death,[10] and the resurrection. He also confutes the opinions of Plato,[11] Pythagoras,[12] Empedocles,[13] Simon Magus,[14] Carpocrates,[15] and Valentinus.[16]

SUMMARY.—The idea of God as just is developed, and is blended with the conception of His goodness, while the thought of God as the great Supreme and as the '*unicus Deus*' is introduced. The argument from the creation and from the soul and conscience of man is reiterated. Anthropology is developed at great length, and from many points of view. The corporeity of the soul and the traducian theory are noteworthy features. There are indications of an advance in the attitude towards Scripture. The ends served by baptism are succinctly stated, and the Montanist view of marriage is introduced. The only thing bearing upon the Logos doctrine is the recognition of the antithesis of the visible and the invisible in God.

'DE CORONA MILITIS.'—This writing seeks to confirm the

[1] *De Anima*, c. 1. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 5. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 10. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 13.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 15. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 16. [7] *Ibid.*, c. 19. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 42.
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 45. [10] *Ibid.*, cc. 50, 53. [11] *Ibid.*, c. 23. [12] *Ibid.*, c. 28.
[13] *Ibid.*, c. 32. [14] *Ibid.*, c. 34. [15] *Ibid.*, c. 35. [16] *Ibid.*, c. 21.

authority of custom when the support of Scripture is lacking, and it supplies a reasoned statement of the various grounds of authority—Scripture, nature, reason, custom, and tradition. It is an advance in this respect upon the fragmentary glimpses of the subject found in Tertullian's earlier works.

'AD SCAPULAM.'—This book contributes nothing of note to our inquiry.

'DE FUGA IN PERSECUTIONE.'—This deals, as its title suggests, with the question of the conduct of Christians in times of persecution, and is chiefly noteworthy in that it reveals a strong antagonism on the author's part to the officers of the Catholic Church. The position it endeavours to maintain is that Christians should not court persecution, but neither should they flee from it.

'SCORPIACE.'—*Scorpiace* deals with the subject of the will of God and His character. It also shows a more scientific attitude towards the Scriptures. Tertullian says that he will deal first with the Law as the root of the Gospel, and later with the Gospels.

SUMMARY.—The threefold ground of authority—Nature, Reason, Scripture—is more fully developed than heretofore. The relation of God and the devil to persecution is frankly faced. Scripture is more methodically treated, but no great theological subjects are handled.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' IV.—The same scientific view of the Scriptures is found in this book. It notes the relation of the Old Testament and the New.[1] It also deals with the question of the authenticity of the Gospel of Luke,[2] and expounds that Gospel in a systematic manner. It speaks of Christ as the bridegroom and the Church as the bride.[3] The Sabbath is treated,[4] but Tertullian still seeks to prove that the *lex talionis* is consistent with love and kindness.[5] It treats of the judicial attributes of Christ,[6] and also of Christ's love for children,[7] of God's mercy and grace, of the promise of connubial fruit,[8] of marriage,[9] divorce,[10] resurrection,[11] of the second advent,[12] and of the Lord's Supper.[13]

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' V.—This treats of Paul's Epistles

[1] *Adv. Marc.*, IV., c. 1. [2] *Ibid.*, cc. 2, 4. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 11. [4] *Ibid.*, c. 12.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 16. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 29. [7] *Ibid.*, c. 23.
[8] *Ibid.*, c. 23. [9] *Ibid.*, c. 29. [10] *Ibid.*, c. 34.
[11] *Ibid.*, c. 38. [12] *Ibid.*, c. 39. [13] *Ibid.*, c. 40.

as the fourth book had done of Luke's Gospel. It mentions God's hiding of Himself and manifesting Himself.[1] It also deals with marriage,[2] the resurrection,[3] and Antichrist.[4]

'De Carne Christi.'—The chief subject of this book is the defence of the reality of the incarnation of Christ against Marcion and Apelles. In chapter 16 the author deals with the distinction between '*carnem peccati*' and '*peccatum carnis*.' The subject of the relation of Christ to the race under the figure of the second Adam is set forth. The Son is called the Spirit.

'De Resurrectione Carnis.'—This work contains a full and many-sided discussion of the resurrection of the flesh. The relation of the flesh to the soul developed in *De Anima* is maintained here. Scripture is very methodically treated.

'De Virginibus Velandis.'—This is chiefly noteworthy as containing a fresh statement of the Rule of Faith.[5] It also mentions the Paraclete[6] and the threefold ground of authority —Nature, Scripture, Discipline.

Summary.—The methodical development of Scripture is continued. Marriage and the Sabbath are again brought in, and the Antichrist is dealt with briefly. The reality of the incarnation is fully treated, together with the doctrine of the resurrection of the body and the soul. The Rule of Faith is stated again.

'Adversus Praxean.'—Tertullian asserts here, not simply that he has become a follower of the Paraclete, but that he has withdrawn from the carnally minded.[7] The Rule of Faith is again stated,[8] with two notable additions: (1) The notion of οἰκονομία is introduced; and (2) the Holy Spirit is identified with the Paraclete, 'the sanctifier of the faith of those who believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost.' The name 'Trinity'[9] is used for the first time for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The subject of the Trinity is dealt with at great length, and expounded fully in opposition to Monarchianism.[10] The Logos doctrine is stated, and the distinction of Reason and Word is indicated more clearly than heretofore,[11] and is illustrated by human thought and speech. The

[1] *Adv. Marc.*, V., c. 6.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, cc. 12, 15.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 16.
[5] *De Virginibus Velandis*, c. 1.
[6] *Ibid.*, c. 1.
[7] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 1.
[8] *Ibid.*, c. 1.
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 3.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 3.
[11] *Ibid.*, c. 5.

'Wisdom' passage from Proverbs, which has already been used in *Adversus Hermogenem*, is employed again as a scriptural basis for the distinction between the Father and the Son.[1] The illustration of the sun and the ray, the matrix and the shoot, in *Apologeticus*, is here amplified.[2] A threefold illustration of the emanation of the Son from the Father is found in the root and the tree, the fountain and the river, the sun and the ray, while it is further extended to indicate the relation of the third Person in the Trinity to the other two. 'Now the Spirit is indeed third from God and the Son, just as the fruit of the tree is third from the root, or as the stream out of the river is third from the fountain, or as the apex of the ray is third from the sun.' The word προβολή, or 'prolation,' is appropriated from the Gnostics to express the relation of the Son and the Spirit to the Father.[3] The names 'Father' and 'Son' are held to imply personal distinction.[4] Scripture passages in which the Divine Being speaks in the plural form, e.g. 'Let us make man,' are quoted to uphold the same distinction, and these are balanced by others which illustrate the unity of the Godhead.[5] The invisibility of the Father and the visibility of the Son are shown from the Old Testament and the New.[6] The appearances of the Son in the Old Testament were rehearsals of the incarnation.[7] The Fourth Gospel is quoted at length to show that the Father and the Son are distinct, and also to show the distinction from both of the Holy Spirit.[8] More briefly, the same distinctions are supported out of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.[9] The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul and of John are quoted in the same connexion.[10] The union without confusion of the two natures in Christ is also set forth.[11] Christ is not a *tertium quid*, neither God nor Man, but one Person possessing the two substances, God and Man.

'De Exhortatione Castitatis.'—The only matters of theological importance in this writing are: (1) The distinction between the indulgence and the will of God[12]; (2) The insistence upon the freedom of man's will[13]; (3) Second marriages are condemned[14]; (4) Even first marriage is an indulgence,

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 6
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 8.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 8.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 10.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 11.
[6] *Ibid.*, c. 14.
[7] *Ibid.*, c. 16.
[8] *Ibid.*, c. 21 ff.
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 26.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 26.
[11] *Ibid.*, c. 27.
[12] *De Exhort. Castitatis*, c. 3.
[13] *Ibid.*, c. 2.
[14] *Ibid.*, c. 5.

and abstinence is better;[1] (5) The contrast of spiritual and carnal is set out;[2] (6) The words of the 'holy prophetess Prisca'[3] are quoted to reinforce the teaching of Scripture.

'De Monogamia.'—Points to be noted here are: (1) Spiritales and Psychici are contrasted[4]; (2) The Paraclete is prominently and openly set up as an authority[5]; (3) The Scriptures are dealt with in their natural order—Patriarchs, Law, Gospel, Epistles[6]; (4) Monogamy is defended from all these sources.

'De Jejunio Adversus Psychicos.'—Here the noteworthy matters are: (1) The opposition to the Psychics is bitter in tone[7]; (2) The adhesion to the Montanist sect is very clear and close[8]; (3) Exposition of Scripture follows the order Law, Gospel, Acts, Epistles.[9]

'De Pudicitia.'—The following may be remarked: (1) The last times are imminent[10]; (2) Fellowship with the Psychics is renounced[11]; (3) Granting of indulgence by the Church is opposed[12]; (4) The mercy and the justice of God are compatible[13]; (5) Scripture is systematically considered[14]; (6) Repentance is defined[15]; (7) The difference between 'power' and 'discipline' is noted, and power is given to Peter and to spiritual men, not to the psychic Church[16]; (8) The Church is properly and principally the Spirit Himself, 'in whom is the Trinity of one Divinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit'[17]; (9) It is sufficient for the martyr to have purged his own sins.[18]

Summary.—Two questions of great importance are dealt with finally, and show Tertullian's mature thought, the Trinity, and the two natures in Christ. The name 'Trinity' is used, and the doctrine is developed: (1) From the economic point of view; (2) In opposition to Monarchianism; (3) As emanations; (4) Philosophically. The relation of the human and the divine in Christ is clearly stated. The Rule of Faith is stated for the third and last time, and with variations from the earlier statements. Scripture is dealt with more systematically, and with due regard to chronological sequence. The break with the Catholic Church is complete, and the view of the Church is strongly coloured by Montanistic opinions. Stricter views

[1] *De Exhort. Castitatis*, c. 9. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 10. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 10.
[4] *De Monogamia*, c. 1. [5] *Ibid.*, c. 3. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 4 ff.
[7] *De Jejunio*, c. 1. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 1. [9] *Ibid.*, c. 2.
[10] *De Pudicitia*, c. 1. [11] *Ibid.*, c. 1. [12] *Ibid.*, c. 1.
[13] *Ibid.*, c. 2. [14] *Ibid.*, cc. 5 ff. [15] *Ibid.*, c. 3.
[16] *Ibid.*, c. 21. [17] *Ibid.*, c. 21. [18] *Ibid.*, c. 22.

of marriage, chastity, and fasting, are also indicative of the complete change over from the Roman Church to Montanism.

THE LINES OF DEVELOPMENT IN TERTULLIAN'S THOUGHT.—It is now possible to trace in broad outline : (1) The influence upon Tertullian's thought of the teaching of the Greek apologists ; (2) That of the Roman tradition ; (3) That of the Asia Minor theology ; and (4) Finally, to indicate something of the force of Tertullian's own mind in the framing of his theology. These different strains can be indicated approximately only, and in broad outline, because, in the first place, they themselves are not so distinct and so mutually exclusive as to render conclusions as to the sources of his conceptions beyond all question, and, in the second place, some of the conceptions (e.g. the emanation idea illustrated by the sun and the ray) are found in both earlier and later expositions.

From the earliest days of his literary activity the influence of the Greek apologists and of the Roman tradition is to be seen in Tertullian, and it is not possible to separate the two clearly. We have seen that as early as *Apologeticus* there are strong evidences of his acquaintance with the writings of the apologists, and we saw reason to believe that he had before that time been a visitor to Rome. The close connexion between the Church of Carthage and that of Rome also favoured the similarity of their tradition.

The influence of the apologists upon Tertullian's thought is particularly evident in his view of the Church, the Rule of Faith, and the Scriptures, as shown in his earlier writings.

It is also to be traced in his theology. His first attempts (in *Apologeticus* and *Adversus Hermogenem*) to set forth the doctrine of the Logos betray the imperfections of the apologists' presentation of that doctrine. The emphasis upon the relation of the Logos to the creation of the world is evident. 'We have already asserted that God made the world, and all that it contains, by His Word, and Reason, and Power.' The teaching of Justin and Tatian and Theophilus is very similar.

It accords with this that he can say (*Adversus Hermogenem*, c. 3) of the Son that there was a time when He did not exist ('fuit tempus cum ei non fuit'), and in the same writing (c. 18), where he identifies the Word of God with Wisdom, the same generation of Wisdom in view of the creation of the world is

evident. 'Indeed, as soon as He perceived it to be necessary for His creation of the world He immediately creates It and generates It in Himself. . . . Let Hermogenes then confess that the very Wisdom of God is declared to be born and created for the especial reason that we should not suppose that there is any other being than God alone who is unbegotten and uncreated. For if that which from its being inherent in the Lord was of Him and in Him, was yet not without a beginning—I mean His Wisdom, which was then born and created, when in the thought of God It began to assume motion for the arrangement of His creative works—how much more impossible is it that anything should have been without a beginning which was extrinsic to the Lord.'

The chief characteristic of the Roman tradition, as far as we are able to distinguish it, lay in the fact that, while a distinction between God and the Logos was recognized, the Holy Spirit was identified with Christ, or alternatively was regarded as one of the gifts of God to the Church. In the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Epistle to Barnabas* this tendency is evident, and it appears after a long interval in Hippolytus, so that we are justified in regarding it as a characteristic of the Roman tradition.

Traces of this are found in *Apologeticus*, c. 21, where the Spirit is identified with Christ: 'Thus Christ is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God. In this way also, as He is Spirit of Spirit and God of God, He is made a second in manner of existence—in position—not in nature; and He did not withdraw from the original source, but went forth. This ray of God, then, as it was always foretold in ancient times, descending into a certain virgin and made flesh in her womb, is in His birth God and man united. The flesh formed by the Spirit is nourished, grows up to manhood, speaks, teaches, works, and is the Christ.' The Spirit here is obviously Christ.

In *Adversus Hermogenem*, where Tertullian is setting forth the Rule of Faith, he speaks of Christ sending, instead of Himself, the power of the Holy Spirit (*vicaria vis spiritus*). But the thought is not of a distinct hypostasis, ranking with the Father and the Son, but of one of the gifts of Christ to the Church.

Moreover, in *De Oratione*, c. 2., Tertullian sets as a third, by the Father and the Son, 'our mother the Church': 'Moreover, in saying Father we also call Him God. . . . Again, in

the Father the Son is invoked. . . . Nor is even our mother the Church passed by, if, that is, in the Father and the Son is recognized the mother from whom arises the name both of Father and Son.'

It is a debated question as to how far it can be said that Asia Minor was the home of a specialized theology, with definite characteristics, prior to Irenaeus. Harnack opposes the idea (*History of Dogma*, vol. II., p. 238, note 1). He notes among other points that 'the doctrine of Irenaeus cannot be separated from the received canon of New Testament writings; but in the generation before him there was as yet no such compilation,' and, 'Tertullian owes his Christo-centric theology so far as he has such a thing, to Irenaeus (and Melito?).' Loofs, on the other hand (*Leitfaden*, pp. 98 ff.), asserts that Asia Minor in the second half of the second century was the place of the greatest spiritual activity within the Christian Church. He instances the writings of Melito of Sardis, Apollinarius of Hierapolis, Rhodon, Miltiades, Apollonus, and other unknown writers, and indicates the sources of their specialized theology in the writings of Ignatius. The characteristics of this specialized theology are: (1) The distinction between the Old Testament and the New Testament is clearly marked; (2) The Christo-centric tendency—Christ is the centre of the Divine οἰκονομία; (3) Modalism, arising out of the close connexion between the Christology and the popular idea of Christ as the Revealer of God; (4) The connexion between the knowledge of God and the assurance of immortality, and the contrasting of the real humanity and real death of Christ with His deity and immortality.

Examination of the case as put by Loofs leads one to the conclusion that the characteristics which he enumerates are found in the apologists whom he names, and that they are certainly found in germ in the writings of Ignatius.[1] Moreover, it would be strange indeed if Irenaeus had not found

[1] (i.) The distinction between N.T. and O.T.—'The prophets themselves in the Spirit did wait for Him as their Teacher' (*Magn.*, IX.). 'The priests, indeed, are good, but the High-Priest is better. . . . He is the door of the Father, by which enter in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets. . . . But the gospel possesses something transcendent (above the forming dispensation)' (*Philad.*, IX.). (ii.) The Christo-centric tendency—'I shall . . . make further manifest to you the dispensation of which I have begun to treat with respect to the new man Jesus Christ' (*Eph.* XX.). (iii.) Modalism.—'There is one God, who has manifested Himself by Jesus Christ His Son' (*Magn.*, VIII.). 'For *our God, Jesus Christ*, was, according to the appointment (or economy) of God, conceived in the womb by Mary, of the seed of

some of the sources of his theology in Asia Minor, though the development of it was in a great measure due to the necessity of combating Gnosticism. Our knowledge of the fact that Tertullian was acquainted with the writings of Irenaeus, and was also influenced by the Church of Asia Minor, leads us to expect to find that at any rate what was common to Irenaeus and the tradition of Asia Minor will find a reflection in his writings, and such is certainly the case.

The distinction between the Old and New Testaments is not found in Tertullian's early writings, but it is clearly brought out in *Adversus Marcion*, IV. 1. Here the two dispensations are acknowledged, each having its own Testament, but the unity of purpose running through the two is maintained. 'And, indeed, I do allow that one order did run its course in the old dispensation under the Creator, and that another is on its way in the new under Christ. I do not deny that there is a difference in the language of their documents, in their precepts of virtue, in their teachings of the Law, but yet all this diversity is consistent with one and the same God, even Him by whom it was arranged and also foretold.' The distinction there made grows clearer and clearer to the end. The last writings—*Adversus Praxean*, *De Monogamia*, *De Jejunio*, and *De Pudicitia*—show it most clearly, the Law and the Gospel being considered in their true order, and the same principle being advanced to the consideration of Gospels, Acts, and Epistles.

The Christo-centric view of the divine οἰκονομία never became a leading conception of Tertullian, but it is reflected in his writings. The emphasis was shifted from the Logos to the incarnation, and the purpose of the incarnation as redemption was given a prominence which it did not receive in the writings of the earlier apologists in the West. This point of view was most clearly worked out by Irenaeus. It had also, before the time of the apologists, been indicated by Ignatius. Hence Irenaeus was able to view the history of salvation as an οἰκονομία θεοῦ, which unfolded itself by

David, but by the Holy Ghost' (*Eph.* XVIII.). (iv.) The connexion between the knowledge of God and the assurance of immortality.—'I exhort you to do all things in harmony of God. . . . Be united with those that preside over you as a type and evidence of your immortality' (*Magn.*, VI.). The contrasting of the real humanity and real death of Christ with His deity and immortality is well exemplified in *Ad Polyc.*, c. III.: 'Look for Him who is above all time, eternal and invisible, yet who became visible for our sakes; impalpable, yet who became passible on our account; and who in every kind of way suffered for our sakes.'

degrees (Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. II., p. 240). 'It is his strong hold on the conception of the unity and continuity of God's purpose and revelations of Himself thus manifested in the incarnation as the natural sequence and culmination of the design of creation, not necessarily conditioned by the fall of man, that is most characteristic of the thought of Irenaeus' (Bethune-Baker, *Early History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 132).

Tertullian did not really grasp this idea and work it out, but there are signs that he was not unacquainted with it. Cf. *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 17: 'Now, to what God will most suitably belong all those things which relate to "that good pleasure, which (God) hath purposed in the mystery of His will, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might recapitulate (*recapitulare*, if I may so say, according to the exact meaning of the Greek word) all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth," but to Him whose are all things from their beginning, yea, the beginning itself too; from whom issue the times and the dispensation of the fullness of times, according to which all things up to the very first are gathered up in Christ. . . . Indeed, what has he (the god of Marcion) ever done on earth, that any long dispensation of times to be fulfilled can be put to his account, for the accomplishment of all things in Christ.' Cf. also *De Monogamia*, c. 5: 'The apostle, too, writing to the Ephesians, says that God "had proposed in Himself, at the dispensation of the fulfilment of the times, to recall to the head" (that is to the beginning) "things universal in Christ, which are above the heavens and above the earth in Him."'

The strong monotheistic tendency of the theology of Asia Minor resulted in a modalistic view of the Person of Christ as the Logos. A reflection of this appears in Tertullian (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 13): 'But when Christ alone (is mentioned) I shall be able to call Him God, as the same apostle says, "Of whom is Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever." For I should give the name of "sun" even to a sunbeam considered in itself, but if I were mentioning the sun from which the ray emanates, I certainly should at once withdraw the name of sun from the mere beam. For although I make not two suns, still I shall reckon both the sun and its ray to be as much two things and two forms of one undivided substance as God and His Word, as the Father and the Son.'

The treatment of the Person of Christ in *Adversus Praxean*, cc. 27–30, reflects the contrast between the real humanity and the real death and the deity and immortality of Christ very clearly. Tertullian says that God was born, and God died, but it was not after the divine nature, but after the human, that He did so. When Christ cried on the cross, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' this was the voice of flesh and soul—that is to say, of man—not of the Word and Spirit—that is to say, not of God.

In the same treatise Tertullian himself reveals the fact that his connexion with the Montanists has brought to him a clearer view of the relationship of the Persons in the Godhead as an οἰκονομία. 'We, however, as we indeed always have done, and more especially since we have been instructed by the Paraclete (who leads men indeed into all the truth), believe that there is one only God, but under the following dispensation, or οἰκονομία, as it is called.' The οἰκονομία is that this one only God has a Son, His Word, who proceeded from Himself, by whom all things were made, and who sent also from heaven, from the Father, the Holy Spirit. This οἰκονομία is further elucidated by Tertullian: 'As if in this way also one were not All, in that All are of One, by unity, that is, of substance, while the mystery of the οἰκονομία is still guarded, which distributes the Unity into a Trinity, placing in their order the three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.' It is from this point of view that Tertullian opposes Monarchianism.

Tertullian's own contribution to these great theological questions is evident. The streams of thought with which he came into contact influenced him, no doubt. But that is no more than to say that he was the child of his own age. His own mind was alert and active, and contributed in no small degree to the shaping of his theology. His interests were polemical rather than constructive. The defence of the Christian faith, rather than the building up of a system of Christian theology, was his work. But in opposing heresies he expounded his own views, and made a substantial contribution towards the solution of the two great questions of the Christian faith—the Trinity and the Person of Christ.

His mature thought as revealed in *Adversus Praxean* shows us that, in regard to the Trinity, he has, by following up the ideas culled from his Stoic philosophy, from the teaching of

the earlier apologists, from the tradition of Rome, and from that of Asia Minor, built up a theory of his own, which is a distinct advance upon anything that is found up to his time, and which contains all the essential elements of the later doctrine of the Church. It also shows us that, in regard to the Person of Christ, he has recognized the essential elements of the problem of relating the divine and the human in Him. His solution is that in Christ the two substances God and man are found, each complete with all its properties; and they are unconfused. Christ is not a *tertium quid*—neither God nor man. He is both God and man.

VI

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD IN THE WRITINGS OF TERTULLIAN

The Existence of God—The argument from Creation and Providence. The argument from the 'soul by nature Christian'—The argument from Scripture—The unity of God—The first article of the 'Rule of Faith'—Against heathen polytheism, against Marcion, against Hermogenes.

The Comprehensibility of God: A fundamental assumption of Tertullian—The visible and the invisible.

The Corporeity of God—The idea Stoic, but also found in Melito.

Moral attributes of God—Goodness—Evidenced in Creation; in communication of His nature; in the law. Justice—coeval with goodness—No realization of the love of God—The Trinity—Doctrine stated in *Apologeticus* and *Adversus Praxean*—The οἰκονομία of God—The Son—The Holy Spirit.

(*a*) The Existence of God

It is vain to seek in the writings of Tertullian for a systematic presentation of the arguments for the existence of God, after the manner of a modern treatise on systematic theology. Such a statement would have been foreign to the age, and outside the pale of what the Christian apologist considered to be his sphere. Nevertheless, there is system and order in the presentation of Tertullian's thought; but it is system and order determined and shaped by the nature of his subject, and by the exigencies of his arguments with his adversaries.

The two passages which bear most directly on the existence of God are *Adversus Judaeos*, c. 2, and *Apologeticus*, cc. 17–20.

In the former of these two passages we have merely a statement of the relation of God to the world. He is described as the Founder of the universe, the Governor of the whole world, the Fashioner of humanity, the Sower of universal nations.

In the latter of the two passages Tertullian is setting forth the nature of the God whom the Christians worship, in contrast to the gods who are the objects of pagan worship, and in refutation of the foul report current among the heathen that

the Christians worship an ass's head. Having defined the nature of the 'one God,' he continues: 'And this is the crowning guilt of men that they will not recognize One of whom they cannot possibly be ignorant.' The indubitable proofs of the existence of this 'one God' are:

(1) The evidence of the works of His hands.

(2) The testimony of the 'soul by nature Christian.'

(3) The revelation contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, whose authority is attested by their antiquity and majesty.

There are echoes of these sentiments in other passages. Taken together, they show us that in Tertullian the reflective and the intuitive tendencies blend. He is ready to argue for the existence of God, and he marshals when necessary the arguments from creation and providence, from the 'soul by nature Christian,' and from Scripture. But, on the other hand, he is more often content to rest in the assumption of the existence of God as a thing that needs no proof. These two tendencies are characteristic of the time in which he lived; the latter an inheritance from the Old Testament, the former called out by the exigencies of polemic.

Of the arguments which Tertullian employs it is necessary to say:

(1) The argument from creation and providence is, in his eyes, so simple as to be self-evident. He derides the philosophers for their vain speculations, and praises the simple Christian for discovering God. 'There is not a Christian workman but finds out God and manifests Him, and hence assigns to Him all those attributes which go to constitute a divine being, though Plato affirms that it is far from easy to discover the Maker of the universe, and when He is found it is difficult to make Him known to all'[1] Here the anti-speculative tendency of Tertullian is most marked. The creation is there; its design is obvious; the creation and the design postulate a Creator and Designer. That Creator and Designer is God. For Tertullian that suffices. It presents a result; it provides a cause. Moreover, it is eminently practical.

(2) The argument which Tertullian derives from the 'soul by nature Christian' appears to savour rather of the advocate's plea *ad hominem* than of the theologian's grateful discovery

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 46.

of a new support for the truth. The evidence which he adduces seems to be finical and unsubstantial. It is based on the involuntary exclamations of the pagans, who say, 'God is great and good,' 'Which may God grant,' 'God bless thee,' and the like. These are the foundation for saying that the soul has an innate intuition of the existence of the God whom the Christians worship. But Socrates and Plato, with their noble lives and moral teaching and devout thought, are demon inspired. Tertullian seems to prefer the thoughtless and meaningless expressions of the pagan throng to the admission of the philosopher who concedes the existence of God, but withholds his approval of the whole Christian conception of God.

But the testimony of the 'soul by nature Christian' is something more substantial than that. Those expressions, which were so often upon the lips of men, were, in his estimation, something more than superstitious or meaningless phrases. They were, as it were, the welling up of the consciousness of God in the human soul. God had created man that he might possess and enjoy the knowledge of God. In his original condition his knowledge of God had been clear and unclouded, but through sin that knowledge had been obscured. In the untutored soul, however, it had not been obliterated, and these phrases, which sprang involuntarily to the lips of men, were expressions of the innate sense of God which even sin could not entirely eradicate. 'These testimonies of the soul are simple as true, commonplace as simple, universal as commonplace, natural as universal, divine as natural. I do not think they can appear frivolous or feeble to any one if he reflects on the majesty of nature, from which the soul derives its authority. If you acknowledge the authority of the mistress, you will own it also in the disciple. Well, nature is the mistress here, and her disciple is the soul. But everything the one has taught, or the other learned, has come from God, the Teacher of the teacher; and what the soul may know from the teaching of its chief instructor thou canst judge from that which is within thee. . . . Even fallen as it is, the victim of the great adversary's machinations, it does not forget the Creator, His goodness and law, and the final end both of itself and of its foe.'[1]

[1] *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 5.

(3) The argument from the testimony of Scripture is based upon its antiquity and its majesty. 'There is nothing so old as the truth.'[1] Tertullian fully endorses the current notion that the antiquity of a doctrine is a guarantee of its truth. He accordingly asserts that God has revealed Himself and His ways to men of old, prophets who were inspired by the Holy Ghost. Moses, he says, dates far beyond the earliest history of the Greeks and Romans, and others of the sacred writers are little less remote. But he excuses himself from the task of arranging the chronology of the Hebrews, as it would be tedious and laborious. Then he falls back upon a second line of argument—that of the majesty of the Scriptures—and this, it seems, consists in their prophetic nature, i.e. in the fact that they foretold the course of events. Such an argument appeals with varying force to different minds, but even at its best it is one of the weakest arguments as to the true worth of the Scriptures.

It is important to bear in mind that these arguments are not to be regarded as the best that Tertullian could have evolved if he had given the whole force of his mind to the task of proving the existence of God. Such a task would have seemed to him an unnecessary work. He accepted the truth of the existence of God as a part of the traditional 'Rule of Faith.' It commended itself to him, with his practical bent of mind, as obvious when once revealed, and his arguments on this subject are but passing interludes in the course of his rapid polemic.

(*b*) The Unity of God

The unity of God is the first article of the *regula fidei* as it is stated by Tertullian. Monotheism was a legacy from the teaching of the Old Testament, and within the Church it was unchallenged until the time of Marcion. But in the time of Tertullian it had to be defended against the polytheistic notions of the pagans, and against the dualistic conceptions of Marcion, while it had to be defined in contrast to the anti-trinitarian unity upheld by Praxeas and to the materialistic theory of Hermogenes.

'The object of our worship is the one-only God.' Tertullian finds the defence of this article of the *regula fidei* against the

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 47.

heathen belief in 'gods many and lords many' a congenial task. He ransacks every available repository of learning for material and illustration, and employs every device of satire, and logic, and ridicule, to pour contempt on the polytheism of the pagan world. When he comes to the positive statement of the Christian belief he depends upon the arguments indicated above for the existence of God. It is the 'one-only' God whose existence he maintains.

Against Marcion, Tertullian points to the fact that, though there were perversions of doctrine in the days of the apostles, no man was then bold enough to surmise the existence of a second God. And such a second God is impossible. But Tertullian first maintains, by a method of proof which foreshadows the modern ontological argument, that there can be only one supreme Being.

'Now, since all are agreed on this point (because no one will deny that God is in some sense the great Supreme), what must be the condition of the great Supreme Himself? Surely it must be that nothing is equal to Him, because, if there were, He would have an equal, and if He had an equal He would be no longer the great Supreme. That Being, then, which is the great Supreme must needs be unique. . . . Therefore, He will not exist otherwise than by the condition whereby He has His being, i.e. by His absolute uniqueness.'[1]

Then he deals with the supposition that two great Supremes may exist, distinct and separate in their own departments, after the manner of earthly kingdoms. Such a notion overlooks the fact that the analogy of human kingship and authority and divine is imperfect and fallacious. 'For although a king is supreme on his throne next to God, he is still inferior to God; and when he is compared to God he will be dislodged from that great supremacy, which is transferred to God.'[2]

In like manner, the argument from the case of rulers who 'preside one by one in a union of authority' is unsound.[3] For a careful comparison of the *minutalibus regnis* enjoyed by these so-called equal rulers shows that one of them is superior in the essential features of royalty, and to him alone can the term 'supreme' really be applied. 'The inevitable conclusion at which we arrive, then, on this point is this: either we must deny that God is the great Supreme, which no wise man will

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, I., c. 3. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 4. [3] *Ibid.*

allow himself to do, or say that God has no one else with whom to share His powers.'[1]

Nor does the fact that the Scriptures speak of 'gods' imply that there are beings equal in condition to the one God. For it is necessary to consider, not names, but essences, to which the names belong. These essences are such that supremacy belongs, and can belong, to one alone.

A discussion of the unity of God in relation to the opinions of Praxeas will be found under the heading of the Trinity.

In his task of confuting Hermogenes, who defended the eternity of matter, Tertullian reveals again his strong grip on the conception of the unity of God; for he makes this conception the assumption from which to belabour Hermogenes. Eternity is a 'property' of God, an essential and characteristic equality, the possession of which is the sole and inalienable right of the one God. Hence to ascribe eternity to matter is to deify it, and so to premise two Gods. But the conception of two Gods is an unthinkable one according to Tertullian.

(*c*) The Comprehensibility of God

It is a fundamental assumption of Tertullian's thought that God is both knowable and known. His refutation of Marcion's second God is based upon this assumption. Marcion held that the true God—the God of Jesus Christ and of the New Testament, as opposed to the God of the Old Testament—was unknown prior to the revelation of Christ. But Tertullian maintains 'that God neither could have been, nor ought to have been, unknown; could not have been because of His greatness; ought not to have been because of His goodness.'[2]

God was known to men even before Moses gave the knowledge of Him in the Pentateuch. Man's knowledge of God dates back, in fact, to Paradise, for the very creation testifies to His existence, and the goodness of His works attests the beneficence of His character. This is further proved by the testimony of the soul. 'The soul was before prophecy,' and, even when idolatry overshadowed the world, the soul bore its witness to the existence and the providence of God. 'If God pleases,' 'I commend you to God'; 'Which may God grant,' were, even in pre-Mosaic days, the sentiments found on the lips of men.

[1] *Adversus Marcionem.* [2] *Ibid.*, I., c. 9.

That knowledge was enlarged and strengthened by the prophets, and amplified by Jesus Christ. The questions of the relation of God to things contrasted as visible and invisible, and of the relation of the visible to the invisible God, are discussed by Tertullian, the former in contention with Marcion, the latter in his *Adversus Praxean*.

He finds the solution to the problem of relating the invisible and the visible creation in the antithetical principle in God. This principle is manifested in the works of creation. They consist of things corporeal and incorporeal, of things animate and inanimate, of vocal and mute, of movable and stationary, of productive and sterile, of arid and moist, of hot and cold. Then why not of visible and invisible? 'Why do they take Him to be uniform in one class of things alone as the Creator of visible things, and them alone; whereas He ought to be believed to have created both the visible and the invisible, in just the same way as life and death, or as evil things and peace.'[1]

Tertullian resolves the distinction between the invisible and the visible God by ascribing invisibility to the Father and visibility to the Son. There is no doubt that he holds the spirituality of God. 'The eye cannot see Him, though He is (spiritually) visible. He is incomprehensible, though in grace He is manifested. He is beyond our utmost thought, though our human faculties conceive of Him.'[2] But He has to meet the difficulty that the Scriptures speak of God as both visible and invisible. He meets it by saying that the passages which ascribe invisibility to God refer to the Father, and that those which ascribe visibility to Him refer to the Son. But, in the Old Testament at least, the references to the Son are to His pre-incarnate state. How, then, was He visible? The answer of Tertullian is that He manifested Himself to men in dreams, or visions, or 'through a glass darkly,' and that the promise to Moses that he should see Him face to face was spoken prophetically of the transfiguration.[3]

There is little trace in Tertullian of the theory developed by the Neo-Platonists and reflected in the thought of Clement of Alexandria that God Himself is unknowable and incapable of possessing attributes. Tertullian readily recognizes that God transcends human thought, and acknowledges the

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, I., c. 16. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. 17. [3] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 14.

anthropomorphic nature of men's conclusions regarding Him. But he does not on that account lose faith in the power of man to know God. He recognizes that the true way to the knowledge of God is not by a negation of the validity of human thought about God, but by a dialectic that stretches upward from the imperfections of the human conception of God to the perfection of His nature.

(*d*) The Corporeity of God

The influence of the refined materialism of Stoic thought is evident in Tertullian's view of the corporeity of God. In Christian theology the idea first appears in Melito of Sardis,[1] who is reported to have given expression to it in a treatise not now extant.

It is plainly evident in Tertullian. 'For who will deny that God is a body, although God is a spirit?' 'For spirit has a bodily substance, of its own kind, in its own form. Now, if even invisible things, whatsoever they be, have both their substance and their form in God, whereby they are visible to God alone, how much more shall that which has been sent forth from His substance not be without substance?'[2] Here the corporeity of God, in a certain sense, is clearly held, and the notion is applied in like manner to the human soul. 'Everything which exists is a bodily existence *sui generis*. Nothing lacks bodily existence but that which is non-existent.'[3]

But it is important to note that Tertullian does not confuse the corporeity of God with the bodily organs of the human soul. 'Discriminate between the natures, and assign to them their respective senses, which are as diverse as their natures require, although they seem to have a community of designations. We read, indeed, of God's right hand, and eyes, and feet; these must not, however, be compared with those of human beings, because they are associated in one and the same name.'[4]

The Moral Attributes of God.—The two great moral attributes of God, according to Tertullian, are Goodness and Justice, and they are not incompatible. Goodness is an

[1] Origen, *Homilies on Genesis*, and Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, IV. 26.
[2] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 7.
[3] *De Carne Christi*, c. 11.
[4] *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 16.

attribute of God neither temporal nor accidental. It did not come into existence after the creation, nor did it find its birth in the moment of its expression. But it was prior to time and the world, eternally present in the character of God. 'Being, therefore, without all order of a beginning and all mode of time, it (goodness) will be reckoned to possess an age measureless in extent and endless in duration. Nor will it be possible to regard it as a sudden or adventitious or impulsive emotion, because it has nothing to occasion such an estimate of itself; in other words, no sort of temporal sequence. It must, therefore, be accounted an eternal attribute, inbred in God and everlasting.'[1]

To the question 'Where are the evidences of the goodness of God?' the answer of Tertullian is that they are found in the work of creation. By observing the works of God, which are prior to the existence of man, it is possible to secure a starting-point, from which to proceed to the examination and explanation of the world order, which was later complicated by the arrival of man.

This starting-point is the obvious goodness of the natural creation. Tertullian finds no discord or imperfection in the world of nature. It is purely good.

But the whole work of God in the creation of the world is subsidiary to a fuller manifestation of His goodness. This consists in the self-communication of God. The knowledge of God is the best of all good things. Wherefore God created man, to whom He could communicate the knowledge of Himself, and the world as the means of communicating it. The instrument whereby God leads men to the knowledge of Himself is twofold. It consists of the fabric of the seen (and lower) and the vaster (and higher) habitation. The one leads to the knowledge of what is good; the other to the knowledge of what is best.

So the whole process of creation manifests the goodness of God, and of that process man is the consummation. 'Goodness formed man of the dust of the ground into so great a substance of the flesh, built up out of one element, with so many qualities; goodness breathed into him a soul, not dead but living. Goodness gave him dominion over all things, which he was to enjoy and rule over, and even give names to.

