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ment is reserved for another volume. But the historical background is absorbingly interesting, and, with such a fascinating subject, no one could be dull. But why reject the traditional account of the origin of the Samaritans in 2 K 17? We are all for being up to date, but the easy acceptance of critical negations is sometimes a mistake. We hope the continuation of this narrative will soon be resumed.

The nephew of 'the great Samuel Butler' (as he is described on the jacket) has written a book on *The Existence and Immortality of the Soul* (Lincoln Williams; 3s. 6d. net). Mr. H. T. Butler has written for the ordinary man, and he has found his proofs in the Book of Nature. We cannot say that the arguments are conclusive. But we can say that the book is full of all sorts of facts, many of them quaint, many of them interesting, so that it will be no task to read these chapters. The reader will add to his knowledge of the world, even if he does not increase his faith.

Leaders of the Ancient Church.

I.

Irenaeus of Lugdunum.

By the Reverend F. R. Montgomery Hitchcock, D.D., Tolleshunt Knights, Essex.

Materials for a Life of Irenæus are meagre. The outline of his life is only given in detached fragments. He reveals himself with the same reserve in his writings. The little that we do know of him, however, makes us eager to find out more about so charming and gifted a personality. It was during the persecution of A.D. 177 that he became Bishop of Lugdunum, succeeding Pothinus, martyred in his ninetieth year. A leading bishop, writer and scholar, he may be fairly described as the first Christian theologian. Dr. Swete's words, 'No Christian writer has deserved better of the whole Church than Irenæus,'[1] would be endorsed by many modern scholars. This verdict, at any rate, is not likely to be greatly affected by the the recent laboured attempt of the late Dr. Friederich Loofs to prove that 'Theophilus of Antioch was greater than Irenæus, both as a writer and theologian.'[2] A fresh zest has been given to the study of Irenæus by this valuable if arbitrary analysis of his sources, based as it is upon a guess of Harnack's that Irenæus gave some references in his *Treatise against all the Heresies* and his *Apostolic Teaching* to the lost treatise of Theophilus against Marcion, the dates not permitting them to be to his extant work. Following this thread, Dr. Loofs thought he discovered a great portion of that lost treatise incorporated in the last three books of Irenæus, thus making Irenæus out to be a smaller man than his fame. However, he agreed with Harnack in holding that Irenæus is the first Christian writer we have who undertook the great task of expounding and defending orthodox Christianity in opposition to the gnostic forms. Of course, the fame of Irenæus does not rest only upon his writings, but also upon his great services to the Christian Church as a leader in its counsels, a mediator in its disputes, and a protagonist in its controversies. He had special facilities and unique opportunities for his lifelong labours for the greater comprehensiveness and unity of Christians. His own Christianity, as Dr. Hort observed, 'has a comprehensiveness such as no earlier Christian Father known to us could ever have dreamed of.'[3] It was a great matter for the Church that a man of such sweet reasonableness, devotional spirit, and vigorous intellect was located in so many different spheres of work where he could feel and appreciate the tendencies of Christian and anti-Christian thought

[1] Preface to *Irenæus of Lugdunum* (Camb. Univ. Press), by present writer.

[2] 'Theophilus,' von Antiochien Adversus Marcionem in *Texte und Untersuchungen* (1930), p. 431. This work can be answered, but it would require a separate article.

[3] Hort, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, i. 71.

throughout the whole Church, East and West. His testimony represents the Churches of Asia, Rome, and Gaul. He had been brought up in Asia at the feet of Polycarp. In a letter to Florinus, a fellow-pupil of his in his youth, he referred to the time he spent with Polycarp, and the discourses of that saint, and the way he described his intercourse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord, and related their words. He also spoke of the 'most adequate epistle' of Polycarp to the Philippians. His early associations with that apostolic man alone would make Irenæus an interesting figure in Church history.

