

T H E

THEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY

J O U R N A L .

VOLUME VII.

JANUARY, 1855.

NUMBER III.

ART. I.—DR. HICKOK'S RATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY.

BY THE EDITOR.

PSYCHOLOGY, in its comprehensive sense, treats of the powers and operations of the mind, including the emotional and voluntary, as well as the perceptive. Rational Psychology treats only of its perceptive powers and operations, to the exclusion mainly of the emotional and voluntary; and its object is to determine what the different classes are of our perceptions and thoughts; what the faculties are in which those classes have their origin; what the laws are of those faculties, or of the perceptions and thoughts that originate in them; and by *à priori* or ascertained criteria, give to our knowledge the rank of a demonstrated science.

This mode of treating the subject was first introduced by Kant, about seventy years ago. His aim was to raise this branch of metaphysics out of the sphere of mere experience and induction, into that of demonstration, by ascertained facts and principles as certain and universal in respect to the mind, as the axioms and definitions of geometry are to that branch of knowledge; and he thought by that means to put an end—if his professions are to be received as

cates that it is to be after the restoration of the nation to their land. Then they are to be universally converted to God. Those who have wandered the furthest from him are to be brought to a knowledge and acknowledgment of him; and those who have assailed and misrepresented his dealings with them, are to be made to see his righteousness and wisdom, and adore and glorify him.

The chapter is thus a clear and graphic prediction of the blindness to which the Israelites were to be abandoned during their long exile from their native land; the straits to which they are to be reduced by their enemies, after a portion of them have returned to Jerusalem and established themselves there; the visible interposition of the Almighty to destroy the hosts that besiege them; and finally, their deliverance from oppression thereafter, their universal conversion, and the eminent knowledge and happiness to which they are to be exalted, after their general restoration to their ancient land; events—except their obduracy and blindness—that are yet to be accomplished.

ART. VI.—THE PRIMITIVE PURITANS.

BY THE REV. JOHN FORSYTH, JUN., D.D.

AT the period when, by the triumph of Constantine, the relations of Paganism and of Christianity to the state were so completely and suddenly reversed, the internal condition of the Catholic church in some respects was not unlike that of the church of England after the accession of Elizabeth. Until within half a century of the age of Constantine, the church had exhibited the aspect of a widely ramified but compact body, having a common faith and a common life. During the whole course of her history, heretics had arisen, often from among her own sons, and had vented systems presenting a compound more or less monstrous of paganism, philosophy, and the gospel; but there was a broad and visible line of demarcation separating all these heretical sects

from that great and growing society known as the church of Christ. Even a Pagan, if intelligent and candid, could not fail to discern it, and was in little danger of mistaking the Gnostic or the Manichean for the Christian.

But about the middle of the third century, the visible unity of the church was disturbed by the conflicts of parties, who, though maintaining with equal tenacity her ancient faith, and observing the same forms of worship, were to such a degree antagonistic as to refuse communion with each other, in the public offices of religion. These schisms had their origin in disputes concerning discipline rather than doctrine, yet they engendered a zeal so intense that not even the most furious tempest of persecution against the Christian name and faith was able to extinguish it. During all the storms which swept over the church, from the days of Decius to those of Diocletian, these divisions subsisted in undiminished vigor. Accordingly, at the memorable epoch when Constantine admitted the long suffering church as a welcome and honored guest into the palace of the Cæsars, we find large bodies of Christians, in various parts of the empire, who then were, and for sixty years had been, in a state of separation from the larger community. They were known by names derived from the localities in which they lived, or from the persons who were the chief instruments in effecting the schism, while they also bore in common the appellation of Cathari, i.e. *Purists* or *Puritans*. Of the founders of this primitive puritanism, few authentic memorials survive; their own writings, and especially those which grew out of their personal controversies, have for the most part perished, so that we are now mainly dependent upon the one-sided accounts of their enemies for our information respecting them. Hence, in order to form a fair and candid judgment in regard to the character of these men, and the influence they exerted upon their times, it is obviously necessary to sift carefully the statements of their prejudiced and often embittered opponents, and to draw upon our knowledge of human nature, which will sometimes go a good way in supplying the lack of historical materials. That these early schismatics, as they are commonly styled, were exempt from personal frailties, or from the current errors of their day, is not to be supposed, but at the same

time we have a strong persuasion that they have not received full justice at the hands of our principal historians, and that they do not hold the place in the memory of the church, which they really deserve, for their services in stemming the incoming tide of corruption, and as faithful witnesses for the truth of Christ.

The history of the rise and progress of the earliest Puritan schism, as *commonly* given, is substantially as follows: It originated at Carthage, during the Decian persecution, and while Cyprian was pastor of the church in that city. By the advice of his friends, Cyprian was induced to seek a shelter from the fury of the storm, at a distance from Carthage. His absence from his flock afforded a fine opportunity to those who were envious of the influence which Cyprian's eloquence, energy, and piety enabled him to wield, to carry out their ambitious schemes. It was greedily seized by Novatus, a presbyter, and Felicissimus, a deacon, of the church of Carthage. These men, though guilty of the most infamous crimes, contrived to gather round themselves a party decidedly hostile to Cyprian, and in the end to establish a distinct congregation having a bishop of its own. This body of Carthaginian separatists was, however, soon merged in another secession, which took place at Rome, and is known as

The Novatian Schism. It too had its origin in the personal ambition of the man who gave name to it. During the Decian persecution, Fabian, the venerable pastor of the Roman church, had been called to seal his testimony with his blood. For more than a year the pastorate remained vacant; partly on account of the fury of the tempest beating against the followers of Jesus, and partly from the want of harmony in the church. The two prominent candidates for the vacant office were the presbyters Cornelius and Novatian.* The latter had won for himself a high reputation for his abilities, learning, eloquence, the strictness of his principles, and his unblemished life. Cornelius, however, was chosen by a small majority. Novatian, disappointed and disgusted with the result, at once took steps to form a

* It is proper to observe that Novatus of Carthage must not be confounded with Novatian at Rome.

new communion of which he should be head; he denounced his rival Cornelius in the bitterest terms for his laxity in readmitting to the fellowship of the church, the Lapsed, or those who had in the time of persecution denied the faith; and finally, having brought to Rome three ignorant country bishops, and by plying them well with wine, having converted them into ready tools, he was by these inebriated prelates ordained to the episcopate. Such is the story of Novatus and Novatian as told by a large class of historians, Papal and Protestant, who have little else to say of them than that they were noted disturbers of the peace of the church. In a word, they somehow suddenly appear upon the surface of the stream of history, are seen there for a moment, and then disappear for ever, leaving not a trace behind.