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 3.

In addition to this, Goodness annexed pleasures to man, so that, while master of the whole world, he might tarry among higher delights, being translated into paradise, out of the world into the Church. The selfsame Goodness provided also an helpmeet for him, that there might be nothing in his lot that was not good.[1]

Furthermore, the imposition of the law was a manifestation of Goodness. Its purpose was to secure the happiness of man, to lead him to cleave to God and to utilize his freedom aright. It was a rational guide to a being of a rational nature. Even the sanction, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die,' was prompted by the goodness of God, for it was a warning of the danger that would accrue from neglect of the law. He who annexed the penalty to the law was yet unwilling that it should be incurred. 'Learn, then, the goodness of our God amidst these things and up to this point; learn it from His excellent works, from His kindly blessings, from His indulgent bounties, from His gracious providence, from His laws and warnings so good and merciful.'

Justice is not to be conceived of as having its origin subsequently to the fall of man. It is coeval with Goodness. 'From the very first the Creator was both good and just.'[2] As Goodness created, so Justice arranged the world. The activity of Justice is evident in the separation of day and night, heaven and earth, land and sea, male and female. Goodness conceived these, and Justice discriminated between them. This is the *justitia architectonia* which justifies the premiss of Tertullian that Justice is an innate and natural property of God. 'By such considerations, then, do we show that this attribute advanced in company with Goodness, the author of all things, worthy of being herself, too, deemed innate and natural, and not as accidentally accruing to God, inasmuch as she was found to be in Him, her Lord, the arbiter of His works.'[3]

As the imposition of the law was consistent with the goodness of God, so the annexing of punishment to the infringement of the law was a course of justice. It was right that, when man swerved from the path of the law intended for him by the good purpose of God, he should be punished. For the fear of punishment restrains from wrongdoing, and the certainty

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 4. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 12. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 12.

of punishment contributes to good. Thus Justice in its penal aspect is an ally of Goodness.

But here arises another distinction. There are two kinds of evil, *malum culpae* and *malum poenae* (sinful evil and penal evil). It is only the latter of which God is the Author. The former is to be attributed to the devil. The *malum poenae* is inseparable from the dispensing of Justice, and though in its incidence it is felt to be bad, in its effect it is undoubtedly good. For the punishment attached by God to wrongdoing is not vindictive or arbitrary, but remedial.

It is noteworthy that to Tertullian the goodness and the justice of God are the attributes of the greatest importance, and that he never attains to the New Testament conception of the love of God. The nearest approach he makes to this last is in the following passage :

' Thus far, then, Justice is the very fullness of the deity Himself, manifesting God as both a perfect Father and a perfect Master ; a father in His mercy, a master in His discipline ; a father in the mildness of His power, a master in its severity ; a father who must be loved with dutiful affection, a master who must needs be feared ; be loved because He prefers mercy to sacrifice, be feared because He dislikes sin ; be loved because He prefers the sinner's repentance to his death, be feared because He dislikes the sinners who do not repent. Accordingly, the divine law enjoins duties in respect of both these attributes : Thou shalt love God, and, Thou shalt fear God. It proposed one for the obedient man, the other for the transgressor.'[1]

But this is a very inadequate conception of the greatest New Testament doctrine, and, even so, it appears to convey more on the surface than it really does when related to its context. The judgement of Loofs appears to be true : ' Auch er betont vornehmlich die Gerichtigkeit und Güte Gottes und versteht die neutestamentlichen Gedanken von der Liebe Gottes und der Liebe zu Gott nicht besser als die Apologeten.'[2]

THE TRINITY.—The passages in Tertullian's writings which are of greatest importance for ascertaining his doctrine of the Trinity are a short statement in *Apologeticus*, c. 21, and a longer and more detailed statement in *Adversus Praxean*. The former statement follows Tatian, but keeps more distinctly

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, II., c. 13. [2] *Leitfaden*, p. 153.

in view than that writer the idea of the Logos as manifested in the historic Jesus Christ. Christ is the Son of God, who came to renovate and illuminate man's nature. His birth will be understood in the light of Word (*Sermo*) and Reason (*Ratio*) and Power (*Virtus*). The philosophers of the heathen also regard the Logos as the Creator, e.g. Zeno and Cleanthes. The Christians, likewise, ' hold that the Word, and Reason, and Power, by which God made all, have spirit (*spiritus*) as their proper and essential substratum (*propriam substantiam*), in which the Word has in-being to give forth utterance (*cui et Sermo insit pronuntianti*), and Reason abides to dispose and arrange (*et Ratio adsit disponenti*), and Power is over all to execute (*et Virtus praesit perficienti*). We have been taught that He proceeds forth from God, and in that procession He is generated ; so that He is Son of God, and is called God from unity of substance with God (*et idcirco Filium Dei et Deum dictum ex unitate substantiae*). For God too, is a Spirit. Even when the ray is shot from the sun it is still part of the parent mass ; the sun will still be in the ray, because it is a ray of the sun—there is no division of substance (*substantia*), but merely an extension. Thus Christ is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God (*de Spiritu Spiritus et de Deo Deus*), as light of light is kindled. The material matrix remains entire and unimpaired, though you derive from it any number of shoots possessed of its qualities ; so, too, that which has come forth out of God is at once God and the Son of God, and the two are one (*unus*). In this way also, as He is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God, He is made a second (*alterum*) in manner of existence, in position, not in nature (*gradu non statu*), and He did not withdraw from the original source, but went forth (*non recessit sed excessit*).'

Obviously there is no attempt here to set forth the doctrine of the Trinity, since the Holy Spirit is not even mentioned. Tertullian has a practical purpose in view—to set forth the original nature of the Founder of Christianity—and to that purpose he devotes his thought. But incidentally he indicates a distinction between God and the Son of God which is of importance for our study. What Tertullian is setting forth here is what the Christians have been taught, and an examination of what that teaching contains yields the following results :

(1) God is a spiritual substance, ' For God, too, is a Spirit.'

(2) He is the Creator of the world.

(3) The agency by which He created the world was His Word, and Reason, and Power.

(4) These three are evidently identified with the Logos of philosophy.

(5) They also have spirit as the substratum, in which they have their in-being, each having a distinct province, the Word to give utterance, Reason to arrange, and Power to execute.

(6) But they also, regarded as one, are identical with the Son of God, who is called God as being of one substance with God.

(7) The ray from the sun, and the shoot from the matrix, are figures of the relation of the Son to God.

The points that call for notice are :

(1) The emphasis upon the unity of the Son, or the Logos, and God—not here expressly called the Father.

(2) The spiritual existence within the substance of God of Word, and Reason, and Power, which are not yet personal existences, but which form a basis for the later development by Tertullian of personal distinctions within the Godhead.

(3) The relation of the Son to creation.

The latter statement in *Adversus Praxean* shows us how Tertullian, under the necessity of refuting the heresy of Monarchianism, developed his thought from the position indicated in the prior statement in *Apologeticus*, c. 21. It shows a curious blend of juristic and philosophic ideas and terms, which enabled Tertullian to set out the trinitarian doctrine in a form which, despite its limitations and imperfections, supplied the framework for the later presentation of the doctrine at the Council of Nicaea, and by the Cappadocians.

Tertullian definitely uses the term *trinitas* (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 12 ff.). He also emphatically maintains the unity of God. With how much success he combined the trinity of Persons and unity of substance in the Godhead we must inquire. Very different judgements have been passed upon the subject by different writers. Petavius said, ' So far as relates to the eternity of the Word it is manifest that Tertullian did not by means acknowledge it.' Bishop Bull declares the very contrary : ' To myself, indeed, and, as I suppose, to my reader

also, after the many clear testimonies which I have adduced, the very opposite is manifest . . . for Tertullian does indeed teach that the Son of God was made, and was called, the Word from some definite beginning. . . . But for all that, that he really believed that the very hypostasis which is called the Word and Son of God is eternal, I have, I think, abundantly demonstrated.'[1]

Bishop Kaye[2] thought that Tertullian was orthodox, but that he used occasionally expressions which were carefully avoided by later writers, who learned through controversy to use greater precision of language. Harnack[3] declares that Tertullian's Trinity is purely economic, and instances the following defects in his view : ' (1) Son and Spirit proceed from the Father solely in view of the work of creation and revelation ; (2) Son and Spirit do not possess the entire substance of the Godhead, but, on the contrary, are *portiones* ; (3) They are subordinate to the Father ; (4) They are, in fact, transitory manifestations ; (5) The Father alone is absolutely invisible, and, though the Son is invisible too, He can become visible, and can do things which would be simply unworthy of the Father.' Bethune-Baker[4] again avers that the judgement of Harnack is based upon isolated statements, to the disregard of others, and is, in fact, modified by Harnack's subsequent survey of the treatise *Adversus Praxean.*

It is evident that there are statements in Tertullian's writings which support the views of those who criticize his theory adversely. He actually says, in *Adversus Hermogenem*, that there was a time when the Son did not exist. He uses figures as that of the sun and the ray and the apex, and that of the root, the tree, and the fruit, and that of the well, the spring, and the river, which are imperfect (as, indeed, all figures of the Trinity must be) as illustrations of the relations of the Persons in the Trinity. He commences his treatment of the subject in *Adversus Praxean* by setting forth the οἰκονομία of the Godhead.

But the statement in *Adversus Hermogenem* needs to be viewed in the light of the peculiar character of the subject that is being treated. Hermogenes affirmed that matter was

[1] *Defence of the Nicene Creed* (sec. III., c. 10).
[2] *The Writings of Tertullian*, pp. 519 ff.
[3] *History of Dogma*, vol. IV., p. 121, note 3.
[4] *Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 144, note 2.

eternal, or else God could not have been Lord from eternity, since there would have been nothing over which He could exercise sovereignty. Tertullian answered that God was not always Lord, as He was not always Judge, or always Father, since ' Lord ' was a title which was given to Him in connexion with the created universe, ' Judge ' in connexion with sin, and ' Father ' in connexion with Son. The idea in Tertullian's mind seems to have been, not that there ever was a time when God's Ratio or Sermo did not exist, but that there was a time when He did not exist *as Son*.

With regard to the illustrations, it is sufficient to say that they are illustrations merely, and that it is not just to argue back from an imperfection in the illustration to a like imperfection in the author's conception. The fact that Tertullian so commences his treatment of the Trinity in *Adversus Praxean* must not be allowed to cast its shadow over the whole treatise. It is the fact that Tertullian is combating Monarchianism which leads him to place his statement of οἰκονομία in the commencement, but that must not be allowed to prejudge the question as to whether the whole statement in the treatise is one of an ' economic ' Trinity merely or not.

Tertullian first states his belief (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 2): ' Unicum quidem Deum credimus: sub hac tamen dispensatione, quam oeconomiam dicimus, ut unici Dei sit et Filius Sermo ipsius, qui ex ipso processerit, per quem omnia facta sunt et sine quo factum est nihil. . . qui exinde miserit, secundum promissionem suam a Patre Spiritum sanctum Paracletum, sanctifactorem fidei eorum qui credunt in Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum sanctum.' This οἰκονομία he maintains, does not impair the unity of God. It is not ' as if in this way also One were not All, in that All are of One, by unity, that is, of substance (*substantia*).' Nevertheless, the mystery (*sacramentum*) of the οἰκονομία is guarded. The Unity is distributed into a Trinity (*unitatem in trinitatem disponit*). The unity is of substance (*substantia*), and condition (*status*), and of power (*potestas*). The Trinity is in degree (*gradus*), and form (*forma*), and aspect (*species*).

He then explains how this can be (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 3). Confusion arises from not distinguishing between *numerus* and *dispositio* of the Trinity, and *divisio* of the Unity. The former is compatible with belief in the Unity of God, the latter,

of course, would destroy it. The idea of a μοναρχία is quite in accord with the orthodox teaching of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, since it does not preclude the association of others in its administration, especially when the sharer in the monarchy is a son. What overthrows the true idea of monarchy is not the assigning of second and third places in the administration to others (in this case the Son and the Holy Spirit), who are closely joined in substance to the monarch (in this case the Father), but the introduction of a rival dominion.

In elucidating this idea of monarchy Tertullian is led into a statement which certainly seems to imply the subordination of the Son to the Father. The monarchy ' remains so firm and stable in its own state, notwithstanding the introduction into it of the Trinity, that the Son actually has to restore it entire to the Father ; even as the apostle says in his epistle concerning the very end of all, " when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father ; for He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." ' We must, however, bear in mind that Tertullian is pursuing his purpose of applying the illustration of a monarchy to the Trinity, also that he is quoting Scripture to support his illustration, and lastly, that there is no thought of an end to *sonship* implied, but an end to the administration of the Kingdom by the Son. If we find elsewhere a more abstract and careful expression of the relation of the Son to the Father, we shall have to bear in mind these circumstances before forming the conclusion that this passage contradicts such an expression.

Tertullian proceeds (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 5) to state in more philosophic manner arguments deduced from the dispensation (*dispositio*) of God, in which He existed before the creation of the world up to the generation of the Son. His statement is that before all things God alone existed, since there was nothing external to Himself but Himself (*Solus autem quia nihil aliud extrinsecus praeter illum*). Yet He was not alone, even at that time, for He had with Him His own Ratio, or Consciousness (*sensius ipsius*), which the Greeks call λόγος and which the Latins call Sermo. Strictly speaking, says Tertullian, we should distinguish between Logos and Ratio, because God had not Logos from the beginning, but He had Ratio even before the beginning (*ante principium*). Ratio is thus prior to Logos,

since it is the substance (*substantia*) of Logos. But this distinction is not to be emphasized, because God had His Sermo within Himself both within and included in His Ratio. In the very process in which God silently cogitated and arranged with His own Ratio, He caused that to become Sermo which He was dealing with in the way of Sermo. As Ratio is the contemplation of God become objective, so Sermo is the active principle of the Divine Nature objectivized. The analogy of human thought and speech as found in 'the image and likeness of God,' while not perfect, is certainly closer than the analogy of a monarchy, and it enables Tertullian to express the relation of the Persons in the Trinity more adequately. 'Observe, then, that when you are silently conversing with yourself, this very process is carried on within you by your reason, which meets you with a word at every movement of your thought, at every impulse of your conception. Whatever you think, there is a world; whatever you conceive, there is reason. You must needs speak it in your mind; and, while you are speaking, you admit speech as an interlocutor with you, involved in which is this very reason, whereby, while in thought you are holding converse with your word, you are (by reciprocal action) producing thought by means of that converse with your word. Thus, in a certain sense, the word is a second (person) within you, through which in thinking you utter speech, and through which also (by reciprocity of process) in uttering speech you generate thought. The word is a different thing from yourself. Now how much more fully is all this transacted in God, whose image and likeness even you are regarded as being, inasmuch as He has Reason within Himself even while He is silent, and involved in that Reason His Word. I may, therefore, without rashness, first lay this down (as a fixed principle), that even then before the creation of the universe God was not alone, since He had within Himself both Reason, and, inherent in Reason, His Word, which He made second to Himself by agitating it within Himself.'

A scriptural basis for this distinction within the Unity of God is found by Tertullian in 'Wisdom,' which is a name befitting the Ratio or the Sermo of God, and with the scriptural basis the distinction becomes one of 'Person.' 'Listen therefore, to Wisdom herself constituted in the character of a second person (*secundam personam*). "At the first the Lord

created Me as the beginning of His ways, with a view to His own works." ' It is hardly to be wondered at that, with such a passage before him, Tertullian was led to make the statement, ' Then, therefore, does the Sermo also Himself assume His own form and glorious garb, sound and vocal utterance, when God says, " Let there be Light." This is the perfect nativity of the Word.'

The difficulty arising out of the use of the word Sermo, which is used in common speech for an impersonal sound, is met by the assertion (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 7) that the Sermo of God is substantial, as being sent forth out of the substance (*substantia*) of God, and the substance of the Sermo is a Person,

' Whatever, therefore, was the substance of the Word that I designate a Person. and I claim for it the name of Son.'

The term προβολή (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 8), which had been used by Valentinus, was capable of expressing what was in Tertullian's mind with regard to the relation of Father and Son and Spirit, and he does not shrink from using it, despite its unfortunate associations. But he indicates the sense in which he employs the word. It is not to express division and separation, but to indicate the unity of source and the distinction of form.

' This will be the προβολή (or prolation) taught by the truth, the guardian of the Unity wherein we declare that the Son is a prolation from the Father,without being separated from Him. For God sent forth the Word, as the Paraclete also declares, just as the root puts forth the tree, and the fountain the river, and the sun the ray. For these are προβολαί (or emanations) of the substances from which they proceed. I should not hesitate, indeed, to call the tree the son or offspring of the root, and the river of the fountain, and the ray of the sun ; because every original source is a parent, and everything which issues from the origin is an offspring. Much more is (this true of) the Word of God, who has actually received as His own peculiar designation the name of Son. . . . Following, therefore, the form of these analogies, I confess that I call God and His Word—the Father and His Son—two. . . . Where, however, there is a second, there must be two ; and where there is a third, there must be three. Now the Spirit, indeed, is third from God and the Son ; just as the fruit of the tree is third from the root, or the stream out of the river is third from the fountain, or as the apex of the ray is third from the sun. Nothing, however, is

alien from that original source whence it derives its own properties.'

Against the objection which arises from these comparisons—that is, the objection that they imply priority in time on the part of the Father—it may be urged that that is a point that does not fairly arise, since Tertullian makes no mention of the time-relation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in this connexion. It might just as well be argued that the tree is superior to the root, and the fruit to the tree, from some points of view, and, therefore, that the Son and the Holy Spirit are superior to the Father. In fairness we must not press the analogy beyond the points in illustration of which Tertullian used it. A passage in *Adversus Praxean*, c. 13, is instructive in this respect. He there says, ' For although I make not two suns, still I shall reckon both the sun and its ray to be as much two things, and two forms (*species*) of one undivided substance (*substantia*), as God and His Word, as the Father and the Son.' Does not this imply, by parity of reasoning to that employed in the above objection, the equality of the Father and the Son ?

SUMMARY.—A cursory glance at the above outline indicates at once that the theory of the Trinity worked out by Tertullian is defective as compared with the later theory of the Cappadocians. It was not to be expected that Tertullian should, as the first one to attempt the exposition of such a difficult doctrine, meet with complete success. It was much that he saw the lines along which a satisfactory solution to the problem was to be sought. His familiarity with legal terms, and his adoption and adaptation of them to the question of the Trinity, proved undoubtedly of great service to himself and to those who followed him; but it seems too much to say, as Harnack does, that ' Tertullian knows as little of an immanent Trinity as the apologist. The Trinity only appears such, because the unity of substance is very vigorously emphasized,' and that his juristic terms enabled him in appearance to set forth the doctrine of the Trinity in accordance with the views later developed by the Cappadocians without his having any sense of the reality with which he dealt. Tertullian does not use the terms in an entirely juristic sense, and really does seem at times to get beyond a formal Trinity, and to perceive the necessity of postulating an immanent Trinity. But he did not hold that necessity clearly and persistently before his

mind. His treatment of this and other subjects is always limited by the apologetic purpose of his writings, and his mentality was such that he easily leaned towards the over-statement of any topic. It is an interesting speculation as to what contribution he would have made to the subject had he been writing subsequently to the Arian controversy, when the need of guarded and careful statement had become apparent. The remarkable thing is that, with so little prior thought on the subject to guide him, and with the intellectual atmosphere of contemporary thought, he achieved so much in this direction. Bishop Bull says: 'Read only his single work *Adversus Praxean*, in which he treats fully and professedly of the most holy Trinity; he there asserts the consubstantiality of the Son so frequently and so plainly that you would suppose the author had written after the time of the Nicene Council.'

VII

THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

Tertullian's belief in creation *ex nihilo*—Exposition of the same in opposition to Hermogenes—Scriptural basis—Five points—The purpose of creation—Man the crown of creation—Angels and demons—The purpose of the divine providence and its problems.

TERTULLIAN had firmly grasped the distinctively Christian conception of the creation of the universe out of nothing. He defended this doctrine with all the acumen and ability of a jurist in his treatise against Hermogenes. The latter was a philosopher who had embraced Christianity, and who seems to have accepted the doctrines of Christianity in their entirety, with the exception of the theory of the creation of the universe out of nothing. On this point he brought with him the notion he had imbibed with his philosophy, and which he found it impossible to discard, of the creation of the universe out of pre-existent matter. Tertullian showed that such a belief was inconsistent with the fundamental ideas of the Christian doctrine.

The Christian view, as expounded by Tertullian, was this: 'There is one-only God (*unicus deus*), who has nothing else co-eternal with Him, because there was present with Him no power, no material, no nature which belonged to any other than Himself.' If matter had existed, out of which He effected the creation, then the nature of matter would have determined the operations of God, and not vice versa. If there was something out of which He made the world, that something was His own Wisdom. It was with His own Wisdom that He took counsel (Prov. viii. 27–31). Even Wisdom was created by God, not being co-eternal with Him, but being prior to all else. The nature of Wisdom (unlike that of matter) does not impose conditions upon God, but is itself the expression of His nature. 'Now, who would not approve of this as the

fount and origin of all things, of this as, in very deed, the matter of all matter, not liable to any end, not diverse in condition, not restless in motion, not ungraceful in form, but natural and proper, and duly proportioned and beautiful, such as even God might well have required, who requires His own and not another's.'

The basis of Tertullian's view of the creation is scriptural. It is in the first instance a truth of revelation. He is frankly opposed to the idea that speculative philosophy can discover the truth of this matter. But he uses all the arguments which his reason can suggest to defend both the interpretation of the Scriptures and the dogmatic statement which he bases thereon, of the creation of the universe *ex nihilo*.

Dealing with the account of the creation in Genesis, he makes five points.

(1) ' In the beginning ' refers to the first original creation of all that exists except God Himself. *Principium* cannot have here a material significance. It may be used to signify the material out of which something is made, as, e.g., the clay is the beginning of the vessel. But it is never so used to denote the origin of a thing, unless the name of that original thing (here the clay) is mentioned. When ' the beginning ' is used apart from such qualification it refers to ' order,' and indicates priority in time to that which follows. Moreover, the text says that God made the heavens and the earth ' *in* ' *principio* ; whereas if He had made them out of a beginning (a *principio*, a material), the preposition should have been ' *ex*.'

(2) The negative form of the proof ' that God made the world out of nothing because Scripture does not say that He made it out of matter ' is reliable. The same form of proof might be used on the other side, because Scripture does not say that God made the world out of nothing. But there is a difference in the substance of the arguments, because the implication that if no pre-existent material is mentioned it did not exist is forceful, whereas the implication that if the creation is not definitely stated to be out of nothing it must be out of pre-existent matter carries no conviction.

(3) ' Earth ' is not a synonym for ' matter.' The narrative in Genesis speaks consistently of ' earth ' and never of ' matter.' So, unless the words are clearly interchangeable, it is wrong to substitute one for the other. But ' matter ' is a

generic term wider than ' earth,' and including it together with much else ; while ' earth ' is a specific term applicable to a particular form or portion of matter only. So the reference of the words ' the earth was without form and void ' to the pre-existent state or condition of matter is unsound.

(4) The whole narrative is an orderly and concise statement of the sequence of creation. There is a series of prefatory statements, each followed by fuller details, and there is a progressive statement of the stages by which the earth, ' formless and void,' was transformed into the cosmical order as we know it. Tertullian further indicates that the general statement found in Genesis is amplified in particulars in other portions of Scripture, e.g., Isaiah makes the Lord say, ' I formed the light and I created darkness,' while Amos says of the Lord, ' He that strengtheneth the thunder and createth the wind and declareth His Christ unto men.'

(5) The Scriptures teach that all things will ultimately be brought to nothing. This affords a presumption that they were made out of nothing in the first instance, for God would not have made that which was to perish out of what was eternal, i.e. out of matter.

Defending the dogmatic statement, Tertullian uses the following arguments :

(1) The title ' Lord ' applied to God does not carry the implication that matter is eternal ; for the name God denotes the eternal substance, while Lord is the relative designation, applicable to God when He is thought of in His relation to the created world. To support this argument Tertullian makes use of an ingenious exposition of the way in which the names ' God ' and ' Lord ' are introduced in Genesis. The former is the one consistently used in describing the process of creation ; the latter is used when the creation is complete. So Tertullian turned to account for the establishing of his theory a circumstance which later knowledge has shown to be due to a far different cause.

(2) Eternity is an attribute of God without which He could not be God. It is a peculiar and exclusive attribute of His. To claim that it may be possessed by anything else is to claim in effect that that something else is God. At first sight this might seem to be a precarious argument. It may be maintained that as goodness, e.g., is an attribute of man and of

God, and as man's sharing it does not rob God of goodness, so eternity is an attribute which may be possessed by matter as well as by God.

But there is an essential difference between attributing goodness to man and eternity to matter. Goodness in God is original; in man it is derived from God. But if eternity is ascribed to matter, it must be original in matter. Likewise, if ascribed to God it must be original in God. Thus a second original eternal existence is set over against God, and He is no longer supreme, because He is eternally conditioned by that other original existence. So Tertullian maintains that eternity is an inalienable, peculiar property of God.

(3) The existence of evil must not be attributed to God, but that is what follows as a necessary inference if matter is eternal. To explain evil as inherent in matter is not to relieve God of the responsibility. Tertullian states the familiar dilemma—if God wills to exclude evil, but cannot, He is not omnipotent; if He is unwilling to exclude evil, though He has the power of doing so, He is not good. Applied to the notion of evil as inherent in matter, which is eternal, the dilemma may be stated thus. If God willed matter to be free from evil, but could not give effect to His will, then where is His omnipotence? If He acquiesced in the inherent evil of matter, what becomes of His goodness? So the explanation of evil as inherent in matter is inconsistent with the truth of the supremacy and goodness of God.

The world, created out of nothing, was created by the goodness of God, for the purpose of making that goodness known. 'The first goodness, then, was that of the Creator, whereby God was unwilling to remain hidden for ever; in other words, (was unwilling) that there should not be a something by which God should become known.' Even before man was created, and there was no one to learn and appreciate the goodness of God, this was the motive that underlay the creation of the universe. It was so because goodness was not in God a sudden, or accidental, or excited impulse, whose existence dates no farther back than its manifestation or operation. 'It must therefore be accounted an eternal attribute, inbred in God and everlasting.'

But the crowning work of the creative goodness of God was the forming of man. Man was made in the image of God. It

was for him that the world was made—both the world that is and that which is to be, ' the vast fabric (of the world) to begin with and then afterwards the vaster one (of a higher world) that He might on a great as well as on a smaller stage practise and advance in his probation.' Thus in a world created out of the goodness of God man was brought into being, and the whole world was made to minister to the growth of goodness in him. On the stage of the world he was to practise and advance in his probation, ' and so be promoted from the good which God had given him, that is from his high position, to God's best, that is to some higher abode.' In this world he was given dominion over all things : ' Goodness gave him dominion over all things, which he was to enjoy and rule over and even give names to.' Pleasures also were added to his lot. ' In addition to this, Goodness annexed pleasures to man, so that, while master of the whole world, he might tarry among higher delights.'

The goodness upon which Tertullian lays such stress appears to be at variance with the legal nature of God's will and dispensation, which looms so large in Tertullian's outlook. But he is at pains to show that it is not so. The law was a product of God's goodness, and even the warning of the results which would follow transgression were promoted by the goodness of God. ' The law, however,' &c. (see c. 5).

ANGELS AND DEMONS.—Though man is the crown of creation, there are other beings, spiritual in nature, who find a place within the scheme of the universe. These are the angels and demons. ' We affirm the existence of certain spiritual essences.'

ANGELS.—The nearest approach to a definition of angels in Tertullian's writings is his assertion that certain ' spiritual essences ' exist. But this must be qualified by the recognition of the fact that to Tertullian every spiritual being is endowed with corporeity of a kind. God, the soul, angels, and demons, all have bodies more tenuous in texture but not less real than the fleshly bodies of men. It is within the range of God's power to create for angels bodies of flesh like those of men. So He endowed the angels who met Abraham with bodies that might be seen and touched. But they were not born in human-wise. Their bodies were created after the similitude of that of Adam. The God who created his body could create theirs. As a general rule, however, the angels are endowed,

according to Tertullian, with bodies which are not visible in the ordinary course to mortal eye.

The angels are divided into two classes, good and bad, the bad angels being synonymous with demons. There is some inconsistency in Tertullian's statements concerning the nature of angels. Speaking of the incarnation, in which Jesus became 'a little lower than the angels,' he implies that the angels are superior to men, but, dealing with the purpose of the incarnation, he implies the opposite. 'Forasmuch, however, as it has been declared concerning the Son Himself, "Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels," how will it appear that He put on the nature of angels if He was made lower than the angels, having become man with flesh and soul as the Son of Man?' 'As bearing human nature, He is so far made inferior to the angels.' 'For although there is assigned to angels also perdition, yet a restoration is never promised to them.' The latter aspect is more clearly indicated in *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 8, where Tertullian is discussing the freedom of man: 'No doubt it was an angel who was the seducer, but then the victim of that seduction was free, and master of himself, and, as being in the image and likeness of God, was stronger than any angel, and, as being, too, the afflatus of the Divine Being, was nobler than that material spirit of which angels were made.'

As to the work of the angels, it consisted originally in ministering in the service of God. They are, as the name indicates, 'messengers.' They are material spirits in God's service, 'who maketh His angels spirits and His messengers a flame of fire.' But some of the angels fell from their high estate, and it is with the activities of these fallen angels that Tertullian mainly deals. He calls them indifferently angels and demons. Their chief work is the ruin of mankind. In pursuance of this purpose they harry men, body and soul. Diseases, calamities, aberrations of mind, are all their work. Their tenuity of substance is of great service to them in this work. Being invisible and intangible, they are able so to act that the effects alone of their destructiveness are evident. They possess wings, and so are apparently omnipresent; they are deceitful tricksters, who impose upon the credulity of men. But women are their chief victims. Having fallen through their impure relations with women, they requited the

ill turn they themselves had suffered by misguiding the minds of those simple women, teaching them to love ostentation and ambition, and made them become offensive to God. Thus originated the love of finery and jewellery in the hearts of womankind; and every art and device for the furtherance of the destruction of womanly simplicity and sincerity was instilled into the minds of men by evil angels. These are the angels whom Christians are destined to judge.

In conclusion, it remains to be said that Christians are destined to become like the angels. This does not mean that in the resurrection they shall lose their own bodies and take those of angels, but the bodies with which they rise shall be the fleshly bodies of their human state, only denuded of earthly passions and weaknesses. The angels here referred to are, of course, those who have kept their high estate.

THE DEVIL.—Concerning the origin and existence of the devil the ideas of Tertullian are clear and unmistakable. Basing his statement on an ingenious exposition of Ezek. xxviii. 11–16, which he makes to refer to the devil, he shows that God created an angel endowed with free will. This angel was formed for good, but by his own choice became evil. 'He was once irreproachable at the time of his creation, formed for good by God as by the good Creator of irreproachable creatures, and adorned with every angelic glory, and associated with God, good with the Good, but afterwards of his own accord removed to evil.' The motive which led to his fall was his own lusting after the wickedness which was spontaneously conceived within him. This is more precisely indicated as envy, and malice, and impatience, prompted by the fact that God subjected the works which He made to man. The fall of the devil (or Satan) was from the heights of heaven, where he dwelt in the Paradise of God. Henceforth he became the adversary of God, and the author and instigator of evil and wickedness in men. He seduced the woman in the garden, and through her the man also. As he had misused his own free will, so he taught men to misuse theirs. Every manner of subtlety is employed by him to alienate men from God.

THE PURPOSE OF THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND THE PROBLEMS ARISING THEREFROM.—One problem in connexion with the providence of God presented itself to the Christians of Tertullian's day, and he faced that problem boldly. How

could persecution find a place in the providential ruling of a good God? The answer which he gives to that question reveals Tertullian's view of the relationship of God to nature, to man, and to the devil.

Persecution is not, in the first instance, of the devil, but of God. It is by His will that persecution comes. 'The question in hand is persecution. With respect to this, let me say that nothing happens without God's will' (*De Fuga in Persecutione*, c. 1). The decision of such a point helps to clearness in discussion, because 'of everything one's knowledge is clearer when it is known from whom it has its origin' (*Ibid.*). Not only is persecution from God, but it is even good. It is the winnowing fan whereby God cleanses the Church, separating the martyrs from the deniers. Or it may be regarded as a contest proclaimed by God, who offers the rewards.

But though the origin of persecution is in the will of God, the devil has a part to play in it, too. He is the agent, and his injustice works in it. But he does not originate it. What he does is by the permission of God. So it was in Job's case, and so it was in Peter's, since in the one case God gave Job into the hands of Satan, and in the other Satan asked that he might sift the apostles as wheat. The petition in the Lord's Prayer: 'Lead us not into temptation,' indicates the same thing. The purpose of God in so delivering Christians into the power of the devil is manifold. It may be to manifest their faith; it may be that the devil, as executioner, may inflict deserved punishment, as in the case of Saul; 'And the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled and stifled him.' It may be to humble; as the stake, the messenger of Satan, was given to Paul to buffet him.

Hence Tertullian draws the conclusion that persecution is not a thing from which Christians ought to flee. But this applies to Christians only, who are so guarded by God that not a hair of their head is unnumbered. As for the rest, they are as a drop in the bucket.

Thus we are led to the conclusion that Tertullian conceived of the providence of God as follows. The world was created by God. It was created 'good,' and for man's good, that he might, through the goodness of creation, learn to know the goodness of God. It was a part of the divine plan to endow

both man and the devil with freedom of the will. To man endowed with free will was given a law to obey. The penalty attached to disobedience was clearly set before him. Of his own free will, at the instigation of the devil, who had preceded him in the way of disobedience, man transgressed the law, and so in the course of time the greater part of the world passed into the power of the devil. Deliverance from the power of the devil is offered to all who receive the revelation of God given by Jesus Christ, and handed down by the apostles through the Church, and who renounce the devil in baptism. The human race is divided into two sections : (1) Those who remain under the dominion of the devil ; and (2) Those who belong to the Christian faith. The former are regarded by God as ' a drop in the bucket,' deserving at His hands nothing but punishment, in this world and in the world to come. The latter are precious in the sight of God, so that the very hairs of their head are numbered. It may be that they are allowed to suffer at the hands of the devil and his agents, but such suffering has a merciful and disciplinary purpose, and is but temporary. It is outweighed by the assurance of eternal bliss. Such is the background to Tertullian's view of the Christian revelation.

VIII

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN AND SIN

The importance of Tertullian's work—The dichotomic view of human nature—The relation of body and soul—Nature of the soul—The corporeity of the soul—Simple nature of the soul—Relation of soul and mind—Elements of the soul: rational, irascible, concupiscible—Origin of the soul—Pre-existence—Introduction of the soul at birth—Transmigration of souls—Metensomatosis—Traducianism—Freewill and the Fall—Unity of the race and variety of characteristics—Original sin, and grace.

ON the subject of man, his nature and origin, the teaching of Tertullian is full and clear. His work in this direction is distinctive, the treatise *De Anima* particularly being, as Harnack puts it, 'an extremely important achievement,' Tertullian manifests an interest in anthropology such as was found later in Augustine, but was foreign to religious thinkers of the Eastern Church.

He was a dichotomist. The nature of man as viewed by him consists of body and soul. The threefold nature (body, soul, and spirit) as held in Gnostic circles of thought he rejected as untenable and indefensible. Ludwig says, 'Man consists (according to Tertullian), not of body and soul, but of body, soul, and spirit,' and he bases this opinion upon passages in *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 6; *De Spectaculis*, c.13; and *De Anima*, c. 10. He further says that Tertullian had acquired this threefold division of man in his Montanistic days. But this is a position which it is impossible to defend. Tertullian says in *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 6: 'Man is the one name belonging to every nation upon earth; there is one soul and many tongues, one spirit and various sounds; every country has its own speech, but the subjects of speech are common to all.'

In *De Spectaculis*, c. 13, he says: 'If, then, we keep throat and belly free from such defilements, how much more do we withhold our nobler parts—our ears and eyes—from the idolatrous and funereal enjoyments, which are not passed

through the body, but are digested in the very spirit and soul, whose purity much more than that of our bodily organs God has a right to claim from us.' In *De Anima*, c. 10, he says: 'Some maintain that there is within the soul a natural substance—the spirit—which is different from it; as if to have life—the function of the soul—were one thing and to emit breath—the alleged function of the spirit—were another thing'; and later: 'Whenever, indeed, the question is about soul and spirit, the soul will be itself the spirit, just as the day is the light itself. For a thing itself is identical with that by means of which it exists.'

What do these passages indicate? The first (*De Testimonio Animae*, c. 6) is little more than a rhetorical device, in which, for the sake of emphasis, 'one soul and many tongues' is repeated as 'one spirit and various sounds.' There is no denial here that the spirit is a mere function of the soul, and no ground for asserting that Tertullian believed that the spirit was a separate and distinct substance from the soul.

The passage from *De Spectaculis*, c. 13, certainly appears to indicate that the soul and spirit are distinct entities, and the sentence might well have been written by one who believed in the threefold nature of man. If the passage had stood either alone, or in company with others to the same effect, the implication would have been obvious; but when it stands in contrast to an overwhelming number of passages which assert the contrary, it can hardly be imagined to be anything more than a loose statement, which is not to be taken too seriously.

As to the passage quoted from *De Anima*, c. 10, the statement of Ludwig derives its force from the illustration of day and light rather than from the treatment of soul and spirit. A survey of the whole chapter shows plainly that the point Tertullian is making is that of the identity of the spirit and soul. 'How much firmer ground have you for believing that the soul and the spirit are but one, since you assign to them no difference, so that the soul is itself the spirit, respiration being the function of that which life is also.'

But Tertullian not only expresses himself in those passages in a way that might make one imagine that he was a trichotomist; he also quotes Paul's saying: 'And may your whole body, and soul, and spirit, be preserved blameless unto the

coming of the Lord,'[1] without being conscious that it brought in a threefold distinction where he himself saw but a twofold distinction.

