

THE ETHICAL TEACHING OF ST. PAUL.

(5) THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES.

THERE is no more serious charge which the historian of European Morals brings against early Christianity than the habitual disregard which, he says, it showed towards the virtues of the intellect. The triumph of the new faith, he declares, meant "the decisive overthrow of intellectual freedom"; the period which followed the conversion of Constantine should probably be placed in all intellectual virtues lower than any other period in the history of mankind; that noble love of truth, that sublime and scrupulous justice to opponents, which was the pre-eminent glory of ancient philosophers, was for many centuries after the destruction of philosophy almost unknown in the world.¹ This adverse judgment certainly does not contain the whole, truth; nevertheless, there is more of truth in it than a Christian man likes to think. Not in the early centuries of its history alone, but through the whole period of its existence, the Christian Church has been slow to do honour to the virtues of the intellect. The duty of thinking, the sacredness of fact, the fearless love of truth, the obligation to rid one's self of passion and prejudice, have perhaps never received at the hands of Christian men the full and ungrudging recognition which is their due. One thing, however, may be unhesitatingly claimed for Christianity, viz., that whatever its failures in this regard may have been, they belong rather to the sphere of its manifestation in history than to its original spirit and character as these are revealed in the New Testament. Read the Church's record through the centuries as we may, surely the last charge which any fair-minded interpreter could bring against the Epistles of St. Paul would be that their author had

¹ *History of European Morals*, vol. i. pp. 176 (footnote), 428; vol. ii. p. 15.

made a virtue of credulity or had put the human intellect in chains. These remarkable documents which, next to the four Gospels, constitute our earliest and most authoritative exposition of the mind of Christ, are remarkable for nothing more than for the reverent freedom and daring with which the Apostle allows his mind to play around the solemn themes of which he writes. And it is to this general intellectual attitude rather than to specific "texts" which can be singled out for quotation—though these, as we shall see, are by no means wanting—that we now turn in order to learn what may be called the ethics of the intellect according to St. Paul.

I.

In the first place, St. Paul was a thinker. He belongs, as Sabatier says, to the family of powerful dialecticians; "he ranks with Plato, with Augustine and Calvin, with Schleiermacher, Spinoza, Hegel. An imperious necessity compelled him to give his belief full *dialectic* expression, and to raise it above its contradictories. Having affirmed it, he confronts it at once with its opposite; and his faith is incomplete until he has triumphed over this antithesis and reached a point of higher unity."¹ Immediately after his conversion he went away into Arabia that in the desert solitudes he might think out and make his own the new revelation which had come to him²; and from that time to the day of his death his mind was steadily at work pushing back the frontiers of that boundless kingdom of truth into which he had entered. That St. Paul was already in possession of all the main elements of his gospel when he set out on his first missionary journey it does not seem possible to doubt; not less certain is it that throughout his whole life "the thinker kept pace with the missionary,"³

¹ *The Apostle Paul*, p. 89.

² Gal. i. 17.

³ As an illustration of an "outsider's" appreciation of the intellectual

the one entering into new fields of thought as the other pressed into new fields of service. Indeed, to St. Paul to think was as natural and as necessary as to breathe, and it is safe to assert that, dominant as was the authority with which Christianity ruled him, it must have remained forever a thing wholly foreign and alien to him had it not appealed to and satisfied his reasoning soul. Human nature, it has been well said, craves to be both religious and rational; and to St. Paul of all men a religion that would not bear thinking about would have been as savourless salt, fit only to be trodden under foot of men. The proof of all this lies, of course, in the Pauline Epistles. Yet, curiously enough, their striking intellectual quality is perhaps one of the last things of which the average reader takes any note. St. Paul as a man of emotion he can understand and appreciate; St. Paul as a thinker belongs to another world into which he will rarely take the trouble to follow. It is an easy and a pleasant thing to sit and warm one's self in the fervent heat of the Apostle's glowing pages where every argument is a fire kindled from the writer's own heart; it is a far harder thing, which few are willing to attempt, to join one's self to the Apostle's company and seek to learn his mighty stride. And so it sometimes comes to pass that while in the house of the stranger, where his gospel has no place, St. Paul as a thinker is a welcome guest, he still waits admission on the threshold of those who, because they are "his own," should have been the first to receive him.