Now this schism, so far from being as insignificant as some eminent writers seem to have regarded it, was really one of the most important events in the history of the early church. As we shall presently show, the movement was by no means limited to a few localities; on the contrary, it enlisted the warm sympathies of thousands of Christians in the east and the west; it subsisted for several centuries as a distinct organization under its original name, maintaining a vigorous life; and if it did not, strictly speaking, give birth to, it at least prepared the way for other secessions from the dominant church, the influence of which can be traced more or less distinctly down to the epoch of the Reformation.

Here then is a great historical fact. In the middle of the third century the church is suddenly rent. Thousands of her members withdraw from her fellowship, and form a separate communion, known as that of the Cathari or Puritans, which survives for centuries. What were the causes of this schism? What relation did they bear to the actual life of the church in that age—what light do they cast upon her internal condition, her faith, and her forms? These questions certainly come within the sphere of history, the history which, refusing to content itself with the comparatively humble function of recording the events of the past, seeks to discover their causes and their consequences, their earliest germ and their ripened fruits. It is by the prosecution of such inquiries, that history is enabled to give forth

her loftiest lessons, and to gather from the experience of the ages that are gone, principles of the highest practical value applicable to the present day and to future generations. Most of our older ecclesiastical authors, however, in discussing these and the like topics, have unfortunately yielded an implicit deference to the authority of the Fathers, to which they were no more entitled when asserting matters of fact, than when expounding matters of faith. They seem to have looked upon it as a sort of heresy, to question the veracity of such men as Cyprian, Eusebius, Optatus, and others, when speaking of the events of their own day. In short, the so called Catholic writers having got the ear of the church, told the story of the past in their own way, illustrating it with portraits of heretics and schismatics, which too many over-credulous Protestants received as truthful pictures of the originals, though the features of most of them are to the last degree repulsive.

In the present day, the student of history is not quite so ready to take things upon trust; he demands that the testimony of contemporary witnesses, however illustrious or obscure, be sifted and compared; that they be subjected to a rigid cross-examination, and that the documents of the remote past, so far as possible, be dealt with just as we deal with those of later times.* Then, again, a much wider field is open to him from whence to gather illustrations of the tendencies of human nature sanctified and depraved. The history of the schisms of the last few centuries supplies him with important helps for the better understanding of the true character and results of those of the early church. Now the annals of schism clearly establish this position—that no man, however able, eloquent, and pious, can originate a sect having “life in itself,” on personal grounds alone. The personal contests which usually accompany, and give a certain complexion to such movements, may be the occasions, but in no proper sense are they the causes of them. For the work done by Luther, Zwingle, and their fellow reformers, by the

* Mosheim, in his *De Rebus ante Const.*, evinces a good deal of the true spirit of historical research; yet even in this able work, it is curious to observe in many places the contest between this spirit and the deference for patristic authority derived from the old school in which he was educated. Jortin, by the way, deserves more consideration than he usually gets.

Erskines in Scotland, by the Wesleys in England, a solid basis had been already laid,—a basis which was the slow growth of years. An able and ambitious churchman may, without much difficulty, establish a party within any communion; a speculative theologian may enlist a multitude of zealous advocates of his peculiar opinions; but, if we mistake not, the voice of history emphatically declares that no man simply on personal grounds can found a sect, instinct with life and energy, and maintaining a vigorous organized existence for generations. Yet such a sect was the Novatian. It spread with marvellous rapidity, and it flourished for centuries. Reasoning from analogous facts we may safely conclude, that Novatus and Novatian could never have raised a social structure of such size and solidity, unless the materials for it had been prepared long before; in other words, that they were simply the instruments of calling out and giving organic shape to sentiments which already dwelt in thousands of Christian hearts.

Neander* thinks that the schism at Carthage, A. D. 250, was the fruit of the struggle then going on between the old apostolic Presbyterianism and embryo Prelacy. Into this contest Cyprian threw himself with the utmost ardor. He was, says Hagenbach, "eine durchaus energische Natur, ein Kirchenfürst in vollen Sinn des Wortes." Cyprian belonged to the class of men who create commanding positions, and who can render any spot illustrious, by making it the centre of a world-wide influence, as Augustine made the little city of Hippo, and Calvin the little town of Geneva. Carthage was indeed already great—the ancient mistress of the sea, once the proud rival and almost the conqueror of Rome, and now the metropolis of North Africa. In such a position there was much to stimulate the ambition of the man and the bishop, and Cyprian certainly did more than any other Carthaginian pastor, before or after him, to make the name of the city famous in the annals of the church. That Cyprian was a man of sincere piety, none acquainted with his history can doubt; and his writings show that he had tolerably clear views of gospel truth. He freely expended his private for-

* Mosheim De Rebus takes essentially the same view. Schroeck, i. 301, deems it doubtful.

tune for the good of the church, and he terminated his somewhat chequered ministry by winning the crown of martyrdom. But he was an ambitious churchman, and endowed as he was with all those qualities which give dignity and influence to the leader of a party, a spotless character, a generous disregard of money, commanding eloquence, aptness for business, and untiring energy—it is not wonderful that, in the course of his comparatively short pastorate, he secured for himself a large measure of spiritual power. He was indisputably the great man of the African church in that age, and no one was more thoroughly sensible of that fact than Cyprian himself.