The clearest proof that Tertullian was a dichotomist is found in the whole assumption underlying the treatise *De Resurrectione Carnis*. There is no mention of spirit, but the resurrection of body and soul is maintained. 'For if the resurrection of the flesh be denied (that prime article of the faith) is denied; if it be asserted, that is established. There is no need, I suppose, to treat of the soul's safety, for nearly all the heretics, in whatever way they conceive of it, certainly refrain from denying that.'[2]

In dealing with the origin of man, it is but flesh and soul of which Tertullian speaks. 'He now became man who was hitherto clay . . . and He breathed upon his face the breath of life, and man (i.e. the clay) became a living soul . . . so that man was clay at first and only afterwards entire. . . . Whatever God has at all purposed or promised to man is due, not to the soul simply, but to the flesh also.'[3]

This view is further strengthened by the fact that Tertullian speaks of the body and soul of Christ simply. 'The first man is of the earth earthy, that is made of dust, that is Adam; the second man is from heaven, that is the Word of God which is Christ, in no other way, however, man than as being Himself flesh and soul.'[4]

It is confirmed also by his arguments against heretics.[5]

It is clear from all these passages that man in Tertullian's view is composed of two parts, soul and body. It is further evident that he regards those two parts as separate substances or natures. 'Jonah comes forth . . . uninjured in both his natures—his flesh and his soul.'[6] 'For man is as much body

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 47.

[2] *Ibid.*, c. 2; cf. the same treatise, *passim*.

[3] *Ibid.*, c. 5; cf. c. 7.

[4] *Ibid.*, c. 49; cf. *De Carne Christi*, cc. 10–13.

[5] Cf. *Adversus Valentinianos*, c. 17: 'She at length gave birth to an offspring, and then there arose a leash of natures from a triad of causes, one material, arising from her passion; another animal, arising from her conversion; the third spiritual, which had its origin in her imagination.' The threefold nature of man as held by the heretics is again referred to in cc. 26 and 29, and in *De Anima*, c. 21. The distinction here indicated is not that of body, soul, and spirit within the individual, but of material, animal, and spiritual individuals within humanity. To this, however, Tertullian opposes the simple (animal) nature, uniform in its condition and composed of body and soul.

[6] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 32.

as he is soul; so that it is impossible for one of these natures to admit a figurative sense and the other to exclude it.'[1] 'For since both substances are set before us (in this passage which tells us) that "body and soul" are destroyed in hell, a distinction is obviously made between the two.'[2] 'For from which substance is it that Christ and Adam have a parity with one another? No doubt it is from their flesh, although it may be their soul also.'[3] 'The higher substance of the soul . . . the substance (flesh) with which it is fully furnished.'[4] 'The entire man consists of the union of the two substances.'[5] 'But in Christ we find the soul and the flesh expressed in simple, unfigurative terms . . . even by Christ Himself each substance has been separately mentioned by itself.'[6]

But these two substances are closely joined together, and make up the single human nature. Though it is permissible to say that the soul is the man, or that the flesh is the man, in reality it is the conjunction of the two substances in one nature that is correctly designated man. It is right that man should be judged in his entire state of body and soul,[7] because it was in his entire state that he lived. Man is properly called flesh,[8] but also man became a living soul.[9]

THE RELATION OF BODY AND SOUL.—The soul is the dominant partner; so much so, indeed, that without the soul the body is nothing. 'Indeed, without the soul we are nothing; there is not even the name of a human being, only that of a carcass.'[10] 'Certainly you value the soul as giving you your true greatness—that to which you belong, which is all things to you, without which you can neither live nor die.'[11]

But the union of body and soul is close and intimate. 'The soul and the flesh are so closely commingled that it is deemed to be uncertain whether the flesh bears about the soul or the soul the flesh; or whether the flesh acts as apparitor to the soul or the soul to the flesh. It is more credible, however, that the soul has this service rendered to it, and has the mastery, as being more proximate in character to God.'[12] They are therefore closely connected in their experience. The

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis.* [2] *Ibid.*, c. 35. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 53.
[4] *Ibid.* [5] *Ibid.*, c. 14. [6] *De Carne Christi*, c. 13.
[7] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 14. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 5. [9] *Ibid.*, c. 6.
[10] *De Carne Christi*, c. 12; cf. *De Testimonio Animae*, 1.
[11] *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 6. [12] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 7.

flesh shares in the guilt of the soul as the poisoned cup shares in the odium with which the poisoner is regarded, though the relation in the former case is more close than in the latter, and hence it is fitting that the flesh should share in the final punishment of the judgement. But the soul is the dominant actuating principle, the body is the obedient servant. 'Accordingly, in the judgement, it (the body) will be held to be a servant (even though it may have no independent discretion of its own), on the ground of its being an integral portion of that which possesses such discretion, and is not a mere chattel.'[1]

Body and soul are conceived together at one and the same time. 'We, indeed, maintain that both are conceived, and formed, and perfected, simultaneously, and that not a moment's interval occurs in their conception, so that a prior place can be assigned to either.'[2] They grow and develop together, attaining the stage of puberty together.[3] In death they are separated,[4] and in the resurrection they shall be united again.[5] In life they are inseparable. 'The soul is never without the flesh as long as it is in the flesh. There is nothing which the flesh does not transact in company with the soul, when, without it, it does not exist.'[6]

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.—The ultimate basis of Tertullian's theory of the nature of the soul is to be found in the Scripture narrative of creation. 'But Scripture, which has a better knowledge of the soul's Maker, or rather God, has told us nothing more than that God breathed on man's face the breath of life and he became a living soul, by means of which he was both to live and breathe.'[7] The soul originated from the breathing of God, *ex flatu Dei*.[8] It follows that the soul had a beginning. 'For when we acknowledge that the soul originates in the breath of God, it follows that we attribute a beginning to it.'[9] But it differs from material beings in that it is born, not made, and God is the Parent thereof. 'For the maker may really be called the parent of the thing that is made.'[10] Further, the soul is the image of God, 'The work and image of God,'[11] and is animated out of His substance. 'Consider first from your own self, who are made " in the image and

[1] *Ibid.*, c. 16. [2] *De Anima*, c. 27. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 38.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 51. [5] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 17. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 15.
[7] *De Anima*, c. 11. [8] *Ibid.*, c. 3. [9] *Ibid.*, c. 4.
[10] *Ibid.*, c. 4. [11] *De Spectaculis*, c. 2.

likeness of God," for what purpose it is that you also possess reason in yourself, who are a rational creature, as being not only made by a rational artificer but actually animated out of his substance.'[1] Moreover, it is rational in its original nature as the creation of a rational God. 'It is the rational element which we must believe to be its natural condition, imposed upon it from its very first creation by its Author, who is Himself essentially rational.'[2] It is noticeable that the Godlikeness of the human soul is bound up, in Tertullian's thought, with its origin in the breath of God.

Tertullian drew a distinction between the spirit of God and the breath of God (*spiritus* and *flatus*), which saved his theory from the danger of Stoic pantheism. Man is not, he holds, the spirit of God, but the breath of God, and herein he found the possibility of attributing to man a separate personal existence, and a free will, able to obey his Maker, but also capable of disobeying Him. Thus he held his ground between the idealism of the heretics, whom he combated, and the material pantheism of the Stoics, whose support against his adversaries he welcomed.

THE CORPOREITY OF THE SOUL.—Corporeity is not a peculiar attribute of the soul. It is rather what it shares with everything which exists. 'Everything which exists is a bodily existence *sui generis*. Nothing lacks bodily existence but that which is non-existent.'[3] This conception is frankly adopted from the Stoics in order to oppose Plato's theory of the reality of the 'ideas' and the unreality of all material things. 'But I call upon the Stoics also to help me, who, while declaring almost in our own terms that the soul is a spiritual essence . . . will yet have no difficulty in persuading us that the soul is a corporeal substance.'[4] Zeno and Cleanthes are quoted with approval, the former as teaching that the spirit which is generated with the body and which departs from it at death is corporeal, and the latter as holding that qualities of soul are transmitted from parent to child as well as physical qualities, the basis of this theory being the idea of the soul's corporeity. Chrysippus lends support, inasmuch as he says that it is impossible to separate things which have body from things

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 5.
[2] *De Anima*, c. 16.
[3] *De Carne Christi*, c. 11.
[4] *De Anima*, c. 5.

which have no body, and Lucretius says: 'For nothing but body is capable of touching or being touched.'[1]

Tertullian argues that the soul is even nourished by corporeal substances. It is refreshed by food, and when deprived of all food it removes from the body.[2] He seizes upon the fact that the Stoics teach that the arts are corporeal, since that strengthens his view of the corporeity of the soul, which is commonly supposed to be nourished by the arts.[3] Though the origin of this theory is Stoic, the support of the Gospels is claimed for it. The story of Dives and Lazarus shows that the soul of Dives is in torment, punished in flames and suffering excruciating thirst, and 'unless the soul possessed corporeity the image of a soul could not possibly contain a figure of a bodily substance, nor would the Scripture feign a statement about the limbs of a body if these had no existence.'[4]

Further, Tertullian reverts to the origin of man to support his theory. He finds that the soul is similar in form to the body. 'This we may at once be induced to admit from contemplating man's original formation. For only carefully consider, after God had breathed upon the face of man the breath of life, and man had consequently become a living soul, surely that breath must have passed through the face at once into the interior structure, and have spread itself throughout all the spaces of the body; and as soon as by the divine inspiration it had become condensed, it must have impressed itself on each internal feature, which the condensation had filled in, and so have been congealed, as it were, in shape. Hence by this densifying process there arose a fixing of the soul's corporeity; and by the impression its figure was formed and moulded. This is the inner man, different from the outer, but yet one in the twofold condition. It, too, has eyes and ears of its own, by means of which Paul must have heard and seen the Lord; it has, moreover, all the other members of the body, by the help of which it effects all processes of thinking and all activity in dreams.'[5]

THE SIMPLE NATURE OF THE SOUL.—In maintaining the simplicity of the soul and the unity of its life Tertullian turns from the Stoics to Plato. 'It is essential to a firm faith to declare with Plato that the soul is simple; in other words,

[1] *De Anima*, c. 5. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 6. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 6.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 7. [5] *Ibid.*, c. 9.

uniform and uncompounded—simple, that is to say, in respect of its substance.' The reason for this change in regard to philosophers is to be found in Tertullian's dogmatic position. His first allegiance is to the revealed Rule of Faith, and his attitude towards the older philosophies depends upon whether they help him to support the doctrines of the *regula fidei* or not. Hence, when he moves from the question of the corporeity of the soul to that of its unity and simplicity, he reverts, too, from the Stoics to Plato. The result of that transition is all to the good. Instead of extravagant theories of the most realistic and material nature, he is led to sensible and useful deductions. The dogma which led him to maintain the unity of the soul was the Christian doctrine of immortality. ' The truth is,' he says, ' the soul is indivisible because it is immortal, and this fact compels us to believe that death itself is an indivisible process, accruing indivisibly to the soul, not indeed because it is immortal, but because it is indivisible.'[1]

Philosophers have divided the soul into a number of parts corresponding to its various activities, e.g. motion, action, thought, seeing, tasting, touching, hearing, smelling. It is better, however, Tertullian holds, to regard these as functions of the soul, rather than as portions or organic parts of the soul's substance. He rejects the materialistic notion that sense-experience is the only reality and that there is no ruling power beyond. There is such a ruling power of the soul, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, and its seat is in the heart. Of this there is Scripture proof, for the Scriptures speak clearly of the heart as the seat of the supreme intelligence and vitality in man.

There are three elements of the one indivisible soul—the rational, the irascible, and the concupiscible. They are, however, merely the directions of its activity. As God is rational, so is man. Any irrationality in the latter proceeds from the devil. But it is quite in keeping with the rationality of God that He should be angry with those who deserve His wrath, and should desire salvation for the good. These three elements or activities were found in Christ, in that He taught and discoursed in accordance with reason, and inveighed with wrath against the scribes and Pharisees, and the principle of desire by which He desired earnestly to eat the Passover with His disciples. They are found, too, in us. By saying, ' If

[1] *De Anima*, c. 51.

any man desireth the office of a bishop he desireth a good work,' the apostle implies that the 'good work' is rational, and blends it with 'desire.' Moreover, he permits us to feel indignation, inasmuch as he is himself moved to it. 'I would,' he says, 'that they were even cut off which trouble you.'

While, however, the senses are not the sole reality, it is important to remember that their witness is reliable. They are liable to mistake and illusion sometimes, it is true, but in the main they are dependable. It is through them that the soul and the mind obtain impressions of the outer world, and in general the opinions which the soul forms are in accordance with objective reality. To deny this would be to denude of validity the opinions, even of Christ, concerning outward realities.

THE RELATION OF THE SOUL TO THE MIND.—The relation of the soul (*anima*) to the mind (*animus*) is somewhat similar, according to Tertullian's view, to the relation of the soul to the spirit. The mind is not separate from the soul as a thing apart; it is not identical with it: but the mind is the instrument of the soul. 'We, however, affirm that the mind coalesces with the soul, not, indeed, as being distinct from it in substance, but as being its natural function and agent.'[1] There is no doubt, however, as to which is the superior. The soul has so undoubtedly the superiority that the word soul has become a synonym for the whole man. So, in common phraseology, the rich man says, 'How many souls do I keep?' and the pilot desires to save so many 'souls' from shipwreck.[2]

THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL.—In his discussion of the origin of the soul Tertullian refutes the Platonic theory of the pre-existence of the soul, the theory of the introduction of the soul at birth, the Pythagorean theory of the transmigration of souls, and the theory of metensomatosis.

THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL.—In dealing with this theory Tertullian sees that the best way of refuting the various expressions of it to be found in the several Gnostic sects is to turn to the teaching of Plato, which lies at the root of them all. In the *Phaedo* Plato had taught that souls wander from the heavenly world of archetypal ideas to this world and back again; while in the *Timaeus* he advanced the theory that the children of God, to whom had been deputed the work of fashioning mortal

[1] *De Anima*, c. 12. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 13.

creatures, took for a soul the germ of immortality, around which they moulded a mortal body. This mortal creature, by reason of the germ of immortality taken from the supernal world of ideas, is capable in a measure of 'recollecting' the eternal patterns of the things it sees in the world. Hence the Platonic doctrine, 'Learning is reminiscence.'

Tertullian rejects the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul on the ground of the insufficiency of the notion of reminiscence. How could the immortal soul forget its previous experience? Memory is, even according to Plato, the basis of intellect. The lapse of time will not account for the lapse of memory, because: (1) Time is of no account to immortal souls; and (2) The lapse of time is too short. Moreover, why should memory fail in all at precisely the same moment, i.e. the moment of physical birth? Another argument which Tertullian uses is this. The natural knowledge of man's sense faculties never fails, e.g. he never forget to eat, see, or hear. Now, if this lower memory never fails, how can the higher knowledge of the intellect fail? Furthermore, if it is possible for the soul to forget, whence comes the power to recollect? How is it so weak in children, whose memory is admittedly so strong, and how is it that even a Plato can remember so little of the former life? And why, if all are equal in forgetfulness, are not all equal in the power of recollection?

These considerations seem to Tertullian to be fatal to the doctrine of anamnesis, and if this doctrine is undermined the whole superstructure of the pre-existence of the soul falls to the ground.

THEORY OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SOUL INTO THE BODY AT THE MOMENT OF BIRTH.—The theory that the soul is introduced into the body at birth with the first inhalation of air is one which is held by the Stoics, and, after a fashion, by Plato. The latter taught that the already existent soul enters its human habitation with the infant's first breath.

In refuting this theory Tertullian enters minutely into the evidences of pre-natal life, and shows a not inconsiderable acquaintance with medical lore. It is sufficient to state that the evidences of pre-natal life are to Tertullian proofs of the pre-natal existence of the soul, which is conceived together with the body. He finds support, too, for this theory in the resemblances of disposition in parents and children. But we

shall recur to this question in dealing with Tertullian's positive treatment of the origin of the soul.

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.—This theory is traced back to Pythagoras, who claimed that he had returned from the abode of the dead.

Tertullian first assails the alleged philosophic doctrine of contraries upon which this theory is based. The fact that some contraries appear to alternate with one another is no sufficient ground for asserting that all contraries do so, and that each produces the other. The nature of the contraries must be examined. To assert that because dead men are made out of living men, therefore living men are made out of dead, is absurd. Then the economic aspect of the question has to be considered. The inference from the doctrine is that the number of human beings inhabiting the earth must always remain the same. But, with something of the pessimism of a Malthus, Tertullian shows that the facts of life were otherwise. Population was continually increasing, so that the pressure upon the resources of the civilized world was increasing, too. Colonies had to be instituted and developed, and more and more of the barren land turned to account, in providing the civilized world with the means of life. The notion that the return of the dead to life only takes place at the end of a thousand years Tertullian dismisses as worthless. Such an interval would be more likely to produce extinction than a return to life.

Other complications also ensue. If souls depart from life at different ages, some in their infancy and some in maturity, why should they all return as infants, and how are we to believe that the mature soul of an old man, and that after a lapse of a thousand years, forsooth, returns as an infant? It is reasonable to suppose that if souls did so return, they would bring something at least of their former disposition and character with them. But the difference between Pythagoras and Euphorbus was radical, as far as temperament and tastes were concerned. Moreover, not even Epicurus, and Zeno, and Cleanthes, and Chrysippus, and Plato, can tell us who they were in their previous incarnation. How futile, then, is a theory which can find so little solid support!

METENSOMATOSIS.—Tertullian cannot refrain from remarking the amusing side of this theory. 'But the fact is, Empedocles,

who used to dream that he was a god, and on that account, I suppose, disdained to have it thought that he had ever before been merely some hero, declares in so many words, " I once was Thamnus and a fish." Why not rather a melon, seeing that he was such a fool, or a chameleon for his inflated brag? . . . Let Thamnuses alone. Our slight notice of them in passing will be quite enough: (to dwell on them longer will inconvenience us) lest we should be obliged to have recourse to raillery, and laughter instead of serious instruction.'

But he is willing to refute it on serious grounds. Even accepting the philosophers' contention that the soul originates out of the substances of the elements, such as fire, air, water, the theory of the passage of the human soul into beasts is untenable, because of the fact that various animals have different qualities, which are opposite in nature to those elements, e.g. water-snakes to fire, fishes to air. Moreover, human souls have developed in human bodies along lines which would make their dwelling in the bodies of swine, or lions, or eagles, an utter impossibility.

The corporeity of the soul as held by Tertullian strengthens his case against the theory of Empedocles. The soul exactly fits the body. How, then, can it fill an elephant or be enclosed in a gnat? If it be held that the soul by transmigration becomes no longer a human soul, but the soul of the animal it inhabits, the necessary inference is that the human soul has ceased to exist, and the whole theory of metensomatosis comes to naught. In conclusion, the idea of such a metensomatosis as a means of retributive justice is so degrading to God, and so ridiculous in its nature, that Tertullian can only treat it with levity and raillery.

TERTULLIAN'S TRADUCIANISM.—Tertullian does more than refute the theories of the origin of the soul at which we have glanced. He supplies a theory of his own. His theory is that the soul neither existed from eternity, nor was unborn or unmade. It was created by God when he made Adam. Scripture has taught simply that God made man, and breathed on his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul. As the body, once created, passed by natural course to the descendants of Adam, so the soul accompanied it as its inseparable companion. Thus there is no time, from the moment of conception to the instant of death, when soul and body are

not joined. Body and soul of the child are, alike and together, derived from the bodies and souls of its parents.

It is worth noting briefly the grounds for, and the implications of, this theory. Among the former we shall expect to find foremost in Tertullian the influence of Scripture. But Tertullian does not quote in this connexion such passages as Gen. v. 3, Ps. li. 5, Rom. v. 14–19, which later writers drew from the armoury of Scripture, nor does he here rely upon the Scriptures, beyond affirming the simple fact of the creation of man as a living soul according to the narrative of Genesis. He rather chooses to defend what 'we' (i.e. the Christians) believe, in a similar manner to those who had advanced other theories, by the process of reasoning from observed facts. His belief in the corporeity of the soul favoured his traducian theory. The analogy between pure spirit and flesh is not very close, but the analogy between the semi-material soul (which inhabits every portion of the body, and fits it as a hand does a glove, or, to be more precise, as the modern spiritualist's etheric body fits the earthly body), and the body is close and exact. A soul that eats and drinks and flourishes upon the food of the body, and departs when that food is withheld, may easily be thought of as subject to the same laws of propagation as the body itself. It is easy to press the analogy of natural law in the spiritual world when the spiritual world is inhabited by the corporeal souls of Tertullian.

Among the implications of the theory advanced by Tertullian are:

(1) The idea of the solidarity of the race finds in it strong support. One soul was created, and that soul persists. It brings forth seed, and multiplies and replenishes the earth. The human race is a brotherhood of souls. The influence of heredity is paramount. As bodily likeness is passed on from parent to child, so likeness of soul follows the same order.

(2) The importance of sin is emphasized and its universality is accounted for. If the soul, with its disposition and character, is passed on with the stock, then sinfulness is passed on, too (*tradux animae, tradux peccati*), and the stock is tainted with a *vitium originis*.

(3) It savours of determinism. If a man inherits the very substance of his soul, with all its failings and weaknesses, from his ancestors, what becomes of free will, and how is he to be

held responsible for his misdeeds? How can the individual stand against the race, and how can the transient child of a day erase what generations have written upon his soul?

(4) By blending the soul so intimately with the body it materializes the former. The supremacy of the soul, which Tertullian defends so ably, is difficult to maintain when it is reduced to a materialized spirit. We shall see to what extent these implications were realized by Tertullian.

FREE WILL AND SIN.—Having refused to believe in the pre-existence of the soul, Tertullian cannot find the relief which Origen found in dealing with the origin of sin, i.e. by referring it to a former life. So he has to face the question directly. How did man, the creature of God, come to sin? The answer that he gives is that man was created free, and that in the exercise of his free will he chose deliberately the way of disobedience and transgression. Man is not by nature good. God alone is that. But man, at his creation, was given the property of freedom of will. The narrative in Genesis of the Fall of Man is understood in a literal sense, and it shows that man was faced with the alternatives of obedience or disobedience, either of which he was free to choose indifferently. Such freedom, Tertullian maintains, was essential to the being who was made in God's image. Without it he could not have been good; with it he might be either good or bad.

Tertullian is careful to guard against the imputation of evil to God. The Gnostics proposed this dilemma: If God created man perfect, how could he fall? If He created man imperfect, how could He be good? Tertullian asserted that the goodness of God was an indubitable fact. Then, said the Gnostic, how comes it that the 'afflatus' of God in man, i.e. the soul, is capable of evil? The answer of Tertullian is that we must distinguish between the spirit of God and the 'afflatus' of God. The latter is to the former as a breeze is to the wind, i.e. it is its image, not its essence. So man is the image of God; the soul or 'afflatus' is the image of the spirit. It is not, therefore, right to argue that because the image does wrong evil is inherent in the thing itself. The soul of man possesses the true lineaments of divinity, immortality (in a sense), freedom of will, foreknowledge (to a degree), reasonableness, capacity of understanding, and knowledge. But it is

not on that account blessed with the actual power of deity, nor is it free from fault. Moreover, not everything that pertains to God belongs to the nature and condition of God. As a man's breath passing through a flute does not make the flute human, so the breath of God passing into man does not make the man God. Scripture bears this out, for it says that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul—not a life-giving spirit. The work is not the workman, the pitcher is not the potter. So man is not God. Here, then, is room for attributing to the soul of man what cannot be attributed to God, i.e. sinfulness.

The onus and guilt is thrown entirely on the shoulders of man. It is his will that is to blame. The same way out of the difficulty of attributing evil to God as the Creator of the devil is taken by Tertullian. God, it is true, made the angels, and He made the good angel who afterwards became the devil, but it was of his own choice that the angel became wicked, and instigated man to sin.

The occasion of sin in man is attributed variously to impatience, to concupiscence, and to gluttony, but in none of these cases is it emphasized, and Tertullian's strong adherence to the purity of the flesh in itself precludes the notion that sin originated in the flesh. Indeed, he expressly repudiates the notion. The flesh is but the instrument of the soul, and the chief responsibility in every case attaches to the soul.

The fact is, that Tertullian did not really face the question of how the devil and man, after being created with the power of choosing good or evil, chose the latter. They chose it—that for him is the all-sufficient explanation. In opposition to the Gnostic doctrine of determination he advanced the theory of unmotived free will.

Where they made man a weather-cock, helpless, at the mercy of every changing wind of circumstance, he made man a weather-cock that moved for no reason whatever—and created the wind by its own motion. Of man he says that, being endowed with free will, and faced with the alternative of good and evil, he chose evil. The devil tempted him, it is true, but he need not have yielded. Of the devil he says, that he chose the way of disobedience, lusting after the wickedness that arose spontaneously within him.

Tertullian did not perceive the relation of motive to will, as

it is seen by the light of modern psycho-analysis. He spoke of the will of man as a separate faculty, and not as the activity of the whole man. So he was able to speak of the freedom of the will, where we speak (as Paul spoke) of the freedom of man.

THE UNITY OF THE RACE AND THE VARIETY OF CHARACTERISTICS.—The nature of man is uniform, and is transmitted through the generations unchanged and undifferentiated. It consists of the soul and its apparatus—the body, the senses, and the intellect; 'the soul (of a human being) has been derived from Adam as its root, and has been propagated among his posterity by means of woman's generative organs, to which it has been entrusted for transmission, and has thus sprouted into life with all its natural apparatus, both of intellect and of sense.' This soul must be distinguished from both the spiritual quality (which is a later gift of God), and the material (as understood by the heretics). 'Now if neither the spiritual element, nor what the heretics call the material element, was properly inherent in him, it remains that the one only original element of his nature was what is called the "animal," which we maintain to be simple and uniform in its condition.'[1]

But the uniform nature which men receive by transmission is subject to development in accordance with circumstances. The natural surroundings, education, society, into which a soul is born, and within which it grows, affects its development and produces infinite variety.

But the variety does not affect the essential nature of the soul; it is confined to the accidents.

Now the question arises, Can such a nature be changed? Tertullian affirms that it can. The nature transmitted by Adam to his descendants was vitiated by sin, and it is certain that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. But as a good tree may be grafted into a corrupt stock and bring forth good fruit, so also a new nature can be grafted into the corrupt nature of man. The power that can effect this is the grace of God, more potent than nature, and exercising sway over it by means of that independent authority, *τὸ αὐτεξούσιον*, within man—the freedom of the will. To put it in another way, what is born can be re-born, what is made can be re-made, because it is not immutable. But man,

[1] *De Anima*, c. 21.

in common with all else except God, is born and made. So he is subject to change.

ORIGINAL SIN AND GRACE.—The idea of *vitium originis* is closely connected with the theory of the transmission of the soul—*tradux animae, tradux peccati.* The sin of the first man meant that the nature transmitted to the whole race derived a sinful tendency. 'There is then, besides the evil which supervenes on the soul from the intervention of the evil spirit, an antecedent and in a certain sense natural evil, which arises from its corrupt origin. For, as we have said before, the corruption of our nature is another nature, having a god and father of its own, namely, the author of corruption.'[1] There is also the fact, according to Tertullian, that every soul has its demon, like that of Socrates.

But at the same time there is a portion of good in every soul. This qualifies the terrible doctrine of the depravity of the human race as taught by Tertullian. It must not be forgotten, he affirms, that the soul is derived from God, and that that divine original good persists in a measure. It is not extinguished, but obscured. 'As therefore light, when intercepted by an opaque body, still remains, although it is not apparent by reason of the intervention of so dense a body; so likewise the good in the soul, being weighed down by the evil, is, owing to the obscuring character thereof, either not seen at all, its light being wholly hidden, or else only a stray beam is there visible, where it struggles through by an accidental outlet.'[2] So it transpires that some men are bad and some are good, and in the worst there is something good, while in the best there is something bad. 'Just as no soul is without sin, so neither is any soul without seeds of good.'[3]

Tertullian did not emphasize the doctrine of *vitium originis* to the extent of making it impossible even to will what is good. That was left to Augustine. In Tertullian's thought there was always room for the remains at least of natural goodness, a strong belief in the free will of man, and a conviction of the power of the grace of God to energize that will for good, which went a long way to counter-balance the idea of a *vitium originis.*

[1] *De Anima*, c. 41. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*, c. 41.

IX

CHRISTOLOGY

Scope of the Subject—The Son is of the substance of the Father—The Logos: Reason, Wisdom, and Word—Is the Son co-eternal with the Father?—The Son as the Agent of the Father in creation and in revelation—The humanity of Christ—Tertullian's treatment facilitated by his anthropology—The need of defending this aspect of the Person of Christ against the heretics—Two points to be established: (1) That nativity was possible to God; (2) That it was becoming to Him—The preparation of Christ for the experience of the incarnation—The marks in the flesh of Christ of its origin—Christ took, not only human flesh, but a human soul—The argument from prophecy—The sinlessness of Christ—The death of Christ—Its reality closely related to the reality of His humanity—Prophecies of the death of Christ in the Old Testament—The resurrection of Christ an article of the Rule of Faith—The relation between the resurrection of Christ and that of believers—The purpose of the life and death of Christ—Was it revelation?—Was it redemption?—The absence of a forensic statement of the Atonement in Tertullian—Such a view incompatible with his view of man's agency in salvation—The curse that rested upon Christ was that of the Jews, not of God—The purpose of the resurrection of Christ—His exaltation and session at the right hand of God.

We have already considered Tertullian's view of the internal relations of the Trinity.[1] Our present purpose is to develop his doctrine of the Son. The Son is of the substance of the Father, is the Agent of the Father in the creation of the world, and is the supreme means of the self-revelation of God prior to and in the incarnation. He became incarnate, being as such both God and man. He suffered, died, and rose from the dead, and is exalted to the right hand of the Father. He is coming again to judge the world. That is the substance of Tertullian's Christology, which we may consider more in detail.

The Son is of the substance of the Father. With the Father He existed before the creation of the world. It has been asserted that Tertullian did not think of the Son as eternally existing, but as coming into being solely in view of the creation of the world. That conclusion, however, seems to have been

[1] Chapter VI.

derived from some isolated statements in Tertullian's writings, without due allowance being made for the force of other statements.

It is plain from the following passage that Tertullian regarded the Son as being of one substance with the Father. 'We hold that the Word, and Reason, and Power, by which we have said God made all, have spirit as their proper and essential substratum, in which the Word has in-being to give forth utterance, and Reason abides to dispose and arrange, and Power is over all to execute. We have been taught that He proceeds forth from God, and in that procession He is generated; so that He is the Son of God, and is called God from unity of substance with God. For God, too, is a spirit. Even when the ray is shot from the sun it is still part of the parent mass. The sun will still be in the ray, because it is a ray of the sun; there is no division of substance, but merely an extension. Thus Christ is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God, as light of light is kindled' (*Apologeticus*, c. 21).

It is plain, too, that Tertullian has the notion of Reason and Word corresponding to λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and λόγος προφορικός, though he does not use these Greek terms. His treatment of this distinction in *Adversus Praxean*, c. 5, shows clearly that the distinction which he had in mind when he spoke of Reason and Word was precisely the distinction between the immanent and the proceeding Logos.

Using the analogy of human consciousness or reason, and word or speech, Tertullian shows that the same are found in God. 'Whatever you think there is a word, whatever you conceive there is reason. You must needs speak it in your mind, and while you are speaking you admit speech as an interlocutor with you, involved in which is this very reason whereby, while in thought you are holding converse with your word, you are producing thought by means of that converse with your word. Thus, in a certain sense, the word is a second with you. Now how much more fully is all this transacted in God, whose image and likeness even you are regarded as being, inasmuch as He has Reason within Himself even while He is silent, and involved in that Reason His Word' (*Adversus Praxean*, c. 5).

When we seek, further, to discover whether the Son, whom Tertullian identifies with the Reason and Word of God, is coeternal with the Father, we find some ambiguous expressions

which seem to imply that there was a time when the Son did not exist; e.g. he speaks of 'God's own dispensation (*dispositio*), in which He existed before the creation of the world up to the generation of the Son.'[1] Divorced from its context, this seems to be a clear statement that there was a time prior to the existence of the Son. But when we remember that *dispositio* means (as Bishop Bull shows in his *Defence of the Nicene Creed*) 'the mutual relations in the Godhead,' and when we find Tertullian going on to say: 'For before all things God was alone—being in Himself and for Himself universe and space and all things. Moreover, He was alone because there was nothing external to Himself but Himself. Yet not even then was He alone, for He had with Him that which He possessed in Himself, that is to say His own Reason,' we feel that there is in such a statement not so much a failure to apprehend the eternal relations of the Persons in the Godhead as a laxity of expression which would not have been possible to Tertullian had he been writing subsequently to the Council of Nicaea.

Again he says: 'God had not Word from the beginning,' but counterbalances this with the assertion: 'But He had Reason even before the beginning, because also Word itself consists of Reason, which it thus proves to have been the prior existence, as being its own substance.'

Moreover, he states: 'For although God had not yet sent His Word, He still had Him within Himself, both in company with, and included, in, His very Reason' (*Adv. Praxean*, c. 5).

Nevertheless, Tertullian regarded the work of the creation of the world as being essentially the Son's. He claims that the philosophers agree with him in ascribing creation to the Logos, but he works out his own theory mainly from the Scriptures (with the approval of tradition). Prov. viii. 22–30 provides him with a starting-point. This passage, which was afterwards pressed into the service of Arianism, is expounded by Tertullian, and it may safely be said that he avoids the conclusions which the Arians later drew from it. He says, it is true: 'Then, therefore, does the Word also Himself assume His own form and glorious garb, sound and vocal utterance, when God says, "Let there be light." This is the perfect nativity of the Word, when He proceeds forth from God, formed by Him

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 5.

first to devise and think out, and afterwards begotten to carry all into effect.'[1] But this must be taken in conjunction with what precedes and what follows it. Tertullian had already said that God pleased to put forth the things which He had planned and ordered within Himself in conjunction with His Wisdom's Reason and Word,[2] and afterwards he says: 'Thus does He make Him equal to Him; for by proceeding from Himself He became His first-begotten Son, because begotten before all things; and His only-begotten, too, because alone begotten of God in a way peculiar to Himself.'[3]

The Son is also the Agent in revelation. The Father is Himself invisible. He is 'the almighty, invisible God, whom no man hath seen nor can see; He who dwelleth in light unapproachable, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, from before whose sight the earth trembles, and the mountains melt like wax; who holdeth the whole world in His hands like a nest, in whom is every place, but Himself is in no place.'[4]

Tertullian even goes so far in this direction as to affirm—what apparently contradicts much that he says elsewhere—that God (the Father) is the remote, passionless God of the philosophers: 'Whatever attributes, therefore, you require as worthy of God must be found in the Father, who is invisible and unapproachable and placid and (so to speak) the God of the philosophers.'[5]

Yet the Scriptures affirm that in olden times the Lord was seen of men and spoke with them. The explanation is that it was the Son who was seen of men, and even He could only be seen in dreams and visions, for He was not yet incarnate. The appearances in the Old Testament were images or enigmas of the incarnation wherein the Son was later to reveal the Father in a human life.[6]

Nor was it as the Agent of revelation alone that the Son was known in the Old Testament times. He was the Agent of Judgement from the very beginning. 'It is the Son, therefore, who has been from the beginning administering judgement, throwing down the haughty tower and dividing the tongues, punishing the whole world by the violence of waters, raining upon Sodom and Gomorrah fire and brimstone,

[1] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 7.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 6.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 7.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 16.
[5] *Adv. Marcionem*, II., c. 27.
[6] *Adv. Praxean*, cc. 14–16.

as the Lord from the Lord. For He it was who at all times came down to hold converse with men, from Adam on to the patriarchs and prophets, in vision, in dream, in mirror, in dark saying; ever from the beginning laying the foundation of the course which He meant to follow out to the very last. Thus was He ever learning, even as God, to converse with men upon earth, being no other than the Word which was to be made flesh.'[1]

The Son became incarnate, being as such God and man. The Son is, as it were, a ray from the Father, and 'this ray of God, then, as it was always foretold in ancient times, descending into a certain virgin, and made flesh in her womb, is in His birth God and man united. The flesh formed by the Spirit is nourished, grows up to manhood, speaks, teaches, works, and is the Christ.'[2]

Of the mode of the incarnation, Tertullian writes: 'The Word, therefore, is incarnate; and this must be the point of our inquiry: How the Word became flesh—whether it was by having been transfigured (*transfiguratus*), as it were, in the flesh, or by having really clothed Himself (*an indutus carnem*) in flesh. Certainly it was by a real clothing of Himself in flesh (*imo indutus*). For the rest, we must needs believe God to be unchangeable, and incapable of form, as being eternal. But transfiguration is the destruction of that which previously existed.'[3] Thus it is not to be affirmed of God that He was transfigured. 'God, however, neither ceases to be what He was, nor can He be any other thing than He is.'[4]

The result of the incarnation is the conjunction of two natures in one Person. It is not a compounding of two substances into a third, which is neither one nor the other.[5] In an earlier statement Tertullian used a phrase which might indicate that he regarded the outcome of the incarnation as a blending or mixture of the human and the divine. 'This ray of God, then, as it was always foretold in ancient times, descending into a certain virgin, and made flesh in her womb, is in, His birth God and man blended together' (*Homo deo mixtus*).[6] That view, whether it is really implied in the phrase or not,

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 16. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. 21. [3] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 27. [4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*: 'Videmus duplicem statum non confusum sed conjunctum in una persona, Deum et Nominem Jesum.'
[6] *Apologeticus*, c. 21.

is definitely opposed in *Adv. Praxean*; 'For if the Word became flesh by a transfiguration and change of substance, it follows at once that Jesus must be a substance compounded of two substances—of flesh and spirit—a kind of mixture, like electrum, composed of gold and silver; and it begins to be neither gold (that is to say, spirit) nor silver (that is to say, flesh)—the one being changed by the other, and a third substance produced.'[1] Jesus, according to this, would not be God, because He has ceased to be Logos; nor would He be man, because He has not become flesh. Being compounded of both, He is neither the one nor the other, but a third substance, distinct from both. 'But the truth is, we find that He is expressly set forth as both God and man. We see plainly the twofold state, which is not confounded, but conjoined in one Person—Jesus, God, and man.' Each of the natures conjoined in Him retains its own peculiar properties. 'The Spirit, on the one hand, did all things in Jesus suitable to itself, such as miracles, and mighty deeds, and wonders; and the flesh, on the other hand, exhibited the affections which belong to it.' Had the result of the incarnation been a *tertium quid* there would be no distinct proofs apparent of either nature. But Jesus, being both, manifested the peculiar properties of each.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.—Though Tertullian's doctrine of the true divinity of Christ is, as we have seen, a noble attempt to express the relation of the Son to the Father, and comes very near to being a satisfactory statement of that relation, it is in his treatment of the true humanity of Christ that his thought is most clear and original. In this he was helped by his anthropology. The Alexandrians, with their threefold division of the nature of man into body, soul, and spirit, were embarrassed by the relation of the soul and the spirit in Christ. Tertullian adopted the twofold division of man into body and soul, and this made it considerably easier for him to express the true humanity of Christ. Man being body and soul, the problem was simply to prove that Christ

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 27. 'Si enim Sermo ex transfiguratione et demutatione substantiae caro factus est, una jam erit substantia Jesus ex duabus, ex carne et spiritu mixtura quaedam, ut electrum ex auro et argento; et incipit nec aurum esse, id est, spiritus, neque argentum, id est, caro, dum alterum altero mutatur, et tertium quid efficitur.'

was possessed of a human body and a human soul. The question as to whether He had a ψυχή, or *anima* (the principle of animal existence), in addition to body and spirit, did not arise. Unquestionably to Tertullian Christ had a human body, else He could not have redeemed the human body; equally He had a human soul, or He could not have redeemed the human soul. In Irenaeus there is some approach to a recognition of the human soul in Christ, but it is uncertain and obscure. Tertullian worked out the idea in accordance with his clear doctrine of the soul as the controlling element in the nature of man.