Not only was St. Paul a thinker himself, but, as his letters plainly show, he expected his converts to be thinkers

greatness of St. Paul I may quote the following from Froude's *Carlyle's Life in London*: "Of all human writings, those which perhaps have produced the deepest effect on the history of the world have been St. Paul's Epistles. What Carlyle had he had in common with St. Paul extraordinary intellectual insight, extraordinary sincerity, extraordinary resolution to speak out the truth as he perceived it, as if driven on by some internal necessity" (vol. ii., p. 286.

also. Now, while it is probably true, as recent writers like Ramsay and Dobschütz have pointed out, that the early Christian Churches were by no means so exclusively composed of the poor and uncultured as has often in the past been supposed,¹ yet these without doubt formed the main body of the converts in each of the communities founded by St. Paul. And it was to them no less than to their more highly educated fellow-Christians that letters like the Epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians, with their elaborate arguments and profound mysticism, were addressed. We get some idea of the demand which the Apostle did not hesitate to make on the minds of his readers when we remember that writings, to the careful exposition of which many modern Christian congregations would listen with ill-concealed weariness, he evidently expected would prove both intelligible and edifying to illiterate slaves, but just rescued from the ignorance and vice of heathenism. Is it, therefore, quite correct to speak, as Professor Knight does, of the "unreflective manner" in which the first disciples embraced the Christian religion? They seized it first of all, he says, "by intuition, by unsophisticated feeling, and the response of the

¹ See Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, pp. 44, 147; and *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 133. "The picture usually formed of the community at Corinth," says Dobschütz, "represents it as composed of merely poor and uncultured people. I do not believe that correct. Paul, it is true, speaks of 'not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble.' We must distinguish, however, between 'not many' and 'not any.' On the contrary, Paul indicates that people of superior rank, and no inconsiderable number of them, did belong to the Church. . . . A man like Stephanas (I. xvi. 15) must have been well off. Lawsuits concerning property were certainly not raised by slaves and poor seamen. The Apostle asked the Church for a large contribution to the charitable fund which he was collecting. If, so far as he was himself concerned, he renounced all support from the Corinthians, it was not because the Church was poorer than others, but on special grounds. People who discussed the superiority of Alexandrian allegory, or of a simple style of preaching, could not have been without considerable culture." (*Christian Life in the Primitive Church*, p. 14.) See also Orr's *Neglected Factors in the Study of the Early Progress of Christianity*.

heart," while reflection upon it followed afterwards.¹ There is truth in this doubtless; certainly it was not as a philosophy, nor in the region of the intellect, that Christianity first laid hold on mankind. But to speak as if, though the heart was stirred, the mind remained dormant and "unreflective," is to do scant justice to the converts of St. Paul. What, we may well ask, would "unreflective" readers have made of the Epistle to the Ephesians? Dr. Stalker seems much nearer the truth when he says, "Christianity, as it went through the cities of the world in St. Paul's person, must have gone as a great intellectual awakening, which taught men to use their minds investigating the profoundest problems of life."²

We have a further illustration of St. Paul's intellectual temper in the high regard for truth which all his writings reveal. First among the things whereon he would have men to think stand "Whatsoever things are true."³ First in the soul's equipment for its heavenly warfare comes the girdle of truth.⁴ "Prove all things," he writes in another place, "hold fast that which is good."⁵ The

¹ *The Christian Ethic*, pp. 9-10.

² *The Preacher and his Models*, p. 244. "If," says the same writer elsewhere, "the orations of Demosthenes, with their closely packed arguments, between whose articulations even a knife cannot be thrust, be a monument of the intellectual greatness of the Greece which listened to them with pleasure; if the plays of Shakespeare, with their deep views of life and their obscure and complex language, be a testimony to the strength of mind of the Elizabethan Age, which could enjoy such solid fare in a place of entertainment; then the Epistle to the Ephesians, which sounds the lowest depths of Christian doctrine and scales the loftiest heights of Christian experience, is a testimony to the proficiency which Paul's converts had attained under his preaching at Ephesus." (*Life of St. Paul*, p. 83.)

³ Phil. iv. 8.

⁴ Eph. vi. 14.

