

salvation. In cases, therefore, such as I have now described, they thought it better that the rite should be performed by a layman, than that it should not be performed at all; and they justified this deviation from the established discipline of the Church, by the notion that the priestly character is impressed upon all Christians indifferently at their baptism. Still our author's reasoning clearly proves his opinion to have been, that this latent power, if it may so be termed, was only to be called into actual exercise in cases of necessity. Laymen who in the present day take upon themselves to administer the rite of baptism in cases in which the attendance of a regularly ordained minister can be procured, must not appeal to the authority of Tertullian in defence of their rash assumption of the sacred office.

Were it not for a passage in the tract *de Baptismo*,<sup>1</sup> in which the inherent right of the laity to baptize is expressly asserted, we should have been inclined to regard Tertullian's reasoning as an argument *ad hominem* of the following kind:—"It is a favourite notion with you (laymen) that all Christians are priests, and may consequently exercise the sacerdotal functions. Be consistent with yourselves. If you assume the power of the clergy, conform yourselves to the rule of life prescribed to them. Do not say, the clergy may not contract a second marriage, but the laity may. The distinction between the clergy and laity is a distinction of office, and does not affect the relation in which they stand to the great rules of morality. These they are both alike bound to observe; and what is criminal in the clergy is also criminal in the laity." Viewed in this light, Tertullian's reasoning is correct, though it proceeds upon the erroneous assumption that a second marriage is forbidden to the clergy.

With regard to the twenty-fourth Article, although our author does not expressly tell us in what language the service of the Church was performed, the necessary inference from his writings is, that it was performed in a language with which the whole congregation was familiar. In order to remove the distrust with which the Roman governors regarded the Christian assemblies, he states, in the *Apology*, the object of those meetings.<sup>2</sup> "We

<sup>1</sup> C. 17.

<sup>2</sup> "Corpus sumus de conscientia religionis, et disciplinae unitate, et spei foedere. Coimus ad Deum, ut quasi manu facta precationibus ambiamus. Hæc vis Deo grata est. Oramus etiam pro imperatoribus, pro ministris eorum ac potestatibus, pro statu



form," he says, "a body, being joined together by a community of religion, discipline, and hope. We come together for the purpose of offering our prayers to God, and as it were extorting by our numbers and united supplications a compliance with our desires. Such violence is pleasing to God. We pray also for the emperors, for their officers, for all who are in authority; we pray that the course of this world may be peaceably ordered, and the consummation of all things be deferred. We come together for the purpose of reading the Holy Scriptures, when the circumstances of the times appear to call for any particular admonitions, or for the careful discussion of any particular topics. Of this at least we are sure, that our faith will be nourished, our hope elevated, our confidence confirmed, by listening to the words of Scripture; and that the Christian rule of life will be impressed upon us with increased effect, through the inculcation of holy precepts." It is evident that none of the objects which Tertullian here enumerates could have been attained if the prayers had been offered, or the Scriptures read, in a tongue to which the majority of the persons assembled were strangers.

We now proceed to the twenty-fifth Article—De Sacramentis. The controversy between the Romish and English Churches respecting the number of sacraments seems in a great measure to have arisen from the laxity with which the Latin Fathers used the word *sacramentum*.<sup>1</sup> In classical writers *sacramentum* means an oath or promise, ratified by a sacred or religious ceremony. Thus the oath taken by the military was called *sacramentum*; and in this sense the word is frequently used by Tertullian.<sup>2</sup> In strict conformity with this its original signification, it is used to express the promise made by Christians in baptism.<sup>3</sup> From the

seculi, pro rerum quiete, pro morâ finis. Coimus ad Literarum Divinarum commemorationem, si quid præsentium temporum qualitas aut præmonere cogit aut recognoscere. Certè fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus," c. 39, quoted in chap. iv. p. 110. The expression *quasi manufactâ precationibus ambiamus*, implies that all present joined in prayer. The passage in the second tract *ad Uxorem*, c. 6, relates rather to family devotion. "Quæ Dei mentio? quæ Christi invocatio? ubi fomenta fidei de Scripturarum interjectione? ubi Spiritus? ubi refrigerium? ubi divina benedictio?"

<sup>1</sup> Now that the word *sacrament* has been strictly defined, the case is very different; and the question between the two Churches respecting the number of sacraments becomes of great importance.

<sup>2</sup> "Nemo in castra hostium transit, nisi projectis armis suis, nisi destitutis signis et Sacramentis Principis sui." *De Spectaculis*, c. 24; *de Idololatriâ*, c. 19; *de Coronâ*, c. 11; *Scorpiace*, c. 4; *de Jejuniis*, c. 10; *ad Martyres*, c. 3.

<sup>3</sup> "De ipso Sacramento nostro interpretaremur nobis, adversas esse fidei ejusmodi artes. Quomodo enim renuntiamus Diabolo et Angelis ejus, si eos facimus."



oath the transition was easy to the ceremony by which it was ratified. Thus *sacramentum* came to signify any religious ordinance,<sup>1</sup> and in general to stand for that which in the Greek is expressed by the word *μυστήριον*—any emblematical action of a sacred import; any external rite having an internal or sacred meaning. By a similar transition, the word was also used to express that which the convert promised to observe—the whole Christian doctrine and rule of life.<sup>2</sup>

With respect to baptism and the Eucharist, Tertullian calls the former *Sacramentum Aquæ*,<sup>3</sup> *Lavacri*,<sup>4</sup> *Fidei*; <sup>5</sup> the latter, *Sacramentum Eucharistiæ*.<sup>6</sup> In the tract *de Baptismo* we find the expression, *sacramentum sanctificationis*; <sup>7</sup> which, though not applied to the external rite of baptism, conveys the idea contained in the definition of a sacrament given in our Catechism—"an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." Notwithstanding the laxity with which Tertullian uses the word, I do not find it applied to any of the five Romish sacraments, excepting marriage, and then with a particular reference to Ephesians v. 32, where he renders the words *μέγα μυστήριον*, *magnum sacramentum*.<sup>8</sup> In the tract *against Praxeas*<sup>9</sup> I find the expression *unctionis sacramentum*; but Tertullian is there speaking of the anointing of our Saviour by the Holy Ghost.

Soon after the time of Tertullian, a controversy arose respecting the validity of heretical baptism. Cyprian contended that it was invalid, and that all persons so baptized, if they wished afterwards to become members of the Church, must be re-baptized.

*De Idololatriâ*, c. 6. "Semel jam in Sacramenti testatione ejeratæ." *De Coronâ*, c. 13.

<sup>1</sup> *Apology*, cc. 7, 47; *ad Nationes*, l. i. c. 16, *sub fine*; *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 26, "Dominus palam edixit, sine ullâ significatione alicujus tecti Sacramenti," c. 40, *et passim*.

<sup>2</sup> "Hoc prius capite, et omnem hic *Sacramenti nostri* ordinem haurite." *Apology*, c. 14, *sub fine*, compared with c. 16, *sub fine*. "Quæ omnia, conversi jam ad demonstrationem *religionis nostræ*, repurgavimus." So in c. 19, "In quo videtur thesaurus collocatus totius Judaici Sacramenti, et inde etiam nostri." See also *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 20, *sub fine*. "Addita est ampliatio *Sacramento*." *De Baptismo*, c. 13, *et passim*.

<sup>3</sup> *De Baptismo*, cc. 1, 12.

<sup>4</sup> *De Virginibus velandis*, c. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *De Animâ*, c. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *De Coronâ*, c. 3.

<sup>7</sup> C. 4. "Igitur omnes aquæ de pristinâ prærogativâ *Sacramentum sanctificationis* consequuntur, invocato Deo." All water acquires from ancient prerogative (because the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, Gen. i. 2), the sacramental power of sanctification ("vim sanctificandi," as Tertullian afterwards expresses himself), through prayer to God.

<sup>8</sup> *De Jejunis*, c. 3.

<sup>9</sup> C. 28, *sub initio*.



Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, thought otherwise; and the Church, though long divided on the subject, appears finally to have adopted his opinion. All baptism by water performed in the name of the Holy Trinity, by whomsoever administered, was deemed to be valid and not to be repeated.<sup>1</sup> Had the dispute existed in our author's time, it is evident, from the general tenor of his writings, that he would have sided with Cyprian.<sup>2</sup> On one occasion he denies that heretics are entitled to the name of Christians; they could not possibly possess that priestly character which he supposed all Christians to receive at their baptism.<sup>3</sup> It is indeed probable that in this instance, as in others, Cyprian formed his opinion from the perusal of *his master's* works. The case which was discussed in Cyprian's day differed in one material point from that contemplated by our twenty-sixth Article. The disqualification in the minister, which was supposed to affect the validity of the sacraments when administered by him, existed *ab initio*; he was not a member of the true Church. The case which our Article has in view is that of a minister regularly ordained, who after ordination falls into gross immoralities; and the question arising out of it is, whether his profligacy vitiates the sacraments. This question does not appear to have presented itself to our author, nor could it frequently happen in those days, when the discipline of the Church was still maintained in its original purity and vigour. An openly vicious minister would then have been immediately degraded, and cut off from the communion of the Church. Standing, therefore, on the footing of a heathen, he would have been deemed incapable of administering any of the rites of the Church.

We shall defer the consideration of the Articles relating to baptism and the Lord's Supper until we come to speak of the rites and ceremonies of the Church. Indeed, we observe nothing in Tertullian's works which bears upon the twenty-ninth or thirty-first Article. We proceed therefore to the thirty-second Article, *De Conjugio Sacerdotum*. That the clergy in Tertullian's time were not obliged to lead a life of celibacy, must be admitted by every person who has perused his writings. Yet the austerity of his character would certainly have impelled him to impose

<sup>1</sup> Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, l. v. sect. 62.

<sup>2</sup> See particularly *de Baptismo*, c. 15. We should, however, bear in mind that the heretics, whom Tertullian had in view, were the Marcionites, Valentinians, etc., who denied that the God of the Old Testament was the Supreme God.

<sup>3</sup> "Si enim Hæretici sunt, Christiani esse non possunt." *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 37. See also c. 16,



upon them this restriction, could he have discovered any plausible pretence for doing it.<sup>1</sup> He remarks with evident satisfaction, that of all the apostles, as far as his researches extended, St. Peter alone was married,<sup>2</sup>—and having admitted in the tract *de Exhortatione Castitatis* that the apostles were allowed to carry about their wives with them,<sup>3</sup> he afterwards, in the tract *de Monogamiâ*,<sup>4</sup> gives a different interpretation of the passage, and asserts that the females there spoken of were not wives, but women who ministered to the apostles, as Martha and others had done to Christ. The arguments, however, by which he endeavours to prove that laymen ought not to contract a second marriage, show that the clergy were at liberty to marry once;<sup>5</sup> and his interpretation of the texts in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus leads to the same conclusion.<sup>6</sup> We know also that he was himself married; but the Romish commentators attempt to get rid of this perplexing fact by saying that, when he became a priest, he ceased to cohabit with his wife.<sup>7</sup>

In our observations upon the government of the Church,<sup>8</sup> we referred to a passage in the *Apology*, in which Tertullian says, that in the assemblies of the Christians censures were pronounced and offenders cut off from the communion of the Church.<sup>9</sup> It may, however, be inferred from his words, that Excommunication, the subject of our thirty-third Article, did not then imply an interruption of all civil intercourse with the offending party, but only an exclusion from all participation in religious exercises—"a communicatione orationis, et conventûs, et omnis sancti commercii."

<sup>1</sup> "Quanti igitur et quantæ in *Ecclesiasticis Ordinibus* de continentia consentur, qui Deo nubere maluerunt, qui carnis suæ honorem restituerunt, quique se jam illius ævi filios dicaverunt, occidentes in se concupiscentiam libidinis, et totum illud quod intra Paradisum non potuit admitti." *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, cap. ult. *sub fine*. This passage proves that, although many ecclesiastics led a life of celibacy, it was not required of all.

<sup>2</sup> *De Monogamiâ*, c. 8.

<sup>3</sup> C. 8.

<sup>4</sup> C. 8, 1 Cor. ix. 5. This change of opinion seems to confirm the statement made in chap. i. p. 30, that Tertullian, when he wrote the tract *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, had not embraced the tenets of Montanus in all their rigour.

<sup>5</sup> See *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 7; *de Monogamiâ*, c. 12, quoted in chap. iv. note 1, p. 113.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 6.

<sup>7</sup> The reader will find in the *Life of Tertullian*, by Pamelius, under the year 201, the reasons alleged by that commentator in support of the opinion mentioned in the text; and in Allix's *Dissertation*, c. 2, reasons for doubting its correctness. If Tertullian and his wife had separated by mutual consent, it seems scarcely necessary for him to have cautioned her against contracting a second marriage after his death.

