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ARTICLE I.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE PATRIARCHS AND MOSES.

The Church considered in this sketch is the Church visible, that community which consists of all who "profess the true religion, together with their children."

No man, with a spark of liberal curiosity, can contemplate this community as it now exists amongst men, without desiring to know something of its history and its origin. The same motive, if no higher, which induced the first explorer to ascend from the delta of the Mississippi to the springs from which it flows, would induce the student of man to trace the course of that institution which has, in such a marked degree, moulded the character and fixed the destiny of so large a portion of our race. And if, like the adventurous travellers who for centuries sought for the sources of the Nile, the inquirer should be again and again baffled in his researches, the disappointment may serve as a wholesome discipline for his faith and patience, if he be a believer in God, and prepare him for the glorious discovery that the Church took its rise not in any feeble fountains of earth, but in the vast "nyanza," or ocean, rather, of the bosom of God; that it is the unfolding of "the economy of the mystery which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God," the demonstration "to princi-

palities and powers in heavenly places" of the "manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. iii. 9, 11.)

Almost the only account, certainly the only authentic account, which we have of the Church for forty centuries. is contained in the Sacred Scriptures. This account is not only authentic, but divine; a record made by God himself, who instituted the Church, and governed and directed it by his special and extraordinary providence. No ancient institution, therefore, can be compared to this, in the trustworthiness of its history, and in the materials it affords for a clear and full knowledge of the changes and vicissitudes, both of form and fortune, through which it has passed along the track of ages.

This history may be conveniently divided into four periods. I. Its patriarchal and catholic form, from the giving of the first promise of salvation to the time of Abraham, say from B. C. 4004—2000. II. Its patriarchal and "particularistic" form, from Abraham to the time of David, say from B. C. 2000—1000. III. Its monarchical or kingly and particularistic form, from David to Christ, say from B. C. 1000—A. D. 35. IV. Its Christian and catholic form, from A. D. 35 to the second advent of the Saviour. We propose at present to consider the Church only in the first two of these periods.

PERIOD I., B. C. 4004—2000.

The form of the Church in this period is called "patriarchal," because it had no visible organisation or government distinct from that of the family. The head of the family was "*rex sacerdosque.*" It is called "catholic" or "universal," because the blessings of salvation were not, by any act of God, confined to a particular family or line. We say by any act of God; for it is only too evident that Cain, in the family of Adam, by a voluntary apostasy, separated himself from God and renounced his interest in the proto-evangelium and in the suffering of the woman's seed by which the serpent's head was to be crushed; and that his posterity, down to their total destruction by the flood, walked in his steps.

During this period the Church had, so far as appears from the

record, no distinct organisation. Those who "professed the true religion" seem to have been known rather as a *party* than as a *separate community*. We are told (Gen. iv. 26) that in the days of Enos, "men began to call upon the name of the Lord," or to "call themselves by the name of the Lord," or to "call (upon men) by the name of the Lord"—for all these renderings of the text have been proposed—which statement seems to imply some formal profession of faith in God on the part of a portion of the race. According to the first-named rendering, nothing more might seem to be meant than formal assemblies of the worshippers of God, in opposition to the assemblies of the wicked. According to the second interpretation, the true worshippers assumed the name of "the Lord's people;" or, as they seem to be denominated in the 6th chapter, "the sons of God," in opposition to the wicked and apostate, who desired to be recognised in no higher relation than that of "the children of men." According to the third interpretation, the professors of the true religion began to teach or preach righteousness in the name of the Lord. Enos, in this view, was the first, as Noah was the eighth "preacher of righteousness." (See 2 Pet. ii. 5, and Owen on Heb. xi. 7.) But whatever interpretation we adopt, there is no necessity for supposing a separate organisation of God's people, such as we now recognise in the Church. There is only a clear recognition of spiritual *relations*, and of the superiority of these relations to those which obtain between man and man, and which are of the earth, earthy.

The rule of faith, in this period, was unwritten and very short. So far as the record informs us, it consisted only of the first promise (Gen. iii. 15), and the rule of duty was the remnant of the law written on the heart. Perhaps the institution of bloody sacrifices may have served, in connexion with the promise, the purpose of a fuller revelation in words, as the judgments of God upon sinners, in the course of his providence, served the purpose of a clearer revelation of law. The revelation, however, though short, was comprehensive, embracing the essential features of the plan of salvation. It was the germ of the whole subsequent revelation. Nothing *essential* was ever added afterwards. It was sufficient, though incomplete. It had the "*perfectio partium*,"

though not the "*perfectio graduum.*" And may not the same be said, in a certain sense, of the revelation which *we* have? But it would not be safe to conclude that the brief notices of revealed truth contained in Genesis, tell us all that the first men knew of God and redemption. The purpose of revelation in the Pentateuch is not to satisfy our curiosity, but only to connect the different stages of the history of redemption.