The humanity of Christ was, in Tertullian's day, the aspect of His Person which had to be defended most carefully against the heretics. Marcion, Valentinus, and the Gnostics in general, had strongly impugned it. 'Let us examine our Lord's bodily substance,' he says, 'for about His spiritual nature all are agreed. It is His flesh that is in question. Its verity and quality are the points in dispute.'[1] The two points to be established are: (1) That nativity was possible to God; and (2) That it was becoming to Him.[2]

(1) Everything is possible to God if He wills it, and so it was possible for Him to be born. If it be said that God could not be born, because that would necessitate His losing His own state and condition, or that He could not become man, because a being who is without end is incapable of change, Tertullian retorts that the analogy of the human and the divine does not hold here. 'But nothing is equal with God. His nature differs from the condition of all things.'[3] To support this extravagant statement Tertullian refers to angels, which took real human bodies and discarded them again, and to the Spirit, which assumed the body of a dove and departed from it, and the only answer he can suggest to the perfectly natural question—'What became of the discarded bodies?'—is, that if his opponents knew how they were made out of nothing, they would also know how they returned to nothing.

(2) When all that can be said against the humble, and worse than humble, conditions of human birth as it was regarded by the Gnostics, has been said, it cannot be held to be unworthy of God. Man is the creature of God, and to be born is a condition of the nature which God has given him. It is natural

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 1. [2] *Ibid.*, cc. 3, 4. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 3.

and worthy that Christ (the Son of God) should love man (the creature of God). This love is the motive of the incarnation. As the conception of man as the creation of God invests him with a noble dignity, and makes him worthy of being the object of divine love, so the love of Christ for man is a sufficient reason why He should love man in his entirety, and with all the concomitant circumstances of his birth.

But Tertullian only allows that the circumstances of human birth are demeaning as a supposition which does not nullify the possibility of human birth to God. His own view of the course of nature is one of veneration. It is a thing mysterious and wonderful, to be regarded with awe. He speaks of ' hanc venerationem naturae ' and ' illa sanctissima et reverenda opera naturae.'[1]

Moreover, there is another aspect to be borne in mind when considering the question of what is worthy of God. That is the principle that the wisdom of God is foolishness with men. This principle is manifested, not in the worship of the true God, nor in the inculcation of right and moral conduct, but in the fact that God was born, and born of a virgin, and that He wallowed in the humiliation of human nature. It is manifested still more (as we shall see) in the crucifixion and death of Christ.

Tertullian is emphatic on the point that the flesh of Christ was truly human. Apelles, a follower of Marcion, had put forward the theory that His flesh, though resembling the flesh of human beings, was in reality of sidereal substance. It was like that flesh which the angels took when they appeared in human form, and thus was not subject to nativity. But that theory will not satisfy Tertullian. He contrasts the reason for their assumption of flesh with the reason for Christ's doing so, and shows that a theory that would meet their case would not meet His. ' Never did any angel descend for the purpose of being crucified, of tasting death, and of rising from the dead.'[2] But that was the purpose of Christ's coming, and the crucifixion and the incarnation are indissolubly joined together. Without the former the latter could not occur. ' Between nativity and mortality there is a mutual contract.'[3] What is subject to death must be subject to birth, for it has entered

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 4. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 6. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 6.

into a condition of which both these are necessary accompaniments. ' For one who was to be truly a man, even unto death, it was necessary that He should be clothed with that flesh to which death belongs. Now that flesh to which death belongs is preceded by birth.'[1]

The truth of the matter is that the flesh of Christ was exactly like our own. Tertullian lays down as a principle, which he has followed hitherto, the rule that everything which is derived from anything else, however much it may differ from the source of its origin, yet bears the marks of that source.[2] On this principle the human body testifies to its derivation from earthy materials, e.g. flesh and blood from earth and water, muscles from clods, and bones from stones. But all these marks of earthy origin were evident in Christ. So evident were they that to those who saw Him in the flesh they obscured the Son of God, and manifested simply the corporeal substance of man. The impression which Jesus made on the people who saw Him in the flesh was invariably the impression that He was a man. More than that, Tertullian maintains that even when compared with men He was without comeliness and beauty of form. Though He was ' fairer than the children of men,' that was in respect of spiritual grace alone. In physical condition He had no form or comeliness, ' but was marred and despised above all,' a ' very worm and no man, a reproach of men and an outcast of the people.'[3]

It was, however, not simply human flesh that Christ took, but a human soul. It consists with Tertullian's theory of the nature of the human soul that Christ could not have assumed humanity in any real sense unless He assumed a human soul. The soul is the controlling principle in the nature of man. Without the soul there is nothing but a carcass. Not even sense experience is possible to man without the soul, for it is the soul that gives meaning to the perceptions of the senses. All rational thought, all self-consciousness, all knowledge of God, is the activity of the soul. How, then, could Christ have taken human nature without assuming that which is its most distinctive property ?

The truth is that the two components of human nature, flesh and soul, are found unconfusedly in Christ. ' But in Christ we find the soul and the flesh expressed in simple,

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 6. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 9. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 9.

unfigurative terms ; that is to say, the soul is called soul, and the flesh, flesh ; nowhere is the soul termed flesh or the flesh soul ' (*De Carne Christi*, c. 13).

Tertullian is always fond of the argument from prophecy, and he turns it to account in this direction. It was foretold by the prophets that Christ should come in the flesh, and by the process of human birth. He was to be the Christ, and Jesus ; and Isaiah and the Psalms speak of His humiliation. ' He is like a servant, like a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form or comeliness ' (Isa. liii.). ' He is a very worm and no man, a reproach of men and an outcast of the people ' (Ps. xxii. 6).[1]

THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST.—There is, however, one distinction to be borne in mind. The flesh and soul of Jesus were truly like our own, but He was sinless. It is not necessary to deny the reality of Christ's flesh, after the manner of Alexander,[2] in order to maintain that He abolished sin in the flesh. ' What has been abolished in Christ is not " sinful flesh " (*carnem peccati*), but " sin in the flesh " (*peccatum carnis*) ; not the material thing, but its condition ; the flaw, not the substance.'[3] The flesh of Christ resembled the flesh of Adam in its nature, but not in the corruption which it received from Adam. Tertullian recognized that it was essential to hold to the identity of the flesh of Christ with that of humanity, since ' it would not contribute to the purpose of Christ's abolishing sin in the flesh if He did not abolish it in that flesh in which was the nature of sin.'[4] How it was possible for Christ to take man's flesh, and yet not to partake of its sinfulness, is a question into which Tertullian does not really enter. He is content to affirm the fact that Christ truly possessed human flesh, and that He was sinless, and to state that in the very act of taking our flesh He made it sinless. ' Do not, however, fetter with mystery a sense which is quite intelligible. For in putting on our flesh He made it His own ; in making it His own He made it sinless.'[5]

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.—The reality of the death of Christ follows from the reality of His humanity. He truly suffered, ' for He suffered nothing who did not truly suffer ; and a phantom could not truly suffer.'[6] He really died, and His death is

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 16. [2] An unknown writer to whom Tertullian refers.
[3] *De Carne Christi*, c. 16. [4] *Ibid.* [5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Adv. Marcionem*, III., c. 8 ; cf. *De Carne Christi*, c. 5.

the very foundation of the gospel. 'Christ's death, wherein lies the whole weight and fruit of the Christian name, is denied, although the apostle asserts it so expressly as undoubtedly real, making it the very foundation of the gospel, of our salvation, and of his own preaching.'[1]

Here also Tertullian makes much of the prophecies of the Old Testament. He expounds such passages as 'The Lord reigneth from the tree'; 'For unto us a child is born, to us is given Him whose government is upon His shoulder'; 'Come, let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof (i.e. His body)'; 'They pierced My hands and My feet'; 'Save me from the lion's mouth'; 'His sepulture was removed from the midst of them.' By a more or less allegorical interpretation he makes all these passages refer to Christ, who shut up the kingdom of death by dying upon a tree, who carried upon His shoulder the excellence and power of His new glory, the cross, whose body was the fruit of the tree, whose hands and feet were pierced, and so on.[2] He also finds in Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, and in the brazen serpent, types of the death of Christ. It was so important and yet so incredible an event that bare prophecy would not suffice; it was so grand that it needed to be viewed, so to speak, in shadow. Isaac was a type of Christ, in that when he was to be offered up as a sacrifice by his father he himself carried the wood for his own death. So likewise Christ carried the cross on which He suffered. Joseph was a type of Christ, inasmuch as he is spoken of as a bullock with the horn of a unicorn. Jesus was 'a bullock in both of his characteristics: to some as severe as a Judge, to others gentle as a Saviour.' The horns of the bullock are types of the extremities of Christ's cross. The horn of the unicorn is the midway stake of the cross. Moses prayed in a sitting posture, with outstretched hands, because 'the shape was necessary of that very cross through which Jesus was to win the victory.'[3]

The allegorical interpretation of Scripture is here evident. But what is of more importance to note is the utter failure of Tertullian to enter into the significance of the sacrifice of Isaac as an offering to God, or of the suffering of Joseph at the hands of his brethren, or of the prayer of Moses as an intercession. The last of the types which he uses shows a clearer perception of an inner relation between the type and

[1] *Adv. Marcionem.* [2] *Ibid.*, c. 19. [3] *Ibid.*, III., c. 18.

the anti-type. 'Why, once more, did the same Moses, after prohibiting the likeness of everything, set up the golden serpent on the pole, and as it hung there propose it as an object to be looked at for a cure? Did he not here also intend to show the power of our Lord's cross, whereby that old serpent the devil was vanquished, whereby also to every man who was bitten by spiritual serpents, but who yet turned with an eye of faith to it, was proclaimed a cure from the bite of sin, and health for evermore?'

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.—That Christ rose again from the dead is among the propositions set forth in the Rule of Faith. As such, of course, it was accepted by Tertullian. The only question that arises in connexion with this doctrine is the bearing which the reality of Christ's flesh has upon the theory of the resurrection of the flesh. As we have already seen, Tertullian held very firmly the view that the flesh shares in the resurrection. The fact that Christ rose from the dead is used by him to support that theory.

'Jesus,' he says, 'is still sitting there (in the court of heaven), at the right hand of the Father, man, yet God—the last Adam, yet the primary Word—flesh and blood, yet purer than ours, who shall descend in like manner as He ascended, the same both in substance and form, as the angels affirmed, so as even to be recognized by those who pierced Him.'[1] That is the earnest and pledge of the resurrection of the flesh. What Christ took upon Him when he assumed our nature, that He carried into heaven, and whither He has taken the flesh which He assumed, thither shall the flesh which He has redeemed follow. 'Be not disquieted, O flesh and blood, with any care in Christ; you have acquired both heaven and the kingdom of God.'[2]

While the resurrection of Christ is the pledge of the resurrection of believers, it belongs to Tertullian's view of the subject of resurrection that unless the body rose there could be no resurrection, even for Christ. 'Now if His death be denied, because of the denial of His flesh, there will be no certainty of His resurrection. For He rose not for the very same reason that He died not, even because He possessed not the reality of the flesh, to which as death accrues, so does resurrection likewise.'[3] In fact, the two things stand or fall together.

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 51. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Adv. Marcionem*, III., c. 18.

'Similarly, if Christ's (resurrection) be nullified, ours also is destroyed. If Christ's (resurrection) be not realized, neither shall that be for which Christ came.'[1]

THE PURPOSE OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF CHRIST.—We have already seen that the birth, life, and death of Christ are, according to Tertullian, inseparably connected in one great purpose. What that purpose was it is now necessary to determine.

Was it to reveal the Father? There is no development of this idea in the writings of Tertullian, though he was not unaware of it. There is no elaborate doctrine of the Logos as the revealer of the Father such as is found in the writings of Clement and Origen, because there is not the same philosophical background. Tertullian did not regard the Father as unknowable, without attributes or qualities, as those writers did. He appreciated the knowledge of God derived from the observation of the works of His hands, from the witness of the Old Testament writers, and from the testimony of the soul, and, as a natural result, the revelational function of the Logos sank out of sight. But there are indications that he recognized the function of Christ, as the revealer of the Father, as one side of His activity, though not as the main purpose of His coming. He says of Christ, 'He had to announce to the world the mighty purpose of the Father, even that which ordained the restoration of man.' He speaks of Christ as the Revealer of the Father. In the Old Testament He was the Lord who there appeared to men. He was the visible, as contrasted with the invisible God. And in His incarnate life He gave the fullest revelation of God, but that was not the chief purpose of the incarnation.

Was it to redeem man? No doubt that was the main purpose of His coming, in the opinion of Tertullian. 'What, in your esteem, is the entire disgrace of my God, is, in fact, the sacrament of man's salvation. God held converse with men, that man might learn to act as God. God dealt on equal terms with men, that men might be able to deal on equal terms with God. God was found little, that man might become very great.'[2]

This redemptive purpose distinguished the coming of Christ to earth from the coming of angels. They came to announce

[1] *Adversus Marcionem.* [2] *Ibid.*, II., c. 27.

and reveal. He came to redeem and restore. 'Man's salvation was the motive, the restoration of that which had perished. Man had perished; his recovery had become necessary. Christ, however, having been sent to die, had necessarily also to be born, that He might be capable of death.'[1]

It was in order to defeat the devil on his own ground that Christ became man. Tertullian has not developed any theory of the redemption of man from the devil, but he says that the devil was the author of man's sin. He had instigated man to sin, and it was consistent with God's goodness that the devil should be overcome by man himself. 'He acted consistently with His own purpose, deferring the devil's destruction for the selfsame reason that He postponed the restitution of man. For He afforded room for a conflict, wherein man might crush his enemy with the same freedom of his will as had made him succumb to him (proving that the fault was all his own, not God's), and so worthily recover his salvation by a victory, wherein also the devil might receive a more bitter punishment, through being vanquished by him whom he had previously injured, and wherein God might be discovered to be so much the more good, as waiting for man to return from his present life to a more glorious paradise, with a right to pluck of the tree of life.'[2]

This last passage prepares us to find—what in other passages is stated explicitly—that the purpose of Christ's life and death was not only the salvation of men from the power of the devil in the present life, but also to secure their entrance into heaven and participation in eternal life. 'For he (Jacob) had seen Christ the Lord, the temple of God, and also the gate by whom heaven is entered. . . . But there is now a gate provided by Christ which admits and conducts (to heaven).'[3] 'For we shall, according to the apostle, be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord.'[4]

How Christ has redeemed men from their sins is admirably expressed in *De Fuga in Persecutione*, c. 12: 'Why, in this very standing of yours, there was a fleeing from persecution, in the release from persecution which you bought; but that you should ransom with money a man whom Christ has ransomed with His blood, how unworthy is it of God and His ways of acting,

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 5.
[2] *Adversus Marcionem*, II., c. 10.
[3] *Adversus Marcionem*, III., c. 24.
[4] *Ibid.*

who spared not His own Son for you, that He might be made a curse for us, because " cursed is he that hangeth on a tree," Him who was led as a sheep to be a sacrifice, and, just as a lamb before its shearers, so opened not His mouth, but gave His back to the scourges, nay, His cheeks to the hands of the smiters, and turned not away His face from spitting, and was numbered with the transgressors, and was delivered up to death, nay, the death of the cross. All this took place that He might redeem us from our sins. The sun ceded to us the day of our redemption, hell re-transferred the right it had in us, and our covenant is in heaven ; the everlasting gates were lifted up that the King of glory, the Lord of might, might enter in, after having redeemed man from earth, nay, from hell, that he might attain to heaven. What now are we to think of the man who strives against that glorious One, nay, slights and defiles His goods, obtained at so great a ransom, no less, in truth, than His most precious blood.' The whole passage and its context is an eloquent statement of the appeal of Christ's sacrifice. It states the fact that by the blood of Christ men have been ransomed and redeemed from the life of sin which they have led in the world, which is subject to the dominion of the spirits of wickedness (the angelic powers), and the end of which is everlasting death. But it does not discuss the question to whom the ransom is paid.

It would be natural to expect that we should find in Tertullian, with his legal training, a forensic statement of the atonement wrought by Christ, but no such statement is to be found in his writings, or, indeed, to be detected in the background of his thought. He uses the term *satisfacere*, it is true, but never in the sense of vicarious satisfaction. With him it means invariably the amends which men make for their own sins by confession, repentance, and good works.

REPENTANCE.—Repentance finds its pattern in God, who, hastening back to His own mercy, rescinded the sentence of His first wrath and offered pardon to men. It finds its purpose and fruition in the salvation of men. It is preliminary to the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of men. It purges men's minds and hearts of error and ignorance, and abolishes former sins. The motive is the fear of God, the Judge who in justice apportions to men reward and punishment for their good and evil deeds. Sin is what God bids us abstain from ;

good is what God commands. To repent of sin is to offer satisfaction to God. ' Repentance is the price at which the Lord has determined to award pardon. He proposes the redemption of release from penalty at this compensating exchange of repentance.' Genuine repentance is assured of pardon, but it must be accompanied by a change of conduct. In practice many receive baptism, the seal of repentance, without the inner change of heart, but they do not receive the pardon of God, because they have not genuinely repented. Their repentance has been without its instrumental agent, i.e. fear.

With regard to post-baptismal repentance, Tertullian is unwilling to declare it impossible or vain, but, on the other hand, he is equally unwilling that it should be deemed a light thing. So he takes up the position that it is desirable that there should be no need for repentance after baptism, but that if such need should unfortunately arise, there is a possibility of a second and last repentance.[1] The assaults of the devil are doubly strong when a man has renounced him and his works. ' These poisons of his, therefore, God foreseeing, although the gate of forgiveness has been shut and fastened up with the bar of baptism, has permitted it still to stand somewhat open. In the vestibule He has stationed repentance the second, to open to such as knock ; but now, once for all, because now for the second time ; but never more, because the last time it had been in vain.'

The willingness of God to pardon this second time, Tertullian supports from Scripture. The letters to the seven Churches and the parable of the Prodigal Son are called in as evidence.

This second repentance is to be accompanied by outward manifestations. It must issue in public confession. The purpose of such confession is not to acquaint God of our sins, as if He were ignorant of them, but to satisfy God. ' Of confession repentance is born ; by repentance God is appeased.' Confession is a discipline calculated to move mercy. It leads the penitent to lie in sackcloth and ashes, to fast, to groan, weep, and roar, and roll at the presbyters' feet, and so exchange for the sins he has committed the severity of self-castigation,

[1] This second repentance, however, gives way in his later writings to a second baptism, martyrdom, by which a man may atone for post-baptismal sins.

and thus by temporal mortification discharge eternal punishments.

It is evident from the foregoing treatment of repentance that Tertullian held a view of the sinner's satisfaction of God which is incompatible with the conception of vicarious satisfaction of the divine justice by Christ. At the same time, he attached great importance to the sufferings of Christ. Against Marcion and his phantom Christ he maintained the reality of Christ's sufferings, without which the whole work of God would have been nugatory. 'For He suffered nothing who did not truly suffer, and a phantom could not truly suffer. God's entire work, therefore, is subverted.'[1] There are passages which indicate that Tertullian regarded the death of Christ as the ground of salvation; e.g. 'Christ's death, wherein lies the whole weight and fruit of the Christian name,'[2] 'I have delivered unto you (says the apostle) how that Christ died for our sins, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day'[3]; 'Christ . . . the offerer of His own life for the people'[4]; 'It is Christ who gave Himself up for our offences,'[5] 'No other cause was the source of Christ's descent than that of setting sinners free'[6]; 'We are not our own, but bought with a price, and what kind of price? The blood of God'[7]; 'The flesh was redeemed with a great price, the blood, to wit, of the Lord and Lamb'[8]; 'For this is the virtue of the Lord's blood, that such as it has already purified from sin, and thenceforward has set in the light, it renders thenceforward pure, if they shall continue to persevere walking in the light'[9]; "She heard her justification by faith through her repentance pronounced in the words, "Thy faith hath saved thee," by Him who had declared by Habakkuk, "The just shall live by his faith."'[10] These isolated references indicate that Tertullian was not unaware of the divine side of the work of salvation, and counterbalance the apparent overemphasis of the virtue of repentance. It must be remembered that there was no demand in the age of Tertullian for any definite consideration of the great question of justification by faith. That subject had faded away for the time from

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, III., c. 18.
[2] *Ibid.*, III., c. 3.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*, II., c. 26.
[5] *Scorpiace*, c. 7.
[6] *De Idololatria*, c. 3.
[7] *Ad Uxorem*, II., c. 3.
[8] *De Pudicitia*, c. 6.
[9] *Ibid.*, c. 19.
[10] *Adv. Marcionem*, IV., c. 18.

the minds of men, but the consideration of the question of repentance was imperative.

The purpose of the resurrection of Christ is plainly stated by Tertullian, as we have already seen. The resurrection of Christ is indissolubly linked with the resurrection of believers. 'For just as they who said that there is no resurrection of the dead are refuted by the apostle from the resurrection of Christ, so if the resurrection of Christ falls to the ground, the resurrection of the dead is also swept away. And so our faith is vain, and vain also is the preaching of the apostles.'[1] In thus giving the resurrection of Christ such prominence Tertullian agrees with Paul. But he does not, like Paul, develop the implications of the resurrection of Christ in the mystical union of Christians with their risen Lord. The nearest approach which he makes to the realization of Paul's doctrine of the Christian life 'in Christ' is his comment on Paul's use of the image of the earthy and the heavenly. There he says that the exhortation of Paul—'as we have borne the image of the earthy so let us also bear the image of the heavenly'—'relates not to any condition of the resurrection life, but to the rule of the present time . . . wishing us to walk as he himself was walking, and to put off the likeness of the earthy, that is the old man, in the works of the flesh.'[2] Beyond that he does not follow Paul in this direction, and perhaps it is not to be expected of him, for Tertullian had little of the mystic in his make-up.

We may compare with the above passage the following from *Scorpiace*, c. 9: 'Besides, by confessing in Christ he confesses Christ, too; since by virtue of being a Christian he is in Christ, while (Christ) Himself also is in him.'

THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST.—In the exaltation of Christ to the heavens, and His session at the right hand of the Father, He retains the flesh which He had assumed in the incarnation. This naturally is consistent with Tertullian's theory of the resurrection of the flesh. But it enables him to hold the belief that in the exaltation of Christ His humanity is exalted. Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father—man, yet God. In His exaltation is the pledge of man's entrance into both heaven and the kingdom of God.[3]

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, III., c. 8. [2] *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 10.
[3] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 51.

X

THE CHURCH, THE MINISTRY, AND THE SACRAMENTS

The necessity of distinguishing between pre-Montanistic and Montanistic views—The Church as the repository of true doctrine—The Church from the standpoint of discipline.

The Ministry—The threefold ministerial office—The later view—The Bishop of Rome—Lectors and widows.

The Sacraments—Baptism—Full and explicit treatment—Simplicity of the rite—The water of baptism—Reception of the Holy Spirit—The effects of baptism—Objections to baptism discussed—Second baptism—The administration of baptism—Preparation and subsequent conduct.

The Eucharist—No set treatment—Exposition of the Parable of the Prodigal Son—'Our daily bread'—Meaning of *repraesentat*—The bearing of Tertullian's philosophy upon the subject.

TERTULLIAN'S view of the nature and the purpose of the Church underwent a great change on his conversion to Montanism, and it is both possible and necessary to distinguish between the views he held prior and subsequent to that conversion.

In his pre-Montanistic days he regarded the Church as the repository of the faith and the guardian of the true doctrine. The essentials of the Christian faith had been declared by Jesus Christ Himself during His earthly life. He had declared to the people publicly, and to His disciples privately, 'what He was, what He had been, what was the Father's will which He was administering, what was the duty of man which He was prescribing.'[1] The disciples were commanded by Him to teach all nations, and to baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This commission they discharged. Commencing in Judaea, they bore witness to the faith in Christ Jesus and founded Churches there. They next went forth to all the world, preaching the same doctrine, and witnessing to the same faith. 'They then, in like manner, founded Churches in every city, from which all the other

[1] *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 20.

Churches, one after another, derived the tradition of the faith and the seeds of doctrine, and are every day deriving them, that they may become Churches.'[1]

Tertullian was repudiating the claim of heretics to be the defenders of the truth, and attacking their 'Churches.' So he laid down the proposition that the genus Church must be explained by reference to its origin. But the Christian Churches alone can trace their origin to the apostles, and they alone, therefore, comprise the true Church. Though they are many, their origin is one and apostolic, and they have descended in unbroken succession from the apostles; while the doctrine which they teach has been handed down intact and uncorrupted through this succession.

But here arises a difficulty. What of the Churches which cannot claim an apostolic foundation? How is their authority and genuineness to be maintained? Tertullian meets this difficulty by asserting that consanguinity of doctrine is the seal of unity, the bond of communion, and the test of truth. The true doctrine of Christ was delivered in speech and in letters by the apostles to the Churches which they personally founded. All doctrine which agrees with that must be reckoned as truth, and Churches which hold such doctrine are in communion with the apostolic Churches. The fact is, says Tertullian, that the Churches hold everywhere one and the same doctrine, and this is manifest proof of the existence and reliability of the traditional faith.

Moreover, the Churches which claim to be apostolic in the narrower sense of the word support their claim by the evidence of their registers, which show, e.g. that Polycarp was placed at the head of the Church at Smyrna by John, and that Clement was ordained by Peter. The first bishops of these and other Churches were placed in their sees by apostles. The Churches which cannot claim such direct apostolic appointment yet claim to be apostolic, as has already been said, by virtue of agreement in doctrine.

After his conversion to Montanism the opinions of Tertullian regarding the Church changed. He revolted against the laxity of the moral code promulgated by the Psychics. The decree of the Pontifex Maximus, proclaiming pardon for sexual impurity upon repentance, called forth his ire. That such an

[1] *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 20.

edict should be read in the Church of Christ is more than Tertullian can endure, for she is a virgin, and the betrothed of Christ. 'Far, far from Christ's betrothed be such a proclamation. She, the true, the modest, the saintly, shall be free from stain, even of her ears. She has none to whom to make such a promise, and if she had, she does not make it.'[1]

As in pre-Montanist days he had discussed the Church from the standpoint of *doctrine* only (the Church being the guardian of true doctrine), so in Montanist days he discusses the Church from the standpoint of *power* only (the Church being the responsible authority in discipline). He combats the notion that Christ's words to Peter, 'Upon this rock will I build My Church,' were addressed to him as the representative of the Church. The words were spoken to Peter personally. 'To thee' and 'thou' are the words of Christ, and the power was exercised afterwards by Peter, not by the Church. This furnishes Tertullian with a basis for his Montanist view that the Church is composed of spiritual men. 'For,' he says, 'in accordance with the person of Peter, it is to spiritual men that this power will correspondently appertain, either to an apostle or to a prophet.'[2]

Thus he is led to state his view that the Church itself is really the Spirit Himself, 'in whom is the Trinity of the one Divinity,' Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[3] Whenever a number of persons have combined together in this faith they constitute a Church. This Church will forgive sins, but it will not be the Church which consists of a number of bishops, but that which consists of spiritual men.

Tertullian evidently did not follow out his thoughts about the Church to their logical conclusion. He seems to have held the view, even in his Montanist days, that the Church is an outward society, while at the same time he maintained that it was composed of spiritual men. But he makes no attempt to prove the spirituality of the officers and members of the Church as it existed. He rather denied to them that attribute, while he stigmatized them as *ψυχικοί*. He left to later thinkers the problem of reconciling the two views.

Tertullian respected the Roman Church, not because it was founded by Peter, but because Peter and Paul were both martyred at Rome. For the rest, the Churches were all equal.

[1] *De Pudicitia*, c. 1. [2] *De Pudicitia*, c. 21; cf. *Scorpiace*, c. 10. [3] *Ibid.*

'How happy is its (i.e. Rome's) Church, on which apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood, where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's, where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's.'[1]

THE MINISTRY.—Tertullian mentions the threefold ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. With regard to the rite of baptism, the bishop, who is the 'chief priest,' naturally has the right of administering this sacrament. After him, but with his authority, the right belongs to the presbyters and deacons. It is in the interests of the honour and peacefulness of the Church that this order should be preserved. But the right of administering baptism is not necessarily confined to these three orders. It is seemly that baptism should be performed ordinarily by the bishop, the presbyters, or the deacons, but in cases of necessity the laymen may perform it, for what has been equally received may be equally given. There must, however, be no presumptuous usurping of what is the specific function of the bishop, and in no case is the right to administer baptism to be allowed to a woman.

Tertullian makes it a ground of accusation against the heretics that their Church lacks discipline. The culminating point in the charge is that there is no fixed distinction between the priests and the laity. The same persons are indifferently one day priests and the next day laymen, and vice versa. 'And so it comes to pass that to-day one man is their bishop, and to-morrow another; to-day he is a presbyter who to-morrow is a layman. For even on laymen do they impose the function of priesthood.'[2] A legitimate inference from such a statement is, that in the Christian Churches the distinction between the laity and the priesthood was rigidly kept, and the separate offices of bishop, presbyter, and deacon were kept distinct. It is certain, moreover, that the presbyters were chosen from the laymen, inasmuch as Tertullian exhorts the latter to monogamy, that they may be eligible for presbytership. No information is given by our author as to the way in which bishops were chosen from among the presbyters or as to the specific duties of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. It seems, however, that the bishop was responsible for the internal economy of each particular church, and, probably, when present, presided at the meetings and at the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist.

[1] *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 36. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 41.

Tertullian also mentions the sovereign Pontiff, the bishop of bishops ('Pontifex, scilicet, Maximus, Episcopus Episcoporum').[1] This reference has naturally been taken by Romanists as an allusion to the Bishop of Rome, and they claim that while Tertullian, now a Montanist, did not accept his claim to be Pontifex Maximus, yet his words imply that the Bishop of Rome was generally recognized as holding priority over the other bishops. Such an interpretation, however, is improbable in view of the fact that Bingham shows that the title of Summus Pontifex was applied to ordinary bishops.

There is also found in *De Pudicitia*, c. 13, the word 'Papa' occurring in the phrase: 'Bonus Pastor et Benedictus Papa concionaris.' This has been treated in like manner by the Romanists as a reference to the Bishop of Rome, but the use of the word in the time of Cyprian[2] shows that it was at that time a designation of ordinary bishops.

In *De Oratione*, c. 28, Tertullian avers that the true priests are those who, being spiritual, offer to God the spiritual sacrifice of prayer.

'For this is the spiritual victim which has abolished the pristine sacrifices. "To what purpose," saith He, "bring ye Me the multitude of your sacrifices? I am full of holocausts of rams, and I desire not the fat of rams, and the blood of bulls and goats. For who hath required these from your hands?" What, then, God has required the gospel teaches. "An hour will come," saith He, "when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and truth. For God is a Spirit, and accordingly requires His adorers to be such." We are the true adorers and the true priests, who, praying in spirit, sacrifice, in spirit, prayer—a victim proper and acceptable to God, which assuredly He has required, which He has looked forward to for Himself! This victim, devoted from the whole heart, fed on faith, tended by truth, entire in innocence, pure in chastity, garlanded with love, we ought to escort with the pomp of good works, amid psalms and hymns, unto God's altar, to obtain for us all things from God.'

This passage may be understood in a figurative sense, so as not to be opposed to the view, which we have noted, of the office of the bishop as a priest. It is the Old Testament

[1] *De Pudicitia*, c. 1. [2] *Cler. Rom. ad Cler. Carthag. Epistles*, 8, 23, 31, 36.

conception of the priest which is here being contrasted with the New.

But the same can hardly be said of the argument in *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, where Tertullian asks, 'Are not we laics priests?' Here the question under consideration is one of discipline, and it is the notion of the layman as a literal priest that is in Tertullian's mind. He is discussing the rightfulness or otherwise of second marriages, and first establishes the rule that priests are to be men of one wife. He quotes an undiscoverable passage from Leviticus which runs, so he says, 'My priests shall not pluralize marriages.' He does not refer to 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2 and Titus i. 5, 6, which might have furnished him with more stable ground for his argument, but he says that the rule is fully and carefully laid down among the Christians that men who are chosen unto the sacerdotal order must be men of one marriage, and some of those who have married a second time have been removed from their office for so doing. Then he infers that what applies to the priest applies also to the layman, for he, too, is a priest. God has made the laity also a kingdom and priests. This amounts to a prohibition of digamy to the laity also.

In this connexion Tertullian lays down the proposition that it is the authority of the Church which has established the difference between the 'Order' and the laity. Where the 'Order' is lacking the individual is his own priest, baptizing and sacrificing for himself, and he is therefore subject to the same discipline as the priest. It seems a descent from this high claim when Tertullian argues that the laity should abstain from digamy because the presbyters are chosen from among the laity, and that if they marry a second time they cannot be chosen as presbyters. The implication of such an argument is that the laity are only potentially priests, whereas he had already claimed for them that they were actually priests. Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Tertullian says, 'He is the only prelate, because He alone succeeds Christ.'[1]

He makes the apostolicity of the Churches depend upon the unbroken succession of the bishops from the apostles, as we have already seen in our treatment of the Church. 'Let the heretics,' he says, 'produce the original records of their Churches; let them unfold the roll of their bishops, running

[1] *De Virginibus Velandis*, c. 1.

down in due succession from the beginning, in such a manner that their first distinguished bishop shall be able to show for his ordainer and predecessor some one of the apostles or apostolic men—a man, moreover, who continued steadfast with the apostles. For this is the manner in which the apostolic Churches transmit their registers.'[1]

In *De Fuga in Persecutione*[2] the same claim is implied. Tertullian, attacking the superiors among the Christians, says, 'Did the apostles, with so much foresight, make the office of overseer (*hanc episcopatui formam*) of this type, that the occupants might be able to enjoy their rule free from anxiety, under colour of providing a like freedom for their flock?'

An allusion in *De Jejunio Adversus Psychicos*, c. 13, indicates that councils or synods were held for dealing with the great questions that affected the Churches. No precise definition of the questions handled, or of the personnel of the councils, is given, but it is in the course of discussing the Church fasts that the reference occurs, and a passage in *De Pudicitia*, c. 10, indicates that such questions as the canon of Scripture found a place in their deliberations. (*The Shepherd of Hermas*, says Tertullian, had been pronounced apocryphal by these councils.) The passage from *De Jejunio* runs thus: 'Besides, throughout the provinces of Greece there are held in definite localities those councils, gathered out of the universal Churches, by whose means not only all the deeper questions are handled for the common benefit, but the actual representation of the whole Christian name is celebrated with great veneration. And how worthy a thing is this, that, under the auspices of faith, men should congregate from all quarters to Christ.'

There are passing allusions in Tertullian's writings to lectors, or readers, and widows. The reference to the former gives us no information as to the duties of the lectors, but presumably it was to read the Scriptures to the people. The references to the latter occur: (1) In *De Virginibus Velandis*, where Tertullian complains that a bishop had admitted a virgin to the office of widow; (2) In *De Monogamia*; and (3) In *De Exhortatione Castitatis*. The allusions are by way of exhorting those who contemplate remarriage to consider those who are in the approved order of widows.

[1] *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, c. 32. [2] *De Fuga in Persecutione*, c. 13.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.—Tertullian's teaching as to the mode and meaning of baptism is very full. In his tract *De Baptismo* the subject is definitely and explicitly treated, and the views there advanced are supplemented by frequent allusions in his other writings. The occasion of his writing *De Baptismo* was: (1) The need of instructing converts; and (2) The assault upon the faith of those whose faith was not strongly grounded upon reason, made by a woman named Quintilla, who taught that baptism was not necessary.

In this connexion two of Tertullian's sayings are worthy of note. The first is his opening statement: 'Happy is the sacrament of our water, in that, by washing away the sins of our early blindness, we are set free unto eternal life.' That introductory statement will prepare us to find a generous recognition of the efficacy of baptism. The second is that which contains the allusion to ἰχθύς: 'But we, little fishes, after the example of our ἰχθύς, Jesus Christ, are born in water, nor have we any safety in any other way than by permanently abiding in water.' This is a play upon the initial letters of the words Ἰησοῦς χριστὸς θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτήρ, which formed a name which was applied to Christ. This statement will likewise prepare us to find emphasis laid upon the place of water in the rite of baptism.

Tertullian commends the simplicity of the Christian rite of baptism in contrast to the elaborate nature of pagan ceremonies. So far from detracting from the value of the rite, its simplicity adds to it, for it is in accordance with the method of God, who employs the foolish things of the world to confuse the wise. Hence, to attain eternal life by being simply dipped in water is a reasonable conjunction of the simplicity and power of God. But not only is water a 'simple' element, it has authority by reason of its age and dignity, and power and grace by reason of the brooding of the Holy Spirit upon it at the first.