<sup>8</sup> Chap. iv. p. 125.

<sup>9</sup> C. 39.



The thirty-fourth Article of our Church is entitled *De Traditionibus Ecclesiasticis*; but in our remarks upon the sixth Article we have already laid before our readers all the information which the writings of Tertullian supply with respect both to traditional doctrines and practices.

Passing over the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth Articles,<sup>1</sup> we proceed to the thirty-seventh, *De Civilibus Magistratibus*. It is evident, from various passages of Tertullian's works, that he deemed the exercise of the functions of the magistracy incompatible with the profession of Christianity, not merely on account of the danger to which, under a pagan government, a magistrate was continually exposed of being betrayed into some idolatrous act,<sup>2</sup> but also because the dress and other insignia savoured of those pomps and vanities, those works of the devil, which Christians renounce at their baptism.<sup>3</sup> He does not expressly say that capital punishments are prohibited by the gospel;<sup>4</sup> but he certainly thought that Christians ought not to sit as judges in criminal causes,<sup>5</sup> or attend the amphitheatre, or be present at an execution.<sup>6</sup>

In the treatise *de Coronâ* he enters into a regular discussion of the question, whether it is allowable for a Christian to engage in the military profession.<sup>7</sup> This question he determines in the negative, for reasons sufficiently weak and frivolous.<sup>8</sup> It might, he was aware, be objected that neither did John the Baptist command the soldiers who came to his baptism, nor Christ the

<sup>1</sup> *De Homiliis*, and *de Episcoporum et Ministrorum Consecratione*.

<sup>2</sup> "Et enim nobis ab omni gloriæ et dignitatis ardore frigentibus nulla est necessitas cœtûs, nec ulla magis res aliena, quam publica." *Apology*, c. 38. See also cc. 31 and 46. "Si de modestiâ certem, ecce Pythagoras apud Thurios, Zeno apud Prienenses tyrannidem affectant: Christianus vero nec ædilitatem."

<sup>3</sup> *De Spectaculis*, c. 12. But see particularly *de Idololatriâ*, cc. 17, 18, where the question is regularly discussed.

<sup>4</sup> "Nec isti porro exitus violenti, quos justitia decernit, *violentie vindex*." *De Animâ*, c. 56.

<sup>5</sup> "Jam vero quæ sunt potestatis, neque judicet (Christianus) de capite alicujus vel pudore (feras enim de pecuniâ), neque damnet, neque prædamnet, neminem vinciat, neminem recludat, aut torqueat." *De Idololatriâ*, c. 17. Tertullian calls the judicial proceedings of the magistrates *justitiam seculi*, an expression which implies an indirect condemnation. *De Animâ*, c. 33. Compare *de Spectaculis*, c. 15, "Seculum Dei est, secularia autem diaboli;" and *de Idololatriâ*, c. 18, "Nam Dæmonia magistratus sunt seculi."

<sup>6</sup> *De Spectaculis*, c. 19.

<sup>7</sup> C. 11. Compare *de Idololatriâ*, c. 19.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, that a Christian, who has pledged his allegiance to Christ in baptism, cannot afterwards take the military oath to a mortal monarch.



centurion, to renounce the military life; but he gets rid of this objection by drawing a distinction between the case of one who is actually a soldier when he embraces Christianity, and that of a Christian who becomes a soldier. In the *Apology*,<sup>1</sup> however, where our author's object is to prove that Christians are not unprofitable to the State, he says that they were to be found in the Roman armies; and this fact is necessarily assumed in the celebrated story of the Thundering Legion.

We find nothing in Tertullian's works from which it can be inferred that he maintained the doctrine—against which the thirty-eighth Article is directed—of a community of goods among Christians, *as touching the right, title, and possession of the same*, though he describes them as contributing without reserve from their own substance towards the relief of their brethren, and living as if there was no distinction of property among them.<sup>2</sup>

With respect to oaths—the subject of the thirty-ninth Article—he appears to have understood our Saviour's injunction, "Swear not at all," literally, and to have thought that an oath was not under any circumstances allowable.<sup>3</sup>

Among King Edward's Articles is one against the millenarians. In my account of Tertullian I stated that he had adopted the notion of a millennium,<sup>4</sup> and referred to a story in the third

<sup>1</sup> "Navigamus et nos vobiscum, et vobiscum militamus," c. 42.

<sup>2</sup> "Itaque qui animo animâque miscemur, nihil de rei communicatione dubitamus; omnia indiscreta sunt apud nos, præter uxores." *Apology*, c. 39.

<sup>3</sup> "Taceo de perjurio, quando ne jurare quidem liceat." *De Idololatriâ*, c. 11.

"Ne juret quidem," c. 17. See also c. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. i. p. 9. We will give the passage at full length. *Adv. Marcionem*, l. iii. c. 24. "De restitutione vero Judææ, quam et ipsi Judæi ita ut describitur sperant, locorum et regionum nominibus inducti, quomodo *allegorica interpretatio*" (compare *de Res. Carnis*, c. 62) "in Christum et in Ecclesiam et habitum et fructum ejus *spiritualiter* competat, et longum est persequi, et in alio opere digestum, quod inscribimus *De Spe Fidelium*; et in præsentem vel eo otiosum, quia non de terrenâ, sed de cœlesti promissione sit quæstio." (Compare l. iii. c. 16.)

"Nam et confitemur *in terrâ nobis regnum repromissum*, sed ante cœlum, sed alio statu, utpote post resurrectionem, in mille annos, in civitate divini operis, Hierusalem, cœlo delatâ, quam et Apostolus matrem nostram sursum designat, et *πολίτευμα* nostrum, id est, municipatum, in cœlis esse pronuntians, alicui utique cœlesti civitati eum deputat. Hanc et Ezechiel novit, et Apostolus Ioannes vidit, et qui apud fidem nostram est Novæ Prophetiæ Sermo testatur, ut etiam effigiem civitatis ante repræsentationem ejus conspectui futuram in signum prædicaret. Denique proxime expunctum est Orientali Expeditione. Constat enim, Ethnicis quoque testibus, in Judæâ per dies quadraginta matutinis momentis civitatem de cœlo pependisse, omni mœniorum habitu, evanescentem de profectu diei et alias de proximo nullam. Hanc dicimus excipiendis resurrectione Sanctis et refovendis



book *against Marcion* of a city which had been seen in Judæa suspended in the air for forty successive days during the early part of the morning. This city, according to him, was the image of the New Jerusalem, destined for the reception of the saints during their reign of a thousand years on earth, in the course of which their resurrection will be gradually effected according to their different degrees of merit, and which is to be followed by the conflagration of the world and the general judgment. Tertullian states, however, that the enjoyments and delights of this New Jerusalem will be purely, or as Mosheim understands the passage, chiefly spiritual. In the tract *de Pudicitia* he connects the hope of Christians with the restoration of the Jews.<sup>1</sup> We may take this opportunity of observing that he notices and ridicules the Platonic or Pythagorean notion that, after an interval of a thousand years had elapsed, the dead are recalled to life, and again run their course on earth.<sup>2</sup>

Another of King Edward's Articles was directed against those who maintained that all men, even the most impious, after suffering punishment for a certain time, would be finally saved. Tertullian appears to have coincided in opinion with the framers of this Article. He asserts distinctly that all men will not be saved,<sup>3</sup> and maintains that the punishments of the wicked will endure for ever.<sup>4</sup>

In the early ages of the Church,<sup>5</sup> a notion was very generally prevalent among its members that the end of the world was at hand; and sceptical writers have insinuated that the apostles

omnium bonorum *utique spiritalium* copiâ, in compensationem eorum quæ in seculo vel despeximus vel amisimus, a Deo prospectam. Siquidem et justum et Deo dignum illic quoque exsultare famulos ejus, ubi sunt et afflicti in nomine ipsius. Hæc ratio regni terreni: post cujus mille annos, intra quam ætatem concluditur Sanctorum resurrectio pro meritis maturius vel tardius resurgentium, tunc et mundi destructione et judicii conflagratione commissâ, demutati in atomo in angelicam substantiam, scilicet per illud incorruptelæ superindumentum, transferemur in cœleste regnum." See Mosheim, "De Rebus Christianis ante Constantinum." *Seculum tertium*, c. 38.

<sup>1</sup> "Christianum enim restitutione Judæi gaudere et non dolere conveniet; siquidem tota spes nostra cum reliquâ Israelis expectatione conjuncta est," c. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *De Animâ*, c. 30, *sub fine*.

<sup>3</sup> "Non enim omnes salvi fiunt." *Adv. Marcionem*, l. i. c. 24.

<sup>4</sup> *De Animâ*, c. 33, *sub fine*; *Apology*, cc. 48, 49.

<sup>5</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 5, *sub fine*; *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 6, from 1 Cor. vii. 29; *de Monogamiâ*, c. 16; *de Fugâ in Persecutione*, c. 12. "Antichristo jam instante." In the two passages last cited, Tertullian speaks of the near approach of the dreadful persecutions which were to follow the appearance of Antichrist. *De Pudicitia*, c. 1, *sub initio*; *de Jejuniis*, c. 12, *sub initio*.



themselves were not entirely exempt from this erroneous persuasion. That the notion took its rise from expressions in the apostolic writings may be admitted; but that it existed in the minds of the writers themselves is far from certain, since the passages may very reasonably be supposed to refer to the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the total subversion of the Jewish polity. The general belief, as stated by Tertullian, was that the end of the world would immediately follow the downfall of the Roman Empire, which was conceived to be the obstacle mentioned by St. Paul to the revelation of the man of sin.<sup>1</sup> Our author urges this belief as a reason why the Christians, far from entertaining hostile designs against the empire, prayed earnestly for its continuance and prosperity.<sup>2</sup> He is not, however, always consistent with himself; for we have seen that in the tract *de Oratione* he condemns those who pray for the longer continuance of the present world, on the ground that such a petition is at variance with the clause in the Lord's Prayer, *Thy kingdom come*.<sup>3</sup>

Having now gone through the Articles of our Church, and laid before the reader such passages of Tertullian's works as appeared to throw any light upon the doctrines contained in them, we will briefly compare the result of our inquiries with the account given by Mosheim of the doctrines of the Church in the second century. His first remark is, that in this century the simplicity of the gospel began to be corrupted and its beauty to be impaired by the misguided diligence of men, who endeavoured to explain and define the Christian system by a reference to the tenets of pagan philosophy.<sup>4</sup> We have seen<sup>5</sup> that Tertullian was not insensible to the mischief which had arisen from this cause, although, with respect to the particular instance alleged by Mosheim in illustration of the above remark, he appears himself to have been in some degree liable to censure. "Plato," says Mosheim,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 6. "Quis? nisi Romanus status, cujus abscessio in decem reges dispersa Antichristum superducet." *De Res. Carnis*, c. 24.

<sup>2</sup> "Est et alia major necessitas nobis orandi pro Imperatoribus, etiam pro omni statu imperii rebusque Romanis, qui vim maximam universo orbi imminentem, ipsamque clausulam seculi acerbitates horrendas comminantem, Romani imperii commeatu scimus retardari; itaque nolumus experiri, et dum precamur differri, Romanæ diuturnitati favemus." *Apology*, c. 32. See also c. 39, *pro morâ finis. Ad Scapulam*, c. 2. "Cum toto Romano imperio, quousque seculum stabit; tamdiu enim stabit."

<sup>3</sup> C. 5. Compare *de Res. Carnis*, c. 22, *sub initio*, referred to in chap. i. p. 10, note 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Century* ii. chap. iii. sect. 2, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. iii. p. 86.