⁵ 1 Thess. v. 21. Dr. Denney, contrary to most authorities, adopts the inviting suggestion that a metaphor from coinage underlies these and the following words, and paraphrases thus: "Show yourselves skilful money-changers; do not accept in blind trust all the spiritual currency which you find in circulation; put it all to the test; rub it on the touch-stone; keep hold of what is genuine and of sterling value, but

work of the perfecting of the saints can never be complete until men are no longer children, "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine," but have become "followers of the truth in love."¹ Still more suggestive is the Apostle's frequent reference to the gospel as "the truth," or simply (omitting the article), as "truth."² Thus, e.g., in Ephesians i. 13, we find "the word of the truth" placed in direct apposition with "the gospel of your salvation." So too in Galatians ii. 5, 14, and Colossians i. 5, we have "the truth of the gospel," by which is plainly meant not simply the truthfulness of the gospel but the truth which is set forth in the gospel.³ Christianity, in a word, had come to St. Paul as a message of truth. "Our exhortation," he protested to the Thessalonians, "is not of error, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile."⁴ He is as confident that his doctrines are true as he is that his motives are pure.

The importance which St. Paul attached to the gospel as truth is still further seen in the earnestness of his desire for the preservation of its purity and for its full intellectual apprehension on the part of his converts. For himself he can claim that, neither corrupting the word of God nor handling it deceitfully, he commends himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.⁵

every spurious coin decline." (*Epistle to the Thessalonians*, Expositor's Bible, p. 245.)

¹ Eph. iv. 15. ἀληθεύοντες, as a glance at the commentaries will show, is a very difficult word to translate. It certainly means more than "speaking truth." The above rendering is Alford's. (See also Moule's *Ephesian Studies*, p. 194.)

² The result of the omission of the article is of course to lay special stress on the character of the apostolic message as truth.

³ For many other kindred passages see Prof. Stanton's art., "Truth," in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iv. p. 818.

⁴ 1 Thess. ii. 3.

⁵ 2 Cor. ii. 17 (R.V. marg., "making merchandise of the word of God"); iv. 2. Cp. Knox's last will and testament: "To the Faithful—before God, before His Son Jesus Christ, and before His holy angels—I protest that God, by my mouth, be I never so abject, has shown you His truth

In like manner he urges upon Titus in his doctrine to show "uncorruptness," and upon Timothy to prove himself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."¹ And if he is anxious for the maintenance of the truth of the gospel by those who preach it, not less so is he for its full and intelligent reception by those who hear it. "Brethren," he writes to the Corinthians, "be not children in mind; howbeit in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men."² It is surely a significant fact that each of the Epistles of the Captivity (with the exception of the short letter to Philemon) contains a prayer for its readers that they may be led into a fuller understanding of the truth of the gospel which they had received: "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened"; "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may approve the things that are excellent"; "We cease not to pray and make request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding . . . increasing in the knowledge of God."³ If it be said that in all this St. Paul is thinking of much

in all simplicity. None have I corrupted. None have I defrauded. Merchandise have I not made—to God's glory I write—of the glorious Evangel of Jesus Christ; but, according to the measure of the grace granted unto me, I have divided the Word of Truth in just parts."

¹ Titus ii. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 15. Many authorities would add 1 Tim. vi. 20, and 2 Tim. i. 14; but I do not feel sure that doctrine is the "deposit" there referred to. No interpretation of *παραθήκη* can be regarded as satisfactory which is not applicable to 2 Tim. i. 12 as well as to the two passages named, and there the idea of a body of doctrine seems wholly out of place. (See R. F. Horton's *Pastoral Epistles*, Century Bible, p. 139.)

² 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

³ Eph. i. 16-18; Phil. i. 9-10; Col. i. 9, 11.

more than the intellectual apprehension of truth, that indeed the intellect alone can never fully apprehend spiritual truth, the answer is that this is true, but it is nothing to the point. Of itself the mind can do nothing in religion; it is none the less true that while the mind remains unawakened the Apostle's prayer must remain unanswered. The appeal of the gospel is to the whole man; and St. Paul was so great as a Christian because in him it found so complete a response.¹

II.