At this period there were two church edifices in Carthage; one of them was known as the Old (or in American phrase, the First church), of which Cyprian was the immediate pastor; the other had been built a short time before the date of the Schism, upon an eminence in the suburbs of the city, for the accommodation of the members resident in the country, hence called *Ecclesia in Monte*, or the Hill church, and was under the care of Novatus, one of the presbyters of Carthage. Usually these suburban chapels were not designed; to be independent of the old mother church, but were rather outstations for the convenience of distant members, and hence were served by the presbyters in turn. Of this Hill church, however, Novatus was sole pastor, and as such, he seems to have felt that his right to exercise episcopal authority was as perfect as that of Cyprian. Accordingly, he ordained Felicissimus as deacon in the Hill church without consulting Cyprian, or in any way recognising his right to be consulted. Struggling as Cyprian then was to build up a prelatic form of government, and to concentrate in his own hands as bishop the powers of ordination and of discipline, the conduct of Novatus must have been exceedingly distasteful to him. This act was followed by another equally offensive on the part of the deacon, who appears to have been quite as determined as Novatus to uphold the independence of the Hill church. From the retreat to which Cyprian had gone to avoid the fury of persecution, he wrote an epistle to the deacons of Carthage in regard to the distribution of the poor's fund, expecting, of course, that his directions would be obeyed by the officers of both churches. The money be-

longing to the Hill church was in the hands of Felicissimus, who sturdily repelled Cyprian's claims to interfere with the matter, except in his own congregation, and would not suffer his messengers to touch a denarius. Such was the state of affairs when Cyprian returned; but Novatus having in the meanwhile removed to Rome, left his deacon to fight the battle of independence alone. A synod was summoned for the settlement of the case, in which Cyprian being all-powerful, the deacon and his friends were condemned, but refusing to bow to the decision, they seceded from the prevailing party and elected Fortunatus bishop of the new communion. These facts fully confirm the judgment of Neander, in regard to the connexion of this schism with the contest between old Presbyterianism and the new-born Prelacy.

Gibbon observes, that if Novatus and his friend the deacon "were not the most detestable monsters of wickedness, the zeal of Cyprian must occasionally *have prevailed over his veracity.*" The former is described by him as "*rerum semper cupidus, rapacitate furibundus, arrogantia et stupore superbi tumoris inflatus—fax et ignis ad conflanda seditiois incendia, turbo et tempestas ad fidei facienda naufragia,*" with many other and more hateful qualities. Yet this picture is accepted by certain historians as faithful, because it is not to be supposed that so holy a man and martyr as Cyprian could lose his temper or utter a falsehood. Novatus certainly could not have become such a monster of depravity within a single year; if he was so bad a man, Cyprian must have been long aware of it; yet he utters not a word of censure until his prelatie schemes and claims are resisted; nay, Cyprian's own epistles show that Novatus and he had lived up to this time on very good terms.

The portrait of Felicissimus, as drawn by the same hand, is no less dark than that of Novatus; he was addicted "*ad fraudes, rapinas, adulterium;*" he was "*pecuniæ commissæ sibi fraudator, stuprator virginum, matrimoniorum multorum depopulator et corruptor.*" But when he comes to trial before the Synod, Cyprian, either moved by an ill-judged charity, or because he found it easier to accuse of crime than to make good his charges, concludes to say nothing respecting the worst of them. "*Taceo de fraudibus,*" says he, "*adulteria prætereo;*" while the "*delictum*

maximum" of the deacon was his opposition to his mandates. In view of these and similar facts which might be adduced, every candid man will admit, that Jortin had ample reason for his statements in regard to the fathers of the third, fourth, and succeeding centuries, viz. that their accounts even of the heretics of their own age must be received with a large allowance for ignorance, credulity, and prejudice, while in the case of their personal antagonists no reliance whatever can be placed upon the truthfulness of their representations. Indeed, many of the fathers of that period seem to have made it a point of conscience to blacken to the utmost the character of their opponents, and often they exhibit a kind of savage delight while tearing from the victims of their wrath the last shred of virtue, and hurling at them the most stinging epithets they could invent.

Novatian of Rome has been confounded with Novatus of Carthage, by some historians, a mistake easily accounted for by the similarity of their names, and by the fact that they were to a certain extent concerned in the same transactions. Even the bitterest enemies of the former, with the single exception of his rival Cornelius,* never ventured seriously to asperse his character; and we may safely infer from this that he was a man of exemplary life; for in what they do say of him, it is quite apparent that if they could have discovered so much as a pimple upon his face, it would, in their eyes, speedily have grown into a large and loathsome ulcer.

Of the early years of Novatian little is known beyond the fact that he was born and bred a pagan, and continued such until he had reached mature manhood. Cyprian *inferred* from his rigid principles that he had been educated in the Stoic school, and accused him of bringing its evil leaven with him into the church. If we may credit the scanty accounts respecting him that have come down to us, the earlier spiritual experience of Novatian bore some resemblance to that of Luther. Under the pressure of an apparently incurable disease he learned the folly of philosophy, the emptiness of the world, and awoke to the awful consciousness

* In a letter to Cyprian he indeed accuses him of "subtlety, perjuries, lies, a churlish and wolfish disposition," but besides being a personal enemy, Cornelius deals only in convenient generalities, which candid historians of all parties regard as the mere ebullition of spite.

of his exposure as a sinner to the wrath of God. After a protracted endurance of intense physical and mental suffering, he found in the gospel of Christ the effectual balm for his wounds. While still confined to the sick bed he was baptized by Fabian, the venerable pastor of Rome, who had formed so high an opinion of his talents, learning, and sincere piety, that he was ordained presbyter so soon as his health was re-established. He discharged the duties of this office for a number of years—historians are not agreed how many—but long enough to make full proof of his fitness for it, and to win the confidence and love of a large portion of the congregation. During the heat of the Decian persecution, he retired from Rome, but kept up in the meanwhile an active correspondence with his flock; and the eagerness with which his advice was sought by Christians of all ranks is the best proof that he held a high place in the esteem and reverence of the people.