The worship of the Church in this period was exceedingly simple, for it was a *catholic* dispensation of religion. Prayer and sacrifice and the preaching already mentioned—whatever that was—constitute all of which the record informs us. Of sacraments, in our present ecclesiastical sense of the word, we find no trace. There is some trace, in the beginning, of a *sacred place* (Gen. iv. 16), but there is no evidence of any such thing being necessary to the patriarchal worship. The patriarchs seem to have built altars anywhere. Nor is there any trace of a stated symbolical worship, beyond the offering of sacrifice. This negative fact is interesting in connexion with the positive statement of Scripture, that there were preachers of righteousness in this period. We are forced to the inference that instruction in religion was given more by words than by symbols, a feature eminently characteristic of the latest Christian and catholic dispensation of religion, and a feature which we should not expect to find in the infancy of the Church and of the race.

Now, what was the life which these elements of the Church combined to produce? What was its actual faith? How much of the knowledge contained in the revelation of that era, and unfolded in the worship, entered into the living faith of the people of God? In answering this question, we should guard against a very natural illusion, springing from the possession, on our part, of a clearer objective revelation. The first impression made upon one who goes from a brilliantly illuminated room into the open air at night, is an impression of total darkness, although the stars may be shining bright. But to one who has been all the time out of doors, the light of the stars has been sufficient to guide him; and as darkness reveals worlds of light which are never seen by day, the advantage, upon the whole,

may not be in favor of him who has the most objective light. Again, vision depends not upon the objective light only, but upon the condition of the eye. A "single" eye may see more in twilight than an eye which is not single in the blaze of a meridian sun. Who will venture to say that Enoch did not see more in the few promises that he had, than many believers now see in the whole gospel now spread out before them? Surely he must have had a very clear understanding of heavenly mysteries, who could so walk with God by faith as to be accounted fit to escape the stroke of death, and to ascend, perhaps, like Elijah of a later age, to the bosom of God, in a chariot of fire. In one sense, faith has an advantage in a darkness which is inevitable, and not self-imposed. It comes by hearing; and as the sense of hearing often acquires extraordinary sensibility and acuteness in the absence of the power of sight, so the faintest whispers of these primeval revelations may have been more audible to those ancient worthies than the trumpet and thunders of Sinai, or the charming strains of prophets and apostles to men of a later dispensation, but of duller ears.

It is also worthy of consideration, whether there may not have been something in the mode of apprehending truth, which had a natural tendency to give this truth a greater power of moving the heart and of controlling the life. There is a vivacity and freshness, a power to impress and move, in the conceptions of childhood, which we do not find in those of riper years. We are often tempted to wish that we could return to the period of childhood, and look upon the objects which we now look upon with the eyes of a child. And it is characteristic of minds of the very highest order that they *do* thus contemplate nature and the works of God. He who would enter into the kingdom of nature, says Bacon, must, like him who would enter into the kingdom of heaven, become a little child. May there not have been something childlike in the mode of seeing truth in the infancy of the Church, which created an enthusiasm and imparted a stimulus, which it is difficult for us, save in a few favored moments, even to conceive? There was a rapture, no doubt, in the flights of

Enoch's childlike faith, not only as far removed from the noisy mirth of the children of Cain as his life of simple walking with God from their cunning study of nature with the view of living without God, but much beyond the rapture of the most favored saints, in their most favored moments, under the fuller dispensation of the gospel. If it be said that Enoch's was a peculiar case, still it must be admitted to be a case belonging to a period of very partial objective revelation. The Spirit of God strove with sinners as they listened to the preachers of righteousness. (Gen. vi. 3.) How much more mightily did he work in the elders who obtained a good report! We find similar phenomena now among illiterate Christians who have neither the time nor the opportunity for the study of the Word. Who has not been astonished at the depth and clearness of the knowledge of the plan of salvation exhibited by some of this class? Whence have they this wisdom, having never learned? The only answer is, *from the Spirit.*

What the more enlightened of these elders had learned for themselves, they could communicate to others. The word of God is *seed*. It falls into the mind and germinates and brings forth fruit: some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold, according to the soil. This fruit becomes seed in its turn, and, falling into other soil, brings forth fruit again, and so on forever. At each remove from the primary seed, and with each change of soil, the product is modified, indeed, but retains still the original type or form; wheat is still wheat. Stranger still, the primary product is not always the best. The secondary, or even a more remote product, may conform with greater exactness to the type than the primary, because it is the product of a soil more congenial with the nature of the seed, or because other external conditions of growth have been more favorable. Hence we may understand how, in an Enoch or a Noah, the seed of the original promise may have expanded into a noble tree, laden with fruit and bending its branches within the reach of the masses of inferior men; and these inferior men might, in their turn, become fruitful soil for the seed, which, in its original form, would, perhaps, never have sprung up. This, perhaps, was one reason why God ap-

pointed "preachers of righteousness" then, as it is, no doubt, one reason why he has his preachers of righteousness now. This is the main reason, no doubt, why the revelation, as we have it, has been given through so many ages and in so many forms—"at sundry times and in divers manners." What does not strike in one form strikes in another. Paul is better adapted to arrest the thought of one man, John of another, Peter of another; or each of these, in his turn, may be best suited to the condition of the same man in the varying states of feeling or of thought. The thought of one age, in order to become the thought of all ages, must be capable of *translation*. He is the most successful preacher who, other things being equal, has his own mind most thoroughly saturated with the truth of God, and is best able to translate it into the modes of thought and speech current in his time.

