
A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

The book is both devout and able, and will reward the fit reader.

A Private Book of Prayer (S.C.M.; 1s. net) is mainly 'a sort of Prayer Note-book, with the pages left blank except for a number of headings arranged under the days of the week. The idea is that each person who uses the book should build up a private book of prayer for himself.' A few pages at the beginning contain suggestions as to how the little note-book should be filled. It is of a size that will permit of it being carried in the pocket, and if thoughtfully used it might give reality and point to private prayer.

The Christian Church of our time is consciously striving towards visible unity, though the obstacles in the way may well appear insuperable. A notable contribution to the subject is made in *Anglo-Catholicism and Orthodoxy*, by the Rev. W. A. Visser 'T Hooft, D.D. (S.C.M.; 5s. net). Dr. Hooft is the General Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation, and has had personal contacts with leaders in all the churches. He writes from a confessedly Protestant standpoint, but while he is frank he is studiously courteous and open-minded. His thesis is that 'a non-Roman Catholicism is emerging which is distinct from the main types of Christianity to which we Protestants in Western Continental Europe so far have been accustomed. The time has therefore come to enlarge our horizon. We must cease to think in terms of two main divisions of Christendom, that is, Roman and Protestant, and discover the existence of a third partner in the œcumenical discussion.' With this in view Dr. Hooft endeavours to give a sympathetic account of non-Roman Catholic Churches—the Anglican, the Eastern, the Old Catholic, and discusses both the misunderstandings and the real barriers that separate them from the Protestant position. All this he has set down with admirable lucidity, and given us a highly illuminating and valuable book.

A reprint of Dr. Fosdick's *The Modern Use of the Bible* (S.C.M.; 3s. 6d. net) has just been issued in 'The Torch Library.' As we dealt with it fully when it first appeared over nine years ago, it will be enough to say that it is a very courageous and successful attempt to re-interpret in terms of modern categories the essential meaning of the Bible, which is there implicated in categories such as demonology, angelology, Semitic cosmology, etc., which we have outgrown. The heart of the Bible, Dr. Fosdick contends, lies in its reproducible experiences, and it is our business—in which his book gives signal help—to 'decode' the abiding meaning from the ancient and no longer applicable phraseology.

Letters to Women on the Christian Faith.

Jerome to Marcella.

By Professor James Moffatt, D.D., D.Litt., New York.

Nearly a century after the Neoplatonist Porphyry had written to his Marcella (see The Expository Times, xlii. pp. 215–217), another Marcella sought and received instruction upon religious difficulties. Both ladies were mentally alive, and both belonged to good society, but otherwise our Marcella of the fourth century had little in common with her namesake in the third. One was a Neoplatonist, the other a catholic Christian. Both were widows, but while the first Marcella re-married, the second refused all offers and remained a 'univira,' like Chrysostom's mother in Antioch, on religious grounds. Consequently, while the third-century Marcella could follow St. Paul's advice and ask her own husband if she wanted to learn anything, our Marcella, who had no husband to ask, was obliged to consult the nearest authority, who chanced to be her friend and counsellor, Jerome. Her correspondence with him forms a distinct unit in Jerome's one hundred and fifty-four letters.[1] Seventeen are extant, addressed to this lady.

[1] Best edition by Hilberg in three volumes (liv., lv., lvi.) of the Vienna Corpus. The chronology is discussed by Ferdinand Cavallera in *Saint Jérôme* (1922), ii. 22 f., and in Georg Grützmacher's *Hieronymus*, i. (1901), 57 f.

He had arrived at Rome in the autumn of 382, in order to attend a council held by Bishop Damasus, who retained the great scholar in his service, encouraging him to do literary work, especially as a translator and a textual critic. For three years Jerome stayed in the capital, revising the Gospels and the Psalter, studying Aquila's text of the LXX, writing his reply to Helvidius, and preparing for the great Biblical work which he accomplished later. What made this busy life a special pleasure to him was not merely the patronage of Damasus, but the congenial society of a group of noble dames, who rejoiced to find in him a leader ready to instruct them not only in asceticism[1] but in the study of the Bible. Jerome says that in his shyness he avoided the society of women at Rome, and that only the persuasions of Marcella induced him to enter the circle of her friends in the Aventine villa.[2] Belonging to an aristocratic family, she had married early, lost her husband after seven months, and then declined to re-marry, in spite of an advantageous proposal from a rich, elderly suitor at Rome. The young beauty, wealthy and independent,[3] had her mansion on the Aventine hill, where she surrounded herself with godly women, married as well as unmarried; eschewing society, she devoted herself to worship, to works of charity, and to Bible study.