As we have already stated, the venerable Fabian was one of the victims of the persecution, and after his decease the Roman pastorate remained vacant for more than a year. Novatian, in a letter to Cyprian written during the vacancy, says, “nondum est episcopus propter rerum et temporum difficultates constitutus,”* evidently referring the delay to the storm of persecution then raging without the church, and to the difficulties within the church both in regard to the proper person to be chosen, and to the still more important subject of the Lapsed. When the day of election came the partisans of Cornelius proved, or at least claimed to be in the majority; the friends of Novatian, however, were still resolved that he should be their pastor, as the head of an independent congregation if not as the formal successor of Fabian. Immediate steps were taken to carry out their plan, and five of the neighboring bishops came to Rome and ordained him to the pastoral charge of the new society. Novatian and his people, according to the usage of the times, despatched letters and messengers to Alexandria, Carthage, and other prominent churches in the east and west, apprising their pastors of what they had done, and asking their approval. Cornelius, of course, did the same. As the whole

* Opera Novatiani 297. Ed. Jackson, Lond. 1728.

affair presented some novel features, it was so soon as practicable brought to the notice of the Synod of Rome, by which the conduct of Novatian and his congregation were condemned, who thus found themselves reduced to the necessity either of submissively disbanding their new organization, or else of taking their stand as an independent body. They adopted the latter alternative.

Their assuming the position of a distinct sect would thus seem to have been a matter of compulsion, rather than of choice. Neither Novatian nor his people appear to have entertained the thought of seceding from the old communion of the other party; they would have been quite content to remain in their old ecclesiastical relations if allowed a reasonable freedom of opinion and action in regard to the questions then agitating the church. We may fairly infer that such was their plan from the fact of their sending letters to the other churches, and from the whole tone of Novatian's epistle to Cyprian, to the contents of which we shall presently advert. But in this as in so many other ecclesiastical movements, that saying was found true, "man proposes, but God disposes."

Of the personal history of Novatian subsequent to his separation from the dominant church no reliable accounts have come down to us. Neither the time nor the manner of his death is certainly known, though Socrates gives it as a tradition that he died a martyr for the faith of Christ. The few productions of his pen that remain to us show that he was a man of very superior intellect. His longest work is entitled "The Rule of Faith,"* as the object of it is to expound and defend the true Scriptural doctrine, and the true faith of the church respecting the being and perfections of God, and the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The last topic is largely discussed, and the treatise abounds with very acute reasonings in support of the tenet that Christ is "very God and very man," based upon the testimonies of the Old Testament. Next we have a short tract on "Jewish Meats," which was one of those pastoral epistles which he was accustomed to send to his friends at Rome, from his place of retreat during the heat of the Decian persecution. This little

* It is appended to some editions of the works of Tertullian with the title *De Trinitate*. Jerome speaks of it positively as Novatian's.

piece contains some fanciful expositions of the Mosaic law respecting clean and unclean animals, but it furnishes decisive evidence that its author clearly understood the difference between the Jewish and the Christian economies, and the nature and extent of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free. "Deus ventre non colitur," says he, "nec cibis quos Dominus dicit perire. Nam qui per escas Dominum colit, prope est ut Dominum habeat ventrem suum. Cibus, inquam, verus et sanctus et mundus est, Fides recta, immaculata Conscientia, et innocens Anima; quisquis sic pascitur, Christo convescitur, talis epulator conviva est Dei; istæ sunt epulæ quæ Angelos pascunt, istæ sunt mensæ quæ martyres faciunt," p. 275. Besides the above, there are other two epistles addressed to Cyprian, one of which was written in the name of the Roman clergy, on the vexed question of the Lapsed; its authorship is therefore uncertain, but it is ascribed to Novatian by Dupin, and is included by Jackson among his works. Dupin thus sums up the merits of the man and of his writings: "Cet auteur avoit beaucoup d'esprit, de savoir, et d'eloquence; son stile est pur, net, et poli; ses expressions choisies, ses pensées naturelles, et ses raisonnemens justes. Il est plein de citations de passages de l'écriture sainte rapporter fort à-propos, il y a même beaucoup d'ordre et de methode,—*et il parle toujours avec beaucoup de douceur et de moderation.*"

Let us now look for a moment, a little more closely, at the causes of this schism. The assertion that it originated in the personal ambition of Novatian is so obviously in conflict with all that we know of the man and the movement, that it hardly needs to be discussed. Socrates, the historian, testifies that the sect "flourished mightily" at Rome, at Alexandria, at Constantinople, and many other cities, while in certain provinces of the east, as in Phrygia, it included the great mass of the Christian population. Now mere sympathy for an individual would never have gathered round his standard such multitudes in so many cities and provinces. The more common account is that the schism arose out of the refusal of Novatian to readmit the Lapsed to the communion of the church. Tillemont (Memoire iii. 481), Romanist-like, insists that the rigid discipline of Novatian was a mere cover for his ambition, adding that he taught that the Lapsed

should be indeed exhorted to penitence, but should be refused absolution, as the church had no power to remit mortal sin. He however appends the important caveat, "at least this is what S. Pacian and S. Augustine say of him, perhaps attributing to Novatian the sentiments of his followers in after times." One might infer from this that Novatian recognised the Romish distinction of mortal and venial sin. There is not a shadow of evidence that he did so. Socrates, who, if not a member of the Novatian church, certainly had a warm affection for it, says that the sect regarded the offence of the Lapsed, or the public denial of the name of Christ, as "the sin unto death," described by John, and that consequently those who fell into it should not be again admitted into the fellowship of the faithful; they should be urged to repent of it, but at the same time should be left in the hands of God who looketh upon the heart, and could alone judge of the sincerity of their repentance. But there is no proof that the founder of the sect held even this precise tenet, which widely differs from the Romish doctrine of mortal sin.