It does not follow, therefore, that the theology of this period was meagre, because the bulk of the rule of faith was small. The whole Bible, as we now have it, is small in comparison with the enormous mass of literature to which it has given rise, in the form of exegetical, historical, and dogmatical theology. Men lived longer then than they do now; and if the spoken commentaries upon Gen. iii. 15, of an Enoch, had been recorded and transmitted, the ponderous folios of the Fathers, or of the voluminous theologians of the seventeenth century, might appear a mere trifle in the comparison. We may form some conception of the thinking of these ancient times, as well as of the style in which the results of that thinking were conveyed, from the ancient book of Job. Whatever theory we may adopt concerning the *historical* character of this book, it is certain that it belonged to the canon of the Jews, and that its canonical authority was affirmed by the Saviour, and therefore that it does not violate the laws of verisimilitude in its representations. Let us then cease to estimate the volume of patriarchal theology by what is actually recorded of divine revelation. This revelation fell into a virgin soil, and was fruitful. There were some deep musings in the minds of these ancient worthies as they sat in their tent-doors, or as they reclined upon the earth, in the midst of their flocks, and

gazed upon the star-spangled vault of heaven. We are apt to confound the *march of mind* with the *progress of knowledge*: and with respect to certain branches of knowledge, the present generation is unquestionably in advance of that ancient generation we have been considering, and indeed of all past generations. But in those departments of inquiry, in which all the facts were before the minds of the earliest thinkers of the race as fully as they can be before ours, in those branches in which all the materials and instruments of knowledge are within the man himself, and not in nature without, the difference is not so great. Observation was then confined to the soul within, and its relations to its Creator, and the great problems of the origin and destiny of man were studied with an attention undistracted by the bustle and running to and fro, which characterise an age of *material* progress. "Aristotle," says South, "was but the rubbish of an Adam;" and how little advance has been made beyond Aristotle, even in this boasted age, in many fields of thought; yet it is not improbable that there were some before the flood, of whose philosophy of man the very best of Aristotle's is only a sort of reminiscence.

We recur now to the question touching the living faith of the people of God in this period; and this is only a question as to how much, with the illumination of the Spirit, could be legitimately gotten out of the proto-evangelium. In addition to what has been said before, it may be observed that they were fully warranted in believing that the victory of the serpent would be no victory in the end, but would be turned into defeat; or, in other words, that what man had lost by yielding to the suggestions of the tempter, would be restored by means of the very nature which had lost it, and by the suffering of that nature. Now, what had man lost? He had lost the favor of God, the image of God, and consequently communion with God, and that right of dominion over the earth which could only exist while he bore the image of God and continued in full communion with him. The dominion was to be restored, and of course, in order thereunto, the image and the favor of God. This may be called the hope of the Church of that era.

It may help us to form an idea of this dominion or kingdom, if we consider what the political condition of the human race would probably have been, if Adam had not sinned. There can be little doubt upon this point to any one acquainted with the history of man. The patriarchal government has been emphatically *the* government of man in some form or other. It is the least artificial of all kinds of administration, and that to which all men are subject, by necessity of nature, in their infancy. The refined and complicated politics of modern times, the elaborate paper or parchment platforms which the sagacity of statesmen has invented, are felt to be intensely artificial, and have been found exceedingly difficult, if not altogether impossible, to maintain. The tendency has constantly been to concentrate the power of rule in the person of one man, who is to be regarded as the "father of his people." The most extensive empire now on earth, is an empire of this sort. We allude, of course, to China. The tendency to empires is natural to man; and it cannot be regarded, in itself, as a fruit of man's apostasy and a consequence of the ruin of his nature. It is rather the attempt to recover a lost inheritance. Man shows his utter moral ruin in the kind of dominion he seeks, and in the spirit in which he exercises his power, as also in the means by which he endeavors to establish and maintain his dominion. He endeavors to establish a dominion of *force*, and rules with the spirit of a *beast*, without God and against God. If Adam had stood the trial, he would doubtless have been the head of his race forever, a universal king. He would have been the priest, also, of the whole race, so far as such an office might have been either necessary or possible to a race without sin. It is not needful to suppose that in such an empire no distinction would have been made between the civil and religious relations of men; between the relations of man to man, and the relations of man to God. This distinction could not but be perceived, and might have been observed in practice; but Adam would have been the head under God in both respects. Reason would have had full scope in temporal affairs, while in all man's intercourse with God, he would have been guided, helped, elevated by ever-growing revelations of the glory and blessedness