What is effected by the brooding of the Holy Spirit upon the water it is necessary to consider, because some find in Tertullian's language the idea of a magical power transferred to the material element of water. The comparison of the baptismal water with the pool of Bethesda lends support to this interpretation. The medicinal properties of the pool were admittedly magical, and consequent upon the advent of the angel. It is an easy inference that the medicinal virtues of the

font were likewise magical, especially as they, too, are ascribed by Tertullian to the agency of the angel. But that inference, easy though it is, is drawn from an illustration which is at best an imperfect parallel, and it is truer to the thought of Tertullian to regard carefully what he says when he is not indulging in illustration. What he thus says is: 'All waters, therefore, in virtue of the pristine privilege of their origin, do, after invocation of God, attain the sacramental power of sanctification, for the Spirit immediately supervenes from the heavens, and rests over the waters, sanctifying them from Himself; and, being thus sanctified, they imbibe at the same time the power of sanctifying.' Apparently, taking the context into consideration, he means that water is a suitable medium of sanctification, because it was over water that the Holy Spirit brooded at the first, and that it then drank in the power of itself hallowing. The consequence is that, though the water used in baptism is not the identical water upon which the Holy Spirit brooded, it belongs to the same genus, and what was possible (i.e. the sanctifying of the element) in the case of primaeval water is possible to every species of water, so that, whether a man is to be baptized in a sea, or pool, or stream, or lake, or trough, the water is sanctified by the Holy Spirit upon the invocation of God. It must be confessed that there are apparent inconsistencies in Tertullian's statements, but that seems to be his root conception, and it certainly implies a higher view than that of the magical efficacy of the material substance of the water employed in the rite of baptism.

The healing efficacy of the water of the pool of Bethesda is typical of the spiritual healing effected through the water of baptism. 'This figure of corporeal healing sang of spiritual healing according to the rule by which things carnal are always antecedent, as figurative of things spiritual.' Under the Christian dispensation baptism removes the guilt and the penalty of sin, and restores the likeness of God. 'The guilt being removed, of course the penalty is removed too. Thus man will be restored for God . . . for he receives again that Spirit of God, which he had then first received from His "afflatus," but had afterwards lost through sin.'

The reception of the Holy Spirit is not, however, conferred by baptism. The latter simply prepares the way by sealing the forgiveness of sins to the faith of the baptized. Following

upon the immersion in water is the anointing with oil. This unction is typified in the Old Testament, especially in the anointing of Aaron by Moses, and it is an outward sign of a spiritual grace, as also is baptism. 'Thus, too, in our case, the unction runs carnally but profits spiritually, in the same way as the act of baptism itself, too, is carnal, in that we are immersed in water; the effect spiritual, in that we are freed from sins.' After the unction come the imposition of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit. This, too, was typified in the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh by Jacob. 'Then over our cleansed and blessed bodies willingly descends from the Father that Holiest Spirit.'

So far we have followed Tertullian's treatment of the subject in *De Baptismo*, and we shall return to the subject as there set forth again. But it is wise at this point to notice some other references which he makes to the subject. In *De Anima*, c. 41, he states that the soul, which has retained something of its original goodness, despite its depravity, is renewed in its second birth by water and by power from above. In *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 47, where he is maintaining the theory that the flesh shall participate in the resurrection, he makes some significant remarks upon baptism. It is the flesh that is baptized, therefore it is reasonable that the flesh should partake in the resurrection, for it is the flesh which is regenerated in baptism. 'Now it would not at all have been consistent that any rule of holiness and righteousness should be especially enjoined for the flesh, if the reward of such a discipline were not also within its reach; nor could even baptism be properly ordered for the flesh, if by its regeneration, a course were not inaugurated tending to its restitution, the apostle himself suggesting this idea, "Know ye not that as many of us as are baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into His death? We are therefore buried with Him by baptism into death, that just as Jesus was raised up from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life." And that you may not suppose that this is said merely of that life which we have to walk in the newness of, through baptism by faith, the apostle, with superlative forethought, adds, "For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." By a figure we die in our baptism, but in a reality we rise again in the flesh.' The death

in baptism is figurative, but the 'rising again' is literal. Some of the effects of baptism are indicated incidentally in Tertullian's contention with Marcion (*Adversus Marcionem*, Book I., c. 38). They are the remission of sins, deliverance from death, regeneration, and the bestowal of the Spirit, while baptism itself is designated a 'sacrament of salvation.'

This last remark leads us to notice the names which are applied to baptism by Tertullian. They are, 'the sacrament of washing' (*eadem lavacri sacramenti*), 'the blessed sacrament of water' (*felix sacramentum aquae nostrae*), 'the sacrament of faith' (*fidei sacramento*), 'the laver of regeneration' (*lavacrum regenerationis*), 'the intinctio of repentance' (*intinctionem poenitentiae*), 'the intinctio of the Lord' (*intinctionis Dominiciae*), and 'the sign and seal of faith' (*insigniculo fidei*).

To return to the tract *De Baptismo*, we find that Tertullian treats further of: (*a*) The distinction between the baptism of John and Christian baptism; (*b*) The objection that Jesus did not baptize; (*c*) The necessity of baptism; (*d*) Paul's assertion that he had not been sent to baptize, and (*e*) The unity of baptism. He then mentions the second baptism (i.e. martyrdom), and discusses the questions as to who are competent to administer baptism, what are the times for administering it, what preparation should be made for it, and what conduct should follow the celebration.

(*a*) The distinction between the baptism of John and Christian baptism lies, according to Tertullian, in the fact that the former was a baptism of repentance only, while the latter included the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Hence he infers that the baptism of John was human, in that repentance was a thing within the power of man, whereas the forgiveness of sins, and sanctification, are divine, being within the scope of God's power alone. The statement that John preached 'baptism for the remission of sins' must be understood as spoken in an anticipatory sense. The remission of sins was future.

(*b*) The difficulty that Jesus did not Himself baptize is met by Tertullian with a double plea that reminds one of the methods of modern legal defence. In the first place it is said that as an emperor is said to proclaim a decree, though he himself does it not, but his officers, or as a prefect is said to punish an offender, though he does it through his underlings,

so it may be said of Jesus that He baptized, although He did not do so personally, but through His disciples. In the second place, it was not to be expected that Jesus would baptize, because if He baptized into repentance He would have rendered void the work of His forerunner, if He baptized into remission of sins there was no need, as He could forgive sins by a word. He could not baptize into the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit was not yet come, and He could not baptize into the baptism subsequently known as the baptism of Christ, because the efficacy of that font had not yet been established by the passion and resurrection.

(*c*) It is evident that there were those in Tertullian's day who maintained that there was no need for baptism, on the ground that the apostles were not (excluding Paul) baptized. Tertullian maintains alternative possibilities in this case. Either the apostles were baptized (like their Master) with the baptism of John, and there was no need of the iterating of baptism, or they were specially exempted by the Master Himself, after the manner of those to whom He would say, ' Thy faith hath saved thee,' and ' Thy sins shall be remitted thee.'

There were others who cited the instance of Abraham to prove that baptism was unnecessary. To these Tertullian replied that former things must give place to subsequent. Mere faith might suffice for Abraham, but since the nativity, passion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ have intervened, the sacrament has been amplified by the sealing act of baptism. The teaching is plain. ' Go,' said Christ, ' teach the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'

(*d*) That Paul did not baptize was no objection against others baptizing. Besides, even he baptized Gaius and Crispus, and the house of Stephanas. The statement had reference to a peculiar state in the Church at Corinth, and should be understood in the light of those circumstances.

(*e*) Regarding the unity of baptism, Tertullian points to the fact that Christian baptism differs from Jewish in that it neither needs, not is capable of, repetition. ' We enter, then, the font once, once are sins washed away, because they ought never to be repeated. But the Jewish Israel bathes daily, because he is daily being defiled . . . happy water, which

once washes away, which does not mock sinners (with vain hopes), which does not, by being infected with the repetition of impurities, again defile them whom it has washed.'

As to the possibility of a second baptism, Tertullian takes the view held, by the African Church and developed by Cyprian, that it does not exist. Heretical baptism is no baptism at all, because the heretics have not the same God, nor the one Christ. If they desire to enter the Christian Church, it follows by implication, though Tertullian does not say it, that they must submit to the Christian rite of baptism. It does not seem, however, that the question, which became so acute later, as to whether baptism administered by heretics was valid, arose in Tertullian's time, so we are not able to say what his views were. Probably he would have agreed with those who held that the validity of the Sacrament depended upon its being duly administered within the Church rather than with those who favoured the validity of the rite in itself, by whomsoever it was administered.

The honourable esteem in which martyrdom was held is reflected in the view taken of martyrdom as a second baptism. The grounds for calling it so were that Jesus had said, ' I have a baptism to be baptized with,' when He was already baptized, and that John had described Him as coming by water and the blood. Further, the water and the blood that issued from the Saviour's side were figures of baptism by water and blood. Martyrdom was a form of baptism which obviated the necessity of prior baptism, and which restored to the sufferer the privileges of a baptism which he had lost.

Before following further the treatment of the subject of baptism in the treatise *De Baptismo* we may conveniently note here that in *De Corona Militis*, c. 3, Tertullian supplies us with a few interesting details as to the mode of administration of baptism. He tells us that the candidate for baptism, before entering the water, makes, in the presence of the congregation, and under the hand of the president, a solemn renunciation of the devil, and his pomp, and his angels. Then follows a threefold immersion—an amplification of the command of Christ in the gospel. After that, they taste a mixture of milk and honey, and refrain from their daily ablution for a week.

This account may be supplemented by the following references:

Adversus Praxean, c. 26: 'And, lastly, He commands them to baptize into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, not into a unipersonal God. And, indeed, it is not once only, but three times, that we are immersed, into the three Persons at each several mention of their names.'

De Baptismo, c. 7: 'After this, when we have emerged from the font, we are thoroughly anointed with a blessed unction.'

De Resurrectione Carnis, c. 8: 'The flesh is anointed.'

De Resurrectione Carnis, c. 26: 'The oil of God's unction.'

De Resurrectione Carnis, c. 8: 'The flesh is signed (with the cross).'

De Spectaculis, c. 4: 'When entering the water, we make profession of the Christian faith in the words of its rule, we bear public testimony that we have renounced the devil, his pomp, and his angels.'

Returning once more to the tract *De Baptismo*, we may follow out Tertullian's treatment. The persons who are competent to administer baptism are: (1) The chief priest, who is the bishop, who would undertake to perform the rite if present; (2) Next to the bishop, the presbyters and deacons, who, however, would not perform the ceremony without the authority of the bishop; (3) Next to these two classes, and in their absence, even laymen had the right to perform the ceremony, 'since what had equally been received might equally be given.' Ordinarily, the performance of the ceremony was the function of the Bishop, and should be carried out by him. But in case of necessity it devolved in succession upon the presbyters and deacons, and upon laymen. But in no case could it be performed by a woman.

As to the persons who were to be baptized, Tertullian advised caution. Not to every one who asks is the privilege to be granted, lest pearls should be cast before swine. It is preferable to delay baptism whenever possible, but especially in the case of children. 'Why does the innocent period of life hasten to the remission of sins?' The unwedded and the widowed should be encouraged to delay baptism, because in certain directions they were free from temptations which might accrue later and prove too strong for them. The belief of

Tertullian that heinous sins after baptism were unpardonable on earth (whatever might be the case in heaven) accounts for his desire that Christians should delay baptism as far as possible 'If any understand the weighty import of baptism they will fear its reception more than its delay.'

Concerning the times most suitable for baptism, Tertullian says they are: (1) The Passover time, which is most suitable of all; and (2) The period of Pentecost, i.e. the whole space between Easter and Whitsuntide. But the peculiar aptitude of such times lies simply in their solemnity; it does not affect the communication of grace in baptism. That is the same every day. 'However, every day is the Lord's; every hour, every time, is apt for baptism; if there is a difference in the solemnity, in the grace, distinction there is none.'

Regarding the kind of conduct that is fitting before and after baptism, Tertullian teaches that the preliminaries of baptism are prayer, fasting, and all-night vigils, with the public confession of all bygone sins. Such confession serves a double purpose. It makes satisfaction for former sins by mortification of the flesh and spirit, and it lays beforehand the foundation of defence against temptations to come. After baptism, fasting is not prescribed, as it is an occasion of joy; though others thought that the example of Jesus in fasting for forty days after baptism ought to be followed.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.—The doctrine of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper does not receive at Tertullian's hands anything approaching the same consideration as that given to baptism. There is no set treatment of the subject at all in his writings, and the incidental allusions are far from conclusive evidence as to his views on the subject. They have been claimed as supporting both the Roman and the Protestant theories by the defenders of each. It is only fair to insist that in a matter of this kind due regard should be paid to the incidental nature of Tertullian's allusions. The subject is one that demands the utmost discrimination in the use of words, and, even when such care has been observed, the history of the Church shows that misunderstandings and misinterpretations have been rife. When a writer, especially such a writer as Tertullian, with his mind intent upon the development of an argument on another subject, makes passing mention

of the eucharist, it is manifestly misleading to treat his statements as though his words had been chosen with meticulous care to express his views of the eucharist itself. The very fact that he has not written explicitly on this subject may be due to his not having thought out any theory of the eucharist, though such a negative argument must not be pressed. However, bearing this in mind, we may glean what we can of his thoughts on this theme.

Expounding the parable of the Prodigal Son, he draws a parallel between the Prodigal of the Gospel and the prodigal of his own time, who also, in a figure, squanders his substance and feeds swine, remembers his Father, receives the robe, and the ring, and 'thenceforward feeds upon the fatness of the Lord's body, the eucharist, to wit'[1] The phrase '*eucharistia scilicet*' may, as Kaye[2] remarks, be a gloss. Whether that is so or not, the language is evidently figurative all through the passage, and to build upon this statement the theory that Tertullian believed in transubstantiation is to erect a weighty superstructure upon a foundation of sand.

The statement, 'The flesh feeds upon the body and blood of Christ that the soul likewise may fatten on God,'[3] carries us no further. It is no more than a rhetorical climax to a culminating series of statements showing the close connexion of body and soul in the religious life. It is probably a condensed statement of the thought, 'The flesh feeds upon the bread and wine, which represent the body and blood of Christ, and at the same time the soul is nourished by partaking, as it were, of God.' The two thoughts have been 'telescoped,' so to speak, in the hurry of a rhetorical statement. The thought expressed elsewhere, that the soul feeds upon the same material food as the body, confirms this view, for the soul does not on that condition require the bread and wine to undergo a transformation into the actual body and blood of Christ in order to become food for the soul.

Dealing with the fifth clause in the Lord's Prayer,[4] Tertullian uses the words, 'Then, too (we find) that His body is reckoned to be in bread: "this is My body."' The statement is brought in somewhat abruptly. Tertullian has just been referring to the passage in John vi. where Christ says, 'I am the Bread of

[1] *De Pudicitia*, c. 9.
[2] *Writings of Tertullian*, p. 426.
[3] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 8.
[4] *De Oratione*, c. 6.

Life,' where the 'bread' is evidently figurative, and the transition to the brief statement from Matt. xxvi. 26, where the bread is literal, and the body of Christ is figurative, is awkward. The parallel would be closer and the awkwardness not so apparent if the 'bread' is still figurative, and the body of Christ is still literal, in the sentence, 'This (bread) is My body.' But, on the other hand, the sentiment of the whole passage is against such a construction. The thought that dominates the whole passage is that the clause in the Lord's Prayer is a petition for spiritual food, and that Christ is that spiritual food. 'For Christ is our Bread, because Christ is Life, and bread is life.'

A passage in *De Resurrectione Carnis* bears this out. There it is said, 'Constituting, therefore, His word as the life-giving principle, because that word is spirit and life, He likewise called His flesh by the same appellation; because, too, the Word had become flesh, we ought therefore to desire Him, in order that we may have life, and to devour Him with the ear, and to ruminate on Him with the understanding, and to digest Him by faith.'[1] It is difficult to believe that a man who could pen such a clear statement of the appropriation of Christ by faith could hold the belief that the substance of the body and blood of Christ were present in the eucharist under the semblance of bread and wine.

Tertullian uses the word *repraesentat* as an indication of the relation between the bread and the body of Christ. In *Adversus Marcionem* he says: 'Nor the bread by which He represents His own proper body.' The question is, What does the word *repraesentat* here signify? Does it mean 'to exhibit,' and so support the view that Tertullian is a transubstantiationist, or does it mean 'to signify'? Some allowance must be made for the view Tertullian takes of the nature of a sacrament. But we saw that he believed in the case of baptism, that it was possible for one to go through the form of baptism without true repentance and faith, and that in that case the immersion and the unction were of no avail. He says that the water is sanctified, and that the oil of unction is holy, but he would probably have said in the same way that the bread and wine were holy, without going so far as to say that they changed their substance.

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 37.

There is no justification in Tertullian's writings for the statement that the bread and wine were ' exhibitions ' of the body and blood of Christ ; they were rather ' signs ' of them.

Again, in the same treatise, there occurs an unmistakable reference to the bread as figurative of the body of Christ. ' This tree it is which Jeremiah likewise gives you intimation of when he prophesies to the Jews, who say, " Come, let us destroy the tree with its fruit, that is His body." For so did God, in your own gospel, even reveal the sense when He called His body bread, so that for the time to come you may understand that He has given to His body the figure of bread, whose body the prophet of old figuratively turned into bread, the Lord Himself designing to give, by and by, an interpretation of the mystery.'

In combating the theory of Marcion that Jesus had a phantom body, Tertullian bases one of his arguments on the use made by Jesus of bread as a figure of His body. It is only possible to use a figure of that which has real existence, so Christ could not have spoken of bread as a figure of His body unless that body really existed. In this connexion Tertullian says, ' Then having taken the bread, and having given it to His disciples, He made it His own body by saying, " This is My body," that is, the *figure* of My body.'

But most important of all in its bearing upon this subject is the philosophy of Tertullian. He repudiates at length the theory that the senses are unreliable witnesses of the actuality of the outer world. There may be illusions ; hallucinations sometimes occur to individuals ; but in the main the impressions conveyed by the senses correspond to the outward phenomena, and the senses are dependable instruments of the soul. Hence we should expect Tertullian to refuse to believe such a theory as that which asserts that the substance of the bread and wine are changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, while the accidents remain the same. He actually, in this very argument, mentions the wine in a sense which shows at least that he was not aware of such a notion. ' We may not call into question the truth of the senses, lest we should, even in Christ Himself, bring doubt upon the truth of their sensation, lest it should be said . . . that the taste of the wine was different from that which He consecrated in memory of His blood.'

To sum up : the truth seems to be that Tertullian had no developed theory of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to give. The philosophical questions that troubled later writers had not yet arisen, and, as in the case of the doctrine of the Trinity, to which he had given much thought and attention, expressions occur which would have been avoided if he had been writing in the light of later controversy, so, more emphatically, in the case of this sacrament, to which definite thought had not been given by him, statements were penned which had no relation to later controversy, and which would never have been penned if he were writing when those questions emerged, or later.

XI

ESCHATOLOGY

Death—its universality—It is the separation of the soul from the body.
The intermediate state—The body: what becomes of it—The soul passes to the 'lower world'—The 'lower world' and Abraham's bosom—The state of the soul in the 'lower world'—Paradise—The immediate entrance of the martyrs to Paradise.
The advent of Christ—Apparent contradiction—Immediate or delayed?—The second coming to be preceded by the events predicted by Christ.
The resurrection—The relation between the resurrection of Christ and that of men—The distinction between the resurrection of the flesh and the immortality of the soul—The dignity of the flesh—The possibility of restoring the flesh to the soul—The necessity of restoring the flesh to the soul in order to the judgement.
Scripture teaching on the subject—*Resurrectio mortuorum*—Prophecy—Teaching of Christ—The apostles and Paul—The exaltation of Christ is the climax of the proof.
The body which is to be raised is the actual body of this present life—Resemblance of the risen to the angels.
The fate of the wicked.

DEATH, says Tertullian, is universal, and he traverses the doctrines of those who teach that any shall escape it. Even Enoch and Elijah, though they were translated, must yet see death, which is postponed for them. 'Enoch no doubt was translated, and so was Elijah; nor did they experience death; it was postponed (and only postponed) for them most certainly; they are reserved for the suffering of death, that by their blood they may extinguish Antichrist.'[1]

But death is not natural. Even when the decay of old age removes men as by natural course death is a violation of nature. For man was not created to die, but sin, which was due to man's free volition, brought in complicating circumstances. 'As for our own views, indeed, we know what was man's origin, and we boldly assert, and persistently maintain, that death happens, not by way of a natural consequence to man, but owing to a fault and defect, which is not itself natural, although it is easy

[1] *De Anima*, c. 50.

enough, no doubt, to apply the term natural to faults and circumstances which seem to have been (though from the emergence of an external cause) inseparable to us from our very birth.'[1]

Death is a shipwreck of life, and the ship which founders by some internal shock quietly and amid peaceful surroundings is yet a wreck. 'It matters not whether the vessel of the human body goes with unbroken timbers, or shattered with storms, if the navigation of the soul be overthrown.'[2]

Death is the separation of the soul from the body, the complete separation. Tertullian discourses at great length on the whole subject of sleep and dreams, in order to establish his contention that the soul never leaves the body, except at death. The conclusion to which he comes is that sleep is a rest for the body only, while the soul remains active. 'Our only resource, indeed, is to agree with the Stoics by determining sleep to be a temporary suspension of the activities of the senses, procuring rest for the body only, not for the soul also.'[3] The soul, meanwhile, is active, and is, as it were, preparing itself for that state of complete separation from the body which it will experience when death supervenes. 'Meanwhile, the soul is circumstanced in such a manner as to seem to be elsewhere active, learning to bear future absence by a dissembling of its presence for the moment.'[4]

'It (the soul) proves itself to possess a constant motion . . . it shows what very great power it has, even without the body, how well equipped it is with members of its own, although betraying at the same time the need it has of impressing on some body its activity again.'[5] Sleep, in fact, is a parable of death, and awaking is a parable of resurrection, although sleep is in no sense a real separation of body and soul. 'Accordingly, when the body shakes off its slumber it asserts before your eye the resurrection of the dead by its own resumption of its natural functions.'[6]

Death is the complete separation of the soul from the body. 'But the operation of death is plain and obvious: it is the separation of body and soul.'[7] Tertullian shows his familiarity with medical knowledge in explaining how it was possible for the body in certain cases to be preserved by natural causes for

[1] *De Anima*, c. 52. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 52. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 43. [4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 43. [6] *Ibid.* [7] *Ibid.*, c. 51.

some time after the departure of the soul, and explains some remarkable incidents in which dead bodies were alleged to have moved, by attributing the movement to the direct agency of God. But not a particle of the soul can remain in the dead body. The soul is an indivisible body, and death is an indivisible process. 'Death, if it once falls short of totality in operation, is not death. If any portion of the soul remain it makes a living state. Death will no more mix with life than will night with day.'[1]

The basis of Tertullian's thought is the narrative of the sin of Adam in the garden of Eden. In this he follows Paul. But he has neither Paul's insight nor his acumen. He does not discriminate between the separation of the soul from the body and the dread accompaniments of that dissolution. To Paul the terror of death lay in the pain, and sorrow, and disease, which followed in the wake of sin, and in the absence of hope beyond the grave. 'O death, where is thy sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But death in Christ had lost its sting. It was the last enemy to be defeated, but it was defeated. 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Henceforth death was robbed of its sting. It was now but a transition from the bodily presence to be with Christ. This was a distinction which Tertullian did not make, and the whole development of his thought upon the subject of death shows this failure.

What becomes of the two elements after their separation? The body is burned by fire, or buried in the ground, or devoured by beasts. For the time being it disappears as an entity, though Tertullian points to the fact that in some cases large portions remain intact for very long periods, and he appears to hold that the actual materials of the bodily structure never really suffer destruction, but remain to be built up into the bodily structure again at the resurrection.

THE SOUL ENTERS THE LOWER WORLD.—Tertullian tells us that he has written a treatise (which is not extant) called *De Paradiso*, in which he has established the position 'that every soul is detained in safe keeping among the inhabitants of the lower world' until the day of the Lord.[2] The lower

[1] *De Anima.*

[2] *Ibid.*, c. 55: 'Habes etiam de Paradiso a nobis libellum quo constituimus omnem apud inferos sequestrari in diem Domini.'

regions are situated as a vast, deep space in the interior of the earth. 'By ourselves the lower regions are not supposed to be a bare cavity, nor some subterranean sewer of the world, but a vast deep space in the interior of the earth, and a concealed recess in its very bowels.' To this region Christ went—in the manner of all dead men—so that the prophets and patriarchs might become partakers of Himself. Hence it is not unjust that the souls of the faithful should go there, too.

Tertullian combats the notion, which was held by some, that the souls of the faithful should mount up straightway to heaven. That would be to anticipate the resurrection and the day 'of the Lord.'[1] How, indeed, shall the soul mount up to heaven, where Christ is sitting at the Father's right hand, when as yet the archangel's trumpet has not been heard by the command of God, when as yet those whom the coming of the Lord is to find on the earth have not been caught up into the air to meet Him at His coming, in company with the dead in Christ, who shall be the first to arise? 'When the world indeed shall pass away, then the kingdom of heaven shall be opened.'[2]

The souls of all shall pass into the 'lower world,' where they shall remain until the resurrection. Good and bad alike are there. But not together, in the same place. There are two regions, a good and a bad. 'I must compel you to determine (what you mean by the "lower world") which of its two regions, the region of the good, or of the bad.'[3] In these two regions of the 'lower world,' where all souls are shut up, there is a difference of condition. There the soul receives punishment or consolation, in accordance with its deserts, and in anticipation of gloom or glory.[4] In one passage[5] Tertullian seems to give to the place of the good in the 'lower world' the name of Abraham's bosom, and to indicate that it is separated by a great gulf from the region of the bad.

The division of the good from the bad in the 'lower world' is the only reasonable position to take up, says Tertullian. He has already shown that the souls of men cannot immediately enter heaven. He now maintains that souls cannot sleep. The only alternative is that they should live, and if they live, it would not be just that the righteous and the wicked should

[1] *De Anima.* [2] *Ibid.*, c. 55. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 56.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 58. [5] *Adv. Marcionem*, IV. 34.

fare alike. The soul is capable of experiencing joy or sorrow, even apart from the body. It can be tortured by ill-temper, and anger, and fatigue. It can in like manner steal away, as it were, from the importunate society of the body, to delight in some furtive joy. It is also capable of sinning apart from the flesh, and of cherishing good in like manner. It is responsible for sins of thought, and for piety of intention, and charity of disposition. Therefore it is only right that it should suffer punishment, or enjoy reward, for these. In fact, the soul takes the first place in sin, since the mental conception precedes the actual deed. Hence it is quite in keeping with the fitness of things that it should be the first to suffer. In the 'lower world' the soul atones in a measure for the offences of life, but without prejudice to the final judgement of the resurrection. 'In short, inasmuch as we understand "the prison" pointed out in the gospel to be the "lower world," and as we interpret also the "uttermost farthing" to mean the very smallest offence, which has to be atoned for there before the resurrection, no one will hesitate to believe that the soul undergoes in the "lower world" some compensatory discipline, without prejudice to the full process of the resurrection when the recompense will be administered through the flesh besides.'[1]

Yet not all souls enter the 'lower world.' There is one exception. The souls of the martyrs pass immediately into Paradise, where they are in the presence of the Lord. 'For no one, on becoming absent from the body, is at once a dweller in the presence of the Lord, except by the prerogative of martyrdom, whereby (the saint) gets at once a lodging in paradise, not in the "lower world."'[2] How is it, then, that the region of Paradise, which, as revealed to John in the spirit, lay under the altar, displays no other souls as in it besides the souls of the martyrs? How is it that the most heroic martyr, Perpetua, on the day of her passion, saw only her fellow martyrs there, in the revelation which she received of Paradise?'[3]

The legal cast of Tertullian's thought is here obvious. Remission of sin by the atonement of Christ is unthought of. Any atonement for sin which is made is personal, and is exactly equivalent to the wrong done. Likewise every reward is proportioned to the desert of the individual soul. The

[1] *De Anima*, c. 58. [2] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 43. [3] *De Anima*, c. 55.

preference accorded to the martyrs is based upon the same legal view. They have bought the right of entrance to Paradise by their own blood. 'Let it suffice to the martyr to have purged his own sins.'[1] Martyrdom is 'that illustrious devotion, that fighting for the faith, wherein whosoever loses his life for God saves it, so that you may here again recognize the Judge, who recompenses the evil gain of life with its destruction, and the good loss thereof with its salvation.'[2] 'The sole key to unlock Paradise is your own life's blood.'[3]

Here, too, is the germ from which the later theory of purgatory developed. But it is no more than the germ. It made possible the later theory of the Roman Church, but Tertullian himself went no farther in this direction than is indicated above.

THE DAY OF THE LORD.—The Christ, who has already come in humiliation, shall come in glory, 'no longer a stone of offence or a rock of scandal, but the highest corner-stone.'[4] He will appear, as predicted in Daniel, upon the clouds of heaven. He will wield all power, and all the nations shall serve Him. His power shall be eternal, and His kingdom shall not be corrupted.

The day of His appearing is fast approaching. 'But what a spectacle is that fast approaching advent of our Lord now owned by all, now highly exalted, now a triumphant one.'[5] It is, in fact, only retarded by the existence of the Roman Empire. Hence Christians pray for the Emperors and the Empire. 'There is also another, and a greater, necessity for our offering prayer in behalf of the Emperors, nay for the complete stability of the Empire, and for Roman interests in general. For we know that a mighty shock, impending over the whole earth—in fact, the very end of all things, threatening dreadful woes—is only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman Empire. We have no desire, then, to be overtaken by these dire events.'[6]

At other times, however, Tertullian writes in another strain, as though the day of the Lord were not to be feared by Christians, but welcomed. 'Now, forasmuch as the seasons of our entire hope have been fixed in the Holy Scripture, and since we are not permitted to place the accomplishing thereof, as

[1] *De Pudicitia*, c. 22. [2] *Adv. Marcionem*, IV., c. 21. [3] *De Anima*, c. 54.
[4] *Adv. Judaeos*, c. 14. [5] *De Spectaculis*, c. 30. [6] *Apologeticus*, c. 32.

I apprehend, previous to Christ's coming, our prayers are directed towards the end of the world, to the passing away thereof at the great day of the Lord.'[1]

This apparent contradiction may easily be resolved by reference to the context. The day of the Lord is to be preceded by great tribulations. It is a day of wrath and vengeance, of the dissolution of the elements and the conflict of nations. As such it will bring dire suffering, not only upon the heathen, but upon Christians, too. In view of such dread accompaniments, the day of the Lord is to be dreaded. But it will issue in a great triumph for the faithful. Those who are dead shall be raised; those who are alive shall be caught up into the air to meet the Lord. And after the judgement they shall receive the reward of their fidelity and good works, life everlasting. As such it is a consummation devoutly to be desired by Christians.

Is the coming of Christ immediate or delayed? That is a question that no one can answer, for the day of the Lord is known to none but the Father. It will be announced by signs and wonders, by the dissolution of the elements and the conflict of nations. Jesus Himself had foretold the course of events up to the overthrow of Jerusalem, and beyond that until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. But the signs of the end had not yet appeared, and those who declared that the resurrection was already taking place, or that it took place at the death of every individual, were unduly hastening the day of the Lord in their minds, and were forgetting the signs, and portents, and events, which were destined to precede it.

Dealing with the eschatological section of Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians, Tertullian asks: 'What archangel's voice, what trump of God, is now heard, except it be forsooth in the entertainments of the heretics?' He also points out that in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians Paul bids them not be troubled by false prophets, who teach that the day of the Lord is at hand. For that day shall not come, unless there first comes a falling away, and the appearance of Antichrist. The Antichrist cannot, however, come until he who now hinders shall be taken out of the way. The 'one who now hinders' is the Roman Empire. 'What obstacle is there but the Roman state, the falling away of which, by being scattered

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 22.

into ten kingdoms, shall introduce Antichrist upon (its own ruins.)'[1]

Tertullian also claims the support of the Book of Revelation. The souls of the martyrs are there taught to wait beneath the altar until the world has suffered the plagues that are foretold for it, 'that the city of fornication may receive from the ten kings its deserved doom, and that the beast Antichrist, with his false prophets, may wage war on the Church of God.'[2]

On the other hand, there are passages in Tertullian's writings which indicate that he believed the day of the Lord to be imminent. Writing to his wife, he advises her not to marry again if he should predecease her, because it is better to be without the encumbrance of children in that day. 'In that day of disencumbrance the encumbrances of children will be an inconvenience. It is to marriage, of course, that these encumbrances appertain; but that woe will not appertain to widows. (They) at the first trump of the angel will spring forth disencumbered.' 'The time (says the apostle) is compressed. It remaineth that they who have wives act as if they had them not.'

In *De Fuga in Persecutione*, Tertullian says that Antichrist is now close at hand and gaping for the blood of Christians. In *De Exhortatione Castitatis* he uses the expression, 'Now at the extreme boundaries of the times.' In *De Monogamia* he writes, 'Let them accumulate by their iterated marriages fruits right seasonable for the last times. . . . Let them prepare for Antichrist (children), upon whom he may more passionately (than Pharaoh) spend his savagery.' In *De Pudicitia* he complains that 'the conquering power of things evil is on the increase—which is the characteristic of the last times.' In *De Jejunio* he even calls the times the 'latest times.'

With reference to these passages, it is sufficient to say that Tertullian evidently thought that persecution of the saints was one of the signs of the approach of the day of the Lord, and that in time of persecution it was natural that he should discern, as he thought, the first of the signs of the approaching end. 'But every sign is his, to whom belongs the thing of which it is the sign; and to everything is appointed its sign, by Him to whom the thing belongs. If, therefore, these

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 24. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 25.

tribulations are the signs of the Kingdom, just as the maturity of the tree is of the summer, it follows that the Kingdom is the Creator's, to whom are ascribed the tribulations, which are the signs of the Kingdom.'[1]

THE RESURRECTION.—The resurrection of the dead synchronizes with the second advent of Christ. 'The powers of heaven shall be shaken, and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' With the quotation of these words of Jesus, Tertullian expresses his own view of the time of the resurrection.

Tertullian appreciates the value in evidence of proceeding from the known to the unknown, from the certain to the less certain. It is in accordance with the appreciation of the relative value of evidence that he first maintains, at great length, and with much weight of argument, the reality of the flesh of Christ. The docetic view of the Gnostics was widely held and supported with much ingenious reasoning, and Tertullian saw that such a view of Christ's Person was incompatible with his belief in the resurrection of the flesh. The physical resurection of Christ was the foundation for the resurrection of the flesh of men. Hence he deems it necessary to establish beyond all doubt the former before arguing in support of the latter.

It is essential to bear in mind the distinction between the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body. The former was a belief shared by many of the philosophers; the latter was a peculiarly Christian doctrine. The Platonists, for example, not only did not, but could not, consistently with their principles, hope for a resurrection of the body. To them the body was a prison where the soul was incarcerated, and death was the release of the body from its prison. How, then, could they hope for the resurrection of the body? But the Christian took at least a less ascetic view of life, and a less pessimistic view of the body. The body was the temple of the Holy Ghost, and in a refined and purer form might be a fit organ for the soul in the life to come. Hence we find Tertullian acknowledging that the philosophers—some of them at least, e.g. Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Plato—believe in the

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, IV., c. 38.

immortality of the soul, but himself going on further to assert and maintain the resurrection of the body.

He says that everywhere the heretics inveigh against the flesh. It is vile from its first origin to its last dissolution, and is unworthy of being restored. Moreover, its restoration is impracticable. How can that which has been devoured by fire, sea, beasts, birds, and fishes, come into being again as an entity? And, if it were practicable, to what purpose would it be to restore the blind and the lame, the leper and the palsied? One of the accompaniments of the body is the wish to die by reason of disease and pain. Will that also be restored?

The reply Tertullian makes is, that the flesh is the creation of God, and not only the creation of God, but the best of His creatures; for He made man, not soul alone, but soul and body together. Though the flesh, regarded in itself, may be lowly, viewed as the work of God it is exalted. It was, moreover, destined to be the habitation and clothing of Christ, and in the Christian religion it is associated with the soul in the most sacred acts and rites. 'And since the soul is, in consequence of its salvation, chosen to the service of God, it is the flesh which actually renders it capable of such service. The flesh, indeed, is washed, that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed, that the soul, too, may be fortified; the flesh is shadowed with the imposition of hands, that the soul also may be illuminated with the spirit; the flesh feeds on the body and blood of Christ, that the soul likewise may fatten on its God.'[1] The soul and the flesh, then, which are so closely associated in service, should likewise be associated in reward. The flesh plays its part in the sacrifices which are acceptable to God, i.e. in fasting and abstinence; and in martyrdom, which is so complete a repayal of man's debt to God that when it is suffered nothing is left unpaid, the flesh plays a noble part.

It is easy to quote Scripture passages which are derogatory to the dignity of the flesh, but it is equally easy to quote passages which are eulogistic of the flesh. Moreover, the passages which seem to belittle the flesh are spoken in denunciation of the *actions* of the flesh, not of its *substance*, and in those actions the soul bears a large portion of the responsibility. Paul speaks of 'carrying about in his body the marks of the

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 8.

Lord Jesus'; he also calls it 'the temple of God,' and its parts 'members of Christ,' and bids us 'glorify God in our body.'

As to the possibility of restoring the flesh to the soul, Tertullian takes the view that He who created the world and man out of nothing is surely able to restore the flesh to the soul. 'On this principle you may be quite sure that the restoration of the flesh is easier than its first formation.'[1] He uses also the principle of analogy. In a passage which reminds one of Ecclesiastes[2] he refers to the recurring courses of nature; day and night, summer and winter, seed and fruit, show, as it were, death and the resurrection of man. The analogy is confessedly imperfect, but there is one more adequate. That is the phoenix. 'If, however, all nature but faintly figures our resurrection; if creation affords no sign precisely like it, inasmuch as its several phenomena can hardly be said to die so much as to come to an end, nor again be deemed to be reanimated, but only reformed; then take a most complete and unassailable symbol of our hope, for it shall be an animated being, and subject alike to life and death. I refer to the bird which is peculiar to the East . . . the phoenix.' Tertullian finds ground for using this analogy in the LXX. rendering of Ps. xcii. 12: 'The righteous shall flourish like the phoenix.'[3]

Another argument for the resurrection of the flesh is found in the judgement. Every man will be judged for his acts and thoughts. But the connexion between the body and the soul in every act, and in every thought even, is so close that the responsibility of the one is inextricably interwoven with that of the other. True, the soul does in the 'lower world' suffer proportionately, or rejoice relatively, but it is reserved for the reunited soul and body to know the fullness of its sufferings or the completeness of its joy.