In the epistle to Cyprian already quoted, Novatian says: "Absit enim ab ecclesia Romana vigorem suum tam profana facilitate dimittere, et nervos severitatis eversa fidei majestate dissolvere. Ubi enim poterit indulgentiæ medicinæ procedere, si etiam ipse medicus, intercepta pœnitentia indulget periculis? Si tantum modo operit vulnus, nec sinit necessaria temporis remedia obducere cicatricem? Hoc non est curare, sed, si dicere verum volumus, occidere." Then after stating that the difficulties of the subject had been much enhanced by the death of Fabian, "a man of most noble memory," he goes on to explain his own wishes. "Quamquam nobis in tam ingenti negotio placeat, quod et tû (Cyprianus) ipse tractasti; prius ecclesiæ pacem sustinendam; deinde sic collatione consiliorum cum Episcopis, Presbyteris, Diaconis, Confessoribus, pariter ac stantibus Laicis facta, Lapsorum tractare rationem." He then bespeaks the earnest prayers of his brother. "Oremus pro Lapsis ut erigantur, oremus pro stantibus, ut non ad ruinas usque tentantur." Finally, adverting to the proper behavior of the Lapsed themselves, he says, "Pulsent sane fores, sed non utique contringant. Adeant ad limen ecclesiæ, sed non ut tran-

silient. *Castrosum coelestium excubunt portis, sed armati modestia qua intelligant si desertores fuisse.*" He would have them "behold the kindness and the severity of God;" and remember that he who said "I forgave thee all that debt," also said "whoso shall deny me before men, him will I also deny;" that he who invited all to the marriage feast, also said of the man who had not on the wedding garment, "bind him hand and foot, and cast him out." Now these are neither the sentiments nor the words of the ambitious demagogue or of the fanatical disciplinarian. Indeed the whole epistle, from which we have quoted, breathes the spirit of moderation, and is evidently the production of a conscientious man, keenly alive to the evils which threatened the purity of the church, and anxious to remove them by the use of wise and gentle, yet energetic remedies.

The origin, therefore, of Novatianism or Primitive Puritanism, is to be sought not in the disappointed ambition of the man who gave name to the schism, nor in the dissensions in the Roman church in regard to the single question what should be done with the Lapsed, but in the growing corruption of the church at large, and the consequent struggles of her faithful members to resist the process of declension. At Carthage, the contest in the first instance was against an incoming prelacy; at Rome it was against laxity of discipline. We do not suppose that the Novatians were themselves wholly exempt from the errors of their times, and it is quite possible that they, like the English Puritans of later days, carried some parts of their disciplinary system to an unwarrantable extreme. But their grand design was beyond a doubt essentially the same as that for which the Puritans of Britain "resisted unto blood,"—to render broad and visible the distinction between the church and the world, and so far as human agency can go, to make the former in reality, what she is in name and by profession, a company of saints.

Accordingly we find that so soon as the news of the ejection of Novatian from the Roman church reached the other cities of the empire, multitudes in them at once arrayed themselves under his standard; while the regions which were most noted for their attachment to the pure faith and simple order of apostolic times, were precisely the localities in which the new sect most vigorously flourished. The

churches of Phrygia, for example, according to the testimony of Socrates, maintained a strictness of faith and morals closely resembling that which obtained in New England two centuries ago; these Phrygian churches, with hardly an exception, ranged themselves on the side of Novatian the instant they were made acquainted with the transactions at Rome, and they adhered to the cause of Puritanism with an undeviating steadfastness for two centuries or more. The same thing was true of the western churches; in north Italy, in the south of France, in the districts along the foot of the Alps, the regions in which the living and life-giving Christianity of apostolic times was most faithfully preached, and whose churches were least contaminated by the leaven of iniquity at work in them, the views of Novatian most widely prevailed. The political as well as spiritual power wielded by the bishops of Rome, after the union of the church and state, and the removal of the seat of empire to the banks of the Bosphorus, enabled them to crush the Puritanism of the west, or at least to compel it to seek a refuge amid the Alpine mountains; but the fact is undeniable, that for a century and a half or more, the whole of central and northern Italy abounded with flourishing Novatian churches, which ceased to exist simply because they were put down by the strong arm of ecclesiastical despotism.

The authentic annals of the Novatians during the palmy days of their existence as a distinct body, and onward until they disappear from history, have all perished. We are therefore mainly dependent for our information respecting them upon the scanty and prejudiced accounts of their principles and policy given by writers belonging to the dominant church. But scanty as these notices are, they abundantly vindicate the claim of the Novatians to the honored name of Puritans. In all the subsequent persecutions of the church, and especially in the last and bloodiest one under Diocletian, no class of Christians suffered more than they for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. So, too, amid the stormy contests between Orthodox and Arian, which arose soon after the overthrow of Paganism, and for many years convulsed the church and the empire, none exhibited a more unwavering steadfastness in defence of the vital doctrine in dispute, and none endured a

greater "fight of affliction" for their tenacious love of it, than the Novatians. In that great battle for the truth of Christ, they were in the front rank of the sacramental host; and accordingly, in the moments of Arian triumph, on their heads descended the full force of Arian vengeance. Their heroic valor in this holy war elicited from the very church against whose corruptions they had so long protested, eulogies similar to those which Sancroft and other high church prelates under James II. bestowed upon their "non-conforming brethren" who had come to their rescue in the hour of their peril. The sins of the Novatians as "schismatics," were for the moment forgotten in the admiration awakened for their virtues as Orthodox Christians.