of his Creator. His chief and highest end, *de facto* as well as *de jure*, would have been to glorify and enjoy the Author of his being; and all temporal works or joys would have been, and would have been felt to be, subordinate to this chief and highest end. There would be no occasion for the exercise of *force*. The loyalty of the heart would have been perfect, not external and professed merely. The government would have been one of direction rather than that of coercion. All its subjects desire to glorify God, and to bless one another; they only need to be instructed how to do it, how to manifest the love which, by the terms of the supposition, pervades all their hearts. In short, the dominion of man would have been a *theocracy*, a government in which God would have been the acknowledged and real Ruler, the all-disposing Lord and the all-comprehending Good, exercising his authority and communicating his blessings through a visible Head and Representative. Some very imperfect shadow of this theocracy may have been seen in the posterity of Seth, during Adam's life, nearly a millennium.

Now the fall of man ruined all these prospects; and if there had been no gracious promise of recovery given, no government could ever have existed on earth but one of force, with mailed hand restraining the transgressor or hurling him to destruction. This is the kind of rule suited to an apostate earth, where all are born sinners, with a perpetual inclination to evil and evil only. But a promise *was* given of a kingdom or reign of *Heaven*, a reign of God on earth in man; a restoration of the dominion originally given to man; a restoration to be achieved by the destruction of the works of the serpent. This was the hope of the antediluvian fathers, as they testified and struggled against the Cainites who were carrying it with a high hand, proclaiming that might was right, and filling the earth with "violence." This was the hope which expressed itself in the sublime prophecy of Enoch, preserved to us in Jude's Epistle, concerning the vengeance of God upon them who destroy the earth. They may not have recognised in the promise of the woman's seed, the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, or a theocracy in which the King should be both God and man in one person forever.

This revelation was probably reserved for a later period. But undoubtedly they looked for a universal reign and triumph of righteousness among men, to be brought about, in some strange way, by the weakness and suffering of the righteous. They could see it written in the very terms of the promise, that the right should conquer, and that the right should conquer *as right*, and therefore must conquer not by might, but by weakness and suffering.

One great example of God's vengeance upon the seed of the serpent, executed for the salvation of the woman's seed, was given in this period. The cause of the devil was ruined for a time by the deluge. The prophecy of Enoch received its first fulfilment, and a judicial discrimination was made between the righteous and the wicked, which was a new prophecy *in act* of the final discrimination and of the utter overthrow of the serpent's kingdom. Thus the faith of the righteous was increased and confirmed in the proto-evangelium; and it was signally demonstrated that it is not a vain thing to serve the Lord.

Another example, of a different sort, yet bearing upon the same end, was given after the flood, in the defeat of the scheme of the Babel builders. These men were the legitimate successors of the Cainites in spirit (compare Gen. iv. 16, 17, with xi. 4), building a city in anticipation of the city which God intended to build (Heb. xi. 10-16; xii. 22; xiii. 14; Rev. xxi. 2, 10-27), and so renouncing their interest in God as the covenant God of his people. Their language was, "Our tongue is our own; who is Lord over us?" so showing itself to be a tongue speaking proud things and exalting itself against the heavens; a tongue set on fire of hell, and setting on fire the whole course of nature. "Let us make ourselves a *name*;" a name which shall represent as much as the name of God, an all-disposing Sovereignty and an all-comprehending Good. (Compare the language of Nebuchadnezzar in Babel Redivivus, in Dan. iv., 30, and that of Babylon the Mystical; again, in Rev. xiii. 5; xviii. 7; see also Rev. xiii. 18, for the signification of the *name*, and compare xix. 16. The name of Babel is only, after all its pretensions, three 6s, not a 7, the number of God.) Here the spirit of the world, of heathen-

ism, (which is the worship of the creature, and specially of *man*,) of the kingdom of the dragon, comes out in an audacious form, and its defeat is a pledge and earnest of the final defeat, when all languages (see Dan. iii. 7, 29; Rev. xiii. 7; xvii. 15) shall unite in the praise of Christ, and in swearing to his name; when the tongue shall no more be set on fire of hell to blaspheme God and slander his King and his saints, as well as to glorify man and his works; but shall be set on fire of heaven, to show forth the wonderful works of God. (See the pledge and earnest of the glorious consummation, in Acts ii. 1-11.) Then, once more, shall the earth be "of one language and of one speech," and the Lord shall be King over all the earth. "In that day shall there be one Lord, and his *name* one." (See Zech. xiv. 9, and compare Zeph. iii. 8, 9.) "For then," saith the Lord, (Zeph. iii. 9) "will I turn to the people a *pure language*, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."*

PERIOD II., B. C. 2000—1000.