In his early manhood he made his way to Rome, where he was evidently a pupil of Justin Martyr. The Moscow postscript of the letter of the Smyrnæans states that when Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna, Irenæus who was then living as a teacher in Rome, heard a voice as of a trumpet saying 'Polycarp has borne testimony.' Lipsius admits that this note may have been contained in one of the lost works of Irenæus. If this is correct, he was a teacher in Rome in A.D. 155, and probably remained there until Justin's martyrdom, A.D. 164, when he took refuge in the south of Gaul. His stay in Rome was most important for the development of his theology. He owed much to Justin, from whose work against Marcion he quoted, whose views on the freedom of man's will, the Messianic reading of Scripture, and seeking for types, eschatology, the Holy Communion, and whose use of the idea of recapitulation, and controversy with Marcion were passed on to him. In Rome he came into contact with the gnostic school of Valentinus, who, he says, came to Rome in the time of Hyginus, flourished under Pius, and remained until Anicetus (A.D. 138–160). He may have met Marcion, who, he says, flourished in Rome under Anicetus, and may have witnessed the meeting of Polycarp and Marcion when the latter asked, 'Do you not recognize me?' and the other replied, 'I know thee for the firstborn of Satan.'

The *Treatise against all the Heresies*, the monumental work by which he is best known to fame, was originally intended to confute the fantastic theories of gnosticism, and to answer the destructive criticism of Marcion. It was during his stay in Rome that he collected his material not only for both controversies, but also for his account of the early history of the Creed, the Canon, and the Episcopate. He had found as he made progress in his studies of the gnostic sects and of Marcion's theories, that he had an even more important work to perform than their confutation. He realized that he had to address himself to the new problems of the growing faith and the questions which had been raised by these heresies, and to lay the foundations of a systematic Christian theology. So he gave the Church, bewildered by heresies and divided by sects, what it needed, a systematic Christian theology, a constructive definite teaching which in some particulars has never been improved upon, and an eirenicon for all who called themselves Christians. In Gaul he came under the influence of Pothindus, whose presbyter he became, and afterwards his successor. In this new country he won golden opinions from all sorts of people. His popularity and prominence in the Christian community were shown by his appointment as delegate from the Confessors of Lugdunum to Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, bearing a letter which introduced him as 'a zealous adherent of the testament of Christ and a presbyter of the Church,' and which was on the subject of the Montanist controversy. During his long residence as bishop among the Keltae of Southern Gaul he almost forgot his Latin and Greek through using the native dialects, he says. In Gaul he had to deal with certain forms of gnosticism, while extending and consolidating Church organization and constructing and formulating its doctrines. We can, therefore, claim that he was a representative theologian of vast and varied experience, and that his literary work as a depository of his personal knowledge of the Church's work, traditions, and teaching is invaluable to the student of Church history.

He was a lover of peace by nature as by name. On many occasions he acted as peacemaker, and prevented schism in the Church and dissension among the brethren, notably in his mediation between the Church of Rome and the Asiatic churches it had threatened to excommunicate, because they held their own views on the Paschal question. He had a lofty sense of the solidary responsibility of the Episcopal order. It was this responsibility that made him so ready to reconcile antagonistic elements in the Church, and to find in the Episcopal succession a safeguard for sound doctrine and Bible truth. He laid down a remarkable principle when discussing the relations of Polycarp and Anicetus of Rome, who differed, but agreed to differ on a question (the Quartodeciman) which troubled the Church at that time.