The famous Edict of Milan, A. D. 313, by which the persecution that had raged against the church was authoritatively ended, was expressly extended to the Novatians, and placed them in common with the larger Christian body under the protection of the law. Constantine was very desirous to terminate, if possible, the long standing schism, and to include the Novatian congregations in the new arrangement which he had resolved to carry out with reference to the church at large. Whether or not they considered, as many now do, the intimate relation between the state and the church, which the emperor was prepared to establish, inconsistent with the purity and the spiritual independence of the church of Christ, we have no means to determine with absolute certainty. But their well known, jealous, perhaps we may say, extreme anxiety for a pure communion, and a strict discipline, renders it highly probable that their refusal to come under the wing of the state arose out of the conviction, that if they accepted the proffered boon it must be at the expense of freedom, and that henceforth it would be impossible to keep up a broad and visible distinction between the church and the world. Be this as it may, they declined the overtures of the emperor; they steadily refused to have any share of the wealth and the honors which Constantine showered so profusely upon the ecclesiastics of that day, and which they were so eager to secure. It was a great temptation, too great in fact to be resisted by men not governed by principle. We have no doubt, that the leading ministers of the Novatian body

would have found no serious difficulty in the way of their obtaining a comfortable position beneath the broad shadow of the tree of state, if they had chosen to make the effort, even though they had persisted in their refusal to be formally amalgamated with the self-styled Catholic church. As yet there was no venerable and powerful Establishment, with whose "might and mastery" it was dangerous to trifle, and whose pride would be deeply wounded by the admission of vulgar dissenters to her lofty platform; neither is it probable that Constantine was, at this period, the bigot to Catholicity that he afterwards became. Policy, untrammelled by conscientious principle, could have easily discovered avenues and arts by which a church stigmatized by its enemies as schismatic, might, in common with its rival, have basked in the sunshine of imperial favor.

But the Novatians neither asked the state to enrich them with princely endowments, nor to erect for them stately temples; they simply desired to be protected, and to be let alone. This was a moderate and just demand; but those who made it soon discovered to their cost, that if the church had expelled the old Paganism from the palace of the Cæsars, she had not driven out the old spirit of persecution, and that if they would not allow the emperor to befriend them in his own way, they should learn from bitter experience what it was to be counted as his enemies. Their ecclesiastical edifices and other property were transferred by an imperial edict to the established church, and the meetings of the Novatians for religious worship were, by the same authority, in various ways restrained. It must have been a strange spectacle to see a Christian government, in the first moment of its power, persecuting its Christian subjects as if they had been the vilest of heretics, and the undisguised enemies of religion. But these ancient Puritans, like their noble namesakes of a later age, "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods," and were busy only to preserve and propagate the truth of God.

This state of things lasted for nearly ten years. During a considerable part of this period, Constantine was too much occupied with political affairs to allow of his looking after the rigid enforcement of his proscriptive laws against "sectarians and non-conformists," and many of them probably were

a dead letter. But they were not rescinded until after Arianism had arisen to convulse the established church, and to give the Novatians a fresh opportunity of exhibiting their unbending orthodoxy. As we have before intimated, their conduct during the progress of that memorable controversy so emphatically vindicated the purity of their principles and character, that the hostility of the emperor and of the dominant church was very much abated. The doors of the "Catholic communion" were again thrown wide open for their admission, and earnest efforts were made to induce them to come in. When the memorable council of Nice was invoked, Acesius, the Novatian pastor of Constantinople, was expressly invited by the emperor to assist in its deliberations, an honor which was conferred upon no other sect. It is possible that Acesius attended the discussions as a spectator, but it is evident from a conversation reported by Socrates and Sozomen as having taken place between him and Constantine soon after the dissolution of the synod, that he was not a member of it. After the formal publication of the Nicene confession, the emperor asked Acesius if he agreed to it. "My prince," replied he, "I know of nothing new determined by the council. I have always understood, that from the beginning, from the very days of the apostles, the same definition of the faith has been handed down to us." "Why then," asked the emperor, "do you separate yourself from our communion?" Acesius then explained to him what had happened during the persecution by Decius, when many fell from the profession of their faith and relapsed into idolatry; and spoke of the rule which forbade the admission to the sacred mysteries of those who, after baptism, had committed a sin which the Scriptures declare to be a sin unto death. "They ought indeed," he added, "to be urged to repentance, but should not be encouraged to hope for pardon through the ministrations of the priests. They should look directly to God, who alone can judge of the sincerity of their repentance, and who alone has the power and prerogative of remitting sins." "Take a ladder, then, Acesius," replied the emperor, "and ascend alone to heaven."

The eighth canon of the council of Nice, though not very gracious in its tone, and in some measure breathing the haughty spirit of "the church as by law established," clearly

enough indicates that the venerable fathers were not without hopes of winning back the hitherto scrupulous Puritans to their communion. In this canon the conditions of union are defined. But they were again destined to be disappointed. The Novatians as a body persisted in standing aloof from the established church. It may be said, that they were prompted to act thus,—to repel the advances of brethren with whom they should have joined, and presented one unbroken phalanx against the inroads of Arian heresy, by that sectarian spirit which has often kept alive parties in the church long after the original causes of their existence had been removed. The grounds of the Novatian schism, however, were not, properly speaking, dogmatic. The views of the Nicene and Novatian fathers on the leading doctrinal points embodied in the so called Apostles', and in the Nicene creed, were essentially the same. But the reasons which led the early Novatians, after they had been thrust out of the dominant church, to take up an antagonistic position, and to found a separate communion, still existed in full force. Even ten years of relentless persecution had not eradicated from the visible body of Christ the evil leaven which had, been so long working among its wide-spread membership. These ten dismal years may have checked the process of declension, but the succeeding ten years of imperial favor and state patronage had given it a fresh impulse, rapidly developing the old tendencies to superstition and will-worship in the liturgic services of the church, and to a hierarchal prelacy with its diverse ranks of clergy in her constitution.