The Church is still patriarchal in its form, but no longer catholic. A hint had been given of the coming change in the prophecy of Noah, concerning the history of his sons. Canaan seems there to be entirely shut out from covenanted mercy, and Japheth is represented as partaking of it only after it had been first and specially deposited in the line of Shem. And here let it be noted, once for all, that the changes in the forms of the Church are never abrupt or violent. Intimations are given before hand that the change is coming; and after it is come, the dispensation which is passing away, is suffered to overlap that which is coming in; so that no rude shock is given to the habits or the hopes of the people of God. Thus, besides the instance before us, in which Noah's prophecy went before, and Melchizedek appears afterwards to show that the Adamic or Noachian

*"It was the opinion of Zoroaster, the founder of the Magian sect, that the earth, after the general dissolution and destruction of Ahriman, (the evil principle) would all be a plain and make one city, wherein men would live together in a happy state, and all use '*one language*.'"—*Plutarch De Isid. et Osir. apud Russell's Connection of Sac. and Prof. Hist.*, Vol. I., p. 78, note.

dispensation still bore good fruit, we have the "particularistic" dispensation of Abraham and Moses overlapping the catholic dispensation of the Gospel. (See Acts, *passim*.)

Up to the flood, the true religion had been found, in point of fact, only in a particular line. The line of Cain had repudiated its interest in God and in the promise of the woman's seed, but had not been deprived of it by any formal constitution of God. Those who waited for the promised salvation were found in the line of Seth. After the flood, all men were, of course, of the race of Noah, and the same proneness to go astray from God was exhibited as before. The Babel-builders were the successors of the Cainites in spirit and temper, renouncing God as their all-disposing Lord and their all-comprehending Good, substituting their own will in the place of his, and the combined resources of man for the fulness of God, as their satisfying portion. The tendency to apostasy and idolatry was desperate and universal. Speaking after the manner of men, the only hope for the preservation of the true religion seemed to be in the segregation of some one family from the mass, in making this family the depository of the promise, and in confirming the promise by some visible sign and seal, which might be at once a remembrance of the faithfulness of God and of the obligation of man.

Accordingly, we find the family of Abraham thus separated from the mass, and a formal covenant made with him on the part of God, and confirmed by the sign and seal of circumcision. We say a covenant, for it seems to us to be refining too much, as Dr. Mason does (*Essays on the Church*), to suppose two covenants, in one of which temporal blessings are promised, and in the other spiritual. The fifteenth and seventeenth chapters of Genesis record, not the ratification of two covenants, but two ratifications of the same covenant. If it be asked, Why two distinct ratifications of the same covenant? the answer may be found, perhaps, in the use which Paul makes of the history in his Epistles. A careful examination of the passages will show that, in illustrating the nature of faith, the organon by which our justification is accomplished and our communion with God maintained, and in adducing for this purpose the "Father of all them that believe,"

he refers mainly to that part of the history which precedes the institution of circumcision, and very specially to the incidents of the fifteenth chapter of Genesis. Now the reason of this is obvious. In the fifteenth chapter the patriarch is almost wholly passive, a passive recipient of promises. The covenant here is a covenant rather in the sense of a dispensation of promises given by one party and received by the other, than in the sense a contract involving *mutual* stipulations and engagements. We have, indeed, the usual ceremonies for ratifying a covenant, but God alone (in his symbol) passes between the parts of the slain victim. So far as the patriarch is active, his activity is ministerial mainly; it is the activity of an attendant and a servant, rather than of a contracting party. But as to the promise, God gives; Abraham receives by faith. Hence the frequency with which Paul refers to these incidents, when his purpose is to illustrate the great truth that righteousness comes by believing, and not by doing. It is here, perhaps, we are to find the explanation of that text in the third of Galatians, which has been for ages the *crux interpretum*, "a Mediator is not of one, but God is one"; there was no need of a Mediator here, for there was but one God, and the seed to whom the promise was primarily made, was one with God. In the *covenant of redemption*, there was no Mediator, for the high contracting parties were God the Father and God the Son, the Seed (compare John i. 1); in the *covenant of grace*, God the Son and Seed becomes the Mediator. In a word, the promise is made sure to Abraham and all his seed by the fact that it is absolutely unconditional and free. Under the Abrahamic dispensation, therefore, a great advance is made in revealing the nature of the promise, the nature of the means by which the promise is made sure to all the elect, and the nature of the faith of the elect. "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness;" *i. e.*, as the apostle explains, his faith is reckoned to him as the means (instrumental) of obtaining the righteousness of God.