The really delightful marriage, Dorothea Brooke reflected, must be that where your husband was a sort of father, and could teach you even Hebrew, if you wished it. But Rome in the fourth century was not like an English county in the nineteenth; Jerome was no bloodless student like Mr. Casaubon, and the last thing Marcella thought of was marriage. She wanted to know Hebrew, but it was enough to have Jerome as her teacher and guide. Although ill-conditioned critics spread rumours about Jerome and his lady friends, no scandal attached to Marcella. The relations between the noble lady and the scholar were above suspicion.

In one letter, after lauding Marcella's character, he answers by anticipation those who blamed him for extolling Christian women so pre-eminently. Why not, he argues? 'We judge human excellence not by sex but by character.'[4] This corresponds to the idea of Donne's poem, *The Undertaking*, in which he declares,

> If, as I have, you also do
> Virtue attir'd in woman see,
> And dare love that, and say so too,
> And forget the He and She;
> Then you have done a braver thing
> Than all the Worthies did.

It is a real achievement, Donne means, to recognize and to honour some fine quality of character without reflecting, even by way of praise, 'And that is in a woman!' So Jerome truly writes in the fourth century, or rather in the beginning of the fifth. Like the English dean, he is stating a sound general maxim, as he maintains that in the case of a noble woman like Marcella one should hail high qualities like self-denial and faith for what they are; she exhibits them because she is a Christian, not because she is a woman; let us pay homage to goodness in a human soul, apart from sex. At the same time two reserves have to be made. One is, that Jerome undoubtedly lauded Marcella to some extent for her addiction to his favourite theory and practice of celibacy; she had dared to exhibit a sort of 'nun'-like piety as the supreme manifestation of religion for her sex. Again, Jerome did not 'forget the he and she.' When he was taunted with writing to women instead of to members of his own sex, he coolly replied that there were no men interested in such high matters! '.If men were to ask me about the scriptures, I would not talk to women.'[5] But this is an evasion, for there were good men in the priesthood as well as among the laity at Rome during the days which Jerome spent there; his correspondence is wholly with women, not because he had no other outlet for his energies, but because he preferred to associate with these devout ladies.

By the time that Jerome joined the circle, Marcella was a mature woman of fifty, with some useful experience of life, which distinguished her from the enthusiastic girls and pious matrons around her in the community at Rome. She was a lady of birth and breeding; she also had brains. For example, Marcella made no secret of the fact that she was not always sure of her friend's wisdom in dealing with human beings, much as she might admire his handling of Hebrew and Greek. We know that she resented, or at any rate deplored, some of his bitter tirades. In one letter (xxvii.), for example,

[1] This is picturesquely described in A. S. D. Thierry, *Saint Jérôme* (1867), i. 23 f., 148 f.

[2] The *hospitiolum* or humble abode, where he lived, may have been adjacent to Marcella's mansion (xlii.).

[3] Unlike her younger friend, Paula, when she was left a widow she was childless.

[4] cxxvii. 5: 'virtutes non sexu sed animo judicamus.'

[5] lxv. 1. Barak's hesitation, he adds, gave Debbora her opportunity, and Mary Magdalene was eager at the Cross while priests and Pharisees (Jerome's term for his clerical critics) were crucifying the Son of God.

after hotly protesting against a criticism of his translation and textual methods, which some scholars ('two-legged asses') had offered, he pulls himself up and remarks to Marcella, half defiantly, 'I am aware that when you read this you will be wrinkling your brow, afraid lest my freedom of speech may sow fresh quarrels; I see that if possible you would stop my lips with your finger, to keep me from daring to mention what other people do not blush to do.'