The isolated and antagonistic position of the Novatian church with reference to the larger body, and the total cessation of visible fellowship between them, were necessarily calculated to keep the former rooted and grounded in their original principles, and to preserve them from many of the superstitious practices prevalent in the established church. In such circumstances, men are naturally disposed to watch with the utmost vigilance a society which they have been accustomed to denounce as corrupt, in order to discover fresh grounds for their hostile attitude, and their condemnatory testimony. This supposition is exactly coincident with the scanty notices of the Novatians by the later fathers.

From these we learn that they condemned *the use of oil in baptism; prayers for the dead; and the worship of martyrs.* But we are not to imagine that their non-conformity with the dominant church was confined to these three points; though, in the absence of their own authentic records, we cannot enumerate all the particular unscriptural and superstitious usages rejected by them. Still their uncompromising opposition to the three above-named salient features of the "mystery of iniquity," is of itself sufficient to stamp them as belonging to the noble "cloud of witnesses," and to warrant their assumption of the name of Puritans. However, this is not the only proof that the Novatian communion was to a far greater degree exempt from superstitious rites and ceremonies, and included a larger share of intelligent scriptural piety than any other portion of the nominal church. We refer to the testimony of Socrates, the continuator of Eusebius.

Socrates of Constantinople was bred a lawyer, and for some years prosecuted his profession in his native city with diligence and success, but at length abandoned the bar, and addicted himself exclusively to the study of ecclesiastical history. In early life he had enjoyed the best educational advantages of the metropolis, and we have no doubt that his training as a jurist, and his practice in the courts of law, materially contributed to qualify him for the work to which in the maturity of his manhood he devoted himself, of writing the ecclesiastical annals of his age. He seems to have been a man of sincere piety, of good sound sense, who, living in a city and at a period notorious for the bigotry and violence of their ecclesiastical factions, preserved the spirit of moderation, and weighed with candor the merits and demerits of the various parties by which the church was divided. Baronius and Labbeus, following Nicephorus, peremptorily insist that Socrates was a member of the Novatian communion; but Valesius, who somewhat largely discusses the question in the preface to his edition of the history of Socrates and Sozomen, has clearly proved that they were mistaken, though he admits that the reasons of this opinion are "*nec pauca, nec leves.*" In other words, the historian recognises and faithfully depicts the various virtues of the Novatians, and on several occasions betrays not only a warm affection

for the men, with many of whom he was personally acquainted, but a decided sympathy with their principles. Thus when giving a summary of the early history of the body (iv. 24), he almost goes the length of endorsing, in so many words, the rigid discipline of Novatian in regard to the Lapsed; and expressly testifies, not only that multitudes in the east and west approved, but that they included the largest share of the holiest men and the purest churches of that day. He refers in particular to the Paphlagonians and Phrygians, and to the high standard of morals that obtained among them, and then adds the remark, "it is certainly true that they live *σωφρονεστερον* than the men of any other sect."

Of the Novatian church at Constantinople, and of its various fortunes under Orthodox and Arian emperors, Socrates supplies us with a good deal of valuable information; yet we much regret that one so competent to the task, and withal so candid, did not deem it worth his while to describe their internal organization. He has also given portraits more or less complete of the succession of pastors from the times of Constantine down to his own. Some of them were men of rare gifts as preachers and authors, while all of them were illustrious examples of primitive apostolic piety. One of them, Sisinnius, was evidently an especial favorite of our historian, who says that he wrote a large number of books, and was held in high esteem by prelates of "the church" and persons of senatorial rank for his distinguished attainments in philosophy, logic, and biblical learning, as well as for his ready wit. Though by no means puritanical in the material and style of his ordinary dress, he seems to have been a Puritan of the extremest sort in regard to his ecclesiastical vestments. The pulpit dress of that day, Socrates relates, was *black*. Sisinnius, however, was accustomed to preach in *white*. He was one day taken to task for this violation of rule by a member of "the church," who asked him, "where is it written in Scripture that a bishop should appear in a *white* garment?" "Give me first," retorted Sisinnius, "the passage in which it is said he shall wear black." His censor was, of course, silenced. "You can find no such text—but I will give my authority from Scripture; for does not Solomon exhort us, saying, let thy garment always be *white*?" Socrates quotes other illustrations

of the ready wit of Sisinnius, but we have given this one because it appears to us plainly to imply that one of the well known and distinctive principles of the Novatians was the supreme authority of Scripture as the rule of faith and manners. Else why should the churchman have demanded from the dissenter his *Scriptural* authority for his unusual dress, unless he fancied that he had a fine chance for a hit at the Puritanism which refused to observe ordinances having no other warrant than such as was derived from tradition or the church?