'This very difference,' he said, 'in the observance of the fast confirms our concord in the faith.' His spirit could soar above the non-essentials into the pure realm of the essentials, the things that matter—Catholic truth, freedom, love, the spiritual

union of all men in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Accordingly, while maintaining the historic Episcopate on one hand, and sound Bible teaching on the other, he insisted no less upon the spiritual bond of unity formed by love—'love which is more precious than knowledge, more illustrious than prophecy, and more excellent than all other gifts.' His pen seems to glow with indignation when he writes of those who broke up the unity of the Church for which he laboured. To that indignation passages in his writings, which we, who do not love the Church less but Christ more, would not endorse, are to be attributed. For he emphasises the Catholic or universal character of the Church, saying, 'the glorious Church is everywhere because they who receive the Spirit are everywhere.' 'For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church. And every form of grace, for the Spirit is truth.' Were Irenæus among us to-day he would be the first to admit that the Holy Spirit had been working in the great Nonconformist bodies even as He has been in the ordered ministry of the historic Churches. The learning, vigour, eloquence, logic, and unction especially of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland would have appealed to him and impressed him, as the graces of a living Church. Although an ardent student of St. Paul's writings, and a great admirer of that Apostle, his mind had a closer affinity to that of the author of the Fourth Gospel, whom he declares was John the disciple of Jesus. For him there was no Johannine problem. In many of his pithy sayings, for example, 'the life of man is the vision of God,' we have that mystical point of view which is so pronounced in his doctrines of God and man, sin and its atonement, Scripture and its exposition. At the same time, it was a mysticism restrained from daring flights by the practical considerations of Church, ministry, and sacraments. It is this mystical turn that makes a voluminous treatise, which is relieved from dulness generally by the quaintness of its conceits, touches of humour, and the aptness of its analogies and metaphors, an inspiring work. Naturally, we expect and find mistakes, as we do in most books. Those of Irenæus are chiefly due to his uncritical acceptance of the statements of men he regarded as authorities in the Church, and whose opinions he would not question, the presbyters to whom he frequently refers, and from one of whom he learned that our Lord lived to fifty years of age! He seems to have been devoted to Papias, who may have led him astray on one point at any rate—Chiliasm. His mind was mystical and synthetical rather than critical and analytical. He says there are four Gospels and no more, and gives certain mystical reasons why there should be no more and no less than four, such as the four-visaged cherubim, the four winds, and four quarters of the heaven. It is his testimony to the fact that there are four Gospels, and not his explanation of the fact, that possesses value for us. We appreciate the former, and discard the latter.

Whichcote, a Cambridge Platonist, resembled Irenæus not only in the turn of his mind, but also in his expressions. We may compare Whichcote's aphorisms, 'heaven is first a temper, then a place'; 'heaven present is resemblance to God'; with these of Irenæus: 'Obedience to God is immortality,' 'the vision of God confers incorruption,' and 'it is the glory of man to be the servant of God.'

He had a vivid sense of the presence of Christ in his life. His love of his Master was the guiding motive of his life, and his appreciation of the Divinely-human and humanly-Divine personality of that Master is the key to his doctrine. As Harnack said, 'So far as we know at least, he is the first ecclesiastical theologian after the time of the Apologists (see Ignatius before that) who assigned a quite specific significance to the person of Christ.' Among the choicest of the jewels 'five words long' that stud his monumental work are the following: 'The Word became what we are to make us what He is'; 'the Word became man that man might possess the Word'; 'The Son of God became the Son of Man that man might become the son of God'; 'The Father is the Invisible of the Son, while the Son is the Visible of the Father.' His pregnant sentences are often expressed in the form of a *chiasmus*, *e.g.* 'to men displaying God, to God exhibiting man.'

Irenæus had not the same spiritual depth and fervour as St. Paul, and therefore did not feel the power of the Divine forgiveness in the same way. He did not express the same passionate longings and convictions as St. Augustine, but he had not passed through the same experience. As a Greek he was more inclined to treat sin from an intellectual rather than from an emotional standpoint. We do not find in him the dogmatic precision of Tertullian, the ample scholarship and classical culture of Clement of Alexandria, and the scientific theology of Origen, yet his doctrine founded upon the New Testament—the book he knew best—proved a more decisive factor than all three in the moulding of the historic faith. His was not a creative genius which could start a new line of thought or discover a new principle of