Though Jerome failed to moderate his own aggressiveness, he did appreciate her good manners; but one is afraid that this appreciation was based upon the polite self-suppression which, according to her teacher, she practised in giving instruction upon religious and Biblical questions after he had left Rome. 'She mastered and made her own,' he proudly writes, 'anything in myself that was the fruit of long study and constant meditation. Hence, after my departure from Rome, appeal was made to her judgment when any controversy arose over some testimony of Scripture. So excellently trained was she, so well did she understand what philosophers call τὸ πρέπον (that is, what is seemly), that in replying to any query she would give her opinion not as her own but as mine or as somebody else's, thus admitting that she was a pupil. For she knew the apostle's word, "I suffer no woman to teach." She would not detract from the male sex, nor do wrong to the priests who frequently questioned her on obscure and doubtful points' (cxxvii.).

This tribute proves that Marcella was not a presumptuous person. Also, that she was not a dilettante in religion, this aristocratic lady of Rome. Devotion, she believed, was more than emotion. It did not suffice her to chant the psalms or read the Scripture; she desired to feed devotion with ideas, and especially to understand the meaning of the Bible. Greek apparently she knew already, being a woman of culture; but she proceeded to master Hebrew, or at least enough of this tongue to enable her to study the Old Testament intelligently. Almost from the outset her mental qualities endeared her to Jerome, who welcomed, as every teacher does, a pupil of independent mind. He pays generous tribute to her in the preface to his commentary on Galatians, written after he had left Rome. 'Well do I know her zeal and faith, the flame she keeps ever burning in her bosom, to rise superior to her sex, to forget man, and sounding the loud timbrel of the divine volumes to cross the Red Sea of this world. Certainly when I was at Rome, she never saw me for any time without putting some question about the scriptures. Nor did she accept her teacher's answer (or "ipse dixit"), as Pythagoreans do; nor did authority prevail with her, apart from reasoned judgment; she tested everything and would weigh the whole matter so acutely that I felt I had in her a judge rather than a pupil.' The mental eagerness of Marcella [1] and her friends was indeed a stimulus to him. His literary work owed much to the incentive of their confidence and sympathy.

We have only Jerome's replies to her, written during the last two years of his residence at Rome, in 384 (xxiii.–xxix., xxxii., xxxviii., xl.) and 385 (xxxvii., xli.–xliv.); xlvi. and lix. were not written till 393, after they had separated. Between 385 and 410 she and Jerome corresponded regularly, but only these two letters of his have been preserved. Of the seventeen which are thus extant, xxv.–xxix., xxxiv. and xlii. are answers to direct queries from her. Some of these letters are supplements to Jerome's oral teaching. Marcella would raise some point of scholarship as they studied together, and later on she would receive a communication which went more fully into the matter; or, she would write to him on such matters, as she studied for herself.

Once or twice the correspondence takes a wider range. Thus, when Marcella had kindly sent some personal gifts to ladies in a circle of Jerome's admirers, he writes to thank her on their behalf (xliv.). The note is tinged with a heavy humour, as he moralizes over the presents. How appropriate to send these chairs, in order to remind Christian virgins never to stir outside the house! And the wax tapers! How they recall the need of awaiting the Bridegroom with lights burning! And the fly-catchers! When we brush the gnats off, shall we not take your hint that voluptuous emotions be at once stopped, inasmuch as such perishing flies rob the oil of its fragrance (alluding to Ec 10[1])? Though personally, he continues (in this artificial vein), I could interpret such gifts in

[1] One acknowledgment may be cited from the preface to the second and third volumes of his commentary upon Ephesians, where he confesses that it was Marcella's urgent interest that had kept him to his work. Besides, he was ashamed to be idle when he thought of her full, busy life in Rome. 'Cujus ego quotiescunque studiorum, ingenii, laboris recordor, toties me damno inertiae, qui in monasterii solitudine constitutus . . . id facere non possum quod mulier nobilis inter strepentem familiam et procurationem domus explet operis successivis.'

a reverse fashion. For instance, a chair is to me associated with idleness. 'And I might gladly light your tapers to banish fears in the night from an evil conscience in terror.' Where a neat, sincere note of thanks was all that Marcella would expect, Jerome could not avoid sermonizing, in a stilted style.