“had taught that the souls of heroes, of illustrious men, and eminent philosophers alone ascended after death into the mansions of light and felicity; while those of the generality, weighed down by their lusts and passions, sunk into the infernal regions, whence they were not permitted to emerge before they were purified from their turpitude and corruption. This doctrine was seized with avidity by the Platonic Christians, and applied as a commentary upon that of Jesus. Hence a notion prevailed that the *martyrs* only entered upon a state of happiness immediately after death; and that for the rest a certain obscure region was assigned, in which they were to be imprisoned until the second coming of Christ, or at least until they were purified from their various pollutions.” Our author cannot with propriety be denominated a Platonic Christian, yet he certainly entertained the opinion on which Mosheim here animadverts. In this instance, as in many others, there appears to have been a process of the following kind. The tenets of the philosophers were first employed in illustration or amplification of the doctrines of the gospel; and passages of Scripture were afterwards perverted, in order to defend the notions which resulted from this mixture of heathenism and Christianity. The Platonic fancy described by Mosheim gave rise to the notion that martyrs alone were admitted to an immediate participation in the happiness of heaven; and this notion was confirmed by an appeal to the Book of Revelation, in which St. John is represented as having seen the souls of none but martyrs under the altar.<sup>1</sup>

Mosheim's second remark relates to the veneration with which the Scriptures were regarded by the early Christians.<sup>2</sup> Tertullian's numerous quotations from them afford sufficient evidence that his mind was deeply impressed with this feeling of reverence. We shall perhaps recur hereafter to his quotations and expositions of Scripture. For the present, therefore, we shall content ourselves with observing that, although of a very different school of divines from that to which Clemens Alexandrinus belonged, he is by no means exempt from the fault which Mosheim imputes to the latter author—of dealing in forced and extravagant and mystical interpretations.

Mosheim remarks thirdly, that no attempts had yet been made to exhibit the Christian doctrines in a systematic form;<sup>3</sup> or,

<sup>1</sup> C. 6. v. 9. See *de Animâ*, c. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 4, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Sect. 6, 7, 8.



at least, no such attempts have come to our knowledge. The latter part of the remark is undoubtedly true; for the *Apologies* which were published from time to time were, as we have seen, designed rather to repel the calumnious accusations brought against the Christians, than to give a connected view either of the evidences or doctrines of the gospel. But we know that the catechumens passed through a course of instruction before their admission to the baptismal font; and this fact seems almost necessarily to imply that the instruction was communicated upon some regular and systematic plan. When we come to the consideration of Tertullian's controversial writings, we shall find that his reasonings, on the particular points of doctrine which he undertook to maintain against the heretics, are neither deficient in perspicuity nor in force. Mosheim indeed has spoken in the most contemptuous terms of the reasoning powers and controversial qualifications of the early Fathers. Two of his observations may be thought more particularly applicable to Tertullian. "One," he says, "laying aside the sacred writings, from which all the weapons of religious controversy ought to be drawn, refers to the decisions of those bishops who ruled the Apostolic Churches. Another thinks that the antiquity of a doctrine is a mark of its truth, and pleads prescription against his adversary, as if he was maintaining his property before a civil magistrate; than which method of disputing nothing can be more pernicious to the cause of truth." To the reader who remembers our remarks upon the subject of tradition, it can scarcely be necessary to observe that this statement of Mosheim is a most unfair and erroneous representation of the line of argument pursued by Tertullian in his tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*. So far is he from laying aside the sacred writings, that his main charge against the heretics is, that they had substituted the tenets of the heathen philosophers in the place of the doctrines of the gospel; and, in order to effect their purpose, had corrupted the sacred volume, or perverted its meaning by forced and unnatural interpretations.<sup>1</sup> Tertullian uniformly insists that Christ had delivered one, and only one rule of faith—the rule which was to be found in the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> But here commenced the difference between himself and his opponents: they rejected several books of Scripture which he deemed genuine, and put different interpretations upon those portions of Scripture which they, as well as he, received. On both these points Tertullian appealed to the authority of the

<sup>1</sup> *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, cc. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* cc. 9, 13, 14.



Church;<sup>1</sup> contending that in it as well the genuine Scriptures as their genuine interpretation had been preserved; and further contending that it was useless to seek the true interpretation among the heretics, since they differed from each other as widely as they did from the Church.<sup>2</sup> When, therefore, Tertullian refers to those bishops who ruled the Apostolic Churches, he does it, not for the purpose of laying aside the sacred writings, but of establishing their authority; and it is with the same view that he urges the plea of prescription. He contends that the doctrines which had always been maintained, and the Scriptures which had always been received, in those Churches which were founded by the apostles, were more likely to be true and genuine than the doctrines and Scriptures of the heretics, whose origin was known to be of very recent date. Wherein, let me ask, consists the fallacy of this mode of reasoning? or how can it possibly be injurious to the cause of truth? If I can, through independent channels, trace back a doctrine to the age of the apostles, and at the same time show that it is contained in those Scriptures which have always been recognised as authentic by the Apostolic Churches, I have surely done much, not only towards proving its truth, but also towards confirming the genuineness of the Scriptures themselves.

Mosheim places the rise of the ascetics in the second century;<sup>3</sup> and says that they were produced by the double doctrine of certain Christian moralists who laid down two different rules of life, the ordinary and the extraordinary,—the one adapted to the general mass of Christians, the other to those only of a more sublime and exalted character. To the former class of doctrines they gave the name of *precepts*, which were obligatory upon all orders of men; to the latter, that of *counsels*, which were voluntarily obeyed by such Christians as aimed at higher degrees of virtue. Mosheim traces the origin of this double doctrine to the Platonic and Pythagorean schools of philosophy, which taught that the continual aim of him who aspired to the envied title of the *sage* or *truly wise* must be to abstract his mind

<sup>1</sup> *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 36.

<sup>2</sup> C. 10. Another argument urged by Tertullian is founded on the nature of faith; which must, he says, have some ascertained truths for its object: those truths we must seek, and having found, must acquiesce in them. There must be a point at which inquiry ceases and faith begins. But with the heretics it is one interminable search: they never attain to the truth; and consequently, having no fixed object of faith, have in reality no faith. Cc. 10, 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 11, 12, 13, 14.



from the senses, and to raise it above the contagious influence of the body, which he was in consequence to extenuate by severe discipline and a spare diet. With the same view he was to withdraw himself from the world, and to affect a life of solitude and contemplation. In our account of the tenets of Montanus, we observed that Clemens Alexandrinus was the earliest Christian writer in whose works this distinction between the ordinary and the extraordinary rules of life is expressly laid down.<sup>1</sup> Tertullian drew a distinction of a different kind, between spiritual and animal Christians—between those who received, and those who rejected, the prophecies of Montanus. Yet in the second tract *ad Uxorem* we find him also distinguishing between precepts and counsels;<sup>2</sup> or, to use his own language, between *jussa* and *suasa*, and grounding the distinction upon St. Paul's expressions in 1 Cor. vii. Although, however, it is certain that the discipline of Montanus was of an ascetic character, and that great stress was laid in it upon fasts and other mortifications, we discover nothing in the writings of Tertullian from which we should infer that either the monastic or the eremitical mode of life was practised in his day. There is in the *Apology* a passage which would rather lead to the opposite conclusion.<sup>3</sup>

The rise of pious frauds is also placed by Mosheim in the second century, and in like manner ascribed to the pernicious influence of the Platonic philosophy.<sup>4</sup> Tertullian has recorded a fraud of this kind, practised by a presbyter, who endeavoured to palm upon the Christian world a spurious work under the name of St. Paul.<sup>5</sup> As he pronounces no severe condemnation upon the offender, it may be thought that he did not look upon the offence as of a very heinous character. Yet his writings appear to us to furnish no ground for affirming that he is himself

<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> "Quanto autem nubere *in Domino* perpetrabile est uti nostræ potestatis, tanto culpabilius est non observare quod possis. Eo accedit, quod Apostolus, de Viduis quidem et Innuptis, ut ita permaneant *suadet*, quum dicit, *Cupio autem omnes meo exemplo perseverare*; de nubendo vero *in Domino* quum dicit, *tantum in Domino*, jam non *suadet*, sed exertè *jubet*. Igitur in ista maximè specie, nisi obsequimur, periclitamur. Quia *suasum* impunè quis negligat, quam *jussum*: quod illud de *consilio* veniat et voluntati proponatur, hoc autem de potestate descendat et necessitati obligetur: illic libertas, hic contumacia delinquere videatur," c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> "Sed alio quoque injuriarum titulo postulamus, et infructuosi in negotiis dicimur. Quo pacto? homines vobiscum degentes, ejusdem victûs, habitûs, nstructûs, ejusdem ad vitam necessitatis? neque enim Brachmanæ, aut Indorum Gymnosophistæ sumus, silvicolæ, et exules vitæ," c. 42.

<sup>4</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 15.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 155, note 2.



justly liable to the charge of practising similar deceptions. We can perceive in him extreme reluctance to admit any fact which militates against the cause which he is defending, and equal readiness to adopt without due examination whatever tends to promote his immediate purpose. But the same dispositions are discernible in the controversialists of all ages; and to make them the pretence for refusing credit to the Fathers in particular, is to display a great deficiency either in information or in candour.

In his chapter on the doctrine of the Church,<sup>1</sup> Mosheim gives a short account of what he calls its penitential discipline. Having already discussed this subject in our account of the government of the Church, under which head it appeared more properly to fall, we shall now only remark that we have found in Tertullian's writings no confirmation of Mosheim's assertion that the Christian discipline began, even at that early period, to be modelled upon the forms observed in the heathen mysteries.

In his strictures upon the qualifications of the Fathers of the second century as moral writers,<sup>2</sup> Mosheim alludes to the controversy between M. Barbeyrac and the Père Cellier on that subject. On no one of the Fathers has M. Barbeyrac animadverted with greater severity than on our author; and an examination of his charges will enable us to form a tolerably accurate estimate of the degree of deference which ought to be paid to the decisions of the Fathers in general upon questions of morals.

But before we enter upon this examination, we must in justice to the early Fathers remark that nothing can be more unfair or more unreasonable than to require in them that perspicuity of arrangement, or that precision of language which we find in the moral writers of modern times. They never studied morality as a system, nor did they profess to teach it systematically. We ought also, before we censure them too harshly for their errors, duly to weigh the circumstances under which they wrote.<sup>3</sup> What we observed with respect to the extravagant terms in which

<sup>1</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Sect. 10, note.

<sup>3</sup> The just and candid mode of estimating the works of the Fathers, when not directly controversial, is to consider them, not as argumentative treatises, but as popular discourses, in which the author is less solicitous to reason accurately, than to say what is striking and calculated to produce an effect upon his readers. Were we to subject many popular treatises on religion published at the present day to the same severe scrutiny to which M. Barbeyrac has subjected the works of Tertullian, the illustrations, I fear, would sometimes be found as impertinent, the premises as unsound, and the conclusions as illogical.



they speak of the merit of martyrdom, is no less applicable to the present subject.<sup>1</sup> They lived at a time when the path of the professor of Christianity was beset with dangers; when he might at any moment be called to suffer privation, pain, or even death, on account of his faith. It was of the utmost importance to the cause of the gospel that he should betray no unmanly fear in the hour of trial—no weak desire to consult his safety by the sacrifice of his principles. Nor was it less important that his moral character should be free from stain—that he should prove himself no less superior to the seductions of pleasure than to the terrors of persecution. Yet instances of human frailty would frequently occur, and the Fathers would be compelled to bewail the apostacy or the immorality of their brethren. Hence, in their anxiety to avert the evil consequences to the Church, which must result from the weakness and vices of its members, they would, especially if, like Tertullian, they were men of austere tempers, be liable to run into extremes,—to imagine that the most effectual mode of preventing the convert from indulging in criminal gratifications was to persuade him that he must debar himself even of those which are innocent; and that the most effectual mode of preparing him for the trials to which his profession might expose him, was to accustom him to a life of voluntary hardship and mortification.<sup>2</sup> Let it not be supposed that we mean by these remarks to justify the extravagances of which the Fathers were guilty; we offer them only in extenuation.

We proceed to M. Barbeyrac, who grounds his first charge on the unqualified manner in which our author condemns every art and profession connected even in the most remote degree with the heathen idolatry.<sup>3</sup> It cannot be denied that in some instances Tertullian's zeal carries him beyond all reasonable bounds; as when he involves in the guilt of idolatry the unhappy trader in frankincense, because it was burned on the altars of the idols.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> See the tract *de Spectaculis*, c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Traité de la Morale des Pères*, c. 6, sect. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *De Idololatriâ*, c. 11. See the *Apology*, c. 42. The trades and occupations which Tertullian in his treatise *de Idololatriâ* states to be incompatible with the profession of the gospel, are those of the makers of idols (c. 4-8); of those who build, or in any way adorn their temples or altars (c. 8); of astrologers (c. 9); of schoolmasters, among other reasons, because they taught the heathen mythology (c. 10); of merchants, who deal in any article used in the worship of idols, as in frankincense (c. 11). According to Tertullian, no Christian could, without contracting guilt, pay or receive money on the legal days, because they were sacred to some heathen god (c. 13); or suspend lamps or garlands at his door (c. 15). He was also guilty of idolatry if he either swore or allowed himself to be adjured or blessed by the name of any heathen god (cc. 20-22).