development. He had many teachers, whose superiority he is ever ready to admit, whose lessons he gratefully acknowledges, although he does not always mention their names. Among these were Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Papias, and Loofs would add Theophilus. In his writings we are able to trace the development of the Creed or apostolic faith, the growth of the Canon or apostolic documents, the progress of the Church or the apostolic constitution. Much of the treatise has been superseded; but more has present force. For ancient errors are ever reappearing in new forms. And when we have separated the dross from the pure ore, the gains are not small. From the traditions of the Middle Ages, from scholasticism and metaphysics we are summoned back to the Early Church with its simple majesty, and its martyr spirit—back to the vision of a Christ of infinite power and infinite pity. He survived until about A.D. 202. It is not certain that he suffered martyrdom, although Jerome described him as 'an apostolic man, bishop, and martyr.' Gregory of Tours is the first to give an account of a martyrdom which is not mentioned by Augustine, Theodoret, or Cyril. Church historians of every age speak in a chorus of praise of his work and character. Tertullian called him 'a most careful investigator of every doctrine'; Basil, 'the successor of the apostles'; Eusebius brackets him with Clement as 'a man equipped with the gifts of the spirit and furnished with heavenly graces'; while Erasmus declares that 'his writings breathe the early vigour of the Gospel, and that his speech proveth his readiness for martyrdom.' The fruits of his pastoral and missionary work are sufficient evidence of the superior quality of the man's soul. The city of Lugdunum, where a common altar had been raised, and a common festival instituted to wean the Gauls from the Druidical religion, became in the succeeding centuries, through the influence and work of Irenæus, a centre of Christian light and culture. His book translated into Latin, about A.D. 200, according to Dr. Loofs, but probably much later, was studied in the monastery of Lérins, in the south of France, and very probably by St. Patrick of Ireland, whose writings have not a few echoes of its Latin phrases. At the Reformation students of every religious party, Franciscans, Jesuits, Lutherans, Calvinists, searched this treatise for arguments.

Indeed, the controversy between the Romanists and the Lutherans became so hot that Dr. Pfaff, a Lutheran doctor about 1713 made use of some fragments to support his case. These were proved by Harnack to be forgeries. A minor work in a simpler style is the *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* discovered in 1904 in an Armenian translation. This manual was written as an introduction to Christian evidences for a friend, Marcianus. Its authenticity is established by a comparison of it with the last two books of the treatise which were found bound with it. 'All the chief points of the religious teaching in the *Adversus Haereses* are here,' said Dr. Harnack. 'For Irenæus they were not theology, but religion itself.' The chief object of the tract is to show how Judaism leads up to and proves Christianity. It incidentally throws light upon Irenæus's doctrine of the Trinity, especially upon the relations of the Son and the Spirit to one another and to the Creation and Incarnation. Chiefly interested in the Incarnation of the Son, Irenæus did not overlook the doctrine of the Spirit. For the first time that doctrine 'takes its place in an orderly scheme of Christian teaching.' He 'enters into the details of the Holy Spirit's work on the hearts and lives of men with a fulness which is far in advance of other Christian writers of the second century.'[1]

The Spirit, he writes, is 'the ladder by which we ascend to God.' 'He prepares man for the Son who leads him to the Father.' There are many such passages in the Treatise like these. As Augustine in later times found the key to the Trinity in Love, He who loves, the Beloved One, and Love that unites the twain, Irenæus found the solution in the name of Christ. 'In the name of Christ is implied the Anointer, the Anointed, and the Unction with which the Anointment has been made. It is the Father who anoints, the Son who is anointed, and the Spirit who is the Unction.' From a careful study of the *Apostolic Preaching* one might infer that the Monarchia of the Father is more pronounced than in the Treatise, while the Being and Initiative of the Son assume a unique importance in the economy of creation and man; and furthermore, that the Personality of the Spirit, if at times seemingly confused with the Divine Logos becomes more vivid in the tract.[2] We are, therefore, thankful for the discovery of this tract which repeats in simpler language the chief doctrinal statements of the treatise and at times 'throws further light upon them.'