Having thus paved the way for a right understanding of the Scripture teaching on the subject, Tertullian sets out the latter fully. He first takes the Scripture phrase '*resurrectio mortuorum*,' and shows that it implies the resurrection of the flesh, for as it is the flesh which has 'fallen,' so it is the flesh which must be 'raised up.' Then he refutes the opinions of those who would accept such a phrase in a figurative sense, as if it referred to the spiritual upraising of a man who is dead in ignorance and sin. Figurative expressions have their basis

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 11. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 12. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 13.

in fact. They are but a carrying over of a parallel from the literal existence to the imaginative realm. If there were no literal resurrection from the dead, the figure could not be applied to the spiritual world.

The resurrection is not to take place immediately at death, but is to be preceded by the coming of Christ. With regard to those passages in Paul's Epistles which speak of a spiritual resurrection, Tertullian shows that they not only do not preclude, but necessitate, the idea of a literal resurrection, and that literal resurrection is referred to in other passages. The Revelation of John also speaks of a first resurrection and a second, the second being referred to the last times, and of necessity indicating a literal resurrection, since a spiritual can no longer be necessary. In fact, the whole description of spiritual resurrection in the Scriptures depends for its force and meaning upon the bodily resurrection.

Tertullian does not rest content without producing all the weapons in the armoury of Scripture to refute his opponents in this doctrine, and he explores the Old Testament for prophetic references, the chief of which are Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones and Jonah's deliverance from the great fish. The teaching of Christ, His parables, and His miracles in restoring the dead, are all made to support his theory. The Acts of the Apostles bears witness to the same truth, and the works of Paul are again referred to, by way of bringing the evidence to its culminating point.

But Tertullian does not clearly grasp the great apostle's teaching on this point, perhaps because he came to his writings to find support for the position which he had taken up against the heretics, rather than to discover what Paul's teaching really was. The apostle uses the comparison of a grain of wheat falling into the ground and bearing fruit through its own death, but he does not make the grain that is born absolutely and materially identical with that which was sown. In fact, he expressly differentiates between that which is sown and that which is raised, and declares that that which is raised is a spiritual body. Tertullian, on the other hand, pleads for the absolute and unchanged identity of the earthly body, and expressly repudiates the notion that it is to be either the corporeity of the soul or a spiritual body.

But it is the exaltation of Jesus, and His session at the right

hand of God, with flesh and blood, yet purer than ours, that forms the climax of proof. In Christ flesh and blood have acquired the kingdom of heaven.

The body which is to be raised is the actual body, which is the inseparable companion of the soul in its earthly life. To maintain this position, Tertullian does violence to Paul's meaning, and forces his words about the ' bare ' grain, and the ' body which God giveth as it pleaseth Him.' The plain meaning of Paul is that it is identity of personality that is preserved. Tertullian makes it the fleshly substance. There is, however, a difference Tertullian is willing to admit. The body that dies is bare grain, but God gives it a body. What is that body, and where lies the distinction? It is that in the resurrection it will be no longer a ' bare ' body, but there will be additional matter. That, however, does not destroy the ' bare ' body; it is superimposed upon it. It is not changed by abolition, but by amplification. This amplification is the grace and ornament which God shall give it according to its merit. Or the change may be regarded as one of condition. A thing does not change because its condition changes. So the hand of Moses became like a dead one, and was restored to life, but it was the same hand in both conditions. So the face of Moses was transfigured, but it was the same face. So Jesus changed His appearance on the Mount of Olives without changing His substance. So a man changes with the passing of the years, but still remains the same man. Here Tertullian comes near to abandoning the position he has taken up, for some of his illustrations come very near to depicting an identity of personality without necessitating the essential identity of the fabric of the body. Nevertheless, he regards them as illustrating his point, which is, that in the resurrection it is the identical, material body which is raised.

But though it is the actual body of this present life which is restored, it will have none of the imperfections which are found in the lame, the blind, and the deformed. Every imperfection of the human body is a partial death, and he who will restore the complete death will restore all these partial deaths, even those which are traced back to the pre-natal life. The resurrection life will be everlasting in its duration, and perfect in beatific bliss. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away. God shall wipe away all tears, and there shall be no more death.

The flesh of man, too, will be made capable of enduring such eternal condition, and while the characteristics of the body, i.e. its limbs and organs, will remain, their functions will not be the same. This may seem impossible to us, but we are not judges of what is possible to God.

The state of the risen will be like that of the angels, e.g. they shall not marry. But as the angels took upon them the condition of men, so men shall take upon them the condition of angels. But Christ did not say, 'They shall be angels,' but 'They shall be equal to angels,' so that, without losing their existence as men, or impairing their humanity, they shall yet resemble the angels. The resemblance will be complete, but the flesh will be human.

Hitherto we have noticed that Tertullian is speaking of the state of the blessed in the resurrection, and it is of this that he mainly treats, but he indicates, too, what is to happen to the wicked. The judgement of God is twofold—of salvation and of punishment—and the punishment consists of consignment to the fire. There is no hope of salvation in the 'lower world,' where even the good and those destined for Paradise must pay the exact equivalent in suffering of their debt to God. There is certainly no hope of deliverance beyond the judgement. Both body and soul are to be punished in hell. They are not to be annihilated; that would be to consume them, not to punish them; but the fire of hell is everlasting, and so is its punishment. It is not a merely human murder—which is temporal—but a never-ending killing. The body is included in this, since the Scriptures speak of 'weeping and gnashing of teeth,' and of 'being bound hand and foot.'

THE JUDGEMENT.—With the advent of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, all men shall appear before His judgement-seat. It will be a spectacle immeasurably more magnificent than the pomps and pageants of earth. The retribution will be according to men's deserts. 'Since, however, there is then to be a retribution according to men's merits, how will any be able to reckon with God? But by mentioning both the judgement-seat and the distinction between works, good and bad, he (Paul) set before us a Judge who is to award both sentences, and has affirmed that all will have to be present at the tribunal in their bodies.'[1] All the nations shall be there

[1] *Adv. Marcionem*, V., c. 12.

with their rulers, and governors, and princes, the mighty and the humble, the learned and the foolish.

The judgement will be one of punishment for the wicked and of salvation for the righteous. The form of punishment is everlasting fire, that of salvation is eternal life. 'But who does not hold that the judgement of God consists in the two-fold sentence of salvation and of punishment? Therefore it is that all flesh is grass, which is destined to the fire, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God, which is ordained to eternal life.'[1]

The sentence pronounced on the judgement day will be final and irrevocable: 'Accordingly God's judgement will be more full and complete, because it will be pronounced at the very last, in an eternal, irrevocable sentence, both of punishment and of consolation.'[2]

THE MILLENNIUM.—Tertullian has set forth, clearly and succinctly, in his controversy with Marcion,[3] his belief concerning the millennium. It had been treated at greater length by him in another work, *De Spe Fidelium*, but that, unfortunately, is lost. He states that he is familiar with the idea of a literal return of the Jews to Judaea, and the setting up then of an earthly kingdom; but he himself accepts the prophecies relating to the subject in a figurative sense as applying to Christ and His Church. He does, however, believe that a kingdom awaits the saints upon the earth, only that it is in another existence, after the resurrection. It will last for a thousand years, in the divinely built city of Jerusalem, which will be let down from heaven. This is the city which Paul calls 'our mother from above,' and in which the πολίτευμα, or citizenship, of Christians is. It was foretold by Ezekiel (xlviii. 30–38) and by John (Rev. xxi. 10–23). Moreover, the New Prophecy taught that a sign of this New Jerusalem would be manifested in a picture of it which would appear in the heavens. That sign, said Tertullian, had already been given. In Judaea, during an expedition to the East, there was seen suspended in the sky a city early every morning for forty days. The city will serve the purpose of receiving the saints on their resurrection. There they will receive spiritual blessings to compensate them for the afflictions of the present life.

The order of events is expressly set forth by Tertullian. 'Of the heavenly kingdom this is the process. After its

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 59. [2] *De Anima*, c. 33. [3] Book III., c. 24.

thousand years are over, within which period is completed the resurrection of the saints, who rise sooner or later, according to their deserts, there will ensue the destruction of the world and the conflagration of all things at the judgement; we shall then be changed, in a moment, into the substance of angels, even by the investiture of an incorruptible nature, and so be removed to that kingdom in heaven of which we have now been treating.'

XII

ETHICAL TEACHING

The sources of Tertullian's ethics : (*a*) His theological views ; (*b*) His eschatological outlook ; (*c*) His Stoicism ; (*d*) His interpretation of Scripture ; (*e*) His character—'Nature' the fundamental ground—Reason—Tradition—Scripture—The Paraclete—The relation of these grounds to one another—The legal nature of this view—Faith and obedience—Two wills in God—The doctrine of merit—The development of that doctrine in the West—Freedom of the will—Virtues and Vices—Patience—Charity—Modesty—Asceticism—Idolatry—The pronounced asceticism of his later days.

THE sources of Tertullian's ethical teaching are to be found in his theological views, his eschatological outlook, his predilection for Stoicism, his interpretation of Scripture, and his own austere character. These all have combined to produce a view of life, and a conception of virtue, which is at once Christian and un-Christian. It is Christian in the sense that it derives its force from its relation to the traditional Rule of Faith ; it is un-Christian in the sense that it departs from the Christian conception of virtue and life as manifested in Christ and in the New Testament. Some inconsistencies in such a system, if system it can be called, derived from so many and so different sources, may be expected, and a variation in point of view in earlier and later writings is an inevitable result of a changing attitude towards the Church.

The dogmatic background of Tertullian's theology colours his ethical teaching. Christianity is to him little more in theory, at any rate, than the acceptance of, and adhesion to, the theological tenets contained in the traditional Rule of Faith. He who accepts these is a Christian, without further ado ; while he who rejects them can have no virtue. That is the theory which underlies his polemical attitude. But he is not without misgivings on the point, and can speak of virtue in the heathen, and insist upon goodness of life in Christians.

His eschatology has given his ethical teaching something of

the character of an *interimsethik*. In a world that is fast approaching its end, the ordinary sanctions of morality are reinforced, and indeed replaced, by others whose immediacy gives them transcendent importance. Celibacy, asceticism, and other-worldliness are emphasized. The world is doomed; separation from it is salvation. Patience is the supreme virtue, martyrdom the greatest glory. There is no possibility of a vision in which the building of a temple over a circus may become a figure of the pleasures of the world being brought under the sway of the religion of Jesus Christ.[1]

In the contrary direction tends the influence of the Stoic view of the natural world as a rational creation, in which the goodness of God is revealed. But Tertullian's dark belief—not unjustifiable in view of the current immorality—that the devil and his angels have corrupted a large part of the creation of God precluded him from developing the full consequences of this view, and enabled him to hold at once that the world is good, and that worldliness is the essence of evil.

Tertullian found in the Scriptures an ally of great power. He made much of their eschatological teaching, and pressed them into the service of his anti-worldly view of life. But he accepted, too, the moral teaching as exemplified in the Sermon on the Mount, though that led him into considerable difficulty, especially in relation to war. The real master motive of the New Testament—love to God and man—he never quite appreciated.

Lastly, his own austere character determined, in a measure, his ethical teaching. There is nothing of the grace of Irenaeus, or the tolerance of Clement of Alexandria, in his composition. Fiery and zealous, just without mercy, and righteous without love, he drew from Scripture, and tradition, and philosophy, just what blended with his own character, and moulded his ethics after the pattern of his own ideals. It is not without reason that his ethics have been called 'Tertullianish.'

The ethical ideal of life, as such, is not discussed by Tertullian, but several points of view come to expression incidentally, and indicate in which direction his thoughts on this subject ran. One very important aspect of the subject is found in his view of nature. Faced with a question of Christian

[1] Cf. *De Spectaculis*, c. 10, where Tertullian takes the opposite view of the Temple of Pompey.

conduct, he goes back to this as the fundamental ground. 'The argument for Christian practices becomes all the stronger when also Nature, which is the first rule of all, supports them.'[1] Similarly, his objection to the shows arises, in part, from the fact that in them 'unnatural' things are done. The faces and forms of men and women were disfigured. 'That disfiguration of the face, which is nothing less than the disfiguration of God's own image'[2]; 'Will God be pleased with him, who applies the razor to himself, and completely changes his features?'[3] It is the devil's work to instigate actors to wear high shoes in order to make them look taller.[4] Hence it would appear that the ideal of life is to live according to Nature.

It is, however, very obvious that Tertullian is not prepared to commend everything that is natural. It is but a small step with him from Nature to Reason. In fact, he uses the two terms interchangeably, and passes imperceptibly from the one to the other.[5] The ideal is, accordingly, narrowed. To live in conformity with Reason is to impose greater limitations upon action than to live according to Nature. When Tertullian thinks of Nature and Reason as synonymous, he thinks of Nature as it was originally created by God. As such it was rational. But that rational created Nature was corrupted by the devil and by man, and it is only the uncorrupted remainder that is still rational; it is living according to Reason and Nature in this sense that constitutes true living.

Besides, even this limitation is not rigorous enough for Tertullian. Reason itself must be further strictly confined. It may be exercised only within the limits of the Rule of Faith. Thus tradition, orally communicated from the apostles, and confined to the Churches, is the guide as to what may be done and what may not. And side by side with tradition is custom, which is tradition hardened into conduct. 'And how long shall we draw the saw to and fro through this line, when we have an ancient practice which by anticipation has made for us the state of the question? If no passage of Scripture has prescribed it, assuredly custom, which has flowed from tradition has confirmed it.'[6] 'In short, what patriarch, what prophet, what Levite, or priest, or ruler, or, at a later period, what

[1] *De Corona Militis*, c. 5. [2] *De Spectaculis*, c. 18. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 23.
[4] *Ibid.*; cf. also *De Cultu Feminarum*, I. and II. *passim*.
[5] *De Corona Militis*, cc. 2–5. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 3.

apostle, or preacher of the gospel, or bishop, do you ever find the wearer of a crown ? '[1] Tradition itself is sufficient without the support of Scripture, but not as an opponent of Scripture. In Tertullian's view Scripture and tradition cannot clash. ' If for these, and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none. Tradition will be held forth to you as the originator of them, custom as their strengthener, and faith as their supporter.' Tradition is the basis of much that is done in baptism, and the eucharist, in fasting and worship, and in tracing upon the forehead the sign of the cross.

A still further limitation is found in the teaching of Scripture. This is the firm and immutable foundation. If the Scripture enjoins, it must be obeyed ; if it forbids, its dictates are final. In his earlier writings Tertullian accepted the Scriptures in an unscientific manner and adopted fanciful exegesis, but in the later writings a better sense of proportion is manifested. After his break with the Roman Church he accepted the view that the true interpretation of the Scriptures was given by the Paraclete, but was careful to show that even the activity of the Paraclete and his prophets was confined to the subject-matter of the Rule of Faith. What was confirmed by the Paraclete, however, was authoritative and final.

The relation of these grounds to one another as a basis of authority appears to be that they are not a group of heterogeneous elements, but a structure made up of a series of steps superimposed upon one another, or even, in some sense, a genetic growth, developing from the seed to the mature plant. ' Look how creation itself advances little by little to fructification. First comes the grain, and from the grain arises the shoot, and from the shoot struggles out the shrub ; thereafter boughs and leaves gather strength, and the whole that we call a tree expands ; then follows the swelling of the germen, and from the germen bursts the flower, and from the flower the fruit opens ; that fruit itself, rude for a while, and unshapely, little by little, keeping the straight course of its development, is trained to the mellowness of its flavour. So, too righteousness—for the God of righteousness and of creation is the same —was first in a rudimentary stage, having a natural fear of God ; from that stage it advanced, through the Law and the

[1] *De Corona Militis*, c. 9.

Prophets, to infancy; from that stage it passed, through the gospel, to the fervour of youth; now, through the Paraclete it is settling into maturity.'[1]

Thus the lowest stage is that of nature, where the natural fear of God is the ground of ethical conduct; the highest stage is the discipline of the Paraclete, leading on to the better things. 'What, then, is the Paraclete's administrative office but this —the direction of discipline, the revelation of the Scriptures, the re-formation of the intellect, the advancement towards the better things?'[2] Between these stages are Reason, Tradition, Custom, and Scripture. There is no opposition between them. The teaching of the Paraclete affords guidance in the highest realms of conduct. That is based upon Scripture, Custom, and Tradition; and Scripture, Custom, and Tradition in turn upon Reason; and Reason upon Nature; and Nature upon God. Thus the source of all moral law is God, and He speaks through all these stages. The highest certitude as to His will is found in the teaching of the Paraclete: 'He has now accordingly dispersed all the perplexities of the past . . . by the open and perspicuous explanation of the whole mystery through the New Prophecy, which descends in copious streams from the Paraclete.'[3] Where this is not given, we must fall back in turn upon Scripture, Tradition, Custom, Reason, and Nature, which are all reliable as far as their content goes.

That is the basis of the ethics of Tertullian, and it is worthy of note that it is essentially legal in character. It is a 'rule' of nature, which is the first 'rule' of all. Reason is a ground for law. 'It is the same thing whether it depends on writing or on reason, since reason is, in fact, the basis of law. But, moreover, if reason is the ground of law, all will now have to be counted law, whoever brings it forward, which shall have reason as its ground.'[4] It is as a support for 'rules' that tradition and custom are of value. 'If for these and other such rules you insist,' &c. (see p. 221). Scripture is of value as containing commands and prohibitions, laws and discipline, and the main work of the Paraclete is to administer discipline. All these sources are of importance, in a word, because they are expressions of the law of God.

[1] *De Virginibus Velandis*, c. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 1.
[3] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 63.
[4] *De Corona Militis*, c. 4.

Regarding the will of God, Tertullian introduced a distinction which was destined to have far-reaching consequences in the moral teaching of the Church, i.e. the distinction between the secret, or higher, will of God, and the manifest, or lower, will in Him. 'Deeply and anxiously must the will of God be pondered again and again, I say, to see what even in secret He may will. For what things are manifest we all know.'[1]

The secret, or higher, will in God is His pure volition; that is to say, it is not unwilling volition, constrained in view of the imperfections of men. 'God wills us to do some acts decreed by Himself, in which it is not indulgence which patronizes but discipline which lords it.'[2] His higher will concerns the acts which He more wills to be done. It is His 'superior volition.'

The manifest, or lower, will in God is concerned, on the other hand, with the indulgence to which He is constrained in view of the weakness of men. It is not the mere and absolute will of God, but the constrained volition, which permits and allows acts without really willing them. So that, indeed, it ceases to be, in truth, the will of God, 'For by showing what He more wills, He has effaced the lesser volition by the greater.'

The theory of two wills, or the *voluntas* and the *indulgentia*, in God is at the root of Tertullian's doctrine of merit. Since there is, on God's part, a double standard of good, i.e. what He permits or allows as 'good' and what He desires as 'better,' so it follows that there is a double standard of obedience on man's part, i.e. what is demanded of him as just and what may be rendered by him as a gift to God.

Corresponding to law on the part of God is faith and obedience on the part of man. Faith is no more than unquestioning acceptance of the contents of the Rule of Faith. The proper attitude towards the rule of the Christian life is not that of an inquirer, after the truth in the spirit of debate, but that of one who seeks advice. 'For it is from this desire that a true inquiry always proceeds, and I praise the faith which has believed in the duty of complying with the rule before it has learned the reason of it.'[3] Obedience, too, is the expression of that faith, in doing what is commanded and abstaining from what is prohibited. 'Let us, however, according to

[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 2. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 3. [3] *De Corona Militis*, c. 2.

our narrow abilities, inculcate one point, namely, that what God enjoins is good and best. I hold it audacity to dispute about the good of a divine precept, for, indeed, it is not the fact that it is good which binds us to obey, but the fact that God has enjoined it.'[1] 'To exact the rendering of obedience, the majesty of divine power has the prior right; the authority of him who commands is prior to the utility of him who serves.'[2]

Obedience has nothing of the stability of character arising out of submission of the self to God, and consolidated by the habit of doing what is right. It is an unending compliance with rules, positive and negative.

The grace of God is almost absent from the thought of Tertullian. Some mention there is of the Fatherhood of God, and some slight intimation of His mercy, and a partial and undeveloped view of the grace of the cross of Christ. 'You belong to Him, for you have been enrolled in the book of life. There the blood of the Lord serves for your purple robe, and your broad stripe is His own cross; there the axe is already laid to the trunk of the tree; there is the branch out of the root of Jesse. Never mind the State horses, with their crown. These put their trust in chariots, and these in horses, but we will seek our help in the name of the Lord our God.' 'For[3] some things there are, which are of the divine liberality, some of our own workings.'[4] 'The Lord walked in humility and obscurity, with no definite home. . . . He exerted no right of power even over His own followers.'[5]

It is quite in accord with Tertullian's view of God as Law-giver and Judge that the favour of God should be the outcome of merit on the part of man. 'For a judge is a rewarder in every cause. Well, since God as Judge presides over the exacting and maintaining of justice, which to Him is most dear, and since it is with an eye to justice that He appoints all the sum of His discipline, is there room for doubting that, just as in all our acts universally, so also in the case of repentance, justice must be rendered to God?'[6] Since God has given a law, man must obey it. If he fails he deserves punishment, which he will receive here or hereafter; if he succeeds in doing all that is commanded, and in abstaining from all that is forbidden, he satisfies God, and so obtains the reward

[1] *De Poenitentia*, c. 4. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *De Corona Militis*, c. 13.
[4] *Ad Uxorem*, I., c. 8. [5] *De Idololatria*, c. 18. [6] *De Poenitentia*, c. 2.

of eternity. 'But as there are some things which He forbids, against which He denounces even eternal punishment—for of course things which He forbids (and) by which withal He is offended, He does not will—so, too, on the contrary, what He does will He enjoins and sets down as acceptable, and repays with the reward of eternity.'[1]

It is possible, however, for man to take upon himself voluntarily the punishment which his sins have deserved. This may be done by repentance and confession. 'Inasmuch as by confession satisfaction is settled, of confession repentance is born, by repentance God is appeased.'[2] It may also be done by castigation of one's self. 'What, therefore, is the business of patience in the body? In the first place, her business is the affliction of the flesh, a victim able to appease the Lord by means of the sacrifice of humiliation.'[3] 'Thus that Babylonish king, by the immolation of the patience of his body . . . made satisfaction to God.'[4] Above all, it may be done by suffering the death of martyrdom. 'This victory of ours gives us the glory of pleasing God, and the spoil of life eternal.'[5] 'For who that contemplates it is not excited to inquire what is at the bottom of it all? who after inquiring does not embrace our doctrines? and when he has embraced them desires not to suffer, that he may become partaker of the fullness of God's grace, that he may obtain from God complete forgiveness, by giving in exchange his blood?'[6]

Not that all these are exacted for every sin. The punishment is strictly proportioned to the wrong done. If more is rendered to God than is strictly due, it becomes a merit which deserves a reward. It actually puts God in a man's debt. 'A good deed has God as its debtor.'[7]

This doctrine was further developed by Cyprian, and through him affected deeply the ethical teaching of the Church in the West in later times. We must be careful, however, not to attribute to Tertullian himself all the developments of the theory which found a place in the later theology of the Western Church. It is necessary to bear in mind that:

(1) What Tertullian has to say on this matter applies only to professed Christians. He holds that in baptism all sins

[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 2. [2] *De Poenitentia*, c. 9. [3] *De Patientia*, c. 13.
[4] *Ibid.* [5] *Apologeticus*, c. 50. [6] *Ibid.*, c. 5. [7] *De Poenitentia*, c. 2.

are washed away, and the baptized commences with a clean sheet. From that time onwards he must do what is commanded, and must abstain from what is prohibited, in order to satisfy God.

(2) The law which must so be kept is not the absolute will of God, but the lower standard which is allowed by His indulgence.

(3) After he became a Montanist, Tertullian took a stricter view of the requirements of Christian discipline. The position that he took up was that the absolute will of God should be the standard at which Christians should aim, and that the 'better' should be chosen rather than the 'good.' 'If, however, He has given a preference over these to some other acts—(acts), of course, which He more wills—is there a doubt that the acts which we are to pursue are those which He more wills; since those which He less wills, (because He wills others more,) are to be similarly regarded as if He did not will them.'[1] Indeed, a 'good' which can only be described as good when compared with evil is no real 'good.' 'Good is worthy of the name, if it continue to keep that name without comparison, I say, not with evil, but even with some second good, so that, even if it is compared to some other good, and is by some other cast into the shade, it do nevertheless remain in possession of the name good. If, however, it is the nature of an evil, which is the means which compels the predicating good, it is not so much good as a species of inferior evil, which, by being obscured by a superior evil, is driven to the name of good.'[2] It is from this standpoint that Tertullian opposes the psychics or carnal Christians.

The means whereby man is able to keep the law is his free will. Tertullian was a firm believer in the freedom of the will. It may be that here again his legal training has influenced his thought. The theory of Roman law is a simple one. Men are expected to obey the laws. If they do not obey them they deserve punishment. Subject to that condition, they are free to choose whether they will obey or not. This is precisely the view of Tertullian. 'And so, when we have learnt from his precepts each class of actions, what He does not will and what He does, we still have a volition, and an arbitrating power, of electing the one; just as it is written, "Behold, I have set

[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 3. [2] *Ibid.*

before thee good and evil; for thou hast tasted of the tree of knowledge.'"[1] 'Thus it is a volition of our own when we will what is evil, in antagonism to God's will, who wills what is good. Further, if you ask, Whence comes that volition whereby we will anything in antagonism to the will of God? I shall say, It has its source in ourselves.'[2]

Tertullian does expressly reject two other explanations. The first is the view that whatever exists does so by the permission of God, and so is in accordance with His will. This would refer all evil to God, or would at least do away with the moral responsibility of men. But 'it is not the part of good and solid faith to refer all things to the will of God in such a manner as that; and that each individual should flatter himself by saying that nothing is done without His permission, as to make us fail to understand that there is a something in our own power.'[3]

The second is that which attributes the blame to the devil. But, says Tertullian, the devil did not impose the volition to sin upon Adam, 'but subministered material to the volition.' And it is the same with those who think that they have been subverted by the devil. The devil did will that they should disobey God's will, but still did not make them disobey, 'inasmuch as he did not reduce those our protoplasts to the volition of sin.'[4] 'Thus the work of the devil is one to make trial, whether you do will that which it rests with you to will.'[5]

There is some recognition of the connexion between the sin of Adam and that of his descendants. They all spring from him, and he willed the sin that he committed. 'You must needs correspond to the seed whence you spring—if, indeed, it be true (as it is) that the originator of our race and our sin, Adam, willed the sin which he committed.' But the emphasis is certainly upon the individual will.

The freedom of that individual will is nothing more than arbitrary choice. The relation of will to motive and to character is not considered at all. No investigation is made into the reason for the choice of good or evil. No recognition is made of the influence of character in determining the choice in particular instances. All is free, unconditioned choice. Every act is willed individually, without any relation to what

[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 2. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*, c. 2.
[4] *Ibid.* [5] *Ibid.*

had been done or willed before. The result is, that while the freedom of the will is emphasized, as against the Gnostic theory of determinism, the reliability of character, which may be depended upon to act in a definite way in a given situation, is lost.

VIRTUE.—But while that is the logical result of Tertullian's theory of free will, he does not press it to such a conclusion. He rather holds that there is such a thing as Christian virtue, which is built up into a definite character. Its ideal is likeness to God. 'The will of God is our sanctification, for He wishes His "image"—us—to become likewise His "likeness," that we may be "holy" just as Himself is "holy"'[1] Its nature is obedience to the will of God. That will of God is in accord with perfect goodness, and it is revealed perfectly in Christ, and kept perfectly by Christians. 'Taught of God Himself what goodness is, we have both a perfect knowledge of it, as revealed to us by a perfect Master, and faithfully we do His will, as enjoined upon us by a Judge we dare not despise.'[2] As such, Christian virtue is superior to virtue whose authority is mere human opinion.

Virtue is built up by hardships. 'We, with the crown eternal in our eye, look upon the prison as our training-ground, that at the goal of final judgement we may be brought forth well disciplined by many a trial; since virtue is built up by hardships, as by voluptuous indulgence it is overthrown.'[3]

THE VIRTUES AND VICES.—It remains to consider the virtues which Tertullian extols, and the vices which he denounces. Of the virtues, patience is the chief. It lies at the foundation of human conduct. 'So is patience set over the things of God that one can obey no precept, fulfil no work well-pleasing to the Lord, if estranged from it.'[4] Patience is not cynical equanimity or insensibility, but an emulation of a divine quality, which has been manifested in creation and providence, but in more imitable form it is revealed in Christ. Patience is to be exercised in enduring the loss of earthly possessions, in receiving personal violence, in bereavement. It is the basis of non-resistance to evil—a doctrine which Tertullian is fond of preaching. But it is interesting to note the casuistical point he makes when he says that patience finds pleasure in

[1] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 1.
[2] *Apologeticus*, c. 45.
[3] *Ad Martyras*, c. 3.
[4] *De Patientia*, c. 1.

the discomfiture of the one who would injure the patient man if he could, but fails. The patient man is gratified by the violent man's pain. The praise of patience arouses Tertullian to eloquence.

'What honour is granted to patience to have God as her Debtor! And not without reason: for she keeps all His decrees; she has to do with all His mandates. She fortifies faith; is the pilot of peace; assists charity; establishes humility; waits long for repentance; sets her seal upon confession; rules the flesh; preserves the spirit; bridles the tongue; restrains the hand; tramples temptations under-foot; drives away scandals; gives their grace to martyrdoms; consoles the poor; teaches the rich moderation; overstrains not the weak; exhausts not the strong; is the delight of the believer; invites the Gentile; commends the servant to his lord, and his lord to God; adorns the woman; makes the man approved; is loved in childhood, praised in youth, looked up to in age; is beauteous in every sex, in every time of life.'[1]

But the Christian patience is not the same as the heathen. The latter is but a counterfeit, contemptible, inspired by the desire for the patronage of men; the former is the patience of God, a patience which Christ laid down for us, and which we must lay down for Him.

Another virtue which is closely allied with patience is charity. Charity is 'the highest sacrament of the faith, the treasure-house of the Christian name.' The noble description of charity in 1 Cor. xiii. is used to show how inextricably it is bound together with patience. It is patience which gives quality to charity, makes her long-suffering, not puffed up, not irritable, enables her to endure all things. In fact, patience is blended with faith, hope, and charity—the things which are eternal; 'Faith which Christ's patience introduced, hope which man's patience waits for, charity which, with God as Master, patience accompanies.'[2]

It is characteristic of Tertullian to over-emphasize the importance of any subject which he is at the moment considering, so that it is not surprising to find that, when he is writing on the topic of 'Modesty,' he is ready to affirm that that virtue is 'the flower of manners, the honour of our bodies, the grace of the sexes, the integrity of the blood, the guarantee

[1] *De Patientia*, c. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 12.

of our race, the basis of sanctity, the pre-indication of every good disposition.'[1]

Of all sins, idolatry is the worst. 'The principal crime of the human race, the highest guilt charged upon the world, the whole procuring cause of judgement, is idolatry.'[2] Every sin can be traced to idolatry as its source, is, indeed, nothing more than a species of idolatry. 'Set aside names, examine works, the idolater is likewise a murderer.' He is also an adulterer and fornicator. Fraud, drunkenness, lasciviousness, vanity, and mendacity are in idolatry, and idolatry is in them. 'Thus it comes to pass that in idolatry all crimes are detected, and in all crimes idolatry.' With idolatry in any form or guise the Christian must not pollute himself. Hence the life of the Christian is narrowly circumscribed. There are trades and professions which are forbidden to him. Military service, among other things, is laid under the ban, and separation from the world is the watchword of Tertullian's ethics.

There is a curious blend of asceticism and of its opposite in Tertullian. At one time he can say, 'The Christian . . . has renounced the world,'[3] while at another his sentiments are very different. 'We are not Indian Brahmins, or Gymnosophists, who dwell in woods and exile themselves from ordinary human life.'[4] The explanation is to be found in his view of nature, which we have considered before. As the creation of God the world is good, and all that He made for the good of man is to be accepted with gratitude. 'We do not forget the debt of gratitude we owe to God, our Lord and Creator; we reject no creature of His hands.' On the other hand, the work of the devil and his angels, and of men, in polluting the good creation of God, was all but complete, and the wickedness of the social life of the time was so obvious that the Christian was bound to renounce all the pleasures which had been polluted. The laws of Christian discipline 'forbid, among other sins of the world, the pleasures of the public shows.'

In his latest writings,[5] however, the asceticism of Tertullian is so pronounced that it affects deeply his teaching on marriage and chastity, and even on the Church. Monceaux says: 'Le mariage, la famille, l'état, l'intérêt même de l'Eglise, il

[1] *De Pudicitia*, c. 1.
[2] *De Idololatria*, c. 1.
[3] *Ad Martyras*, c. 2.
[4] *Apologeticus*, c. 42.
[5] *De Exhort. Castitatis*, *De Monogamia*, *De Jejunio Adversus Psychicos*, and *De Pudicitia*.

sacrifierait tout à son idéal chrétien de chastité.'[1] He impugns second marriage more strongly than ever, and even first marriage is a species of fornication. 'If we look deeply into his (Paul's) meanings, and interpret them, second marriage will have to be termed no other than a species of fornication.'[2] '"Then (says some one) are you by this time destroying first—that is single—marriage, too?" "And not without reason (if I am), inasmuch as it, too, consists of that which is the essence of fornication."'[3] Whereas he had earlier portrayed in glowing colours the beautiful union of a Christian man and woman engaging in religious exercises together,[4] he now speaks of the man who chances to be deprived of his wife as the one who is favourably circumstanced in regard to the religious life. 'He savours spiritually. If he is making prayer to the Lord, he is near heaven. If he is bending over the Scriptures, he is wholly in them. If he is singing a Psalm, he satisfies himself (*placet sibi*).'[5] Family life is undermined. 'I am aware of the excuses by which we colour our insatiable carnal appetite. Our pretexts are: the necessities of props to lean on; a house to be managed; a family to be governed, chests and keys to be guarded, the wool-spinning to be dispensed, food to be attended to; cares to be generally lessened. Of course, the houses of none but married men fare well! . . . But Christians concern themselves about posterity, (Christians) to whom there is no to-morrow! Shall the servant of God yearn after heirs who has disinherited himself from the world?' The welfare of the commonwealth is no concern of the Christian. 'Is it, then, perchance in (patriotic) forecast for the commonwealth that such (marriages) are contracted? for fear the estate fail, if no rising generations be trained up? for fear the rights of law, for fear the branches of commerce, sink quite into decay?'[6] The Church is not that which consists of a number of bishops, but that which consists of spiritual men. 'What, now, (has this to do) with the Church, and your (Church), indeed psychic? For, in accordance with the person of Peter, it is to spiritual men that this power will correspondently appertain, either to an apostle or else to a prophet . . . (it will be) the Church of the spirit, by means of a spiritual man; not the Church which consists of a number of bishops.'[7]

[1] Vol. I., p. 394. [2] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 9. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ad Uxorem*, I., c. 8. [5] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 10.
[6] *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 10. The question is ironical. [7] *De Pudicitia*, c. 21.

XIII

CONCLUSION

The character of Tertullian's work—Ancient opinions—Modern views—Contradictions in his writings—The extent to which he dealt in a systematic manner with Christian truth—The limitations of his endeavours: (1) The Rule of Faith; (2) Controversy; (3) Legal training—The merits of his endeavours: (1) Exclusion of Gnosticism; (2) Aid in defining the views of the Church; (3) The laying of the foundation for later teachers—Doctrines to which Tertullian made a definite contribution: (1) The Trinity; (2) The Person of Christ; (3) The nature of Man—Conclusion.

ONE marked feature of the Christian religion in the early centuries was that it attracted to itself so many men of outstanding ability. Few of them were greater than Tertullian. His virtues were many, though, in common with so many great men, he did not escape the defects of his qualities. He was a prolific writer, and the originator of Latin Christian literature. His works supply a wealth of information on a variety of subjects—Church History, Ethics, Theology, and Archaeology. He was before all an apologist. Of his work in that direction it is beside our present purpose to speak.[1] His passionate protests against the injustices to which the Christians were subjected, his terrible scorn, his scathing satire, his dialectical subtleties, his powerful reasoning and compelling logic, are subjects upon which much has been written, and upon which, doubtless, much will be written again. His love of righteousness, and his devotion to the truth as he perceived it, were only surpassed by his impatience of error in others. His readiness in the realm of doctrine to go out not knowing whither he went, save that he pursued the truth, combined with a faithful adherence to the revelation in Christ, which was handed down through the Church, led him into many apparent contradictions, and ultimately robbed him of the

[1] The work of Tertullian as an apologist is fully treated in Pressensé, *The Early Years of Christianity*, Vol. III., pp. 374–414, 591–605, and T. R. Glover, *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, pp. 305–347. But see Appendix II. for a brief characterization of his apologetic work.

regard of the *mater ecclesia*. But that impelling force of mind and passionate love of truth, where it did not lead him into the error of extremity, enabled him to expound the doctrines of the Christian faith with praiseworthy clarity.

Tertullian's writings have been variously appraised. Cyprian[1] read them daily, and was proud to call him 'Master.' Augustine[2] and Jerome[3] esteemed his keen perception, his fertile thought, and his great constructive ability. Lactantius[4] scorned his style but recognized his erudition. Vincent of Lerinum[5] speaks of him with unqualified admiration. 'Who,' he asks, 'of all his race was ever more instructed and versed in things human and divine? His genius was at once so powerful and so impetuous that he never devoted himself to the study of any doctrine but he brought to bear upon it all the weight of his reason, or pierced through all its intricacies with his penetrating glance. Who can sufficiently praise his eloquence? There is a necessity in his logic which forces conviction on those whom it cannot persuade; every word conveys a striking thought, and every thought a triumph over his adversaries. This they know well, for he has come down like a thunderbolt, crushing the dead mass of their blasphemous writings. He is among the Latins what Origen is among the Greeks—the greatest of all.'

In modern times the theology of Tertullian is variously esteemed. Earnest advocates of the Greek school can see in him simply the one who first gave to Christian thought that Latin character which has dominated Western theology ever since. In this they are right, but they err when they attribute to him every development of his thought and every vagary of theologians of the Latin school. It is often the manner of theologians who belong to the Greek or the Latin school of thought to condemn the exponents of the opposite school *in toto*. It should be borne in mind, however, that the theology that is to approximate most nearly to the truth is that which can solve the problem of harmonizing the two systems in a higher unity. What is defective in the one is provided by the other, and each is dazzled by excess of light upon some

[1] *De Viris Illus.*, c. 53 (St. Jerome): 'Nunquam Cyprianum absque Tertulliani lectione unum diem praeterisse, ac sibi crebro dicere: Da Magistrum.'