He seems not to have perceived the clear distinction between the case of the artificer who formed the idols, and of the merchant who dealt in any of the articles employed in idolatrous worship. An idol is made in order that it may be worshipped, that is, for a forbidden purpose; the very use for which it is designed is unlawful. But frankincense may be employed, as our author himself admits, on many occasions not only innocently, but beneficially.<sup>1</sup> To burn it on the altar of an idol is not to use, but to abuse it; and the guilt of the abuse must rest with the purchaser: to make the seller accountable for the purpose to which the buyer applies it is contrary to every principle of reason and of justice. That Tertullian should have overlooked this distinction is the more remarkable, because in the same treatise he has recourse to one nearly similar. He says<sup>2</sup> that a Christian may, without incurring guilt, be present, *as a spectator*, at the sacrifices with which it was customary to celebrate the assumption of the toga virilis, a marriage, or the naming of a child; because in these cases he is not invited expressly to attend the sacrifice, but to join in a ceremony which has in it nothing of an idolatrous character. Before, however, we proceed too severely to censure Tertullian for the error, which is the subject of M. Barbeyrac's animadversion, let us endeavour for a moment to put ourselves in his place. For this purpose we must imagine to ourselves the feelings with which the primitive Christians regarded the worship paid to the gods of the nations; the pious horror which they felt when they saw the homage, due only to the Creator, transferred to an idol, the work of man's hands.<sup>3</sup> They were, moreover, aware of the strong hold which idolatry possessed upon mankind, through the gratifications which it afforded to their sensual appetites; and were, therefore, desirous to place the convert as far as possible out of the reach of its temptations. Sometimes, in their anxiety to guard themselves and others from pollution, they might perplex their minds with unfounded scruples, or subject themselves to unnecessary restraints.<sup>4</sup> But we shall perhaps be induced to think more favourably even of their discretion, when we reflect that, had their descendants persisted in the same steadfast determination to hold no inter-

<sup>1</sup> *De Coronâ*, c. 10. "Et si me odor alicujus loci offenderit, Arabiae aliquid incendo; sed non eodem ritu, nec eodem habitu, nec eodem apparatu, quo agitur apud idola."

<sup>2</sup> *De Idololatriâ*, c. 16. Compare *de Spectaculis*, c. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See *ad Martyres*, c. 2; *de Coronâ*, c. 10.

<sup>4</sup> On the subject of intercourse with Gentiles and compliance with Gentile customs, see *de Idololatriâ*, c. 14, and *de Cultu Fœminarum*, l. ii. c. 11.



course with idolatry, neither would the friends of the gospel have occasion to lament that, for a long series of years, a gaudy ritual, calculated only to affect the senses, was substituted almost universally in the place of its pure and spiritual worship; nor would its enemies be enabled to object that the mythology and superstitious practices of pagan Rome still subsist, changed only in name, throughout the larger portion of Christendom.

M. Barbeyrac's second charge relates to Tertullian's notions respecting the incompatibility of a military life with the profession of Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Having in our remarks upon the thirty-seventh Article of our Church<sup>2</sup> exposed the weakness of the grounds on which he maintained this opinion, we have now nothing further to add on the subject.

The treatise *de Coronâ Militis*<sup>3</sup> furnishes M. Barbeyrac with matter for another charge against Tertullian. When the Emperors distributed largesses to the army,<sup>4</sup> it was customary for the soldiers to appear with crowns of laurel on their heads. A Christian soldier on an occasion of this kind, instead of wearing the crown upon his head, bore it in his hand. Being questioned why he was guilty of this breach of discipline, he replied that his religion would not allow him to wear a crown. Persisting in his refusal to place it on his head, he was thrown into prison and sentenced to death. His conduct appears to have been disapproved by the majority of his Christian brethren. The warm and vehement temper of Tertullian led him to view it in a very different light. He regarded the soldier's refusal as an act of truly Christian heroism and self-devotion, and imputed the censures which were cast upon it to the lukewarmness and pusillanimity of the censurers. The reasons by which he justifies the act are not, it is true, of the most satisfactory nature. He admits that the Scriptures are silent on the subject, but says that it was not customary for Christians to wear crowns; and urges this fact as a proof that the tradition of the Church was unfavourable to such a practice.<sup>5</sup> He next contends that flowers, of which crowns were for the most part composed, were intended to gratify the senses of sight and smell; consequently, to weave them into garlands and to wear them on the head is to pervert them from their natural use, by placing them in a situation in

<sup>1</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 6, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> P. 180.

<sup>3</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 14, *et seq.*

<sup>4</sup> *De Coronâ Militis*, c. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cc. 2, 3, 4. Compare *Apology*, c. 42. "Non emo capiti coronam," etc.



which they can neither be seen nor smelt.<sup>1</sup> But as this argument would apply only to crowns composed of flowers, he proceeds to enumerate the different heathen gods to whom the invention of the different crowns was ascribed.<sup>2</sup> Ornaments, originally suggested by demons, and still consecrated to their service, could not be fit for the head of a Christian. "We find," he continues, "no evidence in the Old Testament that crowns were ever worn by the prophets or priests, or suspended in the temple, or placed upon the ark or altar, or upon any part of the furniture of the sacred edifice."<sup>3</sup> He inquires lastly into the occasions on which crowns were worn, and discovers that the practice was always connected either with some idolatrous observance, or some secular art, or profession, or employment, which was forbidden to Christians.<sup>4</sup> The point upon which the whole question really turned—whether, in the particular case under consideration, to have worn a crown would have implied a participation in an idolatrous act—is scarcely touched by Tertullian. He calls it indeed an idolatrous act, but does not state wherein the idolatry consisted.<sup>5</sup> For further information on this point, the reader may consult Bingham,<sup>6</sup> who says that it was purely a civil act, performed in honour of the Emperors on such days as they gave their largesses or donations to the soldiers. Milner regards it in the same light, and pronounces an unqualified condemnation of the opinions advanced by Tertullian in this treatise.<sup>7</sup>

Among our author's works is a tract written for the express purpose of proving that a Christian could not, without incurring a certain degree of guilt, attend any of the public games. The principal reason which he assigns is, that all those games—having been originally instituted, and continuing to be celebrated in honour of some god—must be regarded as idolatrous ceremonies; all, therefore, who attended them were necessarily involved in the guilt of idolatry.<sup>8</sup> This, however, is not his only argument. He reasons also upon the moral effect of the games, and upon the tumult of passions which they were calculated to excite in the bosom of the spectator; who could scarcely fail to be transported as it were out of himself, and

<sup>1</sup> Cc. 5, 6.<sup>2</sup> Cc. 7, 8.<sup>3</sup> C. 10.<sup>4</sup> C. 11, *et seq.*<sup>5</sup> See c. 12.<sup>6</sup> L. xvi. c. 4, sect. 8.<sup>7</sup> Vol. i. 315.

<sup>8</sup> *De Spectaculis*, c. 4. The strange application of Ps. i. in c. 3 is deserving of notice, as a specimen of the mode in which the Fathers wrested Scriptures to their purpose. Compare the *Apology*, c. 38, where all the arguments, urged in the tract *de Spectaculis*, are comprised in two sentences.



to give way by turns to hope and fear, to sorrow and resentment.<sup>1</sup> On two passages of this tract Gibbon has conferred celebrity by his animadversions. We shall offer a few remarks upon one of them, as it illustrates an opinion to which we shall hereafter have occasion to allude. Gibbon says that Tertullian "is particularly offended at the dress of the actors, who by the use of the buskin impiously endeavoured to add a cubit to their stature."<sup>2</sup> Now in the passage alluded to, our author is establishing the point on which his whole argument turns—the connexion of all the public games, and among the rest of the theatrical exhibitions, with idolatry. He had previously traced their origin to Satan; he now proceeds to show that the author of evil suggested the pomp and circumstance of the public exhibitions—the chariot race—the various gymnastic exercises—the dress of the actors, the buskin, the mask, etc. In all these devices Satan availed himself of the partial discoveries which he had been able to make, of what Christ would say, and do, and suffer, on earth; accommodating his suggestions to those discoveries—sometimes deceiving mankind by an imitation of Christian rites—at others betraying them into a violation of the precepts of the gospel.<sup>3</sup> Thus, anticipating as it were Christ's declaration, that no man can add a cubit to his stature, he invented the buskin; in order that, through the medium of the actors who wore it, he might practically make Christ a liar.<sup>4</sup> Gibbon's remark scarcely conveys a correct notion of Tertullian's object; which is to caution men against taking part in the theatrical exhibitions, lest they should unconsciously render themselves the instruments of the devil. The other passage, quoted by Gibbon, is from the concluding chapter of the tract, and is a striking specimen of Tertullian's vehemence and proneness to exaggeration.<sup>5</sup>

Having already considered,<sup>6</sup> what is sufficiently obnoxious to censure, Tertullian's notion that Christians ought neither to aspire to, nor to accept any civil office, we shall proceed to his condemnation of second marriages, which furnishes M. Barbeyrac with ample matter of animadversion.<sup>7</sup> On this subject, as we

<sup>1</sup> C. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xv. note 41. See Barbeyrac, *Traité de la Morale des Pères*, c. 6, sect. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Compare *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 7, *sub fine*.

<sup>4</sup> "Sic et tragædos cothurnis extulit (Diabolus) quia nemo potest adjicere cubitum unum ad staturam suam. Mendacem facere vult Christum."

<sup>5</sup> Chap. xv. p. 474, ed. 4to.

<sup>6</sup> P. 180.

<sup>7</sup> *Ubi supra*, sect. 30, *et seq.*



have before observed, we find a gradually increasing severity in our author's opinions. In our brief notice of the two tracts *ad Uxorem*, we stated that in the former Tertullian dissuades his wife, in case she should survive him, from contracting a second marriage; in the latter, fearful that she might be unwilling to impose upon herself so great a restraint, he cautions her at least not to marry a heathen.<sup>1</sup> Such a marriage he brands with the name of adultery; appealing, in support of this harsh sentence, to 1 Cor. vii. 39, where the apostle says that a widow may marry whom she will, "*tantum in Domino*," only in the Lord, that is, according to our author's interpretation, only a Christian.<sup>2</sup>

In the treatise *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, written after he had become a Montanist, but probably before he had adopted the opinions of Montanus in all their rigour, he proceeds a step further. The name of adultery, which he had before applied to a marriage contracted with a heathen, he now applies to second marriages in general; and that for reasons, some of which, as he himself admits, are equally applicable to a first marriage.<sup>3</sup> The object of the treatise is to dissuade a Christian brother, who had lost his wife, from marrying again. "There are," Tertullian says, "three degrees of holiness:—the first exists in those who have continued chaste from their birth; the second in those who have continued chaste from their second birth, that is, their baptism—either separated from their wives, if living, by mutual compact, or remaining single if they have lost their wives; the third in those who, having been once married (after baptism), do not marry again."<sup>4</sup> One of the arguments urged in this treatise affords a striking example of the fallacious reasoning by which Tertullian occasionally imposed upon himself. "You have lost your wife," he says; "it was therefore the will of God that you should become a widower; by marrying again you cease to be a

<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, l. ii. cc. 2, 3. "Hæc quum ita sint, Fideles Gentilium matrimonia subeuntes stupri reos esse constat et arcendos ab omni communicatione fraternitatis, ex literis Apostoli dicentis, *cum ejusmodi nec cibum sumendum*." Compare *adv. Marcionem*, l. v. c. 7; *de Monogamiâ*, cc. 7, 11.

<sup>3</sup> "Si penitus sensus ejus interpretemur, non aliud dicendum erit secundum matrimonium, quam species stupri—Ergo, inquis, jam et primas, id est, unas nuptias destruis; nec immerito: quoniam et ipsæ ex eo constant quo et stuprum," c. 9. See also c. 4.