He also wrote to her (xliii.) one day, broadly hinting that it would be pleasant to get away from the noise and interruptions of the city to a rural retreat, where one could live economically on milk and vegetables, enjoy fields and forests, meditate under shady trees, and blend psalm-singing with the songs of the birds. There is a note of sentimental unreality in this letter. Apparently he is suggesting to the rich Marcella that she might provide such desirable quarters in the country. It is a letter that does not ring quite true, with its gush and self-pity; for Jerome is—unless we are hopelessly unjust to him—urging the advantages of an easier life, and indicating in an unctuous fashion to the lady that something might be done for himself among others. So far as we know, Marcella did not take the hint. She was not wax to be shaped even by the hands of the saint and scholar whom she admired, but a lady with a mind of her own.

She displayed the same independence at a later stage in her relations with Jerome, after he had left Rome in August, 385, disgusted and disappointed, to reside in holy Palestine. A pressing invitation came to Marcella, urging her to rejoin the circle of devout ladies at Bethlehem, where the party were encamped. Seven years had passed since these voluntary exiles had left the Babylon of the west, and from their settlement at Bethlehem they write gushingly[1] to their noble friend in the capital, contrasting the sacred opportunities of a residence in the Holy Land with the handicaps to religion which beset the Christian at Rome. Has not the prophet John bidden us, in the name of the Lord, to 'come out of her, my people, that ye have no fellowship with her sins,' just as Jeremiah had called, 'Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver each his own soul'? For Rome has become "a habitation of devils,' true to her pagan traditions. 'A holy church is there indeed, with trophies of apostles and martyrs, a true confession of Christ, a faith preached by apostles, the Christian name daily rising higher and higher, and paganism being trodden under foot.' But it is no environment for the monastic piety, this noisy, distracting, fashionable city! Whereas in our cottage of Christ, at Bethlehem, 'all is rustic, there is no sound to be heard outside save psalm-singing; wherever you turn, the ploughman is chanting "alleluia," the mower as he sweats is cheering himself with psalms, and as the vine-dresser prunes the vine he sings a canticle of David. These are the songs of our countryside, these (to speak colloquially) are our love-ditties; the shepherd whistles them, the field-worker employs them in his toil.' Besides, the choicest spirits of Christendom are all hurrying hither, even the remote British! We do not deny that there are saints elsewhere, but surely 'a chorus of monks and virgins is a fair flower, a most precious jewel, among the decorations of the Church.' No flattery here, no backbiting, no luxury! Won't our beloved Marcella join us, for her own sake and for ours, 'so gentle and suave she is, sweeter than any honey'? We shall eagerly expect her. What good times we shall have together, touring the sacred Land and renewing our fellowship! The letter (xlvi.) professes to be written by Paula and Eustochium, but, as Marcella knew, it was really composed in their name by Jerome. He sought to put pressure upon his pupil, the wealthy and influential aristocrat, but he failed to move her. Marcella, for reasons of her own, preferred to remain in her Babylon. She doubtless took the glowing sentences of Jerome at their true value.

Yet although she declined to throw in her lot with Jerome and the others, the tie between them was not severed. Jerome repeatedly recalls her character and services, in his later writings. He sent her copies of his treatises (xlvii.), including his translation of the Book of Job (xlix.), and, unfortunately for her, enlisted her support as he attacked Origenism. Marcella, nothing loth, came to the rescue. She exerted local influence on the Roman authorities, when that 'scorpion' Rufinus, as Jerome pleasantly dubbed the translator of Origen, and 'the Pharisees' (that is, the supporters of Origen in the Roman Church), induced even Siricius, the simple-minded Bishop of Rome, to agree with them. 'For a long while she had held back, to avoid any suspicion of partisanship, but now, conscious that the faith once praised by apostolic lips was being widely injured —so much so that the heretic was attracting to himself priests, some monks, and specially laymen, besides deluding the simple-minded bishop, who thought other people as guileless as himself—she publicly resisted the said heretic, preferring