When from the New Testament we turn to the subsequent history of the Church we are conscious at once of a rapid and mournful descent. The intellectual virtues seem to suffer immediate and disastrous eclipse. Forgeries and pious frauds meet us at every step. Men—Christian men—are very careful of what they call "the truth," very careless of truth. Through long centuries it seems (as a well-known writer says²) as if there were no such thing

¹ Two or three other passages in St. Paul's Epistles strictly relevant to our subject, but not referred to in the foregoing brief discussion, may be brought together in a note. Now that English readers have the Revised Version in their hands we may perhaps hope that even obscurantism will at last cease to talk about "oppositions of science falsely so called," under the impression that it is quoting Scripture (1 Tim. vi. 20). That there are "imagination" (or "reasonings") to which the gospel must oppose itself and seek to overthrow is inevitable (2 Cor. x. 5), but to instance this, or indeed any other word of St. Paul, as censuring the free exercise of intelligence in religion, is, as Dr. Denney says, too absurd. Rom. xii. 2, Eph. iv. 23, remind us that the mind, through its renewing, is to share in the redemptive work of Christ; and in 1 Cor. iii. 22 ("all things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, etc.") we have a striking illustration of that noble liberality of mind which is so marked a feature of the Apostle's whole career: "Paul would say, ye do yourselves a wrong by listening to one form of the truth only; every teacher who declares what he himself lives on has something to teach you; to despise or neglect any form of Christian teaching is so far to impoverish yourselves. "All things are yours," not this teacher or that, in whom you glory, but all teachers of Christ." (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Expositor's Bible, by Marcus Dods, p. 95.)

² "J.B." of the *Christian World*.

as an ethic of the intellect at all, as if mental morality had ceased to be. The picture is not, indeed, quite so unrelieved in its blackness as Mr. Lecky would lead us to suppose. The faults upon which he comments with such severity are not peculiar to early Christianity; they are the faults of the general intellectual character of the time. Moreover, as Mr. Lecky himself has pointed out, both Jews and Christians, by their refusal to act a lie in religious matters and to sanction, either by their presence or their example, what in their hearts they regarded as baseless superstitions, stand forward as representatives of a moral principle which was wholly unknown even among the most truth-loving philosophers of the Pagan world.¹ To whom is it, as Dean Church pertinently asks, that the world owes the word "martyr"? Nevertheless, when all necessary qualifications and explanations have been made, this chapter remains one of the worst in the long and often blotted record of the Church's past. To one group only of the ugly and undeniable facts brief reference may be made.

"We beseech you," St. Paul wrote in one of his earliest letters, "that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by *epistle as from us*, as that the day of the Lord is now present"²—so early did falsehood take upon itself to do the Lord's work. And the trail of the forger is over all these early centuries. "The immense number of forged documents," says Mr. Lecky, "is one of the most disgraceful features of the Church history of the first few centuries."³ Here are a few illustrations culled almost at random. "Christian gratitude and reverence," says Milman, "soon began to be discontented with the silence of the authentic writings as to the fate of the twelve chosen

¹ *History of European Morals*, vol. i. p. 404.

² 2 Thess. ii. 2.

History of European Morals, vol. i. p. 341 (footnote), see also p. 376.

companions of Christ. It began first with some modest respect for truth, but soon with bold defiance of probability to brighten their obscure course, till each might be traced by the blaze of miracle into remote regions of the world, where it is clear that, if they had penetrated, no record of their existence was likely to survive."¹ On the ground of a supposed correspondence with St. Paul, the philosopher Seneca was for several centuries regarded as a Christian disciple; now by all but universal consent the letters are rejected as a forgery.² The *Acts of Paul and Thekla* was the composition of a presbyter who, when he was convicted, confessed, Tertullian tells us, that he had done it "out of love to Paul."³ A letter which the Emperor Marcus Aurelius was reputed to have written to the Roman Senate, acknowledging how effective had been the aid he had received from Christian prayers, and forbidding anyone hereafter to molest the followers of the new religion, is declared both by Mr. George Long and Dean Farrar to be a stupid and impudent forgery.⁴ "The Ignatian Epistles, even if some be in substance genuine, were undoubtedly all interpolated and some fabricated in the interests of the episcopal government of the Church." But perhaps the most amazing of these pious frauds are the so-called "Sibylline Oracles" in which predictions of the Messiah and His sufferings, and of the overthrow of the Roman power, are put into the lips of the ancient heathen, in order, as Milman says, to enlist these authorized interpreters of futurity on the side of the Church, and to compel Paganism in its most hallowed language and by

¹ *History of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 18.