[2] *De gen. ad. litt.*, X. 41. [3] *Cat.* 53. [4] Lactant., *Div. inst.*, V. 1.

[5] Vincent of Lerinum, *Commonitor*, 24: 'Cuius quot paene verba, tot sententiae sunt; quot sensus tot victoriae.'

aspects of the truth and baffled by the lack of it upon others. The perfect theology will see things whole. In the meantime, it is wise to recognize the clearness with which some aspects of the truth are perceived by Tertullian and his successors, even though their vision is defective in other directions.

Others who are not obsessed by the Greek point of view, but who regard the hardening of Christian thought into the mould of ecclesiastical theology as a calamity, see in Tertullian the fatal turning-point of Christianity. The Christian religion, they claim, is not a system of doctrine, but a life, revealed in Christ and lived in the Spirit. But while there is truth in that, it is inevitable that if Christianity is to claim dominion over the mind as well as the heart it must justify its claim at the bar of reason. If it is to guard itself against misinterpretation and perversion it must be subject to legitimate interpretation and exposition. If it is the essence of truth, it must submit to the elucidation of its implications and the application of its principles. That Tertullian perceived this challenge to Christianity in the necessities of his day, in the speculation of the Gnostics, in the reasonings of philosophers, in the objections of the heathen, and in the difficulties of the Christians themselves, and accepted it, is to his credit. With the aid of an acute intellect, a philosophic spirit, and a legal training, he aimed at establishing the claim of Christianity to be the truth of God and the hope of man. In pursuit of that aim he delved into philosophy, into medical lore, and into mythology; he laid bare the folly and wickedness of paganism; he indicated the limitations of philosophy; he presented a rational view of the universe as understood by Christians; and he expounded some of the contents of the Christian religion at great length and in systematic form.

Tertullian's teaching is characterized by Monceaux thus: 'A la base du système la Règle de foi. Puis la raison intervient pour justifier et explique le dogme. L'imagination complète l'oeuvre par des tableaux réalistes dont le cadre est fourni par la foi, les lignes par la raison, les couleurs par la réalité.'[1] It is well to remember that the 'Rule of Faith' consists very largely of the elements of Christian truth, and that Tertullian is not the first nor the only Christian thinker

[1] *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique Chrétienne*, Vol. I., p. 362.

to base his exposition upon it. Irenaeus[1] and Origen[2] take it as the basis of their theology. That Tertullian's 'picture' is primarily (as Scullard[3] interprets the characterization of Monceaux) a work of the imagination, and only secondarily based upon faith and reason, is surely an over-statement. The exercise of reason upon the fundamental positions of the 'Rule of Faith,' combined with an appeal to fact, and tinged with imagination, would be a fairer estimate of Tertullian's work. In his exposition of the main tenets of Christianity he may be at fault, but at least he has advanced beyond his predecessors, and has indicated lines of thought which are valid to this day.

Much has been made, too, of the fact that contradictory statements are to be found in Tertullian's writings. In part these are due to the vividness with which he visualized the aspect of the truth with which he happened at the time to be dealing, so that at different times he expresses opposing opinions. In part they are due to the development in his perception of the truth, so that what at an earlier period seemed a satisfactory view is replaced on maturer consideration by another. In part, again, they are due to the fact that he sought to reconcile opposing tendencies in the Church of his day where no reconciliation was possible. 'It was his desire to unite the enthusiasm of primitive Christianity with intelligent thought, the original demands of the gospel with every letter of the Scripture and with the practice of the Roman Church, the sayings of the Paraclete with the authority of the bishops, the law of the Churches with the freedom of the inspired, the rigid discipline of the Montanist with all the utterances of the New Testament, and with the arrangements of a Church seeking to set itself up within the world.'[4]

[1] Irenaeus, *Adversus Omnes Haereseis*, I., x. (1).

[2] *De Principiis*, Preface, 4–8.

[3] *Early Christian Ethics in the West*, p. 161.

[4] Harnack, *Ency. Brit.*, article 'Tertullian'; cf. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II., p. 516: 'Tertullian dwells enthusiastically on the divine foolishness of the gospel, and has a noble contempt for the world, for its science and its art, and for his own; and yet are his writings a mine of antiquarian knowledge, and novel, striking, and fruitful ideas. He calls the Grecian philosophers the patriarchs of all heresies . . . and yet reason does him invaluable service against his antagonists. He vindicates the principle of Church authority and tradition with great force and ingenuity against all heresy; yet, when a Montanist, he claimed the right of private judgement and individual protest. He has a vivid sense of the corruption of human nature and of the absolute need of moral regeneration; yet he declares the soul to be born Christian, and unable to find rest except in faith. . . . He adopts the strictest

Some, again, of the contradictions in the writings of Tertullian are capable of yet another explanation. Truth as we see it is often paradoxical, and many of the apparent contradictions of Tertullian are reflections of this fact. No doubt the perfect theology, like the perfect city of God, will lie foursquare, but in the meantime a projection here and there may be a necessity to the ultimate symmetry. It is far more important that two points of view should be put, if both are true, even when their reconciliation is beyond the power of him who puts them, rather than that essential truth should be sacrificed for the sake of consistency. Some of the contradictions in Tertullian's theology are unreconciled to this day.

Before we discuss those separate doctrines to which Tertullian made a definite contribution, it is necessary that we should indicate the extent to which he dealt with the Christian revelation in a systematic way.

He perceived clearly the need of his day, which was that the claim of the Church to possess the full revelation of essential truth should be substantiated. In order to maintain this position it was necessary to master the secular knowledge of the time and the sacred knowledge revealed in the Scriptures, and to show that the former was but a remote approximation to the truth, the latter the truth itself. His wide knowledge of history and philosophy, of literature—poetry and prose—and of thought of every description, is remarkable. His mastery of the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments is likewise astonishing. Both made demands upon sheer memory alone, of whose severity he pardonably complains.

The Limitations of His Endeavours

Tertullian's endeavours were not without their limitations. They were frankly limited by the ' Rule of Faith.' Though of a decidedly speculative turn of mind, he laid down the express rule that no speculation outside the ' Rule of Faith ' was permissible. That procedure had its advantages in an age when the Scriptures were not easily accessible to all, and when

supernatural principles, and shrinks not from the *credo quia absurdum est*. At the same time he is a most decided realist, and attributes body, that is, as it were, a corporeal tangible substantiality, even to God and to the soul.'

the principles of exposition were undetermined. The extravagances of the Gnostics are evidence of the excesses to which unrestrained speculation might easily lead. The limitation of speculation to the explanation of the contents of the ' Rule of Faith ' gave sanity and balance to the doctrine of the Church at a time when it was sorely needed.

They also suffered from the limitations inseparable from the fact that he was constantly engaged in controversy. Unlike Origen, who lived in a time of comparative immunity from such conflict, he had to fight the cause of Christianity against the heathen populace ; he was engaged in controversy with the Gnostics, with the Monarchians, and with the Jews ; and was prominently concerned in the rift between the Phrygian community and the Catholic Church. Hence his writings suffer from that one-sidedness which is characteristic of controversial compositions.

They were limited also by the attitude of mind induced by his legal training. It has often been averred that a man's conception of God colours his view of everything. This is certainly true of Tertullian. His conception of God was defective, and its inadequacy is reflected in every department of his thought. His portrait of God lacks the element of love. The two chief attributes of God are goodness and justice. The former of these would, if it were given an adequate place in the character of God, or even if Tertullian consistently gave it the prominence in his own thought that he does in his polemic against Marcion, go a long way toward relieving the bare justice which stands out so cold and rigid. But, despite the eloquent description of the goodness of God which Tertullian gives as an eternal attribute, which is manifested in His dealings with man, we must acknowledge that it is the heat of his ardour against the doctrines of Marcion, who taught that the God of the Old Testament was just but not good, rather than a dominant conviction of the inherent goodness of God, which led Tertullian to place the attribute of goodness beside that of justice in his description of the character of God. The dominant idea in his mind is that of the justice of God.

Hence we find no trace of love, or even of goodness, in his exposition of the Trinity. It might be argued that there was little, if any, appreciation of the love of God as the basis of the Trinity in Unity throughout the long controversy over that

important doctrine; but of Tertullian, at any rate, it is true to say, not simply that he did not, but that he could not, from his view of the character of God, realize the place of love in the relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The same may be said of his Logos doctrine. He certainly does hold securely the incarnation of the Logos in Jesus Christ, but his indication of the impelling motive points in the direction of wisdom rather than of love, and of sovereignty and power before all. The result is that even the Christ is primarily the Judge of men.

The gospel follows in the same line. It is a Rule of Faith which one accepts as a means of salvation for oneself, and which is appropriated through the sacraments. It is reasonable enough, defensible enough, once our God is Tertullian's God, but it is a gospel without a heart. The statement of Gwatkin[1] is quite true: 'To Tertullian the revelation through Christ is no more than a law.' It is a gospel of the law-courts—of justice tempered with mercy—but it is not the gospel of Jesus. That had its source in the Fatherhood of God, and its basal principle is love. Any glimpses that Tertullian had of the essential truth that God is love were glimpses merely. Hence he has given but fragmentary and fleeting expression to that aspect of the Gospel which views the work of Christ as an expression of the love of God. But his view of the Judge upon the throne was clear and compelling, so that he has laid the foundation for that theology which has interpreted the gospel in terms of law.

The results of starting from the sovereignty of God are not seen in Tertullian's theology in their stark nakedness, because he did not himself draw the conclusions to which later thinkers, starting from his premisses, were inevitably led. When God is thought of as the Great Supreme, the Fountain of Righteousness, the outcome for feeble, sinful man is terrible indeed. The order of the divine attributes inscribed upon the portal of hell is, according to Dante, Power, Wisdom, Love. If such an abode is the logical deduction from the God whose attributes rank in that order, what wonder that from a God who is Power and Righteousness alone, with no leaven of Love, men were led to the conclusion that even upon the abode of earth for the multitude the doom is inscribed: 'Abandon hope, ye who enter here.'

[1] *The Knowledge of God*, Vol. II., p. 163.

The Merits of Tertullian's Exposition

There are three conspicuous merits of Tertullian's endeavour to systematize Christian thought.

The first is that it led to the exclusion of Gnosticism. What that meant can be realized only by visualizing the consequences that must have followed the triumph of Gnosticism. The theosophical absurdities of their unrestrained speculations would have provided a poor substitute for the Christian God; the aeons and emanations a weak alternative to the incarnation of God in Christ for bridging the gulf between the finite and the infinite; the threefold division of mankind into spiritual, psychic, and material would have fastened a hopeless destiny upon the bulk of mankind, an unsatisfactory alternative to the possibility of virtue and of eternal life for all who seek it. A triumphant Gnosticism would have meant the reduction of Christianity to but one more Oriental speculation on the meaning of life. Those who served in the great controversy and saved Christianity for the world deserve to be numbered with the worthy defenders of the faith, and among them Tertullian occupies an honourable position.

The second is that it helped the Christian Church to define its own views. This is sometimes claimed to be the negative virtue of Gnosticism. Positively it was the work of none more conspicuously than of Tertullian. In these days, when Christian theology has developed into an exact science, systematically ordered and expressed, it is easy to under-estimate the immense service rendered by those who endeavoured, though with but partial success, to give systematic and reasoned expression to the contents of the Christian faith. The members of the Christian Church were at the mercy of those who with ridicule and satire, no less than with dialectical skill, could reduce to absurdity the 'fables' and 'simple notions' upon which their faith rested. But these 'fables' could be proved to be historical facts; the 'simple notions' could be proved to be the highest revelation of a rational God to His rational creatures. The simple faith was the wisdom of God. The whole position was one that was worthy of the respect and admiration of the profoundest intellect. It needed, however, an advocate who could demonstrate its wisdom and power. That advocate it found in Tertullian.

In the third place, the endeavours of Tertullian resulted in the laying of the foundation for other thinkers to build upon. He was the 'Father of Latin Christianity,' but his influence was mediated mainly through Cyprian and Augustine. Cyprian stood upon his shoulders, and Augustine stood upon those of Cyprian. Augustine is the greatest teacher of the Western Church, and Tertullian is worthy of being described as his forerunner. This preparation for the labours of others is, as Freppel says, by no means the least of Tertullian's merits: 'C'est le mérite de Tertullien, d'avoir préludé aux travaux de l'avenir par un essai, qui restera un modèle, comme il avait été sans précédent.'[1]

DOCTRINES TO WHICH TERTULLIAN MADE A DEFINITE CONTRIBUTION.—It remains to consider those separate doctrines to which Tertullian has made a distinctive contribution. They are the doctrines of the Trinity, the humanity of Christ, and the nature of man. These all have been treated already, but it is necessary here to give some estimate of the value of his work in these directions.

The Trinity is a doctrine whose value is variously estimated to-day, and which is looked at from various points of view. As a *mystical* truth, which defies comprehension, and yet is an expression of that ultimate reality in God that appeals to the mystic soul, it is to be accepted as a matter of divine revelation, which neither needs nor is capable of precise definition. As a *rational* truth, which can be illustrated by analogies from human experience, it is regarded as expressing the real life of God. As an *experimental* truth it is an endeavour to explain the revelation of God to men. It is a threefold revelation of God: (1) As ultimate reality; (2) As imparting Himself; (3) As a spiritual force in the consciousness of man.

But historically the doctrine of the Trinity is an attempt to express in philosophical form the truth revealed in the Scriptures of the existence in the Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

That attempt culminated in the work of the Cappadocians. In definite, formal statement it began with Tertullian. The Monarchian agitation forced him into formulating a statement in which the essential elements of the Trinitarian doctrine were included. The final dogmatic form of the doctrine is found in

[1] *Cours d'éloquence sacrée*, Vol. II., p. 364.

the Athanasian Creed, which summarized concisely the teaching of Augustine on the subject in his work *De Trinitate.*

Compared with previous Christian writers, we find in Tertullian : (1) A definite statement of three Persons in one Substance and the repeated use of the term *trinitas* ; (2) The use of the terms *substantia* and *persona* in a semi-legal, semi-philosophical sense ; (3) The clearer definition of the Logos doctrine as applied to Christ, and as expressive of the relationship of Father and Son. Compared with later developments we find : (1) No definite exclusion of the view of the Person of Christ propounded by the Arians; (2) No discussion of οὐσία and ὑπόστασις of ὁμοούσιος and ὁμοιούσιος, or of the distinctions implied by them ; (3) No adequate discussion of the place of the Holy Spirit ; (4) The eternal generation of the Son is not perceived ; (5) The procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is not treated.

Thus it is fair to say that Tertullian ' expressed in all its essential elements the full Catholic doctrine of the relation between the three Persons in the one Trinity, linked together in the one divine life. This is the first attempt at a scientific treatment of the doctrine.'[1] Later developments, however, called for a more precise definition of the doctrine, and led to a more careful formulation. It was not to be expected that Tertullian should have anticipated and guarded against later accruing misinterpretations.

As to the question how far indications are to be found of the three points of view from which the subject is looked at to-day, we may say : (1) There is no indication in Tertullian's statement of this doctrine of any recognition of that view of the Trinity which represents it as a mystery that transcends reason. (2) There is some recognition of that view which regards it as an experimental truth. Indeed, the prime motive which led Tertullian to state and expound the doctrine was the fact of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The recognition of the divinity of Christ led to difficulties in the minds of earnest but simple Christians, who thought that it implied two Gods. Tertullian was led to expound the nature of God, with the aid of current philosophical conceptions, in such a manner as to harmonize the thought of the divine nature of Christ with the ' Monarchy ' of God. That this was his leading motive is

[1] Bethune-Baker, p. 201.

abundantly evident from the fact that in the treatise *Adv. Praxean*, in which he professedly deals with the doctrine of the Trinity, he devotes a considerable space to an explanation of the two natures in Christ. It is to be remarked, however, that there is no real attempt on his part to indicate the place of the Holy Spirit in this view as the Agent who is represented by the activity of God in the consciousness of men. This is all the more remarkable in that he was at the time a follower of the Paraclete. (3) But it is chiefly on the speculative side that Tertullian's contribution to the doctrine is rendered. Here he makes use of analogies in human experience and in nature which are imperfect, but one of which, at least, is in substance identical with the psychological analogy of modern speculation. The analogies from human experience are those of a monarch and his son who is associated with him in the government of a kingdom, and of a person and his speech ; while the analogies from nature are those of the sun and its ray, and the peak of the ray—the well, the stream, and the river—and the root, the shoot, and the fruit. That which foreshadows the psychological analogy of modern speculation is the analogy of a person and his word. Tertullian seeks to express the relation of God, His Reason, and His Word, by the analogy of human personality and thought. 'Whatever you think, there is a word ; whatever you conceive, there is reason. You must needs speak it in your mind ; but while you are speaking you admit speech as an interlocutor with you. . . . Thus, in a certain sense, the word is a second within you. The word itself is a different thing from yourself.'[1]

The endeavour to find in human personality an analogy to the triune nature of God was continued with greater success by Augustine. He found in man memory, understanding, will, in all of which the whole mind is active. In like manner he distinguished the mind, the knowledge which the mind has of itself, and the love which it has for itself. In modern times, Hegel applied his psychological analysis of all thought as trinitarian to the consciousness of God. Others, following him, find in the self as knowing, the self as known, and the union of both in one consciousness, an illustration of the Trinity. Dr. W. N. Clarke has expressed the doctrine through this analogy, and realizes the transition implied from logical distinction of

[1] *Adv. Praxean*, c. 5.

thought to metaphysical distinction of being. 'In finite and imperfect minds these mental movements pass half-noticed, oftener unnoticed.' But in the perfect Being 'it does not seem impossible that to Him each of the three should be a centre of conscious life and activity, and that He should live in each a life corresponding to its quality. The assertion that He lives such a life is the assertion of the divine Triunity. He lives as God original and unuttered, He lives as God uttered and forthgoing, and He lives as God in whom the first and the second are united. He not only lives and is conscious in these three modes, but from each of these He acts from everlasting to everlasting. His perfect life consists in the sum of these three modes of activity. They are not personalities in the modern sense of the term, but separate aspects of one personality.'[1]

But the difficulty is to distinguish between the 'centres of conscious life and activity' and separate personalities. The analogy from the human individual here breaks down, and the only recourse is to turn to the social life of mankind. Here we come upon an element that is conspicuously absent from Tertullian's thought. He had no basis of love in either God or man to work upon. But Augustine discovered that love is threefold—there is the one who loves, the one who is loved, and love. The threefoldness of love is carried up by analogy to the character of God. In Him there is the Father who loves, the Son who is loved, and the Union of the Two in the Holy Spirit. This view, which is admirably expressed by Dr. Fairbairn, is attractive.[2] It begins with the essential nature of God—love—and it provides an explanation of how God could be love from all eternity. The great difficulty in this view, however, is that it leans towards tritheism, and it opens the door to those speculations which were characteristic of the Gnostics, and the equality of Persons in the Trinity is scarcely maintained when the Holy Spirit is just the bond of union between the Father and the Son.

The Person of Christ

The Person of Christ is a subject of intense interest to-day, as it has been throughout the centuries. How the divine

[1] W. N. Clarke, *Outline of Theology*, p. 174.
[2] *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology*, pp. 294 ff.

could enter into the life of humanity and express itself in a human life, and what relation the divine and the human must bear to one another in such a personality, are questions of never-failing interest. A solution to the former is sought along the lines of Kenosis, or of a progressive incarnation (Dorner), or of a 'Werthurteil' (Ritschl). The mode of approach to the latter is along the lines of metaphysical, or historical, or psychological inquiry.

Historically, the problem was in the early centuries not so much to discover how the incarnation was possible, but to maintain that it did really occur; and to preserve the two elements—the divine and the human—in the conception of the Person of Christ. The docetic view was particularly prominent in Tertullian's day. Hence he was led, in opposition to this, to emphasize the reality of the flesh and the human experience of Jesus. But he also held firmly the divinity of Christ, and worked out a theory of the possibility and mode of the incarnation, and of the relation of the human and divine natures in the Person of Christ, which is not only a great advance upon the work of his predecessors, but also a remarkable prefiguring of the conclusions attained at the Council of Chalcedon. The essential elements in the doctrine of the Person of Christ which was embodied in the creed of Chalcedon, and maintained by the orthodox Church throughout the ages, are clearly and definitely stated by him. One can easily imagine how Tertullian would signify his assent to the Chalcedonian formula: 'We confess and all teach with one accord one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once perfect (complete) in Godhead and perfect (complete) in manhood, truly God and truly man, and, further, of a reasonable soul and body; of one essence with the Father as regards His Godhead, and at the same time of one essence with us as regards His Manhood, in all respects like us, apart from sin; as regards His Godhead begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards His manhood—on account of us and our salvation—begotten in the last days of Mary the Virgin, bearer of God; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten, proclaimed in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the difference of the natures being in no way destroyed on account of the union, but rather the peculiar property of each nature

being preserved and concurring in one Person and one hypostasis, not as though parted or divided into two Persons, but one and the same Son and Only-Begotten God the Logos, Lord, Jesus Christ.'[1] The echo of later controversy is audible in this statement, but the Creed of Chalcedon is in essence the verdict of the Church that it agrees with the doctrines as set forth by Tertullian.

When we examine the teaching of Tertullian with a view to discovering what, if any, indications it reveals of a recognition of those lines of inquiry into the problem which are characteristic of modern theology we find that it is the explanation of the incarnation along what are now called 'Kenotic' lines that is propounded by Tertullian. There are attributes of God which belong to Him as the 'Father, who is invisible and unapproachable, and placid, and (so to speak) the God of the philosophers.' These are not found in Christ, but He is 'the Witness and Servant of the Father, uniting in Himself man and God, God in mighty deeds, in weak ones man, in order that He may give to man as much as He takes from God.'[2] This involves humiliation upon the part of God, but it is a humiliation born of the moral greatness of God—it is, in fact, 'the sacrament of man's salvation.' Tertullian does not express more explicitly than that the self-limitation of God in the incarnation, nor does he make use of the passage in Philippians[3] which is the scriptural basis of the Kenotic theory.

On the further question of the relation of the two natures in the Person of Christ the theory of Tertullian is that the two mutually exclusive natures of God and man co-existed in one Person. Each retained its own peculiar properties, and exercised its own function independently of the other. This theory is based upon a philosophy which held sway over the Church until the final dogmatic statement took form in the Council of Chalcedon—a philosophy which conceives of God as transcendent and far removed from the nature of man, and which is forced to bridge the gulf between the human and divine by the doctrine that the Logos assumed an impersonal human nature. It satisfies the conditions of the problem in every respect save one. It fails to realize the consciousness of

[1] Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, Vol. III., p. 346.
[2] *Adv. Marcionem*, II., c. 27.
[3] Philippians ii. 7.

Jesus Himself. This, however, is the starting-point of our present-day investigation into the divine-human personality of Jesus Christ, and from this point of view, while there is still a problem to be solved, the impressiveness of His character comes out with ever-increasing grandeur. It was not to be expected that Tertullian, with the far different philosophical background of his day, should have contributed much that is of value to our modern understanding of the Person of Christ, but at least we can be grateful to him for emphasizing the precious truth of the humanity of Christ at a time when it was in great danger of being lost. 'Much has changed in outlook and preconceptions since Tertullian wrote, but his language on the reality of Jesus as an actual human being and no sidereal or celestial semblance of a man, on the incarnation and the love of God, still glows, and still finds a response.'[1]

The Nature of Man

The Christian doctrine of man, his nature, origin, and destiny, has of necessity undergone great changes in modern times. The larger view of the world introduced by modern science has called for the examination, and in some cases for the re-fashioning, of the conceptions which were the outcome of a far different view of the world. The origin of man is seen to date much farther back than the biblical record will show, but it is still possible to hold that he is the creature of God. The elements of his nature are two, body and spirit (or soul). The threefold division into body, soul, and spirit is based upon a dualistic philosophy which cannot maintain itself. His destiny is now seen to be, not the recovery of a pristine perfection, but the realization of the ideal revealed in Jesus Christ. On the question of the freedom of the will the issue is still undecided between the determinist and the libertarian, the former maintaining that a man can only act according to his own character; the latter averring that he has the power, at times at least, of rising above himself, and making a free choice between alternatives. On the allied subject of the transmission of evil propensities from parents to children, while biological evidence seems to lean in favour of the transmission, the ground is still contested by those who

[1] T. R. Glover, *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, p. 340.

find a sufficient explanation of the apparent transmission in the powerful influences of environment. The remarkable fact about the doctrine of man as set forth by Tertullian is that it was not only a notable advance upon that of his predecessors, but that it is in some important respects still valid to-day.

Historically, Tertullian owes something to the work of Athenagoras and Tatian. The former of these had affirmed the untrammelled free will of man ; the latter had, in addition, maintained that man was composed of body and soul. In this connexion, however, it is necessary to point out that the philosophical basis of the latter conception was found in the teachings of the Stoics. Tertullian's statement of these doctrines is far more elaborate than those of his predecessors. His doctrine of original sin and of transmitted depravity was adopted by Augustine, who went farther than Tertullian in maintaining the total depravity of man, and propounded a theory of the will which gave a far more sinister character to the theory of inherited depravity. By depriving man of the ability to will what is good (apart from the grace of God) he closed the door which had been kept open by Tertullian's insistence on the freedom of the will. He also lost sight of the other factors which had qualified Tertullian's theory of the transmission of sinfulness, the ' soul by nature Christian,' and the transmission of grace.

The most distinctive contribution of Tertullian to Christian doctrines is his teaching on the nature of man. His so-called ' Traducianism ' is especially noteworthy. But it is important that we should bear in mind in what sense he taught Traducianism, and in what way it affects the character of man.

In outline his theory may be stated thus. The nature of man is single, but it is composed of two species, body and soul, which are in life inseparably united. Man was created complete, body and soul, and he transmits his nature complete, body and soul, to his offspring. There are in him two kinds of seed, a bodily seed and a soul-seed, and they are inseparably united in transmission, so that the conception of body and soul takes place at the same moment. It follows that the whole race is one. It is ' evolved out of one ' (*ex una redundans*),[1] ' The souls of all form one genus ' (*unum omnes animae*

[1] *De Anima*, c. 22.

genus).[1] The process of generation receives its trend from God, ' Grow and multiply.' Thus parents and offspring, and, indeed, the whole human family, are intimately connected, not only in body, but in soul. So strongly does Tertullian hold this that he even affirms that in the creation of Eve there was a transmission (*tradux*) of the soul as well as of the flesh of Adam.

Such is the theory of Tertullian, but a few points are worthy of notice.

(1) Though this theory of the transmission of the soul later contested the ground with the theory of ' Creationism,' according to which the body alone is transmitted from parent to child, and each soul is a new creation of God, Tertullian did not discuss it in opposition to that theory—which he does not even mention—but in opposition to Gnosticism.

(2) It affords very strong ground for refuting the Gnostic theory of three separate natures in man. The strange figment of three classes of men distinguished by the predominance in them of the spiritual, the animal, and the material, the first being destined for salvation, the third for reprobation, and the second oscillating between the two,[2] was amply refuted by the commonsense theory of Tertullian. The Gnostics began with their unrestrained speculations concerning the nature and character of the Divine Being, and worked downwards to an explanation of the nature of man that was both immoral in its tendency and inadequate to the facts of human experience. Tertullian, by a reasoned observation of the facts of human experience, produced an explanation which accorded with the revelation of Scripture, and easily discredited the fabrications of the Gnostics.

(3) It is facilitated by his theory of the corporeity of the soul. As has already been indicated, the belief in the corporeity of the soul made easy the analogy between the transmission of the body and that of the soul. But here again we must qualify our comment by the observation that Tertullian does not base his argument upon the corporeity of the soul. He does not even mention that quality of that soul in this connexion. It is the unity of man's nature that is the basis of his argument.

(4) It appears to give a materialistic cast to the soul. But

[1] *De Anima*, c. 41. [2] *Adv. Valent.*, c. 29.

two considerations must be borne in mind: (i.) Tertullian is definitely opposed to the materialistic explanation of the soul as a product of the body; (ii.) Some such explanation as that of Augustine,[1] that the conception of soul from soul is similar to that of a light kindled from a light, would be nearer to Tertullian's thought than any less spiritual idea.

The chief importance of this theory of the transmission of the whole man, soul and body, lies in its relation to the doctrine of original sin and hereditary depravity. How far does the theory assist in the elucidation of this doctrine? Tertullian was conscious of this relation, and stated it clearly, but he did not discuss it at any length, nor did he deal with the many difficult problems that arise out of the subject.

His view, briefly stated, is this: Man as created by God was pure. But by the sin of Adam a *vitium* was introduced into his nature, and that *vitium* was transmitted to his descendants. The *vitium* is conveyed, not by the body alone, but by the soul and the body together. The chief agent in sin, however, is the soul, and so it becomes the principal channel in its transmission. The evil is moral, and so attaches itself to a moral agent. But the body is not free from complicity. It is a *caro peccatrix*[2] as a result of its participation in the one nature of man. The result is that every soul has, by reason of its birth, its nature in Adam, and is unclean, and suffuses even the flesh, by reason of their conjunction, with its own shame.[3] In the beginning man was entrapped into breaking the commandment of God, 'and, being given over to death on account of his sin, the entire human race, tainted in their descent from him, were made a channel for transmitting his condemnation.'[4]

Three qualifications of this statement are found in Tertullian. The first is that the corruption of the nature of man is not complete. There is still a portion of good in the soul—of that original, divine, and genuine goodness which is its proper nature.[5] The second is that the nature of man provides a vehicle, not only for the transmission of evil, but also for the transmission of grace. 'Again, if the blessing of the fathers was likewise destined for their offspring, previous to any merit

[1] *Epist. Ad Optat.*, 190, c. 4: 'Tamquam lucerna a lucerna accendatur.'
[2] *De Anima*, c. 40.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *De Test. Animae*, c. 3.
[5] *De Anima*, c. 41.

on the part of those, why might not also the guilt of the fathers redound to their children? As was the grace, so was the offence; so that the grace and the offence ran down through the whole race.'[1] The third is that the nature which was contaminated in Adam is regenerated in Christ.[2] And as the contamination was not confined to the soul, so, too, the flesh is a partaker in grace. 'The flesh follows the soul, now wedded to the spirit, as a part of the bridal portion—no longer the servant of the soul, but of the spirit. O happy marriage, if in it there is committed no violation of the nuptial vow.'[3]

In conclusion, Tertullian was a child of his day, keenly alive to all that happened around him, and extremely active in relation to the life of his time. His energetic spirit made him the earnest advocate and exponent of the religion that claimed his allegiance. Every shade of intensity in the persecution of the Christians is reflected in his writings. Every device of logic and satire was employed in his contention with heathenism. He used the tricks of his rhetorical art to defend his own position and to attack his opponents. He delved into all manner of learning, that he might the better expound the perfect learning. He fought the Gnostics, and Marcion in particular, and exposed the absurdities of their doctrines. He expounded the doctrine of the Church on matters that were in dispute. He entered into every controversy of his day within the Church, devoting himself with equal ardour to expounding the nature of God and the details of worship and conduct. He involved himself in contradictions, seizing a new position without abandoning the old, and he lived to see himself, the arch-enemy of heresy, branded as a heretic.

But he was more than the product of his own time. Though his strength undoubtedly lay in his ability to grasp a position and expound it without relating it to his view on other subjects, he had sufficient insight to deal with the subjects he handled to effect a contribution in some directions of value for all time. His devotion to the Christian faith as he understood it, coupled with a speculative ability above the ordinary, made him not only an able advocate of the early Church teaching, but also a thinker of fertile suggestion, to whom men like Calvin and Richard Hooker turned for light upon the problems of their day. He has suffered more than most men from one-sided

[1] *Adv. Marc.*, II., c. 15. [2] *De Anima*, c. 40. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 41.

and unfair judgements.[1] The influence of his writings is itself an ample refutation of the ill-considered criticisms of those who have based their judgement upon a superficial acquaintance with them. When, with an imagination that is vivid enough to reproduce the situation, the circumstances, and the temperament of the man, and a judgement that is based upon a calm review of his theology in its historical setting, we draw near to Tertullian, we shall recognize in him, despite his failings and limitations, one of the noblest characters and greatest thinkers of the Christian Church.

[1] Cf., e.g., Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. 15; Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History*, Cent. II., Part II., c. 5.

APPENDIX I

TERTULLIAN'S LITERARY ACTIVITY

THE following brief sketch of Tertullian's activity as an author is not intended to deal with any questions of linguistic interest or to attempt to estimate the literary value of his work. The purpose in view is simply to indicate the setting and character of the various writings in such a manner as to enable the reader to follow the development of Tertullian's thought, and to appraise his theological statements at their true value. He passed through various stages, commencing as an earnest exponent of the elements of the faith, the simple rites, and the central virtues, of the Christian religion; developing into the able advocate of the Christian community and the arch-enemy of heresy; gradually moving towards that sect with which he had so much spiritual affinity, and in turn impressing upon that sect the stamp of his own personality; singling out special aspects of the truth, and expounding them in masterly fashion; giving his best thought to the elaboration of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Nature of Christ; and finally descending into the pettiness of a bitter quarrel with the Church, which led to his being branded as a heretic.

A.D. 195, 'DE BAPTISMO.'—This, the earliest of Tertullian's extant writings, was called forth by the fact that a woman, 'a viper of the Cainite heresy,' had attempted to do away with the rite of baptism on the plea that it was unnecessary. The teaching of the treatise has been indicated already.[1] The thoroughness with which Tertullian dealt with his subjects is evident thus early. His zeal for practical Christianity appears in his denunciation of the too easy administration of baptism and in his opposition to infant baptism. Expression is already given to his view that unquestioning faith should precede understanding.[2] The tendency to over-emphasize the aspect of the truth for which he is pleading is illustrated by the extent to which he goes in eulogizing the external means of baptism. One other point of interest is found in the way in which he writes on the subject of women teachers in church. He could not have written in this strain after he became a Montanist without some qualification of his views in favour of the prophetesses who played such an important part in that movement.

A.D. 195–196. 'ADVERSUS JUDAEOS.'—Tertullian's love of disputation soon led him to write on the controversy between the Christians and the Jews. This treatise purports to have arisen out of an argument

[1] See Chapter X.

[2] c. 10: 'Non Intelligentes, quia nec credentes. Nos porro quantula fide sumus, tantulo et intellectu possumus aestimare.'

between a Christian and a Jewish proselyte. This may well have been the case. The *Dialogue with Trypho* of Justin Martyr, *Jason and Papiscus* and the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, are instances of the employment of such a literary device. But, on the other hand, Tertullian's prejudice against such literary devices, and the fact that the argument is represented as taking place between a Christian and a Jewish proselyte, would lead one to suppose that the treatise was prompted by an actual dispute.

It covers the usual ground of contention between Christian and Jew. Are the Gentiles admissible to God's law? Is circumcision necessary? Are the Jewish sacrifices incumbent on the Gentiles? Has the Christ come? Are the prophecies fulfilled in Him? Tertullian's argument is that the Law of God was anterior to Moses, and that the failure of the Jew was the opportunity of the Gentile. The sign of circumcision was given that the Jews might be distinguished at 'the last time,' when they would be prohibited from entering the holy ark. The cessation of circumcision had been predicted by the prophets, and the new law had come to the obedient Gentiles. The sacrifices which God desires are not carnal, but spiritual. The Christ has come and the prophecies have been fulfilled in Him, both in His birth and in His passion.

One great idea is nobly expressed here—that of the universality of the Christian religion. Tertullian takes a sweeping survey of the kingdoms of the earth, past and present, and asserts the universal sway of Jesus Christ.[1] No indications of Montanism are to be found here, and in dealing with the question of the Sabbath the writer adopts the Western view.

A.D. 196. 'De Spectaculis.'—From the task of defending the Christian religion against the Jews Tertullian turned his attention to a far more formidable foe—the paganism that surrounded the Christians on every side. He entered the lists against this powerful adversary. The contest demanded a knowledge of the origins of the pagan customs and festivals, and Tertullian spared no pains to make himself acquainted with the origins, that he might discredit the developments which had accrued. He bases his contentions upon the accounts given by the authors of heathen literature. The purpose he has in view, however, is not that of disputation with the heathen themselves, but that of guarding the Christians against the peril to their faith contained in the attractions of the games and celebrations of the pagan world. He passes in review the circus, the theatre, the combats, and the funeral sacrifice, traces their origins, showing them to be the offspring of idolatry, and characterizes them in their existing form as being, true to their origin, nothing more than a species of idolatry. It is noteworthy that he feels the force of the demand made by those Christians who favoured attendance at these exhibitions, that if such things are forbidden, scripture proof of the prohibition should be adduced. But in attempting to supply that proof he depends upon a far-fetched interpretation of the first Psalm rather than upon the application of scriptural principles to a problem which in its existing form

[1] c. 8.

was foreign to biblical times. The appeal to the first Psalm in this connexion is probably due to the influence of Clement of Alexandria, who had made a similar use of it in his *Paidagogos*.

A.D. 196–197. 'DE CULTU FEMINARUM,' I. and II.—The two little pamphlets *On Female Dress* reflect still more clearly the influence of Clement. The similarity in the subject-matter dealt with by both is not sufficient to account for the close resemblances in the writings of the two authors. Tertullian must have been familiar with the *Paidagogos*. In these two pamphlets he continues his exhortations to the members of the Christian community to abstain from the allurements of pagan society. He inveighs against the wearing of gold, silver, and jewels, and draws the distinction between those refinements in dress which are lawful and those which are not. The limits assigned are that the things which, being natural, are the creation of God, are therefore to be desired, while those refinements which are superinduced upon the work of God by the ingenuity of Satan are to be avoided. What he has to say applies, he affirms, equally to men and to women. His appeal to the Book of Enoch shows that he regards it as authoritative, and reveals an uncritical attitude in affirming that the book owes its authorship to Enoch himself.

'DE ORATIONE.'—Between these two pamphlets he wrote on the subjects of Prayer and Idolatry. Dealing with the former subject, he first expounds the Lord's Prayer; then he intimates that it is lawful to add personal petitions, and deals with the appropriate attitude of prayer, the 'kiss of peace,' stations, women's dress, the veiling of virgins, and with the time and place for prayer, its power, and its effect. The appeal to the *Shepherd of Hermas* may be contrasted with the denial of its authority in *De Pudicitia*.