[1] Labriolle, in his *Histoire de la Littérature Latine Chrétienne* (1920), p. 474, describes the piece as 'une lettre pleine de mysticisme et de tendresse'; which is kind rather than critical. He does not realize that it was composed by Jerome.

to please God rather than men.' Apparently both sides had appealed to this influential lady, but she finally started a not too scrupulous[1] campaign against Rufinus and his party, which helped to decide Bishop Anastasius in favour of the anti-Origen coalition. No wonder Jerome gratefully dedicated to her and her cousin Pammachius his refutation of Rufinus as well as his commentary on the Book of Daniel.

Poor lady, she had still rougher experiences to suffer. She lived to witness the capture of Rome by Alaric in 410, and the shock proved too much for her. Some of the Goths burst into her mansion, demanding to know where she had concealed her wealth; they cudgelled her brutally, though her life was spared. A few days later she died, in the arms of her friend Principia, to whom Jerome addressed a letter of consolation, which is a brief memoir of his loyal pupil and supporter (cxxvii.).

From this as well as from his letters to her we can infer the direction of her religious studies, which were principally Biblical.

Most of the queries on the Old Testament are verbal and technical. From his letters to her and to others of the group one gathers that the Book of Psalms was a special favourite of these ladies. They had indeed been instructed by Athanasius or by some director of the religious life to make the Psalter their manual of devotion, for in the treatise called *De Virginitate* (20) the instruction for a nun or virgin was: 'At midnight rise and praise God. . . . Stand up and repeat first of all the verse, "At midnight I have risen to give thanks to thee for thy just judgments." Then pray, and begin by repeating all the fifty-first psalm from start to finish. Let this be done duly every day. Say as many psalms as you can repeat standing up; and at every psalm say a prayer, bending your knees.' The interest that these good women took in the Psalter was therefore not merely due to the fact that Jerome was working at his revision of that Scripture; indeed, it would be almost right to say[2] that Jerome's work on the book was largely prompted by the fact that he had to study it with Marcella and her friends. The truth is that the Book of Psalms was extraordinarily popular and dominating in the education of Christian youth at this period. According to Ambrose of Milan[3] the Book of Psalms was a biography of Jesus; 'in the psalms Jesus is not only born for us, but he undergoes that saving passion of his body, he sleeps, rises, ascends to heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father.' The mystical interpretation lent itself to this use of the Psalter. Girls especially were encouraged to learn the psalms by heart at an early age; Jerome himself (cxxviii.) advises parents to begin the good work when their daughters were seven years old. Indeed, the Psalter was to be mastered even before the Gospels. Marcella was probably trained on these lines. Jerome, in fact, found among these Roman ladies who gathered round her a true awakening of the religious spirit, accompanied by some higher education of women along Biblical lines. A knowledge of the Bible became fashionable in society. It had its drawbacks, no doubt. 'Talkative old women,' as well as garrulous old men and wordy sophists, argued smartly over texts. 'Some, I am ashamed to say,' Jerome wrote to the Bishop of Nola, 'learn from women what they are to teach men. . . . Others with knit brows balance their polysyllables as they philosophize to weak women about scripture.' But Marcella and her group belonged to a nobler set. They were honest, anxious to learn, willing to study before they talked, and, if they pored over the text of the Psalter or of any other Scripture, it was a genuinely devotional spirit that moved them. Other ladies might pose as authorities on the Bible, fluent, shallow, pert, self-confident creatures (Jerome angrily complains, in cxxx.), teaching before they have been learners—women of whom the apostle speaks when he says that they 'are carried about with every wind of doctrine, ever learning and yet never able to reach the knowledge of the truth.' Marcella and the circle over which she presided were serious and modest.

Her interests, however, were not confined to words and phrases. Thus, in studying the New Testament, she was acute enough to appreciate some problems that lay under the surface of the text. We know of five points, on which she consulted Jerome (lix.), who informed her (*a*) that 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God

[1] Some of her manœuvres led the usually equable Rufinus to go the length of calling her 'a Jezebel of a woman,' who had laid false accusations against the Naboth of her day; but he contents himself by saying, 'I leave her to her own conscience and to God's' (*Apol.* i. 19). It is perhaps well that we know little of Marcella as the partisan in ecclesiastical politics towards the end of her career, a period in which Gibbon describes her behaviour as that of a 'beldam.'