<sup>4</sup> C. 1. It is worthy of remark that M. Barbeyrac agrees with Tertullian in asserting that a person who has once been married has a stronger inducement to contract a second marriage, than an unmarried person has to marry. Compare *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 8, and *de Virgin. vel. c. 10*, with the *Traité de la Morale des Pères*, c. 4, sect. 30.



widower, and thereby strive against the will of God.”<sup>1</sup> A considerable portion of the tract is occupied by a commentary on the seventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians; the design of which is to show that when St. Paul asserted, as a reason for allowing a second marriage, that “it is better to marry than burn,” he evidently regarded such a marriage merely as the less of two evils.<sup>2</sup> In the course of this commentary, Tertullian alludes to the distinction made by the apostle between that which he delivered from himself, and that which he delivered from the Lord. In the latter case he thinks that St. Paul spoke from the extraordinary inspiration which was peculiar to him as an apostle; in the former, only as an ordinary Christian, possessing the ordinary gifts of the Spirit. I notice this circumstance because the late Mr. Rennell, in his *Proofs of Inspiration*, etc., has referred to this passage of Tertullian in a manner which may lead his readers to form a very erroneous notion of its real purport. Mr. Rennell<sup>3</sup>—whose object is to prove that what St. Paul delivered as from himself was equally the dictate of divine inspiration with that which he delivered as from the Lord—says that “the apostle decided the question concerning virgins, in 1 Cor. vii. 25, not as an ordinary man, but as one *who had obtained mercy to be faithful*; by which expression he meant to assert the grace and authority of an inspired minister and apostle.” Let us now turn to Tertullian, who begins his remarks with the following words:—“In primis autem non videbor irreligiosus, si, quod ipse profitetur, animadvertam, omnem illum indulgentiam nuptiarum de suo, id est, de humano sensu, non de divino præscripto induxisse.”<sup>4</sup> He then proceeds to comment upon several verses of the chapter, and concludes with the passage, part of which has been quoted by Mr. Rennell:—“Sed ecce rursus, mulierem marito defuncto dicit nubere posse, si cui velit, *tantum in Domino. Atenim felicior erit, inquit, si sic permanserit secundum meum consilium. Puto autem, et ego Dei Spiritum habeo. Videmus duo consilia, quo supra nubendi veniam facit, et quo postmodum continentiam nubendi indicit. Cui ergo, inquis, adsentabimur? Inspice et lege. Quum veniam facit, hominis prudentis consilium adlegat. Quum continentiam indicit, Spiritus Sancti consilium adfirmat. Sequere admonitionem cui divinitas patrocinator. Spiritum quidem Dei etiam fideles habent, sed non omnes fideles Apostoli.*”

<sup>1</sup> C. 2. Compare *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 7; *de Monogamiâ*, c. 9.

<sup>2</sup> C. 3. Compare *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 3.

<sup>3</sup> P. 28, with the note. The part quoted by Mr. Rennell is from “Quum continentiam indicit” to “fastigium redderet.”

<sup>4</sup> C. 3.



Quum ergo qui se *fidelem* dixerat, adjicit postea *Spiritum Dei se habere*, quod nemo dubitaret etiam de *fideli*, idcirco id dixit, ut sibi Apostoli fastigium redderet. *Propriè enim Apostoli Spiritum Sanctum habent in operibus prophetiæ, et efficaciâ virtutum, documentisque linguarum; non ex parte, quod cæteri.*"<sup>1</sup> Now it must be evident to every person who reads the above extract, that Tertullian agrees with Mr. Rennell only in one particular—that in the expression, *I think that I have the Spirit of God*, St. Paul meant to assert his own inspiration.<sup>2</sup> On two important points our author is directly opposed to Mr. Rennell.<sup>3</sup> In the first place, Tertullian makes a decided distinction between the advice given by St. Paul as a prudent or sagacious man, and that given by him at the suggestion of the Holy Spirit. In the second, so far was he from thinking that the apostle, when he spoke of himself as one *who had obtained mercy to be faithful*, meant to assert the grace and authority of an inspired minister and apostle; that by the word *Fideles* he understood an ordinary Christian, as contra-distinguished from an apostle, who was endowed with extraordinary gifts. Let me here observe that I am not contending for the accuracy of Tertullian's interpretation: I am only anxious that his testimony, if urged at all, should be correctly stated.

But to proceed to the tract *de Monogamiâ*, in which Tertullian pursues nearly the same line of argument as in the tract *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, but with greater extravagance both of sentiment and language, because he was then in a state of avowed separation from the Church. He affirms, for instance, that in point of criminality it is immaterial whether a man has two wives at the same time, or marries a second wife after the death of the first.<sup>4</sup> He urges also the example of Christ, who

<sup>1</sup> Does Tertullian here mean to assert that none but the apostles possessed miraculous gifts? or that all those gifts were united in the apostles, which other Christians possessed only in part, with reference to 1 Cor. xii. 4, etc.?

<sup>2</sup> Compare *de Pudicitia*, c. 16; *de Monogamiâ*, c. 3.

<sup>3</sup> There is in the tract *de Coronâ* a passage in which Tertullian makes a nearer approach to Mr. Rennell's opinion. "Dicit et Apostolus, *si quid ignoratis, Deus vobis revelabit*, solitus et ipse consilium subministrare, quum præceptum Domini non habebat, et *quædam edicere a semetipso, sed et ipse Spiritum Dei habens deductorem omnis veritatis*. Itaque consilium et edictum ejus divini jam præcepti instar obtinuit, de rationis divinæ patrocínio," c. 4. In this passage our author's object is to place observances, for which no written command could be produced from Scripture, on the same footing with those for which such command could be produced, on the ground that they were probably enjoined by the apostles, and were consequently to be deemed of divine origin. His language varies with the object which he has in view.

<sup>4</sup> "Neque enim refert duas quis uxores singulas habuerit, an pariter singulæ



was unmarried in the flesh. If, therefore, we aim at His perfection, we must also remain unmarried; but if the infirmity of our flesh will not allow this, we must follow in the flesh the example which He has set us in the spirit.<sup>1</sup> He has one spiritual spouse, the Church; we, therefore, must be content with a single marriage. In our remarks upon the thirty-second Article of our Church, we noticed the different interpretations of 1 Cor. ix. 5 given by Tertullian in the tracts *de Exhortatione Castitatis* and *de Monogamiâ*. Towards the conclusion, however, of the latter tract, a suspicion appears to cross his mind that his expositions of St. Paul are far-fetched, and may not be satisfactory to his readers. In order, therefore, to silence all gainsayers, he adds that, as Christ took away the liberty of divorce in which Moses had indulged the Jews on account of the hardness of their hearts, so the Paraclete now takes away that liberty of contracting a second marriage, which St. Paul had allowed the members of the infant Church of Corinth on account of the infirmity of their flesh.<sup>2</sup>

The train of reasoning, if it may be so called, which conducted the early Fathers to these strange conclusions, was, according to M. Barbeyrac,<sup>3</sup> somewhat of the following kind. They observed that men were impelled to the commission of many irregularities and crimes by the desire of gratifying certain appetites which constitute a part of human nature. They could not condemn the appetites themselves without at the same time condemning the author of nature; they hit, therefore, upon another expedient. They said that those appetites were given us for particular ends; the appetite of hunger, for instance, in order to preserve the life of man; the sexual appetite, in order to ensure the continuance of the human species. So long, then, as the acts which originate in those appetites are performed solely with reference to the ends for which the appetites were given, all is right. But the instant that we annex the idea of pleasure to the act, and perform it with a view to the gratification which we shall derive from it, then it becomes sinful. That this is a correct account of the mode in which many of the Fathers reasoned may be true, and we may discern some traces of it in Tertullian's writings. But it is

*duas fecerint. Idem numerus conjunctorum et separatorum. Semel tamen vim passa institutio Dei per Lamech constitit postea in finem usque gentis illius,"* c. 4.

<sup>1</sup> "Quando novissimus Adam, id est Christus, innuptus in totum, quod etiam primus Adam ante exilium," c. 5. He applies the name *Spado* to Christ (see also c. 3), as well as to St. Paul (*ibid.*) and to John the Baptist (c. 17), but evidently not in the literal sense of the word.

<sup>2</sup> C. 14.

<sup>3</sup> C. 4, sect. 34, 35.



certain that he also attached a degree of impurity to the act itself, without any reference to the purpose for which it was performed,—a certain incompatibility with the perfection of the Christian character.<sup>1</sup> He regards marriage as only allowed under the gospel, in condescension to human infirmity. “The union of the sexes was, it is true, in the beginning blessed by God; being devised for the purpose of peopling the earth, and on that account permitted.<sup>2</sup> The patriarchs were even allowed to have a plurality of wives. Then came the law, and afterwards the gospel, which restrained the licence before given, and confined a man to one wife. Lastly, the apostle, as speaking to those upon whom the ends of the world were come, did not indeed forbid marriage, lest man should be tempted to sin, but recommended a life of celibacy, as best suited to the situation of Christians in seasons of difficulty and persecution.”<sup>3</sup> The inference which our author draws from this historical sketch is, that the apostle’s permission to marry was not willingly given, but extorted by necessity.

But though Tertullian attached a degree of impurity even to the married state, and would certainly have enforced a total abstinence from marriage if the human species could have been continued without it, as he would have prohibited eating and drinking if the life of man could have been sustained without food,<sup>4</sup> yet we find occasionally in his writings passages of a different complexion. In the second tract *ad Uxorem* he breaks out into a glowing description of the blessedness of that marriage, in the celebration of which none of the forms required by the Church has been omitted;<sup>5</sup> and in other places he speaks of the married state, not only as pure, but even honourable.<sup>6</sup> As

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the intercourse between the sexes even in the married state, he uses the expressions “contumeliam communem,” *de Virg. vel.* c. 10; “Dedecoris voluptuosi,” *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 1. He argues also that it unfits the soul for devotional exercises. *De Exhortatione Castitatis*, cc. 9, 10. He calls it on one occasion “permissam voluptatem,” *de Cultu Fæminarum*, l. ii. c. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, l. i. cc. 2, 3. See also c. 4; *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, cc. 5, 6; *de Monogamiâ*, c. 3.

<sup>3</sup> We have seen that in the tract *de Monogamiâ*, cc. 2, 3, 14, Tertullian states that it was reserved for the Paraclete to prohibit second marriages. During the ministry of our Blessed Lord, men were not yet able to bear so severe a restraint.

<sup>4</sup> “Nos quoque, ut possumus, os cibo excusamus,” etc. *De Res. Carnis*, c. 61. Compare *de Jejuniis*, c. 3.

<sup>5</sup> “Unde sufficiamus ad enarrandam felicitatem ejus matrimonii, quod Ecclesia conciliat?” etc., c. 9.

<sup>6</sup> “Natura veneranda est, non erubescenda. Concubitus libido, non conditio fœdavit. Excessus, non status, est impudicus. Siquidem benedictus status apud Deum: *Crescite et in multitudinem proficite*. Excessus vero maledictus—adulteria,



we remarked with reference to another subject, Tertullian's language varies with the object which he has in view.<sup>1</sup> When he speaks his genuine sentiments, he exaggerates the merit of celibacy, and speaks of the married state as rather permitted than approved by God. But when he is contending against Marcion and the other heretics, who condemned marriage altogether, as an institution of the Demiurge who was opposed to the Supreme God, he stands forth in its defence, though he still asserts the superior purity of a life of celibacy.<sup>2</sup>

We will take this opportunity of introducing two observations in some measure connected with the subject immediately before us. The first is, that in Tertullian's time the practice of making vows of continence had already commenced,<sup>3</sup> and had been found to be productive of evil consequences.<sup>4</sup> The females who made such vows were called *Brides of Christ*.<sup>5</sup> The second observation is, that the Roman Catholic notion of the indissolubility of marriage was then unknown. Tertullian on all occasions

et supra, et lupanaria." *De Animâ*, c. 27. "Sanctitas—quæ non matrimonium excludat, sed libidinem—quæ vas nostrum in honore matrimonii tractet." *Adv. Marcionem*, l. v. c. 15.

<sup>1</sup> See note 3, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *De Monogamiâ, sub initio. Adv. Marcionem*, l. i. c. 29. "Sine dubio ex damnatione conjugii ista institutio" (the Marcionite custom of refusing baptism to married persons) "constabit. Videamus, an justâ : non quasi destructuri felicitatem sanctitatis, ut aliqui Nicolaitæ, assertores libidinis atque luxuriæ ; sed qui sanctitatem sine nuptiarum damnatione noverimus, et sectemur, et præferamus, non ut malo bonum, sed ut bono melius ; non enim projicimus, sed deponimus nuptias ; nec præscribimus, sed suademus sanctitatem ; servantes et bonum et melius pro viribus cujusque sectando : tunc denique conjugium exertè defendentes, quum inimicè accusatur spurcitiæ nomine in destructionem Creatoris, qui proinde conjugium pro rei honestate benedixit in clementiam generis humani, quemadmodum et universum conditionis in integros et bonos usus. Non ideo autem et cibi damnabuntur, quia operosius exquisiti in gulam committunt ; ut nec vestitus ideo accusabuntur, quia pretiosius comparati in ambitionem tumescunt. Sic nec matrimonii res ideo despiciuntur, quia, intemperantius diffusæ in luxuriam inardescunt. Multum differt inter causam et culpam, inter statum et excessum. Ita hujusmodi non institutio, sed exorbitatio, reprobanda est, secundum censuram institutoris ipsius, cujus est tam, *Crescite et multiplicamini*, quam et, *Non adulterabis, et uxorem proximi tui non concupisces*." Here we find an approach to the mode of reasoning which M. Barbeyrac imputes to the Fathers.