It was Irenæus's refutation of gnosticism, especially in the form of Valentinus, and of the system of

[1] Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Church*, 89.

[2] An article by present writer in *Hermathena* (1907), pp. 307–337, 'The Apostolic Preaching of Irenæus and its Light on his Doctrine of the Trinity.'

Marcion which won him his position in the annals of Christianity. The first two books are an examination of the weird and bewildering speculations carried on beneath the cloak of Christianity, but under the name of gnosticism. Its fundamental principle was the unknowableness and transcendence of God implying the complete separation of God from man. This gap they made between God and man was filled up by a scale of intermediaries, variously termed æons, or emanations, *dynameis*, or agencies. The gnostics pretended that they possessed the key that solved all the problems that have perplexed not only men in general, but Christians in particular. The promoters of this 'falsely so-called science' looked down upon the common church people, and offered to the would-be-thought clever an attractive refuge from the social service of the Church and a welcome escape from the restrictions of its rule of faith. The danger of these early systems like that of similar modern ones, *e.g.* Christian science and its illusions, Theosophy and its planes, Spiritualism and its communications, Swedenborgianism and its 'correspondences,' which are but revivals of ancient gnostic thought, sometimes presented in Christian dress, consisted not so much in the mass of error they concealed as in the grains of truth they contained. These grains of truth gave vitality and attraction to the miscellaneous medley of speculation, magic, mysticism, and nonsense, of which gnosticism, generally speaking, consisted, and so it became a formidable barrier to the progress of Christian thought among the cultured. To expose and refute the plausible theories and mystifying utterances of the various gnostic sects, Irenæus, like a second St. Paul, buckled on his armour. 'The specious fraud of the heretics,' he writes, 'tricked out with borrowed plumes might easily beguile the more simple people to accept it for truth.' For those of an imaginative turn the Valentinian gnosis held out many inducements; but to those of a more ascetic and practical type the Marcionite *gnosis* made a stronger appeal. Marcion's system was austere. He professed to be purely Christian in his views, borrowing nothing from Greek philosophy or Oriental theosophy on which Valentinus had largely drawn. He protested against all that savoured of Judaism as well as allegorical interpretation and Church tradition. Valentinus spared the Scriptures, expounding them by his allegorical method. Marcion, like an advanced critic, 'employed a sword rather than a pen,' cutting up the Pauline Epistles to suit his own ideas. In his system the Creator is distinguished from the Supreme God, who is perfectly good; whereas the Creator or Demiurge, an inferior God, is the source of strife, the author of the Old Testament, and the protector of the Jews, whose kingdom he desired to establish. The Supreme God sent the Messiah, who accommodated Himself to Messianic expectations, and proclaimed the Supreme God in an unreal body. The Demiurge, however, incited the Jews against him. The original difficulty of reconciling God's mercy and justice underlay this theory, and turned Marcion so much against the Jewish system and the Old Testament that he kept the Jewish Sabbath as a fast. These systems were exposed by Irenæus in his writings and discourses; and although they were heavily defeated, they were not completely crushed. The Marcionite became the more popular, because of the ascetic character of its founder. Marcionite communities were strong in Egypt, Palestine, and other places in the fourth century, owing to their courage in enduring martyrdom, and were found in Bosnia in 1774; while a revival of the Valentinian heresy under the name of *Église Gnostique* was until quite recently working in Paris and Lyons, and was supported by spiritualists.

The one advantage the Christian Church reaped from her controversies with these heretics was the vital definitions of the faith which they elicited. Irenæus would describe all modern revivers of gnosticism in one telling phrase—'omnes falso scientiæ nomine inflati, Scripturas quidem confitentur, interpretationes vero convertunt.'

This is but a meagre summary of the life and teaching of 'the admirable Irenæus who brought learning, culture, and religion to the tribes of Gaul' (Theodoret), and after a terrible persecution 'in a short time brought the state back to Christianity' (Gregory of Tours).