[2] See G. Bardy in *Revue Biblique* (1932), p. 358 f.

[3] *Explanat. in Psalmos*, i. 8. He adds (4), 'licet omnis scriptura divina dei gratiam spiret, praecipue tamen dulcis psalmorum liber.'

hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit' (1 Co $2^{9.10}$), means that the apostle and his fellow-saints have certain spiritual revelations of the future which are not always capable of instant transmission to others (like the 'unspeakable words' which the apostle heard in paradise, 'which it is not lawful for a man to utter'). Again (*b*), if Marcella wishes to know who the sheep and the goats are in the parable of Mt 25^{31}, she had better turn to the second part of his treatise against Jovinianus, where she will find proof that these mean good and bad within the Church, not Christians and pagans. (*c*) As to the resurrection body (for Marcella was puzzled by passages like 1 Th 4^{17}, 1 Co 15^{51}, and Rev $11^{8f.}$), Jerome pleads that the Book of Revelation must be interpreted spiritually, and that the saints who survive until the Second Advent will have their present bodies glorified. (*d*) You ask the meaning of 'Touch me not' in Jn 20^{17}? You ask how this is to be reconciled with the statement in Mt 28^{9} that the women 'held the risen Jesus by the feet and worshipped him'? The reason is,[1] that these women recognized His divinity, whereas Mary Magdalen at first was incredulous and therefore was not judged worthy as yet to embrace Him. Marcella was evidently studying the narratives of the Resurrection carefully, for she put a further query (*e*) to her teacher. During the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension was the Lord in heaven as well as in direct touch with the disciples on earth? Jerome assures her that the Lord was everywhere at the same moment, with angels and with the apostles at once. In proof of this he cites Ps $139^{7ff.}$

Again, she asked what the sin against the Holy Spirit meant, in Mt 12^{32}: 'whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.' Some friends have called on me, Jerome replies; he has little time to answer his correspondent, but he dashes off a *commentariolum* or note (xlii.), a short study on a great subject, he remarks, and yet a subject which is surely plain. After denouncing Novatian's theory on the subject (for apparently Marcella had been in touch with emissaries of the Novatian theory), he goes to the heart of the matter by showing that the sin in question is committed 'by those who, seeing God's work in miraculous deeds (*virtutibus*), nevertheless loudly and calumniously allege that they represent the miraculous power of dæmons, and that the signs wrought pertain not to the divine glory (*magnificentiam*) but to the devil.' The rigorous Novatian had held that the unpardonable sin could be committed by Christians alone, and that it denoted denial of Christ under the stress of persecution; hence no renegade Christian could be reinstated. Jerome retorts rather hastily that renegades did not call Christ Beelzebub. 'To give way under torture and deny that one is a Christian is a different thing from saying that Christ is the devil.' But his explanation of the sin is sound. Marcella learns that the words of Jesus refer to a settled deliberate malice, which drives men (as a modern scholar puts it) to 'say and do anything rather than yield to the appeal of the good Spirit of God in Jesus . . . the sin of finding bad motives for good actions, because the good actions condemn us, and we do not want to yield to their appeal.'[2]

He took such an interest in Marcella's general religious life that he would also supervise her reading and studies occasionally. Once, when she asked him for the loan of a commentary on the Song of Solomon by Rheticius, the Bishop of Autun, he declined to let her have the book. At an earlier period Jerome had praised the commentary, but he now seems to have detected its unscholarly character, and he will not have his favourite pupil waste her time over its pages. Others may get good from the eloquent style of Rheticius, but it will be no profit to Marcella, he assures her (xxxvii.). Once she had come across a Montanist emissary who endeavoured to commend the views of his party to this patrician lady, apparently thinking that one who was so interested in asceticism and so sympathetic with the function of women in the Church would incline to Montanism. When she consulted Jerome, he replied that he was sure she merely asked him his opinion out of curiosity (xli.). So sound a student of the Bible as herself would never be led astray by Montanist absurdities! It is plain that he was sincere in this, for the letter is written with unusual moderation. Had he imagined for a moment that Marcella was in serious danger of going over to the Montanists, he would have argued with more vehemence and at greater length; but he is not alarmed. He knew her too well to fear that she might succumb to the pleas of any Montanist or to Novatian's theory.