In the seventeenth chapter we find the covenant ratified again, and ratified now in a manner which makes the agency of Abraham, as a contracting party, conspicuous. A seal is ordained,

not in the heavens above, like the bow in the cloud in the covenant with Noah, nor in nature around, like the tree of life in the covenant with Adam; but in his own body and in the bodies of his seed; a *sacramental* seal, not an arbitrary or conventional sign, and therefore a seal which might subserve and was designed to subserve the double purpose of confirming the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promise, and of confirming the faithfulness of Abraham and his seed in fulfilling their vows to be the Lord's. He promised to be their God and they vowed to be his people.

Again: this new dispensation of religion was distinguished by a new development of the doctrine of the Church. The Church had not yet become clearly distinct from the other fundamental forms of human society. The State does, indeed, seem to have emerged in the line of Cain, where there was no Church; but in the line of Seth, the Church was still confounded if not identified with the family. Now, however, a line is drawn within the sphere of the family itself, by which those who are in covenant with God are separated from those who are without. All of Abraham's descendants except those who were in the line of Isaac, are excluded from the Church visible. This is the reason why the writers of the New Testament make so much of the Abrahamic covenant in connexion with the doctrine of a Church visible, and go no farther back in the history of the race.

Another very important point in the constitution of the Church visible established by the Abrahamic covenant was the membership of infants. This may be said to have been implied in previous covenants with man, in the Adamic and the Noachian, and seems to grow, almost of necessity, out of the constitution of the family as the unit of society; but it is articulately announced in the covenant with Abraham. As this covenant is perpetual, according to the statements and reasonings of Paul, in the third of Galatians and the eleventh of Romans; and this feature of the covenant has never been repealed, the conclusion is inevitable that the infant seed of believers are still to be recognised as members of the Church visible. The conclusion, we repeat, is inevitable, if the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant be conceded, and no act repealing the membership of infants can be alleged.

As to the faith of the Church in this period, it may be observed that, in consequence of the fuller revelations to Abraham, the people of God had clearer views upon some points of theology than they had before. A few of these may be mentioned: 1. That the original promise of the woman's seed should be fulfilled in the line of Abraham, more definitely in the line of Isaac, more definitely still in the line of Jacob; and in the last days of Jacob, he announced by the Spirit of prophecy that the great salvation was to be expected in the line of his son Judah; and further, in this last prophecy, the promise points out more clearly than ever before, *one person* as the seed, by way of eminence. It is to Shiloh that the people shall gather, or be obedient. The kingly or monarchical form of the body of the seed is also clearly hinted at. 2. That this promise is the promise of a great work to be done, a work so great that divine power alone can accomplish it. Along with the renewal of the promise is the revelation that it shall be fulfilled in the seed of Abraham himself. This could not be without a special and supernatural work of God. Incredible it seemed to the patriarch, even at the first announcement of it; and yet the birth of Isaac was yet longer delayed, in order to make it all the more evident that the seed was, as it were, created or supernaturally produced. The birth of Isaac was a shadow of that greater birth which should come to pass by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of a virgin, and a shadow also of the birth which takes place in the soul of every man who enters into the kingdom of God. Salvation is not reformation brought about by argument and persuasion, but the communication of life to the soul which "is not." 3. That the suffering of the woman's seed should be that of a victim offered in sacrifice. This was the great lesson impressed upon Abraham and Isaac by the scene of the intended sacrifice of "the only begotten." In the mount of the Lord it was seen, and should be seen. Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad. 4. That the inheritance should be restored: not the lost Eden, indeed, but a real outward inheritance, which should combine all that was beautiful in a garden, with all that was strong and splendid in a city, "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is

God." (Heb. xi.; Gal. iii.) 5. That as in all God was the worker, so he was sovereign in all. How strikingly does this come out in Abraham's own household, and then still more in Isaac's! (Compare Rom. ix. 11-13.) As all was pure grace, so all was pure sovereignty.

As to the worship of the Church, it was essentially the same until Moses as it had been before, with the exception of the sacrament of circumcision.

The Mosaic Dispensation under the form of a Commonwealth.

The body of Abraham's chosen seed has now grown into a nation, and needs new revelations and a new form. The following are some of the features which distinguish the Church visible in this period of its history:

1. It remains *particularistic*, consisting of the chosen portion of Abraham's family in the line of Isaac and Jacob, and this only, in covenant with God. Provision was made indeed for the reception and incorporation of Gentiles; but they must first be circumcised and become Hebrews.

2. There is an enlargement of the revelation of the promise and a fuller interpretation of the covenant. The idea of *redemption by blood* comes out more fully, and a special sub-covenant is made by God with the people, to bring out this idea more fully.

"As before he called upon Abraham to enter into an instrument with him, by an external act, affixing his seal thereto, and saying, 'This is my covenant: every male shall be circumcised, and it shall be a token between me and you;' so now, appointing the shedding and sprinkling of blood, he declares 'The blood shall be to you for a token.' This, therefore, is a covenant of a sacramental nature; and, after the method of the former covenant, a seal is appointed to be affixed thereto, which seal itself is found to be a symbol of all the great truths and blessings stipulated in the instrument.