But the historian who records this piece of pleasantry, has supplied us with more decisive evidence of the fact, that one of the distinguishing features of the Primitive Puritans was their recognition of the Bible as the exclusive rule of faith and life. In his 5th Book there is a very remarkable chapter (22) bearing upon this point, from which we should be glad to make large extracts, if our limits allowed. It exhibits the judgment of Socrates concerning the diversity of usage that then existed in Christendom in regard to Easter, baptism, fasting, religious assemblies, and other ecclesiastical rites. Referring to the famous dispute about Easter, he says, "Now it seems to me that in this matter neither the ancients nor the moderns have sufficiently considered, that when the Jewish law was superseded by the Christian worship, the observance of the Mosaic ceremonies entirely ceased. It is most clearly demonstrable, not only that there is no law of Christ which permits Christians to judaize—*ἰουδαίζειν*—but that the apostle expressly forbids them to do so. Certainly the apostles never imposed upon those to whom they preached, such a yoke of bondage, as to require them to keep Easter and other festivals. *But as men are very fond of such days*, because they bring rest from daily toil—*διὰ τὸ ἀνίστασθαι τῶν πόνων ἐν αὐταῖς*—they were gradually established by the force of custom. So it was with Easter, the observance of which gradually became a general custom—it was ordained by none of the apostles, but grew up *εἰς ἔθους*." He then gives an extended description of the variety of usage that obtained in the church; in the course of which he remarks that, "no religious sect has the same ceremonies in their worship; even those who hold the same doctrines and the same faith differ widely among themselves

in their religious rites. Among all sects (the context shows that he includes the "Catholics") you will hardly find two churches whose modes of prayer are identical." Adverting to the miserable disputes then so common about times and forms of worship, he quotes the decrees of the apostolic synod at Jerusalem, and adds, "nowadays there are many who, despising these apostolic laws, look upon whoredom as a very small matter, yet fight for their festivals *ὡς περὶ ψυχῆς*." Finally he comes to the wise conclusion that, "as no one can pretend to bring a law of Christ, or of his Apostles, imposing these and the like rites and ceremonies upon Christians, every man should be left free to follow the dictates of his own conscience; to determine for himself whether he will receive or reject them, and that none should be compelled to observe them through necessity or fear."

Socrates relates, that among the Novatians this rule obtained in regard to the festival of Easter. It was formally decided by one of their synods, that as the Scriptures laid down no rule on this subject, the church had no right to enact one; that it belonged to the class of "things indifferent," and that therefore each congregation was entitled to fix for itself the time of keeping Easter; or if its members so pleased, not to keep it at all. In the chapter from which we have quoted, the historian claims to speak for himself alone; to give his own private sentiments on the topics discussed in it; but there can be no doubt that he also gave utterance to the distinctive opinions of the Puritanism of that age—opinions which it is quite probable he had himself imbibed from his daily intercourse with these Bible-loving and intelligent Christians. The reason why the overtures for union made by the Nicene fathers failed, now becomes quite obvious. The hearty amalgamation of two such bodies was impossible; for their foundation principles were as antagonistic as light and darkness. Such is the teaching of the church history of all ages. We may bring the representatives of these principles into the same visible society, or into one ecclesiastical establishment, like that of England, but after all, their unity is mere conformity. Their only common bond is the chain that binds them to the state. The church of England at the Reformation tried to bring these opposite principles into harmony, and for a time thought she had succeeded,

but she speedily discovered that, like the wife of Isaac, she had "two nations in her womb, and that two manner of people should be separated from her bowels." Perhaps we may add, that before her career is fully run, she may find the latter part of the above prediction no less applicable to her case—"the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger."

But the limits of this article forbid our prosecuting the subject further for the present. Enough, we apprehend, has been said to convince the candid reader that those who in the earlier ages of the church bore the name of Puritans, were not undeserving of the appellation; that the Primitive Puritanism and the Puritanism of later times have many features in common. There were other bodies of Christians that came into existence at a later period, and which occupying essentially the same stand-point with the Novatians, were equally entitled to the name of Puritans—such as the Luciferians, the Ærians, the Paulicians, and others. Their history is full of interest, and deserves to be better known than it is. But the Novatians were the first to win and wear the appellation; they were the earliest organized body that appears in the long line of faithful witnesses against the corruptions of the nominal church: That this line reaches back to those early ages, it is impossible to doubt. "The Christian church," says Monastier,* "did not quit the narrow path of sound doctrine, the purity and simplicity of her hidden life with Christ, without encountering a protracted resistance on the part of her sound members. Who, he adds, can recount all the efforts put forth to turn aside so great a misfortune, to prevent so sad a shipwreck?" The earthly records of the struggles and sufferings of these noble bands of faithful men among the faithless, have long since perished; only a few isolated fragments survive, and it is therefore impossible to do full justice to their memory, by showing how much after generations owe to their resistance against the incoming tide of worldliness and superstition. Still we may well believe, that the influence of a body like the Novatian, so widely diffused, including such multitudes

* Histoire de l'Eglise Vaudoise, i. 16.

of intelligent Christians, with not a few eloquent preachers and able authors, a body untrammelled by state control, except as it was the object of proscriptive laws, and boldly displaying a banner because of Truth and Purity, must have been powerful, at least in particular localities, in the way of impeding the onward course of a declining church. They, unquestionably, were the persons of whom Celestine of Rome, about the middle of the fifth century, so bitterly complains as "the troublers of Israel" in North Italy. The patriarchs of Alexandria were vexed by multitudes of "troublers" of the same sort, and continued to be down to the memorable epoch when churchmen and schismatics were swept away by the overflowing flood of the Saracen invasion. They could not stay the development of the mystery of iniquity, nor prevent the appearance of the Man of Sin in the temple of God, but in ages of festering corruption they kept their own garments clean, they fought a good fight, and gained for themselves imperishable renown.

ART. VII.—THE RESURRECTION; THE CONFLAGRATION;
THE JUDGMENT.

A correspondent addresses to us the following inquiries, to which, as they are of interest to our readers generally, we reply through the Journal.

1. "How do you reconcile Daniel's prophecy, chap. xii. 2, with the resurrection of the saints at the beginning, and of the wicked at the close of the millennial period?"

2. "Regarding as I do the language of 2 Peter iii. 4-13 as literal throughout, I must believe all the wicked then living to be doomed to destruction (see a kindred passage, 2 Thess. i. 8, 9), and the heavens and earth to be subjected to purification by fire so as to become a fit abode for Christ and his glorified saints. Now the wicked being slain, and the risen and changed saints not being subject to the law of marriage (Matt. xxii. 30), and therefore not propagating their species, whence shall come those nations over whom