A.D. 197. 'DE IDOLOLATRIA.'—In further pursuit of the question of the relation of the Christians to the pagan world Tertullian wrote the tract *On Idolatry*. It is couched in stronger terms than his earlier writings, and makes more stringent demands of the Christians. They must abstain from every form of that idolatry which is 'the principal crime of the human race,' and which is identical with murder and adultery. Not only idol-worship, but idol-making, is to be abjured. Guilt attaches, not only to direct participation in the making of such idols, but even to such occupations as those of schoolmasters, soldiers, and servants of officials. The subject is not treated in learned fashion, after the manner of *De Spectaculis*; the author is rather addressing himself to the urgent necessity of dissuading his fellow Christians from participating in the celebrations which followed the victory of Severus over Albinus. The sound of approaching persecution grows clearer. In *De Spectaculis* the cry 'To the lions' is daily raised against the Christians; in *De Idololatria* the question is becoming acute as to whether a Christian ought to divulge or to deny the fact that he is such. In *De Cultu Feminarum*, II., the author says, 'Otherwise, I know not whether the wrist that has been wont to be surrounded with palm-leaf-like bracelet will endure till it grow into the numb hardness of its own chain! I know not whether the leg that has rejoiced in the

anklet will suffer to be squeezed into the gyve! I fear the neck beset with pearl and emerald nooses will give no room to the broadsword! . . . But Christians always, and now more than ever, pass their time, not in gold, but in irons; the stoles of martyrdom are preparing, the angels who are to carry us are being awaited.'[1]

A.D. 197. 'AD MARTYRAS.'—The approaching persecution had arrived before Tertullian's next writing was penned. By this time the fearful civil war which preceded the accession of Severus was receding into the past, the celebrations were over, and the twenty-nine senators who had conspired with Albinus had been put to death. The campaign of Severus against his enemies in the state had been persecuted with vigour. Meanwhile, in Carthage a number of Christians had been thrown into prison. What immediate occasion had led to their incarceration it is impossible to say. But there they were, and Tertullian, with his characteristic determination to have a part in everything that concerned the Christian community, wrote a letter to these prisoners. Others were providing for their physical needs; he would make some contribution to their spiritual sustenance. The burden of his letter is that they must rejoice, for the Holy Spirit has entered the prison with them, and there they are secure from the temptations of the world, and free from its pollution. Though the prison is hard, it affords a discipline for the soul. The example of those who have died for the sake of virtue or truth is set before them, but as no Christian is cited among these examples it is evident that the persecution had not yet issued in actual martyrdom.

A.D. 197. 'AD NATIONES' AND 'APOLOGETICUS.'—These two books were written during the persecution, the former when it was at its height, the latter when it was beginning to wane. By this time some Christians had suffered death by sword and beast for their faith. *Ad Nationes* is addressed to the heathen populace, and reveals a bitter resentment of the treatment meted out to the Christians. It reflects the folly of the unthinking multitude, who are misled by such absurd travesties of the Christian religion as that presented by the Jew who went about carrying a caricature of the Christians in the form of a figure with an ass's ears, clothed in a toga, carrying a book, and having a hoof for one of his feet. Tertullian retorts against the heathen the accusations they have levelled against the Christians, and asserts that the latter have the truth, while the heathen need to reform themselves. He confirms this by a lengthy examination of their gods as they are set forth in Varro.

Apologeticus covers much of the ground traversed in *Ad Nationes*, and brings in some fresh material which is more in place in an apology addressed to 'the Rulers of the Roman Empire.' It is not so bitter in tone, and it introduces a statement of the beliefs of the Christians and compares them with the findings of pagan philosophy.

A.D. 198–200. 'DE TESTIMONIO ANIMAE.'—When the persecution had subsided, Tertullian composed a short treatise, *On the Testimony of the Soul*, the purport of which was that the soul in its natural untutored

[1] c. 13.

state is Christian, i.e. that it believes in those things that belong to the essence of the Christian religion. This little tract is primarily apologetic, but it at once develops a thought which has been briefly expressed in the *Apologeticus*, and foreshadows some of those doctrines which are to receive a fuller treatment in the contest with heresy to which Tertullian is about to devote the whole ardour of his mind.

'DE PRAESCRIPTIONE HAERETICORUM.'—From the first Tertullian seems to have had an inclination to dispute with heretics. His first attempt at authorship took the form of a treatise in Greek on the question of the baptism of heretics.[1] Now, for a decade or more, he devotes his attention to the task of combating Gnosticism, while the discussion of such subjects as Penitence and Patience occupies his pen at intervals.

The treatise *De Praescriptione Haereticorum* was called forth by the fact that considerable numbers of the members of the Christian community in Carthage had gone over to the side of the heretics, even bishops, and deacons, and widows, and martyrs among them.[2] The Marcionites had attracted the greater number, for they had their churches modelled on the pattern of the Christian Church. Tertullian will later enter into closer disputation with the Marcionites and the Valentinians, as well as with Hermogenes, but for the present he contents himself with adopting a legal process—that of 'Prescription.' He lays down the rule that the heretics may not appeal to the Christian Scriptures, for these belong to the Christians alone. Hence all discussion of the contents of Scripture with them is banned. They are ruled out of court.

'ADVERSUS HERMOGENEM.'—Following out his resolution to deal with the heretics singly, Tertullian turned first to Hermogenes. This man was a painter by profession, but he had leanings towards philosophy, and had learnt from the Stoics the doctrine of the eternity of matter. When he became a Christian he was unable to accept the current orthodox doctrine of the creation of the world out of nothing. Tertullian indulges in a deal of witticism at his expense, and makes the main point in his criticism of Hermogenes the argument that if God made all things out of pre-existent matter He is responsible for evil as well as for good. It was to prevent the attribution of evil to God that Hermogenes had defended the eternity of matter, but he fails in this very purpose, because even if evil lay of necessity in the nature of matter, yet the making of all things out of that evil matter was an act of God.

A.D. 200–204.—Probably A.D. 200–204 were occupied with the first writing of *Adversus Marcionem*, I. and II., which are lost.

Before Tertullian directed his anti-heretical fervour against the Valentinians he turned his attention to two questions of Christian morality, and addressed two letters on Christian conduct to his wife. The persecution which now took place as a result of the edict of the Emperor drew from Tertullian no definitely apologetic writing at all comparable with the *Apologeticus* and the *Ad Nationes*. Possibly he

[1] See *De Baptismo*, c. 15. [2] c. 3.

thought that in view of the changed attitude of the Emperor the repetition of such arguments would avail little. The Church at Carthage suffered, as we know from the *Passion of St. Perpetua*, which, according to the generally accepted view, was edited by Tertullian. With the exception of some minor verbal alterations he is content to allow the descriptions of the visions of the martyrs to stand as presented in their own words, and to confine his own work to the narration of the circumstances under which they suffered. Whether the editing of the *Visions* preceded the writing of *De Patientia*, as Dean Robinson suggests, or not, is open to question, but there is no doubt that the contemplation of the fortitude of the martyrs, who were Montanists, was a potent influence in precipitating Tertullian's breach with the catholic Church.[1]

A.D. 204–207. 'De Poenitentia.'—This followed close upon the persecution of A.D. 202–3. How many of the catholic Christians had suffered in that persecution it is impossible to say, but Tertullian's description of the presbyters and deacons as 'the dear ones of God' indicates that some had evoked his sympathy. The general condition of things in the Christian community is revealed in the discussion of the question of baptism. It is not now the attitude of Christians towards the 'Spectacles' that is in question, but a certain insincerity that is characteristic of many. They are unwilling to make an open and abject confession of their lapses from the faith, and are too ready to be baptized without amendment of their conduct. They seek to be baptized by stealth, not openly, as in former days, possibly because of the fear of persecution, now that the edict of the Emperor has decreed that henceforth no one shall become a Christian. On the other hand, there is a disposition on the part of many to remain in the catechumen stage, so that they may live less strictly. Tertullian's attitude on the question of baptism—which occupies a large part of the treatise—reflects this twofold tendency of the day. It also shows that he has come in his own mind to the parting of the ways. Dealing with the question of repentance after baptism, he sees the danger of teaching an unlimited availability of repentance. And yet he shrinks from asserting that post-baptismal repentance is an impossibility. So he compromises by teaching that after baptism one repentance is permissible, but no more.

'De Patientia.'—This little book shows that the persecution was not yet over. A certain Judas had predicted that the world would come to an end in the tenth year of Severus (A.D. 203), but the time had come and passed, while the prophecy remained unfulfilled.[2]

This leads Tertullian to emphasize his belief that God has not forgotten to exercise His vengeance, but His patience still endures. The memory of the murder of Plautian is still fresh, and the spirited praise of the witnesses whose blood was shed in the persecution is more marked than that of *De Poenitentia*.

[1] The whole scene of the martyrdoms as presented in the *Passio S. Perpetuae* is not easy to abridge, but it has been admirably done by Dr. H. B. Workman, *Persecution in the Early Church*, pp. 313 ff.

[2] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, VI. 7.

It is significant that Tertullian waxed so eloquent in praise of patience because he knew his own lack of that virtue. The Author of patience is God; the author of impatience the devil. True to his general tendency to overstate his case, Tertullian makes patience the chief of the virtues, and impatience the essence of all evil.

'AD UXOREM,' I. AND II.—These books bring us to the verge of Tertullian's conversion to Montanism. He had already complained of insincerity in the catholic Church; he now definitely denounces those who had advised a Christian woman to marry a pagan. He cannot understand such counsellors. That this matter is introduced in the *second* of the two books indicates that he is now approaching the Montanist position. In *De Poenitentia* he had admitted the possibility of a second repentance. Here he discusses the question of repeated marriage. His doubtfulness is reflected in the fact that he first lays down a strict prohibition of second marriage, and then modifies it by conceding that a second marriage is permissible, provided that it is with a Christian. Such contradictions are characteristic of Tertullian, it is true, but it is probably here a reflection of his movement towards Montanism. The condition of the community is similar to that reflected in *De Poenitentia* and *De Patientia*. He thinks that he himself may be a victim of the persecution, hence the composition of these letters declaring to his wife what he thinks she should do if she survives him.

Here we come to the close of that period in his life in which he was a member of the catholic Church. He had a spiritual affinity with Montanism earlier, but hitherto he had remained with the catholic Church, which he so highly praised. The sum of the improprieties of the catholic Church, the noble bearing of the famous Montanist martyrs, and certain quarrels with the officers of the Roman Church, led him gradually away from the catholic Church and into definite connexion with the Montanist sect.

His breach with the catholic Church did not, however, restrain his activity against the Gnostics. It rather stimulated it, for he found the Montanists already engaged in controversy with the Gnostics. The contest he began as a member of the catholic Church he continued with increased fervour as a Montanist. He contended with the Valentinians, and then at great length with the Marcionites.

'ADVERSUS VALENTINIANOS.'—He first directs his anti-heretical fervour against the Valentinians—a numerous sect to which he had already referred in *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*. There is little to indicate that he really understood this Gnostic theory. He deals with the teaching of Ptolemy, the follower of Valentinus, rather than with that of his master, and follows Irenaeus closely. His criticism is little more than a humorous description of the extravagances and absurdities of the system. His progress towards Montanism is reflected in the statement that he means in this work to follow Justin Martyr, Miltiades, Irenaeus, and '*our own* Proculus.'

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM' I.—Tertullian next turned his attention to Marcionitism, against which he composed his greatest work. This heresy had something in common with Montanism. Both were popular

movements, which laid great stress upon asceticism and gloried in suffering. Neither laid claim to learning, and neither made anything of officialism and clericalism. But the prophetic element so prominent among the Montanists is absent from the Marcionites, and while the former stressed the Old Testament the latter rejected it. The Monarchian and definitely monotheistic belief of the Montanists could find no room for the two gods of the Marcionites.

Tertullian treated this opponent more seriously than Valentinianism. Against the latter he was disposed to be humorous ; against the former to be abusive. His treatment of Valentinianism is superficial ; his treatment of Marcion's teaching is fundamental.

A.D. 209. 'DE PALLIO.'—Between his first and second book against Marcion, Tertullian wrote a little pamphlet—the only secular writing he has left to us—in defence of his adoption of the mantle in preference to the toga. He had a penchant for writing on the subject of dress. Not only the dress of women, but the garb of men, was a subject of more than passing interest to him. Here we find a kind of presage of what was to happen to him in more important matters. He who had appointed himself the censor of others found himself the object of censure. The tone of the little writing indicates that it was not the ridicule of the rabble but the censure of the authorities against which he makes his defence.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' II. AND III.—These two books were next written with little time between their composition, though the repetition in Book II of the matter of Book I indicates that some time had elapsed between the composition of the first and second books. The weakness of the third book as compared with the other two is probably due to the fact that in it the author depends upon his earlier treatise, *Adversus Judaeos*.

A.D. 211. 'DE ANIMA.'—Tertullian next turned his abilities in a different direction—to the discussion of a philosophic theme, the nature of the soul. He reveals the same thoroughness of treatment in dealing with this subject. In order to write with knowledge he studied the ancient philosophers and medical writers—Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, Plinius, Hippocrates, Asclepiades, Herophilus, and Soranus. The theme was not only abstractly interesting, it was practically important. The fact that Tatian and Clement of Alexandria had written on the subject indicates the necessity for discussing it. *De Anima* deals with the nature, origin, and qualities of the soul, its relation to the body, its development, and its destiny. The extensive acquaintance with the thought of others, combined with a commendable independence of judgement, makes it ' an extremely important achievement.'[1]

A.D. 211. 'DE CORONA MILITIS.'—For the next two years Tertullian's pen was occupied with four writings which arose out of the persecution which followed the death of Severus. These were *De Corona Militis*, *Ad Scapulam*, *De Fuga in Persecutione*, and *Scorpiace*. *De Corona Militis* was written in defence of the action of a soldier who refused to

[1] Harnack.

wear the crown of laurel when receiving his gratuity. The whole subject of crown-wearing was one which had received the attention of Clement of Alexandria.[1] There are resemblances between his treatment of the subject and that of Tertullian which indicate that the latter was familiar with the writing of Clement; e.g. the absurdity of placing flowers upon the head, where they can neither be seen nor smelt, and the reference to the crowning of Christ with thorns. The custom was very widespread among the pagans, and the question of the relation of Christians towards it was but a part of the larger question of the attitude which they were to adopt towards pagan customs in general. The incident already referred to, however, led Tertullian to discuss the question in detail. His treatment of the subject is noteworthy for the fact that he abandons the attempt to find Scripture ground for the prohibition of crown-wearing. He places the onus of finding Scripture support on those who would defend the custom, and himself prefers to base his prohibition upon custom, tradition, and reason.

A.D. 211. 'AD SCAPULAM.'—This is an apologetic writing of much simpler form than the *Apologeticus*. It is couched in terms of greater moderation, and is throughout dignified and manly in tone. It is rich in allusions to contemporary events, so that its date can be determined with confidence. The arguments of the *Apologeticus* are succinctly stated, but the main purpose of the epistle is to warn Scapula of the grave risk he is running in persecuting the Christians. Other persecutors had met with the judgements of God, and even Scapula himself had received in portents of various kinds a sufficient warning from God. Yet Tertullian avows that his aim is not to frighten Scapula but to save him from the folly of contending with God. That the scene of the persecution is Carthage is obvious, and there is no indication of persecution on a wider scale at this time.

A.D. 212. 'DE FUGA IN PERSECUTIONE.'—The persecution under Scapula produced a far different result from that predicted by Tertullian in his letter to that ruler. The harvest was not heroism, but bribery and cowardice. The Christians, whose readiness to die Tertullian had proclaimed with a flourish, turned out to be for the most part more ready to resort to flight or to buy off their oppressors. In this they defended themselves by referring to Christ's admonition to His disciples to 'flee from city to city.' The letter is addressed to 'Brother Fabius,' who had asked for guidance in this matter. The Montanistic tone is unmistakable, but Fabius, apparently a member of the catholic Church, is addressed in affectionate terms. The writer approaches the question by asking whether persecution comes from God or from the devil, and, having decided that it is from God, concludes that flight in times of persecution is indefensible. Persecution is the judgement of God, whereby He approves of faith and rejects the unfaithful. It is the winnowing fan separating the grain of the martyrs from the chaff of the deniers. It is the ladder of which Jacob dreamed, by which some ascend to higher places and some descend to

[1] *Paidagogos*, II., c. 8.

lower. To buy oneself off from such persecution is no better than fleeing from it, for ' as flight is a buying off without money, so buying off is money-flight.'[1] The catholic Church is in this respect a sad contrast to the followers of the Paraclete. The deacons, and presbyters, and bishops even, of the former take to flight,[2] which shows the need of the Paraclete. ' And therefore the Paraclete, is requisite who guides into all truth, and animates to all endurance. And they who have received Him will neither stoop to fly from persecution nor to buy it off, for they have the Lord Himself, One who will stand by us to aid us in suffering, as well as to be our mouth when we are put to the question.'[3]

A.D. 213. ' SCORPIACE.'—The traitors within the camp were not the only source of anxiety to Tertullian. The Gnostics without denounced the martyrdom of the zealous Montanists as madness. It was a misunderstanding of the teaching of Christ, they said, that led His followers to confess Him before men when the only result was that they were delivered into the hands of the executioner. The title of this reply to the Gnostics is an abbreviation of ' An Antidote for the Scorpion's Sting.' The Scorpion's sting is, of course, the poison of the Gnostics. Tertullian's first point is that God has willed martyrdom to take place. His second is that God, who so wills, is good. The first follows from the fact that God has forbidden the practice of idolatry. Wherever the worshippers of God have fallen into this sin, a few have resisted the general trend, and they have perforce suffered. By willing the prohibition of idolatry, God, in effect, willed the suffering of martyrdom. The second is defended on the ground that the sufferings of the martyrs make for their spiritual good and their eternal happiness.

A.D. 213–217. ' ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' IV.—From this time to the end of his life Tertullian saw no persecution of the Christians comparable to the three we have noticed, but, though official persecution ceased, there still remained that hostility on the part of the populace that would gladly have seen it revived. In the comparative peace of these days Tertullian's thoughts turned again to the great work he had undertaken in opposition to the doctrines of Marcion. Apart from that he dealt no more with particular sects of the Gnostics, but devoted his time and strength to the task of defending the reality of the flesh of Christ, and the resurrection of the flesh, against the whole army of heretics. Such a narrowing of the bounds of controversy gave his genius better scope, and provided a congenial sphere of exercise for his ability. Though his previous studies come to his assistance, his Montanistic predilections are obvious, and the peculiar beliefs of that sect are pressed into his service.

The fourth book against Marcion is practically a commentary on the Gospel of Luke, in which Tertullian shows that the only Gospel which Marcion acknowledged (and that in a mutilated form) furnishes no ground for that heretic's contention. Here the application of the term ' Psychicos ' to the members of the catholic Church first comes to sight in the writings of Tertullian, and here the discussion of the

[1] *De Fuga in Persecutione*, c. 12. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 11. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 14.

Sabbath reveals an altered attitude. He no longer accepts the Western view. The Sabbath is the Lord's.

'DE CARNE CHRISTI.'—This treatise is an endeavour to establish the reality of the flesh of Christ in opposition to the teaching of Marcion and Apelles, Valentinus and Alexander. It confines itself to this one point in refuting the teaching of the four heretics. Apelles was a follower of Marcion, and Alexander a follower of Valentinus. The former allowed, in contrast to his master, that Christ had real flesh; but held that it was a sidereal substance, and was not born. The letter held that Christ could not have had a human body without partaking of the sinfulness of human nature. Against these four heretics Tertullian maintained that Christ was born of a virgin, possessed a truly human body, and yet was sinless.

'DE RESURRECTIONE CARNIS.'—The last-named treatise formed an introduction to this. The need for such a treatise was found in the fact that the heathen treated the Christian doctrine of the resurrection with derision, and that the heretics were prone to follow the opinions of the heathen. Tertullian maintains the resurrection of the body, and supports his doctrine by a copious and systematic employment of passages of Scripture.

'DE VIRGINIBUS VELANDIS.'—The remaining writings reveal a pronounced antagonism to the catholic Church. Hitherto Tertullian had found it possible to address a typical member of that Church as 'brother.'[1] Henceforth he can only think of the members of the catholic Church as 'Psychici.' The bitterness of feeling grows to the end. The Montanists, whose narrow views on the questions of marriage and fasting became unendurable, and whose assumption of superiority became too much for the patience of the catholic Church, were now branded as heretics.

De Virginibus Velandis discusses at greater length a question which had been treated in *De Oratione*.[2] The earlier discussion of the subject shows us that it was not a specifically Montanistic doctrine that virgins should be veiled in the Christian assemblies. Opinions were divided, but generally the tendency of the Eastern Churches was towards strictness, that of the West towards laxity, in the matter. Tertullian from the first advocated the strictest view, and it is probable that the teaching of the Montanists on this point was influenced by him rather than that he was influenced by it.

'ADVERSUS MARCIONEM,' V.—The fifth volume brings to a close his great work against Marcion. It shows that the teaching of Paul, whom Marcion placed on a pedestal above the other apostles, so far from being in agreement with the Marcionite doctrine, is decidedly opposed to it. In addition to its maintenance of the chief argument against Marcion, it is noteworthy for its introduction into the discussion of the questions of the reality of the flesh of Christ and the resurrection of the flesh (subjects to which by this time Tertullian had given much attention), the 'recapitulation' of all things in Christ, and a modification of his views regarding the right of women to speak in church.

[1] Cf. *De Fuga in Persecutione*, c. 1.

[2] cc. 21, 22.

A.D. 217–221. 'ADVERSUS PRAXEAN.'—Once more Tertullian took up his pen to deal with a dogmatic subject, and with the wider knowledge and greater understanding of his latest years he expounded the great themes of the nature of God and of Christ. Difficulties had arisen out of the belief in the divinity of Christ. It seemed to imply that there were two Gods. To surmount the difficulty Praxeas taught that Christ is identical with the Father. The fact that to many of the 'simpler sort' of Christians this explanation seemed sufficient induced Tertullian to expound the whole subject, and to give to the world the fruit of his mature mind.

'DE EXHORTATIONE CASTITATIS.'—This is a private letter addressed to a brother (probably a Montanist) who had lost his wife. It is a counsel not to marry again. There are three grades of celibacy, in descending order—virginity from birth, virginity from the second birth, i.e. from baptism, and monogamy. The Montanist strictness on this question is so completely shared by Tertullian that he wrests the teaching of Paul to serve his own purpose. Paul had distinguished between the *ideals* of celibacy and monogamy and the *law*, which forbade second marriage only in the case of officers. Tertullian would make Paul's ideal the law.

'DE MONOGAMIA.'—The question of the Christian teaching on marriage was one on which the strict views of Tertullian aroused more resentment than either his dogmatic teaching or his attitude on the subjects of the wearing of crowns, flight in persecution, and the veiling of virgins, because it affected a greater number of people. Tertullian maintains his views by claiming the authority of the Paraclete, whose teaching is not novel, as his opponents averred, but who is the original fount of Christian truth who spoke through Christ. Further, the Scriptures, whose teaching he interprets and whose words he twists to suit his own views, are on his side. The Old Testament gives place, in Tertullian's estimation, to the New, a distinction which was forced upon the Christian Church by the Gnostic controversy. It is interesting to note that Tertullian complains that his teaching on the subject of marriage is regarded as heresy.

'DE JEJUNIO ADVERSUS PSYCHICOS.'—The same charges of heresy and novelty were laid against Tertullian and his fellow Montanists in respect of their teaching on the subject of fasting. He replies with a charge of gluttony against the Psychics. The Montanists claimed the authority of the Paraclete for their fasts, vigils, and abstention from bathing. Their opponents assert that it is pseudo-prophecy, 'the spirit of the devil,' which directs them. An even more marked bitterness of feeling characterizes this treatise than that manifested in *De Monogamia*.

'DE PUDICITIA.'—The last of Tertullian's writings is a general defence of the Montanist attitude towards the subjects of celibacy, marriage, and chastity. The defence is embittered by the fact that Callistus had issued an edict proclaiming the pardon of adultery and fornication to those who repented. The position maintained by Tertullian is that already assumed in *De Monogamia* and *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, and the treatise is marked by a thoroughgoing and

systematic application of Scripture to the subject. The *Shepherd of Hermas* is described as an apocryphal writing. The Church is not that of the Psychics, but that which is composed of spiritual men. The intercession of martyrs (many of them such in name only) on behalf of scandalous offenders is denounced. ' Who has redeemed another's death by his own but the Son of God alone ? '

APPENDIX II

TERTULLIAN AS APOLOGIST

(*a*) His Forensic Plea for Christianity

Three persecutions of the Christians, with intervening periods of comparative calm, are reflected in the writing of Tertullian. The first called forth the *Ad Nationes* and the *Apologeticus*, the second is reflected in *De Patientia* and *Ad Uxorem*, while the third induced him to write *Ad Scapulam*, *De Corona Militis*, *De Fuga in Persecutione*, and *Scorpiace*. In *Apologeticus* and *Ad Scapulam* the case of Christianity is pleaded in definite form. *Ad Nationes* is in substance similar to *Apologeticus*, but while the former was addressed to the pagan populace, the latter was directed to the 'Rulers of the Roman Empire.' *Ad Martyras*, *De Spectaculis*, *De Idololatria*, *De Patientia*, *Ad Uxorem*, I. and II., *De Corona Militis*, *De Fuga in Persecutione*, and *Scorpiace*, while they do not provide a set defence of the Christian religion, add to our general apprehension of the attitude adopted by Tertullian.

We may first note the obvious links of connexion with the earlier apologists. The folly and injustice of the hatred of the Christian name, the confusion of 'Christian' with 'Chrestian,' the fact that the poets ridicule the gods, the absurdity of idol-worship, the claim to freedom of worship, the refutation of the charge of atheism, of impious feasts, and lasciviousness, the assertion of the priority of the Scriptures to heathen literature, are repeated by Tertullian.

In the *Apologeticus* we find the Christian advocate pleading the cause of oppressed truth. It is an eloquent protest against injustice; it is also a clear demonstration of the Christian case, set forth with great dialectical ability. Tertullian first deals with the question of justice. The Christians suffer from the prejudices of men. The whole case against them arises from ignorance—an ignorance that is culpable. 'Because they already dislike, they want to know no more.'[1] The truth in regard to the Christians ought to be inquired into and sifted, but, if the rulers of the Roman Empire are afraid to make such an open inquiry, they ought at least not to 'forbid the truth to reach their ears by the secret pathway of a noiseless book.'[2] If the Christians are criminals, they ought to be tried by the same methods as other criminals; but they are not allowed to speak in their own defence. The whole judicial procedure in dealing with the Christians is a travesty of justice.

Turning to the substance of the charges made against the Christians, Tertullian reduces them to five main points:

(1) They are accused of committing unspeakable atrocities. The

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 1. [2] *Ibid.*

answer of Tertullian is that this accusation is based on false rumours, which ought to be recognized as such by reasonable men. Simple humanity is sufficient to expose their absurdity. 'Tell me, I pray you, is eternity worth it? If it is not, then these things are not to be credited. . . . Why then can others do it if you cannot? Why cannot you, if others can? I suppose we are of a different nature—are we Cynopae or Sciapodes? You are a man yourself, as well as the Christian; if you cannot do it you ought not to believe it of others. For a Christian is a man as well as you.'[1]

(2) They are accused of worshipping a strange god instead of the gods of the empire. This leads Tertullian to trace the origin of the pagan gods, to show that they were in reality merely men, or less than men—demons. Even their own worshippers ridicule and despise them. But the Christians worship one God reasonably and with loyalty of heart.

(3) They are accused of treason. But the Christians offer prayer for the safety of the Emperor without ceasing and in sincerity of mind. It is the command of God's revelation that men should pray for their enemies and persecutors; 'Nay, even in terms, and most clearly, the Scripture says, "Pray for kings, and rulers, and powers, that all may be peace with you."'[2] They look up to the Emperor as called to his office by God, so that Caesar is really more theirs than their enemies. The attitude of Tertullian is here dignified and sincere. He shows what are the rights of Caesar and what are those of God. The Christian can scrupulously obey the Emperor, taking no part in sedition, and yet be loyal to his Lord. The Christians, who are no longer a mere sect but a vast multitude scattered throughout the Empire, could be a menace to the Empire by the simple reason of their numbers, but they respect it as a divine institution.

(4) The calamities—war, pestilence, and fire—that have befallen the Empire are attributed to the Christians. To this Tertullian retorts that the like calamities befell the human race before the existence of the Christians, and the fact is that men have always deserved ill of God. The calamities could not be visitations of the pagan gods for the impiety of the Christians, because the evils befell the temples of those very gods. If anything, the Christians are rather to be credited with warding off evils by their prayers. To the question that then arises: How comes it that the Christians share in the common sufferings if they are the favourites of God? Tertullian answers that they are indifferent to these matters. Their sole concern with the world is to be delivered from it.

(5) The last indictment of the Christians is that they are useless in the affairs of life. 'How can that be the case,' asks Tertullian, 'with people who are living among you, eating the same food, wearing the same attire, having the same habits, under the same necessities of existence? We are not Indian Brahmins or Gymnosophists, who dwell in woods, and exile themselves from ordinary human life.'[3] There are some, it is true, who may complain that the Christians are a

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 8. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 31. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 42.

sterile race. These are the pimps and bath supplies, assassins and poisoners and sorcerers, soothsayers, diviners, and astrologers. If the Christians do not support the temple revenues, well, they cannot give alms to both the human and the heavenly mendicants of the pagans. 'Our compassion spends more in the streets than yours does in the temple.'[1]

By the time that he addresses Scapula, Tertullian has developed a more implacable spirit. He is scarcely now the advocate pleading the cause of the Christians; he is the accuser of Scapula. 'We are not in any great perturbation or alarm about the persecutions we suffer from the ignorance of men. . . . We shrink not from the grapple with your utmost rage. . . . We have sent, therefore, this tract to you in no alarm about ourselves, but in much concern for you and all our enemies.'[2] He repeats, briefly but pointedly, the refutation of the charges he had rebutted at length in the *Apologeticus*, and then warns Scapula of the wrath of God, which will surely fall upon him, as it had fallen on others, if he continues to persecute the Christians. The premonitory signs of that impending wrath have already appeared; the fulfilment of the divine vengeance is sure to follow if the warnings are unheeded. 'Spare thyself, if not us poor Christians! Spare Carthage, if not thyself! Spare the province which the indication of your purpose has subjected to the threats and extortions at once of the soldiers and of private enemies.'[3]

(*b*) His Philosophic Defence of the Christian Religion.

Tertullian's defence of the Christian religion in the realm of thought takes distinctive ground. We have already dealt with his attitude towards Greek philosophy; our present purpose is to deal in more general fashion with his defence of Christian truth. He does not commence with the Logos as the germinal principle of all good, as Justin Martyr does, but with the testimony of the 'soul by nature Christian.' He develops more fully in his treatise *De Testimonio Animae* the position which he takes in regard to this principle in *Apologeticus*. The testimony of the natural, untutored soul is in favour of the Christian religion. 'Would you rather have the proof from the works of His hands, so numerous and so great, which both contain you and sustain you, which minister at once to your enjoyment and strike you with awe; or would you rather have it from the testimony of the soul itself? Though under the oppressive bondage of the body, though led astray by depraving customs, though enervated by lusts and passions, though in slavery to false gods; yet whenever the soul comes to itself, as out of a surfeit, or a sleep, or a sickness, and attains something of its natural soundness, it speaks of God; using no other word, because this is the peculiar name of the true God. "God is great and good," "Which may God give!" are the words on every lip. It bears witness, too, that God is judge, exclaiming "God sees," and "I commend myself to God," and "God will repay me." O noble testimony of the soul by nature Christian!'[4]

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 42. [2] *Ad Scapulam*, c. 1. [3] *Ibid.*, c. 5. [4] *Apologeticus*, c. 17.

Tertullian places this witness of the untutored soul before the testimony to be found in ' the writings of the philosophers, or the poets, or other masters of the world's learning and wisdom.' Only by long and careful search and by the aid of a most retentive memory can the latter be obtained, but the testimony of the soul by nature Christian is simple, commonplace, universal. ' Stand forth, O soul, whether thou art a divine and eternal substance, as most philosophers believe—if it is so, thou wilt be the less likely to lie—or whether thou art the very opposite of divine, because indeed a mortal thing, as Epicurus alone thinks—in that case there will be the less temptation for thee to speak falsely in this case ; whether thou art received from heaven, or sprung from earth ; whether thou art formed of numbers, or of atoms ; whether thine existence begins with that of the body, or thou art put into it at a later stage—from whatever source, and in whatever way, thou makest man a rational being, in the highest degree capable of thought and knowledge—stand forth and give thy witness. But I call thee not as when, fashioned in schools, trained in libraries, fed up in Attic academies and porticoes, thou belchest forth thy wisdom. I address thee, simple and rude, and uncultured and untaught, such as they have thee who have thee only, that very thing pure and entire, of the road, the street, the workshop. I want thine inexperience, since in thy small experience no one feels any confidence. I demand of thee the things thou bringest with thee into man, which thou knowest either from thyself or from thine author, whoever he may be. Thou art not, as I well know, Christian ; for a man becomes a Christian, he is not born one. Yet Christians earnestly press thee for a testimony ; they press thee, though an alien, to bear witness against thy friends, that they may be put to shame before thee, for hating and mocking us on account of the things which convict thee as an accessory.'[1] When inquiry is made as to what the soul teaches, the reply is that it teaches the existence of the true God, while it denies that of the pagan gods ; it teaches the nature of God, that He is good and does good, that He is sovereign and all-powerful, that He sees all and judges all ; it teaches, moreover, the existence of demons and of Satan ; it teaches the resurrection and the judgement. It is the most faithful friend of truth, taking precedence of pagan literature, and even of the Scriptures themselves. ' Believe, then, your own books, and as to our Scriptures, so much the more believe writings which are divine, but in the witness of the soul itself give like confidence to nature. Choose the one of these you observe to be the most faithful friend of truth. If your own writings are distrusted, neither God nor Nature lie, and if you would have faith in God and Nature, have faith in the soul ; thus you will believe yourself.'[2]

The testimony of the soul is supplemented by the evidence of Scripture. This provides a fuller knowledge of God, and of His counsels, and of His will. ' But that we might attain an ampler and more authoritative knowledge at once of Himself, and of His counsels, and of His will, God has added a written revelation for the behoof of every one whose heart is set on seeking Him, that seeking he may find, and

[1] *De Testimonio Animae*, c. 1. [2] *Ibid.*, c. 6.

finding believe, and believing obey.'[1] That written revelation has come through men 'abundantly endowed with the Holy Spirit.' Tertullian does not define his view of the inspiration of the Scriptures more exactly than that. He appears to recognize the human agency—the writers have left 'literary treasures'; they are compared with the authors of pagan literature; but they are distinguished by their stainless righteousness, which made them worthy to know and to reveal the Most High. Men of Hebrew origin, who wrote in the Hebrew tongue, they are called prophets because they predict the future. Herein lies the majesty of the Scriptures; they foretold in ancient times the things that were now occurring. 'All that is taking place around you was foreannounced; all that you now see with the eye was previously heard by the ear. The swallowing up of cities by the earth; the theft of islands by the sea; wars, bringing external and internal convulsions, the collision of kingdoms with kingdoms. . . . All was foreseen and predicted before it came to pass.'[2] The dignity of the Scriptures arises from their antiquity; everything in pagan belief is less ancient than they. 'Well, all the substances, all the materials, the origins, classes, contents of your most ancient writings . . . the very forms of your letters . . . your very gods themselves . . . are less ancient than the work of a single prophet in whom you have the thesaurus of the entire Jewish religion, and therefore, too, of ours.'[3]

The difficulty that arises out of one aspect of this subject, i.e. the fact that, though the Christians claim the authority of antiquity for their Scriptures, their own religion dates from a comparatively recent time, leads Tertullian on to another main point in his apology for the Christian religion—the divinity of Christ. The Jews had in former times enjoyed the favour of God, but they sinned, turning away from God to sheer impiety, of which their present national ruin is sufficient proof. The result was that God chose for Himself more faithful worshippers, and bestowed His grace upon them in ampler measure, by sending His Son, the Christ. This Christ was the Logos of whom the heathen philosophers spoke. Thus Tertullian presents the Christ to the mind and conscience of men. 'Search, then, and see if that divinity of Christ be true. If it be of such a nature that the acceptance of it transforms a man, and makes him truly good, there is implied in that the duty of renouncing what is opposed to it as false; especially on every ground that which, hiding itself under the names and images of the dead, labours to convince men of its divinity by certain signs, and miracles, and oracles.'[4]

One further point Tertullian makes—the superior moral life inculcated by the Christian religion. So far from being productive of immorality, this religion alone preserves men from crime. 'We, then, alone are without crime.'[5] The reason for this is not far to seek. The Christians are taught of God Himself what goodness is. As a result they have perfect knowledge of virtue. Moreover, they regard God as a Judge, whom they dare not despise, hence they faithfully do His will. But

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 18.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. 19.
[3] *Ibid.*, c. 20.
[4] *Ibid.*, c. 21.
[5] *Ibid.*, c. 45.

the pagans derive their notions of virtue from human reason, and the cult of virtue among them depends upon human authority. Hence it is deficient both in fullness of knowledge and in authority. The pagans are deterred from sin only by fear of the Pro-Consul; the Christians make a real effort to obtain a blameless life out of the fear of God, who sees all, and whose punishments are everlasting.

This apology for Christianity has its merits and its defects. Among the former the chief is the consistency of the various points established. Commencing with the testimony of the soul, Tertullian proceeds to strengthen and augment it by adducing the evidence of Scripture. This leads up to the presentation of the person of Christ Himself, while this in turn culminates in the good moral life of those who receive Him. Among the latter the most obvious are the absence of the qualities of love and mercy in the portrayal of Christ and of God, the limitation of the evidence of Scripture to the foretelling of future events, and the failure to perceive that, in the development of the soul from its rude, untutored beginning to the mental and moral stature of the best among the pagans, there was a development of good as well as of evil. In failing to recognize the activity of the Logos in the life of men, prior to the appearance of Christ, Tertullian fell far behind Justin Martyr.

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