² See the first of these papers, *EXPOSITOR*, January 1905, p. 40 (foot-note).

³ See two admirable papers on "The Moral Character of Pseudonymous Books" by the late Professor Candlish, *EXPOSITOR*, 4th series, vol. 4.

⁴ Long's edition of the *Thoughts of Marcus Aurelius*, p. 19; Farrar's *Seekers after God*, p. 103.

the mouth of its most inspired prophets to confess its own approaching dissolution.¹

The condemnation and punishment of the presbyter referred to above shows that the Church was not wholly without a better mind on this subject ;² and, of course, not all who sought to serve the cause of truth with the instruments of iniquity were themselves to blame. It was a credulous age ; literary criticism was barely in its infancy ; and it is perhaps small wonder that in the fervour of their new faith Christian men often fell an easy prey to clever and unscrupulous partisans. But however leniently we judge the deceived, it is impossible to acquit their deceivers. If it be urged that they did what they did from no selfish or worldly motive, but honestly believing that deception in a good cause is both lawful and expedient, we can only reply that offence and apology alike only show to what depths even good men may descend once they have set their foot on falsehood's steep and slippery slope. Bitter taunts like that of a famous German historian, who classes "Christian veracity" with "Punic faith" owe all their sting to the ignoble manipulations of these traffickers in deceit for the kingdom of heaven's sake. To-day we owe it to ourselves, to the world, and to our Lord, to make it plain that henceforth we will purge ourselves of all complicity with "this age-long and deadly infraction of the ethic of the intellect."

III.

If from the past we turn to the present, and inquire whether in the life of the Church to-day the great Pauline traditions are being maintained, the answer must be both "Yes" and "No." We have moved far from the day when leaders of religion could condone and make use of

¹ *History of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 120. See also Lecky, vol. i. p. 376.

² Lecky, however, says that this is the only instance of the kind known to him. (Vol. i., p. 376, footnote.)

literary falsehoods in the interests of the Church. So great, indeed, has been the change that we are perhaps sometimes in danger of judging with undue severity the lapses of an age whose moral standards were not and could not be our own. But even yet the place of the intellect in religion is but very imperfectly apprehended by many Christian people. By some it is regarded as an alien power whose every movement faith must watch with a jealous eye; by others, as a servant for whom in the sphere of religion no service can be found. It is, perhaps, our lack of intellectual interest in the contents of the Christian revelation which, in the matter of the intellectual virtues, divides us to-day most decisively from St. Paul. The dearth among us of really great theologians, the popular but unspeakably foolish depreciation of theology, the deep gulf that so often separates the Christian evangelist from the Christian scholar, the sheer intellectual laziness (no milder term can adequately describe the facts) of many Christian congregations, all bear witness, each in its own way, to our feeble recognition of the duties of the intellect in the service of God.

How fraught with peril to all the best interests of the Church of Christ such a condition is, a moment's thought will be sufficient to show.¹ We, like the Apostle himself, are debtors "both to Greeks and Barbarians, both to the

¹ "I believe that in all the great movements of religious reform that have permanently elevated the religious life of Christendom there has been a renewal of intellectual interest in the Christian revelation. . . . If at the present time the religious life of the Church is languid, and if in its enterprises there is little of audacity and of vehemence, a partial explanation is to be found in that decline of intellectual interest in the contents of the Christian Faith which has characterized the last hundred or hundred and fifty years of our history. . . . The intellect has its rights as well as the conscience and the heart, and if religious truth does not meet the just demands of the intellect as well as of the moral nature, it will be regarded with languid interest, and will at last be either silently abandoned or rejected with open hostility and scorn." (*Lectures on the Ephesians*, by R. W. Dale, pp. 236-8.)