<sup>3</sup> "Viderit et ipsum continentiae votum." *De Virgin. vel.* c. 11.

<sup>4</sup> See *de Virgin. vel.* c. 14.

<sup>5</sup> "Quot Virgines Christo maritatae?" *de Res. Carnis*, c. 61 ; "Malunt enim Deo nubere, Deo speciosæ, Deo sunt puellæ," etc., *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 4. Generally, however, such expressions as "Christi solius ancillæ," *de Virgin. vel.* c. 3 ; "Dei ancillæ," *de Cultu Fæminarum*, l. i. c. 4, l. ii. cc. 1, 11 ; "Nuptæ Christo," *de Virgin. vel.* c. 16 ; "Benedictæ," *de Cultu Fæminarum*, l. ii. c. 5 ; "filiae sapientiæ," *ibid.* c. 6 ; "Fœminæ ad Deum pertinentes," *ad Uxorem*, l. i. c. 1, mean only Christian females, as "ancilla Diaboli," *de Cultu Fæm.* l. ii. c. 11, means a heathen female, and "Angeli Dei," *ibid.* c. 3, Christians in general.



affirms that it may be dissolved on account of adultery;<sup>1</sup> and though his peculiar tenets would naturally lead him to deny to either party the liberty of marrying again, yet he admits that such marriages actually took place in the Church.<sup>2</sup>

Two charges which M. Barbeyrac brings against Tertullian remain to be mentioned. One is, that, in opposition to our Saviour's express injunction, he passes a sentence of condemnation upon all who in time of persecution consult their safety by flight. The other, that he advances opinions so extravagant and irrational on the subject of Christian patience that, were they generally adopted, the effect must be to place the honest and peaceable part of the community at the mercy of the robber and ruffian. In our remarks upon the External History of the Church we gave an account of Tertullian's opinions on the former of those points;<sup>3</sup> and with respect to the latter, it will be sufficient to observe that his error appears to have arisen partly from too close an adherence to the letter of our Saviour's injunctions, and partly from a strange misapprehension of their meaning.<sup>4</sup>

We will conclude our review of M. Barbeyrac's animadversions by observing that he seems to have overlooked a passage in the fourth book *against Marcion*;<sup>5</sup> in which Tertullian argues, from a passage in Ezekiel, that no interest ought be taken for the loan of money.

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, l. ii. c. 2; *de Monogamiâ*, c. 9. "Tam repudio matrimonium dirimente quam morte." *De Patientiâ*, c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, l. ii. c. 1. "Quarundam exemplis admonentibus, quæ divortio vel mariti excessu oblatâ continentiæ occasione," etc.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. ii. p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> See the tract *de Patientiâ*, cc. 7, 8, 10. In this tract, which is a panegyric upon patience, Tertullian exhorts his readers to the practice of that virtue, by setting forth the forbearance which God at all times exerts towards sinful man, and the patience exhibited by Christ in taking upon Him human flesh, and submitting to every indignity during His residence on earth. There are, however, some passages not unworthy of attention, as c. 9, in which Tertullian enforces the duty of patience under the loss of relations and friends.

<sup>5</sup> C. 17. There is an ambiguity in Tertullian's expressions, but we believe that we have given the true meaning.



## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE CEREMONIES USED IN THE CHURCH.

MOSHEIM,<sup>1</sup> in the beginning of his chapter on the Ceremonies of the Church in the Second Century, observes that "in this century many unnecessary ceremonies were added to the Christian worship, the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men." In support of this statement, he refers to a passage in the tract *de Oratione*, in which Tertullian complains that various forms and observances had been introduced into the Christian worship, of which some bore too close a resemblance to the customs and practices of the Gentiles. Of these observances he specifies several,—the practice, for instance, of washing the hands, or even the whole body, before the commencement of prayer, which he calls a superstitious practice, originally suggested by the act of Pilate when he delivered up Christ to the Jews, and, consequently, unfit to be adopted by Christians;<sup>2</sup> and that of putting off the cloke before the commencement of prayer, which he disapproves because the heathens had a similar custom.<sup>3</sup> He assigns the same reason for objecting to the practice of sitting down after the conclusion of the public prayers; though he supposes its introduction into the Church to have arisen from a misapprehension of a passage in the *Shepherd of Hermas*.

From the passage just alluded to, and from other passages of Tertullian's works, it appears that in the act of prayer, the early Christians raised their hands to heaven, and expanded them in imitation of the mode in which our Saviour's arms were stretched upon the cross.<sup>4</sup> They usually prayed in a kneeling posture,<sup>5</sup> excepting on the Lord's day, and in the interval between Easter

<sup>1</sup> *Century* ii. part ii. chap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *De Oratione*, c. 11. Compare *de Baptismo*, c. 9, *sub fine*. "Quum deditur in crucem, aqua intervenit; sciunt Pilati manus."

<sup>3</sup> C. 12.

<sup>4</sup> "Nos vero non attollimus tantum, sed etiam expandimus, a dominicâ passione modulantes." *De Oratione*, c. 11, *sub fine*. *Apology*, c. 30, "Manibus expansis." *Ad Marcionem*, l. i. c. 23, *sub fine*.

<sup>5</sup> *De Coronâ*, c. 3; *ad Scapulam*, c. 4. "Quando non geniculationibus et jejunationibus nostris etiam siccitates sunt depulsæ?" In the second tract *ad Uxorem*, c. 9, we find the word *volutari* applied to the act of prayer. "Simul orant, simul volutantur." Compare Pseudo-Justinus, *Quæstiones ad Orthodoxos*, c. 115.



and Whitsunday: they then prayed standing, in commemoration of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. The men prayed with the head uncovered.<sup>1</sup> With respect to the women, different customs appear to have prevailed in different churches: in some even the virgins were unveiled; but in the tract *de Virginibus velandis*, Tertullian inveighs vehemently against the indecency and irreverence of this practice.<sup>2</sup> It was customary also, in the act of prayer, to turn the face towards the east<sup>3</sup>—a practice borrowed, according to Mosheim, from the eastern nations, who conceived light to be the essence of the Supreme, and therefore worshipped the sun as the image of His glory.<sup>4</sup> We have seen that this practice gave rise to a very general persuasion among the Gentiles that the Christians worshipped the sun.<sup>5</sup> After the prayers were concluded, the persons present usually saluted each other with the kiss of peace, excepting on Good Friday, which was observed as a solemn fast by every member of the Church.<sup>6</sup> Tertullian censures the affectation of those who, at other seasons, refused the kiss of peace, on the ground that they had kept a fast.

Having alluded to the tract *de Oratione*, we will take this opportunity of mentioning that the greater part of it is occupied by a commentary on the Lord's Prayer.<sup>7</sup> After some preliminary remarks on the injunctions to pray in secret and not to use long prayers, by which the Lord's Prayer is introduced in the gospel, Tertullian observes that this form, concise as it is, contains an epitome of the whole Christian doctrine. In commenting upon the different clauses, our author displays an extensive knowledge of Scripture, but for the most part little judgment in the application. He concludes with stating that, although in our devotions we must on no account omit this

<sup>1</sup> "Capite nudo." *Apology*, c. 30.

<sup>2</sup> C. 2. See *de Coronâ*, c. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Apology*, c. 16; *ad Nationes*, l. i. c. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Century* ii. part ii. chap. iv. sect. 7. There is in the tract *against the Valentinians*, c. 3, the following remark:—"Amat figura Spiritûs Sancti (Columba) Orientem, Christi figuram," referring perhaps to Zechariah iii. 8: *I will bring forth my Servant the Branch*. The word corresponding to *branch* in the Septuagint is ἀνατολήν.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. ii. p. 62.

<sup>6</sup> "Alia jam consuetudo invaluit; jejunantes habitâ oratione cum fratribus, subtrahunt osculum pacis, quod est signaculum orationis." *De Oratione*, c. 14. "Jam vero alicui fratrum ad osculum convenire." *Ad Uxorem*, l. ii. c. 4. From the latter quotation we might infer that the Christian mode of salutation was by a kiss.

<sup>7</sup> There are also some remarks on the Lord's Prayer in the fourth book *against Marcion*, c. 26.



prayer, yet we may add to it such petitions as are suitable to our particular circumstances;<sup>1</sup> remembering always that, in order to render our prayers acceptable to God, we must approach Him in a right frame of mind—with hearts free from anger and every other evil passion.<sup>2</sup> In addition to these remarks upon the spirit in which men ought to pray, he offers some cautions against all extravagance of gesture in putting up our prayers to the throne of grace.<sup>3</sup> Our gesture and countenance ought to bespeak humility and modesty. He says also that we should be careful not to pray in so loud a tone of voice as to disturb the devotions of those near us. It is not by reason of the strength of our lungs that our prayers reach the ear of the Almighty.

In speaking of the Christian assemblies, Mosheim gives the following account of the purposes for which they were held.<sup>4</sup> “During the sacred meetings of the Christians, prayers were repeated, the Holy Scriptures were publicly read, select discourses upon the duties of Christians were addressed to the people, hymns were sung, and a portion of the oblations presented by the faithful was employed in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper and the feast of charity.” We need scarcely remind the reader that this account is merely an epitome of a passage in the *Apology*,<sup>5</sup> which was given in the chapter on the Government of the Church.

There is, however, in the *Apology*, an expression which has been urged by those who object to the use of set forms of prayer, in confirmation of their opinion. Tertullian, speaking of the primitive Christians, says “that they prayed for the Emperor without a prompter, because they prayed from the heart.”<sup>6</sup> From the words “without a prompter” it has been

<sup>1</sup> C. 9.

<sup>2</sup> C. 10.

<sup>3</sup> C. 13. In Semler’s edition, the tract *de Oratione* contains nine additional chapters, which were published by Muratori; of these the first two relate to the question whether virgins ought to wear veils in the church, and are little else than an epitome of the tract *de Virginibus velandis*; the third, to the practice of kneeling in the act of prayer; the fourth, to the place, the fifth, to the hour of prayer; the sixth, to the propriety of not allowing a Christian brother to quit the house without joining in prayer; the seventh, to the custom of saying Halleluiah at the conclusion of our prayers; in the eighth, prayer is stated to be the spiritual sacrifice, by which the ancient sacrifices were superseded; the ninth relates to the efficacy of prayer. From the style and tone of these additional chapters, I should infer that they were not written by Tertullian.

<sup>4</sup> *Century* ii. part ii. chap. iv. sect. 8.

<sup>5</sup> C. 39 in chap. iv. p. 110.

<sup>6</sup> C. 30. “Denique sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus.” See Bingham, l. xiii. c. 5, sect. 5.



inferred that their prayers were on all occasions extemporaneous effusions. But the context clearly shows that Tertullian merely intended to contrast the cordial sincerity of their prayers for the safety and prosperity of the emperors, with the forced and hollow exclamations of the heathen populace, who required to be bribed with largesses, and even to be prompted before they would cry out in the accustomed form, "De nostris annis tibi Jupiter augeat annos."<sup>1</sup>

From incidental notices scattered over Tertullian's works we collect that Sunday, or the Lord's Day, was regarded by the primitive Christians as a day of rejoicing; and that to fast upon it was deemed unlawful.<sup>2</sup> The word *Sabbatum* is always used to designate, not the first, but the seventh day of the week; which appears in Tertullian's time to have been also kept as a day of rejoicing. Even the Montanists—anxious as they were to introduce a more rigorous discipline in the observance of fasts—when they kept their two weeks of *Xerophagiæ*, did not fast on the Saturday and Sunday.<sup>3</sup> The Saturday before Easter day was, however, an exception; that *was* observed as a fast.<sup>4</sup> The custom of observing every Saturday as a fast, which became general throughout the western Church, does not appear to have existed in Tertullian's time.<sup>5</sup> That men who, like our author, on all occasions contended that the ritual and ceremonial law of Moses had ceased, should observe the seventh day of the week as a festival, is perhaps to be ascribed to a desire of conciliating the Jewish converts.