"Looking backward, and comparing this with the previous covenants of Jehovah, we shall find this to embrace and bring out more clearly the truths and blessings of those that precede it. The enmity and struggle between the two seeds of his Eden covenant here stand forth strongly in the hostility of Egypt to Jehovah, and cruelty to his chosen: the bruising of the heel, in the sufferings endured by the chosen seed; and the bruising of the head, in the overwhelming judgments upon Pharaoh. The theology of the sacrifice by blood, revealed in Eden, now reappears

in the blood of the lamb slain and sprinkled. The promise of the covenant with Noah, securing the descent of the blessing to the line of Shem, here appears in the body of his descendants selected as special objects of divine favor. The provisions of the charter-covenant with Abraham, organising the descendants of Israel as a visible Church, here appear as actually fulfilled, in not only a vast body of people, but that body organised as the congregation to which Moses speaks, and that, too, with its elders already executing their office of rule; to whom he came at first with his credentials from Jehovah, and to whom, as representing the congregation, he now repeats the command of Jehovah."—*Robinson's Disc. of Redemption*, pp. 102, 103.

We are not to think of Israel, therefore, as an ordinary nation in political bondage, throwing off the yoke under the guidance of some great patriot, and achieving its liberty and independence; nor are we to think of Egypt simply as a mighty national power oppressing a weaker by force and fraud; but we are to think, on the one hand, of a visible representation of the old dragon, the serpent, receiving from that dragon his "power, seat, and great authority;" and, on the other hand, the people of God redeemed from bondage and oppression. We have here the beastly kingdom, and the kingdom of the Son of man; the kingdom of darkness, and the kingdom of light; the world which lieth in the wicked one, and the Church of the living God.

Further, it is an instance, an example, a specimen, of an actual redemption vouchsafed to the Church; not a mere sign or type of the great redemption. We lose not a little of the instruction and comfort which the history of God's dealings with his Church is designed to afford, when we look at these great facts of his providence merely as modes or forms of imparting truth or of revealing promises. They are promises of redemption *fulfilled*, though fulfilled only in part; actual *instalments* of redemption, if we may so speak; and therefore pledges and earnest of the completing and consummating of the redemption. As Peter (2 Ep. iii.) and Jude (Ep.) argue from the past judgments of God, in which there was a separation between the righteous and the wicked, to a final judicial separation between these two classes, so we may argue from the partial and preliminary acts of redemption performed for the Church to its final and complete redemption. The preliminary acts constitute redemption in a

preliminary stage; hence the Church of the redeemed in the Apocalypse (c. xv.) appropriating the "song of Moses" as its own, as well as singing the "song of the Lamb." They are songs of the same redemption, sung by the same body of redeemed people.

3. The *ceremonial law*, as it is mainly a ritual of worship, must claim a fuller notice in this sketch of the development and phases of the visible Church. This law was designed to accomplish two ends entirely distinct: one was the same with that of the moral law, to express the conception of holiness, and to teach the redeemed people how to glorify God; the other was a gospel end, to teach the redeemed people how sin was to be taken away and holiness to be acquired. In both relations, it was a schoolmaster to bring the Church to Christ, who is the fulfiller of the law; who is at once a perfect example of the holiness which the law requires, and the taker away of the sin which the law condemns, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

The moral law, from its very nature, is eternal; the ceremonial, from its very purpose, is provisional and temporary. It did not need to be formally repealed; it was necessarily superseded by the next stage in the development, just as the bud is superseded by the blossom, and the blossom by the fruit. The "good olive tree" (Rom. xi.) has passed through many stages in its growth; and in every stage the essential has been preserved and strengthened, while the accidental of the stage which preceded has passed away. While it was in bud, no power on earth could suddenly advance it to the stage of fruit-bearing; when it is bearing fruit, no power on earth can put it back into the state of budding. So the Church can never go back to the Mosaic ritual. A society may be organised, calling itself a Church, which may adopt such a ritual, but it will not be the Church. Rome has Judaized; but with what result? The ceasing to be a Church of Christ.

The ceremonial law, then, was a mode of preaching the gospel, and this was its principal end. It was a mode suited to that stage of the Church's development. The promised seed had not yet come, and the representations of His person and work

were of course prophetic. not historic; and being prophetic, the symbolic and typical modes of representation were best adapted to the condition of the Church. In reference to things future, the only way, so far as we can see, by which the Church could have any adequate conception of them, was by conceiving them in the forms of the present; that is, by symbolical and typical forms. Hence, even in the New Testament, after plain unsymbolical history and theology constituting the great mass of its contents, we find at the end a book of the future fortunes of the Church, written in the language of symbols, and cast in an Old Testament mould throughout. The symbols of this book, however, are not symbols to be *acted* as a part of the worship of God, as in the Mosaic ritual, but to be contemplated as the vehicle of a divine revelation of the future.