wise and to the foolish." It is always at the risk of failing in our whole duty that we neglect either half of it. That the Church is debtor to the poor, the illiterate and the unprivileged, needs not to be said; not less is it debtor to them that know. It has to make its faith reasonable to reasonable minds. Every day men drift silently and sorrowfully into unbelief simply because they have failed to find the reconciling point between the faith of childhood and the larger knowledge which the years have brought. Their general intellectual outlook has gone on slowly widening, while their religious outlook has remained unchanged; then when the shock of discovery comes scepticism seems the only refuge. Now always to such—and their number grows daily—the Church has a duty as difficult as it is imperative. Unhappily, in our clumsiness we sometimes do nothing but create further difficulties. What only skill and tact and patience almost infinite ought even to attempt, we vainly think to accomplish by an earnest but unintelligent evangelism which thrusts its harsh alternatives, like an unthinking ramrod, among the most exquisite sensibilities of an anguished soul. Earnest evangelism we do assuredly need, but it is useless to hide from ourselves the fact that not a little present-day evangelism, on both sides of the Atlantic, by its shrill dogmatism and obsolete theology, is preparing the gravest embarrassments for the Church of to-morrow.¹ When will Christian teachers learn that in order to edify the souls of the simple it is never necessary to affront the intelligence of the wise? What is needed is that our thinkers and theologians should become our evangelists; or, if this seem a counsel of perfection, then that our evangelists should themselves become thinkers and theo-

¹ The writer may be pardoned for saying that he speaks as one who for many years has been seeking to do the work of an evangelist in connexion with a large city mission.

logians. For certain it is—so, at least, it seems to the present writer—that the only evangelism by which England can be won and held for Christ is the evangelism in which zeal and culture, religion and theology, the heart and the intellect, are yoked in one common service, the evangelism of Chalmers and Wesley and Luther and St. Paul.

Another illustration of the perils which arise from our inadequate intellectual apprehension of the truth of the gospel is seen in those panics of fear which still sometimes seize the Christian public when some new doctrine is first propounded by students of science or religion. It is easy from our loftier vantage ground to-day to lament the ignorant clamour with which in the past good men have assailed the findings of Christian scholarship; the pity of it is we are so quick to repeat their blunders. It may well be that Christian scholars are not always as mindful as they should be of the susceptibilities of their fellow-Christians; but can any indiscretion on their part excuse the blind alarm with which, e.g., the modern critical inquiry concerning the composition of our Scriptures is greeted in many quarters to-day? It may not be our duty to have a definite opinion on the questions at issue; it is our duty to keep a cool head and avoid all hysterics. After all, the questions which scholarship raises scholarship must decide. When wise men err, wiser men—not simply better men—must put them right. As for us whose are neither the duties nor the responsibilities of the scholar, we must have faith in God, and go on with our work. We must cultivate the scientist's fearlessness of facts. For, indeed, the facts—the facts, I say, not every speculation regarding them—are God's facts; it is He and not we who are responsible for them; and in the end it cannot hurt but must help us to know them, whatever they be. Here also the one thing needful, the one thing which belongs unto our peace, is that the roots of our minds strike deep down and

clasp themselves about the great verities of our faith ; then whatever tempests be abroad they will harm us no more than the noise of the wind in their branches harms the strong oaks of the forest. Wherefore, "be not children in mind ; but in mind be men."

GEORGE JACKSON.

JERUSALEM FROM REHOBOAM TO HEZEKIAH.

(Concluded.)

6. AMAZIAH, circa 797-789 or 779.

THE history, confined in the last reign to Jerusalem, spreads in this upon wider arenas, but only to return to the capital with disastrous effects.

The murdered king was succeeded by his son, Amaziah : proof that the assassins had been provoked not by hatred to the dynasty, but by what they regarded as their victim's own fault, whether in the surrender to Hazael or in the murder of Zechariah. Amaziah, indeed, appears to have owed his elevation to the assassins, for we read that *as soon as* (which means *not until*) *the kingdom was firmly in his grasp he slew them*. It is noteworthy not only that a usurping faction should thus find the house of David indispensable to the kingdom, but that this house should be able so bravely to show its independence of every faction and its ability to punish even more or less justifiable assaults upon its representatives. This endurance of dynastic authority is not the only relief to the depressing tales of intrigue, tumult and bloodshed, in which the history of Jerusalem at this period so largely consists. For the execution of the murderers of Joash was signalized by an innovation, which betrays the existence of impulses—to whatever source they may be assigned—surely making for a higher morality. The editor records that Amaziah did not also slay the