We find in Tertullian's works no notice of the celebration of our Lord's nativity, although the festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide are frequently mentioned; with reference to which it should be observed, that the word *Pascha* was not used to signify merely the day of our Lord's resurrection, but also the day of His passion, or rather the whole interval of time from His crucifixion

<sup>1</sup> Compare c. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Tertullian uses both names; that of Sunday, when addressing the heathens. *Apology*, c. 16. "Æque si diem Solis lætitiæ indulgemus," etc. *Ad Nationes*, l. i. c. 13; that of the Lord's Day, when writing to Christians. *De Coronâ*, c. 3. "Die Dominico jejunium nefas ducimus." *De Jejuniis*, c. 15; *de Idololatriâ*, c. 14; *de Animâ*, c. 9. "Inter Dominica Solennia." *De Fugâ in Persecutione*, c. 14. We are not, however, certain that Tertullian uniformly observes this distinction. Bingham thinks that he does. L. xx. c. 2, sect 1.

<sup>3</sup> *De Jejuniis*, c. 15. The Gentiles feasted on a Saturday. *Apology*, c. 16.

<sup>4</sup> *De Jejuniis*, c. 14.

<sup>5</sup> See Bingham, l. xx. c. 3.



to His resurrection.<sup>1</sup> In like manner the word Pentecost signified, not merely Whitsunday, but also the fifty days which intervened between Easter and Whitsunday.<sup>2</sup> Tertullian makes no allusion to the paschal controversy—a controversy which was carried on with great bitterness towards the middle of the second century, respecting the days on which the death and resurrection of Christ ought to be commemorated. He says only in general terms that they were always commemorated in the first month of the year.<sup>3</sup>

We have already had occasion to allude to the custom of making offerings at the tombs of the martyrs on the anniversary of their martyrdom.<sup>4</sup> To the anniversary itself was given the name of Natalitium or Natalis Dies, on the ground that it was the day of their birth into eternal life. Some of the commentators fancy that they discover, in a passage in the tract *de Coronâ*, an allusion to the practice of noting down the days on which the martyrs suffered—in other words, of composing martyrologies; but the passage is not of that decided character on which an inference can be safely built.<sup>5</sup>

After Tertullian became a Montanist, he wrote his tract *de Jejuniis*, the object of which was to defend the number, length, and severity of the fasts described by the founder of the sect. In order to refute the notion that the season of our Saviour's Passion was the only season at which Christians were positively bound to fast, he undertakes to establish the general obligation of fasting. With this view he goes back to Adam's transgression.<sup>6</sup> Adam was forbidden to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; he ate and fell. As, therefore, he fell by yielding to his appetite, it follows that the sure way for man to regain the favour of God is to mortify his appetite. Adam offended by eating; we must remedy the evil consequences of the offence by fasting. Our author refers also to various instances, both in the Old and New Testaments, in which punishment had been averted, and spiritual

<sup>1</sup> *De Coronâ*, c. 3; *ad Uxorem*, l. ii. c. 4. "Quis denique solemnibus Paschæ abnoctantem securus sustinebit?" Bingham supposes that our author here speaks of the Paschal Vigil or Easter Eve. (L. xiii. c. 9, sect. 4; or l. xxi. c. 1, sect. 32.) *De Baptismo*, c. 19; *ad Marcionem*, l. iv. c. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *De Coronâ*, c. 3; *de Idololatriâ*, c. 14, *sub fine*; *de Baptismo*, c. 19; *de Jejuniis*, c. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *De Jejuniis*, c. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. v. note 3, p. 173. Compare the *Scorpiace*, c. 15. "Tunc Paulus civitatis Romanæ consequitur nativitatem, quum illic martyrii renascitur generositate."

<sup>5</sup> C. 13. "Habes tuos census, tuos fastos."

<sup>6</sup> C. 3.



and temporal blessings obtained, by fasting.<sup>1</sup> God, moreover, by testifying His favourable acceptance of fasts observed in consequence of voluntary vows, thereby declared His will, and rendered such fasts obligatory in future.<sup>2</sup> This favourable acceptance supplied the place of a positive command. Tertullian, however, is met in the very outset by a perplexing objection.<sup>3</sup> "If fasting was designed to be the means of recovering God's favour, how came it to pass that, after the deluge, the liberty respecting food was not curtailed but extended? That man, who was originally confined to a vegetable diet, was then allowed to eat flesh?" To this question Tertullian returns an answer, for which few of his readers could, we think, have been prepared. At first the liberty respecting food was enlarged, in order that man might have an opportunity of evincing a greater desire to please God, by a voluntary abstinence from those kinds of food which he was permitted to take.<sup>4</sup> Afterwards, when the law was given, a distinction was made between clean and unclean animals, for the purpose of preparing mankind for the fasts which in due season they would be required to observe under the gospel.<sup>5</sup> One argument urged by Tertullian in favour of fasting is, that it fitted the Christian to encounter the bodily hardships to which the profession of his faith exposed him.<sup>6</sup> Another is grounded on the natural tendency of fasting to render the intellectual and moral faculties vigorous and active; whereas a full stomach weighs down the soul, rendering it unfit for contemplation, and devotional exercises, and intercourse with heaven.<sup>7</sup> This remark our author confirms by the examples of Moses and Elias, who fasted forty days and forty nights, when they were admitted to the divine presence.<sup>8</sup>

From this treatise, and from other parts of Tertullian's writings, we learn that the fasts observed by the Church in his day were—(1) The Paschal Fast, which consisted in a total abstinence from food (*jejunium*) during the interval between Christ's passion and resurrection.<sup>9</sup> This was considered as obligatory upon all Christians. (2) Stationary days, *Dies Stationarii*, Wednesday and Friday in every week, on which a half-fast (*semi-jejunium*)

<sup>1</sup> Cc. 7, 8. Compare *de Patientiâ*, c. 13.

<sup>2</sup> C. 11.

<sup>3</sup> C. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Compare *de Cultu Fœminarum*, l. ii. c. 10; *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 8.

<sup>5</sup> C. 5. Compare *adv. Marcionem*, l. ii. c. 18.

<sup>6</sup> C. 12.

<sup>7</sup> C. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Compare *de Res. Carnis*, c. 61.

<sup>9</sup> "Certe in Evangelio illos dies jejuniis determinatos putant, in quibus ablati sunt sponsus (Matt. ix. 15), et hos esse jam solos legitimos jejuniorum Christianorum, abolitis legalibus et prophetis vetustatibus." *De Jejuniis*, c. 2. Compare c. 13, *sub in.*, c. 14; *de Oratione*, c. 14.



was kept, terminating at three in the afternoon.<sup>1</sup> These were voluntary fasts, and observed on the authority of tradition; Wednesday being selected, because on that day the Jews took counsel to destroy Christ; and Friday, because that was the day of His crucifixion.<sup>2</sup> The reason assigned for terminating the *Statio* at the ninth hour was,<sup>3</sup> that Peter is said in the Acts of the Apostles to have gone with John into the temple at that hour.<sup>4</sup> "But whence," asks Tertullian, who contended that the *Statio* ought to be prolonged till the evening, "whence does it appear that the apostles had on that day been keeping a fast? The example of St. Peter might be more plausibly alleged for terminating the fast at the sixth hour; for in another chapter we are told that he went up to pray at that hour, and became very hungry, and would have eaten."<sup>5</sup> (3) *Xerophagiæ*, days on which it was usual to abstain from flesh and wine, in imitation, perhaps, of the restraint which Daniel is stated to have imposed upon himself.<sup>6</sup> These fasts were not enjoined by the Church, but were voluntary exercises of piety on the part of individuals;<sup>7</sup> and some of the orthodox appear to have objected to them altogether, on the ground that they were borrowed from the heathen superstitions.<sup>8</sup>

The difference between the orthodox and Montanists, on the subject of fasting, appears to have consisted in the following particulars. With respect to the *Jejunium*, or total abstinence from food, the former thought that the interval between our Saviour's death and resurrection was the only period during which the apostles observed a total fast, and consequently the only period during which fasting was of positive obligation upon all Christians. At other times it rested with themselves to

<sup>1</sup> "Cur Stationibus quartam et sextam Sabbati dicamus?" *De Jejuniiis*, c. 14. "Sic et Apostolos observasse, nullum aliud imponentes jugum certorum et in commune omnibus obeundorum jejuniorum; proinde nec stationum, quæ et ipsæ suos quidem dies habeant, quartæ feriæ et sextæ; passivè tamen currant, neque sub lege præcepti; neque ultra supremam diei, quando et orationes fere hora nona concludat, de Petri exemplo, quod Actis refertur," c. 2. See also *de Oratione*, c. 14, where our author supposes the word *statio* to be borrowed from the military art. "Si *statio* de militari exemplo nomen accipit; nam et militia Dei sumus." Tertullian uses the expression "*trium hebdomadum statione*" in speaking of Daniel's fast (c. 10). *De Animâ*, c. 48.

<sup>2</sup> See *de Jejuniiis*, c. 13, *sub in.* Bingham, l. xxi. c. 3, sect. 2, from Augustine, ep. 86 or 36 *ad Casulanum*.

<sup>3</sup> *De Jejuniiis*, c. 10.

<sup>4</sup> C. 3, v. 1.

<sup>5</sup> C. 10, v. 9.

<sup>6</sup> C. 10, v. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *De Jejuniiis*, c. 13.

<sup>8</sup> "Xerophagias vero novum affectari officii nomen et proximum Ethnicæ superstitioni, quales castimonie Apim, Isidem, et Magnam Matrem certorum eduliorum exceptione purificant." *De Jejuniiis*, c. 2. See also c. 16.



determine whether they would fast or not. The Montanists, on the contrary, contended that there were other seasons during which fasting was obligatory, and that the appointment of those seasons constituted a part of the revelations of the Paraclete.<sup>1</sup> With respect to the Dies Stationarii, the Montanists not only pronounced the fast obligatory upon all Christians, but prolonged it until the evening, instead of terminating it, as was the orthodox custom, at the ninth hour.<sup>2</sup> In the observance of the Xerophagiæ the Montanists abstained—not only from flesh and wine, like the orthodox—but also from the richer and more juicy kinds of fruit, and omitted all their customary ablutions.<sup>3</sup> Montanus appears to have enjoined only two weeks of Xerophagiæ in the year;<sup>4</sup> but his followers were animated by a greater love of fasting than their master, for Jerome says that, in his day, the Montanists kept three Lents, one of them after Whitsunday.<sup>5</sup>

We have already observed that, in Tertullian's time, the bishops exercised the power of appointing days of fasting, whenever the circumstances of the Church seemed to require such outward marks of sorrow and humiliation; and that the councils or general assemblies, which were held in Greece for the purpose of regulating the affairs of the Church, were opened by a solemn fast.<sup>6</sup>

Ecclesiastical history abounds with proofs of the tendency of mankind to run into extremes; and thus to convert institutions, which in their original design and application were beneficial and salutary, into sources of the most pernicious errors and abuses. Were we required to produce an instance in confirma-

<sup>1</sup> *De Jejuniis*, cc. 1, 13.

<sup>2</sup> *De Jejuniis*, c. 1. "Quod Stationes plerumque in vesperam producamus."

<sup>3</sup> *De Jejuniis*, c. 1. "Quod etiam Xerophagias observemus, siccantes cibum ab omni carne, et omni jurulentiâ, et vividioribus quibusque pomis, ne quid vinositatis vel edamus vel potemus. Lavacri quoque abstinentiam, congruentem arido victui." See also cc. 9, 10, where Tertullian defends the practice of the Montanists as strictly conformable to the practice of holy men under the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. The Marcionites appear to have deemed fish a holy diet. *Adv. Marcionem*, l. i. c. 14.

<sup>4</sup> "Duas in anno hebdomadas Xerophagiarum, nec totas, exceptis scilicet Sabbatis et Dominicis, offerimus Deo." *De Jejuniis*, c. 15.