The reason why the ceremonial law is generally regarded, even by intelligent Christians, as a legal discipline rather than as an evangelical dispensation, is probably twofold; *first*, because it was a mode, as we have seen, of setting forth the moral law; and *second*, because the Jews, as a body, lost sight of its principal intent, and perverted it, as they did the moral law also, into an instrument of justification. Hence, to their unenlightened consciences, it became a yoke of intolerable bondage. That it was not so to the enlightened saints of the Old Testament, is abundantly evident from the Psalms. This perversion was one of the circumstances which created the necessity for the order of prophets. The first chapter in the greatest of the prophets (Isaiah) reveals the whole case, and shows how deplorably a beneficent institution of God had been abused by the folly and perverseness of man. We find a similar abuse under the dispensation of the gospel. The *means of GRACE*, and especially the only two which possess a symbolical character, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, have been put in the place of Him to whom they were designed to be merely *pointers*, and the doing of them has been trusted in as a justifying righteousness.

The true statement of the matter is, that there has always been but one Church; that this Church has always been under a dispensation of promise and of law; that the promise and the

law have not always been equally prominent; that under the pre-Mosaic and the Christian dispensations, the promise was more conspicuous than the law; that under the Mosaic, at least until the decline of the Jewish monarchy, the law was more prominent than the promise. There were beatitudes and maledictions under all dispensations; in some it might be said that there were beatitudes as well as maledictions; in others, that there were maledictions as well as beatitudes. When, therefore, John says, "the law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ," we are to understand that the contrast is one of *degrees*, not of *kinds*. Moses was a deliverer as well as a lawgiver. (Acts vii. 35.) Christ was a Lawgiver (Matt. v.—vii.) as well as a Saviour. The Old Testament and the New contain one and the same religion for one and the same Church. The Church, under the Old Testament, is the son and heir in a state of childhood, subject to tutors and governors; the Church, under the New, is the son and heir in a state of majority. (Gal. iv.)

We close this account of the ceremonial law with the following pregnant and beautiful statement of the relations of the law and the gospel, (these terms standing here for the Old and New Testament dispensations) in Bernard's Bampton Lecture (L. vi., p. 146, Amer. ed.):

"The gospel is the heir of the law; it inherits what the law had prepared. The law, on its national and ceremonial side, had created a vast and closely-woven system of ideas. These were wrought out and exhibited by it in forms according to the flesh; an elect nation, a miraculous history, a special covenant, a worldly sanctuary, a perpetual service, an anointed priesthood, a ceremonial sanctity, a scheme of sacrifice and atonement, a purchased possession, a holy city, a throne of David, a destiny of dominion. Were these ideas to be lost, and the language which expressed them to be dropped, when the gospel came? No! It was the heir of the law. The law had prepared these riches, and now bequeathed them to a successor able to unlock and diffuse them. The gospel claimed them all, and developed in them a value unknown before. It asserted itself as the proper and predestined continuation of the covenant made of God with the fathers, the real and only fulfilment of all which was typified and prophesied; presenting the same ideas which had been before embodied in the narrow but distinct limits of carnal forms, in their spiritual, universal, and eternal character. The body of types according to the flesh died with Christ; and with Christ it rose again a body of

antitypes according to the Spirit. Those who were after the flesh could not recognise its identity; those who were after the Spirit felt and proclaimed it. The change was as great, the identity was as real, as in that mystery of the resurrection of the body which the same preachers showed; in which the earthly frame must lay aside the flesh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and must reappear, dead and raised again, another and yet the same, 'sown in weakness and raised in power, sown in dishonor and raised in glory, sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body.' "

ARTICLE II.

WILSON'S SLAVE POWER IN AMERICA.

History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.
By HENRY WILSON. Boston: James R. Osgood & Company.
3 Vols., 8vo., pp. 670, 720, and 774.

This ponderous work is what the well-informed reader would expect from its author. The first volume professes to treat the rise of slavery in the United States, from its beginnings up to the admission of Texas. The second continues the history of the sectional controversies about it, to the election of Lincoln. The third treats of the war and its results.

Of this huge "partisan document," it may be justly said, that its staple material is sophistry and misrepresentation, and its very title an insult and falsehood. In the sense of the author, there has been no "slave power" in America. It suited the purposes of the conspirators among whom Mr. Wilson acted all his political life, to advance their project of riding into sectional domination by means of the Abolition phrensy, to imagine a "slave power" in the South, which cherished the counterpart design to his: that of usurping the authority of the United States to extend slavery, at the expense of others' rights, over the whole country. But in fact, the States whose citizens owned slaves, never were a "slave power" in any sense but this: that they endeavored to employ the rights guaranteed to them by the laws