Marcella was not, of course, the only one to con-

[1] One of the explanations for which he was indebted to Eusebius, who goes into the matter in his third *Quaestio ad Marinum* (see Migne, *PG.*, xxii. 947–951).

[2] From Dr. Denney's sermon on the subject in *The Way Everlasting* (p. 242 f.).

sult Jerome by letter upon the Bible. Not merely men like Bishop Damasus, but women like Hedibia and Algasia in far-off Gaul, no less than other members of the women-group at Rome, received help from the great scholar. Still, it is the personality of Marcella which stands out in this connexion. She is head and shoulders above even a woman like Paula. Her passion for monastic discipline was unfortunately tinged with the delusion that marriage at best was a second best for any really Christian woman; but even this aberration proved at any rate that the ethical tradition which characterized the Roman genius in great families of the capital still throbbed, although unfortunately it was not always reinforced within the Roman Church. She had the moral courage to resist the shallow, fashionable temper of her patrician surroundings, and even as she yielded to the ascetic current she managed to keep her head better than most of her contemporaries. She was a great lady, yet humble; generous and yet not one to be imposed upon; possessed of a warm heart but nevertheless gifted with some sangfroid. Marcella was a religious inquirer who had mental balance, and a love of learning which did not make her either conceited or pedantic.

The Apostles' Creed.

By the Reverend A. Mitchell Hunter, M.A., D.Litt., F.R.S.E., Edinburgh.

The New Testament Church soon found it necessary to demand acceptance by its members of at least certain doctrines if it were to safeguard its healthy life. It was born into a world of competing faiths, all of them more or less aggressive and out to win the world. The real danger to Christianity did not lie in their rivalry so much as in the spirit of eclecticism begotten in bewildered men by the claims of these competitors, strengthened by similarities in their teachings, an eclecticism which took shape in the congeries of ideas and speculations generically known as Gnosticism. The Christian Church was early menaced by this dangerous invasion. Gnostic ideas found or formed points of contact with its beliefs and threatened to suffuse themselves into its doctrines, as appears from apprehensive references and warnings in the later portions of the New Testament. Happily the apostles and leaders, roused by the keen-sighted Paul, became wideawake to the insidious peril and ejected the plausible and specious enemy before it poisoned the springs of the Church's life.

But measures had to be taken to ensure the purity of Christian doctrine in the future, as converts began to stream in from all quarters, many of them with minds tainted by beliefs which tended to become associated with and to bring elements of corruption into those they were now asked to accept. Something had to be done to make and keep plain the truths which formed the unique claim of this new religion to supremacy and finality. In fine, a creed had to be formulated of such a nature as would safeguard the entrance into membership and secure unity in essentials in the Church which was rapidly spreading throughout the world. The New Testament of course provided the groundwork. But converts could not be restrained from thinking along pre-Christian lines and trying to correlate their new beliefs with ideas which had commended themselves to their reason in the philosophies of the world. Differences of opinion regarding the interpretation of doctrines inevitably arose as men began to ask what this or that article of faith exactly meant. The leaders of the Church were called on to determine what was to be regarded as error and to outlaw it from the Church, especially errors which might become centres of infection to other related doctrines or threaten to set up dry-rot in the structure of the Church. The original central doctrines of the New Testament in their stark simplicity would soon cease to be sufficient for the purpose. Clauses would require to be added of a defining nature, as this or that article of belief centred attention upon itself and new heresies were thrown up and denounced. That is very summarily how the Apostles' Creed came into existence and grew to the proportions which it at last assumed.

That the Apostles' Creed has no right to the title scarcely needs to be argued in this enlightened age. The name appears only towards the end of the fourth century. Ambrose of Milan, recognizing, like Ter-