<sup>5</sup> "Illi tres in anno faciunt quadragesimas, quasi tres passi sint Salvatores." *Ad Marcellam*, ep. 54. "Et ex hujus occasione testimonii Montanus, Prisca, et Maximilla, etiam post Pentecosten faciunt quadragesimam, quod, ablato sponso, filii sponsi debeant jejuna." In Matt. ix. Bingham infers that each of these Lent fasts continued for two weeks. L. xxi. c. 1, sect. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. iv, note 5, p. 117. *De Jejuniis*, c. 13.



tion of the truth of this remark, we should without hesitation refer the reader to the subject which we have been now considering. Fasting, as it was originally practised in the Church, was regarded as a means to a moral end: as a means, peculiarly fitted both to the circumstances and to the nature of man, of nourishing in him those feelings of contrition and self-abasement, and of enabling him to acquire that mastery over his sensual appetites which are essential elements in the composition of the Christian character. When, at the season appointed by the Church for the commemoration of the Passion of Christ, its members, amongst other external observances—designed to express their lively sense of their own unworthiness, and of the deadly nature of sin which could be expiated only by so great a sacrifice—abstained also from their customary meals and recreations; surely the most enlightened reason must approve the motive of their abstinence, and admit as well its suitableness to the fallen condition of man, as its tendency to encourage a devout and humble temper. To these considerations we may add that, from the mixed constitution of man's nature and the intimate union which subsists between his soul and body, the occasional restraints, which the primitive Christians voluntarily imposed upon themselves in respect of food and amusement, could scarcely fail to have a beneficial operation upon their character; were it only by interrupting for a time their ordinary habits, and reminding them that the objects of sense possessed neither the sole, nor the principal, claim to their attention. A life of habitual indulgence, even when that indulgence leads not to positive excess, is favourable neither to intellectual nor spiritual improvement. It enfeebles our mental powers; it deadens our moral perceptions; it tends especially to render us selfish and regardless of the wants and feelings of others. But when experience also tells us that such a course of life terminates almost invariably in excess, no further argument can be wanting to prove the reasonableness and utility of occasional abstinence—if used only as a means to an end—to invigorate the moral principle within us, and to promote humility of temper and purity of heart. Unhappily, however, for the Church, from the propensity of the human mind to run into extremes—from an increasing fondness for the tenets of the Platonic philosophy—and an indiscriminate imitation of what is recorded in Scripture of holy men, who, being placed in extraordinary circumstances, were never designed to be held up as examples, in all points of their conduct, to ordinary Christians—from the combined



operation of all these causes, fasting, instead of being considered as a salutary discipline, or as a means to holiness, came to be regarded as holiness itself. The piety of men was estimated by the frequency and severity of their fasts. In proportion as they subjected themselves to greater privations and hardships, they acquired a higher reputation for sanctity. A species of rivalry was thus excited; new and strange methods were invented of macerating and torturing their bodies, till at length extravagance in practice led to error in doctrine; fasts and mortifications were regarded as meritorious in themselves—as procuring by their intrinsic efficacy remission of sin and restoration to the favour of God.

To the same causes, which led men into the errors now described respecting the merit of fasting, may be traced the erroneous opinions which were gradually introduced, respecting the superior sanctity of the monastic and eremitical modes of life. No man, who has reflected upon the constitution of his own nature and believes that he is destined to exist in a purer and more spiritual state, can doubt the utility, or rather necessity, of occasional retirement and seclusion, for the purposes of self-examination, and of securing to religion that paramount influence over the thoughts and affections which is liable to be weakened, or even destroyed, by a constant intercourse with the world. Here, then, was a reasonable motive to induce Christians, wisely anxious for their own salvation, to withdraw themselves, at stated intervals, from worldly pleasures, and cares, and occupations. The frequency with which those intervals recurred would depend in each case upon the temper of the individual. Men of an austere and unsocial, as well as those of an enthusiastic character, would naturally run into excess, and contend that, if *occasional* seclusion was thus favourable to the growth of religion in the soul, the benefits to be derived from *total* seclusion must be proportionally greater;—in a word, that the most effectual mode of securing their virtue against the temptations of the world was to quit it altogether. The deference paid in the Church to the authority of Plato contributed to give currency and weight to these opinions. One principle of his philosophy was, that the visible things around us are only the fleeting and fallacious images of those eternal, immutable ideas which alone possess a real existence. The business, therefore, of *him*, who wishes to arrive at the knowledge of the truth, and to elevate his nature to the perfection of which it is capable, must be to abstract his



mind from his senses—entirely to exclude from his observation those forms of perishable matter which serve only to bewilder and lead him astray—and to give himself up to the contemplation of the ideal world. These speculative notions, originally derived from the Platonic school, no sooner gained a footing in the Church, than they were reduced to practice. Men began to affect a life of solitude and contemplation, and to deem all intercourse with the world a positive hindrance to the attainment of that spiritual elevation at which the Christian ought to aim. Overlooking the clear intimations supplied by the constitution of their own nature, that man is designed for society—overlooking the express declarations of Scripture and the example of our Blessed Lord, whose ministry was one continued course of active benevolence—they took Elias and the Baptist for their models, without reflecting for a moment either upon the peculiar circumstances in which those holy men were placed, or the peculiar objects which they were appointed to accomplish. Thus, while they passed their hours in a state of indolent abstraction—discharging no one social duty, and living as if they were alone in the world—they succeeded in persuading themselves and others that they were treading the path which leads to Christian perfection, and pursuing the course most pleasing in the sight of God—that they were the especial objects of His regard, were holding habitual intercourse with Him, and enjoying a foretaste of that ineffable bliss which would be their portion, when removed from this world of sin and misery to His immediate presence. Hence the stories of dreams and visions which occur so frequently in the lives of the saints, and have been too hastily stigmatized as the offspring of deliberate fraud; whereas they were in most instances the creations of a distempered mind, cut off from the active pursuits in which it was designed to be engaged, and supplying their place by imaginary scenes and objects. It forms no part of our plan to enter into a minute detail of the follies and extravagances which were the natural fruits of the eremitical and monastic modes of life. Let it suffice to have pointed out the sources from which they took their rise, and to have exposed the mischievous consequences of setting up any one mode of life as pre-eminently pure and holy—as rendering those who adopt it the peculiar favourites of heaven.

To return to our author. In refuting the calumnious accusations of the pagans, he speaks of the Agape, or feast of charity. “Its object,” he says, “is evident from its name, which signifies



love.<sup>1</sup> In these feasts, therefore, we testify our love towards our poorer brethren, by relieving their wants. We commence the entertainment by offering up a prayer to God; and after eating and drinking in moderation, we wash our hands, and lights being introduced, each individual is invited to address God in a psalm, either taken from the Scriptures or the produce of his own meditations. The feast concludes, as it began, with prayer." Tertullian does not expressly say, but it may be fairly inferred, that the materials of the feast were furnished out of the oblations made at the Eucharist; a portion of which appears also to have been allotted to the support of the martyrs in prison.<sup>2</sup> When we read the above description of the Agape, we cannot but participate in the regret expressed by Dr. Hey, that scandal should have occasioned the discontinuance of an entertainment so entirely consonant to the benevolent spirit of the gospel.<sup>3</sup> If, however, we may believe Tertullian, the grossest abuses were introduced into it even in his time; for we find him, in the tract *de Jejunis*,<sup>4</sup> charging the orthodox with the very same licentious practices in their feasts of charity which the pagans were in the habit of imputing—and according to the statement in the *Apology*, falsely imputing—to the whole Christian body. On these contradictory assertions of our author, we may remark that the truth probably lies between them. Abuses did exist, but neither so numerous, nor so flagrant, as the enemies of the gospel, and Tertullian himself, after he became a Montanist, alleged.

Tertullian speaks both of public and private vigils;<sup>5</sup> and says that it was customary for the Christian females to bring water to wash the feet of the brethren, and to visit the dwellings of the poor, for the purpose, it may be presumed, of giving them instruction and relieving their wants. The Romish commentators have endeavoured to defend the religious processions of their Church

<sup>1</sup> *Apology*, c. 39.

<sup>2</sup> "Imo et quæ justa sunt caro non amittit per curam Ecclesiæ, agapen fratrum." *Ad Martyres*, c. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Book iv. art. 28, sect. 5.

<sup>4</sup> C. 17. "Sed major his est agape, quia per hanc adolescentes tui cum sororibus dormiunt: appendices scilicet gulæ lascivia atque luxuria." Compare the *Apology*, cc. 7, 8.

<sup>5</sup> "Ita saturantur, ut qui meminerint etiam per noctem adorandum sibi Deum esse." *Apology*, c. 39. "Quis nocturnis convocationibus, si ita oportuerit, a latere suo adimi libenter feret?" *Ad Uxorem*, l. ii. c. 4. "Quum etiam per noctem exurgis oratum," c. 5. "Aquam sanctorum pedibus offerre," c. 4. "Quis autem sinat conjugem suam, visitandorum fratrum gratiâ, vicatim aliena et quidem pauperiora quæque tuguria circumire?" *Ibid.*



by the authority of Tertullian, who uses the word *Procedendum* in the passage from which the preceding remarks are taken.<sup>1</sup> But if we compare it with another passage in the second tract *de Cultu Fœminarum*,<sup>2</sup> we shall find that the word *procedere* means "to go from home;" which, Tertullian observes, a Christian female ought never to do, excepting for some religious or charitable purpose.<sup>3</sup>

We will now proceed to the rite of baptism, on which Tertullian wrote an express treatise in confutation of a female, named Quintilla, who denied its necessity, affirming that faith alone was sufficient to salvation. In that treatise, as well as in other parts of his works, he speaks in strong terms of the efficacy of baptism. "By it," he says, "we are cleansed from all our sins, and rendered capable of attaining eternal life."<sup>4</sup> By it we regain that Spirit of God which Adam received at his creation, and lost by his transgression."<sup>5</sup> Tertullian connects regeneration with it;<sup>6</sup> calling it our second birth, in which the soul is formed as it were anew by water and the power from above, and the veil of its former corruption being drawn aside, beholds the full refulgence of its native light. In the first book *against Marcion*, he declares the following spiritual blessings to be consequent upon baptism:—Remission of sins, deliverance from death, regeneration, and participation in the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> He calls it the sacrament of washing,<sup>8</sup> the blessed sacrament of water,<sup>9</sup> the laver of regeneration,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Si procedendum erit," etc.

<sup>2</sup> C. II. "Ac si necessitas amicitiarum officiorumque gentilium vos vacat, cur non vestris armis indutæ proceditis?" See also c. 12.

<sup>3</sup> "Vobis autem nulla procedendi causa non tetrica; aut imbecillus aliquis ex fratribus visitatur, aut sacrificium offertur, aut Dei verbum administratur," c. II.

<sup>4</sup> See *de Pœnitentiâ*, c. 6; *de Baptismo*, cc. 1, 7.

<sup>5</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 5, *sub fine*. "Recipit enim illum Dei Spiritum, quem tunc de afflatu ejus acceperat, sed post amiserat per delictum." Tertullian usually speaks as if the soul, that is, the vital and intellectual principles, had been communicated when God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life. Here he appears to confound the soul and spirit. See chap. iii. p. 86; chap. v. note 3, p. 162. "Aquâ signat, Sancto Spiritu vestit." *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 36.

<sup>6</sup> *De Animâ*, c. 41. See chap. v. p. 162; *de Res. Carnis*, c. 47; *de Pudicitiâ*, cc. 6, 9. We find in the tract *de Carne Christi*, c. 4, the expression "*Cælestis Regeneratio*," and in the *Scorpiace*, c. 6, "*Secunda Regeneratio*;" but in both cases the allusion seems to be to the change in the body of man, which will take place when it puts on incorruption and immortality.

<sup>7</sup> C. 28.

<sup>8</sup> "Eadem lavacri Sacramenta." *De Virginibus velandis*, c. 2. See chap. v. p. 162.

<sup>9</sup> "Felix Sacramentum aquæ nostræ." *De Baptismo*, *sub initio*.

<sup>10</sup> "Per lavacrum regenerationis." *De Pudicitiâ*, c. 1.



the sacrament of faith,<sup>1</sup> the sign,<sup>2</sup> or seal of our faith.<sup>3</sup> There is an apparent inconsistency in his accounts of the mode in which the spiritual benefits of baptism are conferred. At one time he speaks as if the sanctification of the water used in baptism was effected by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit, who descended upon it as soon as the prayer of invocation had been addressed to God.<sup>4</sup> At another time he supposes the effect to be produced through the ministry of an angel, whom he terms *Angelus Baptismi Arbiter*.<sup>5</sup> To this angel, who, according to him, is the precursor of the Holy Spirit, as the Baptist was of Christ, belongs the especial office of preparing the soul of man for the reception of the Holy Spirit in baptism. We call the inconsistency of these two statements only an apparent inconsistency, because, occurring as they do not only in the same tract, but even in the same chapter, our author could scarcely have deemed them inconsistent. The latter statement is evidently founded on the narrative in St. John's Gospel respecting the angel who imparted a healing efficacy to the waters of the pool of Bethesda.<sup>6</sup>

In the tract *de Coronâ Militis*, Tertullian gives a summary account of the forms used in administering the rite of baptism.<sup>7</sup> The candidate having been prepared for its due reception by frequent prayers, fasts and vigils,<sup>8</sup> professed, in the presence of the congregation,<sup>9</sup> and under the hand of the president,<sup>10</sup> that he renounced the devil, his pomp, and angels.<sup>11</sup> He was then

<sup>1</sup> "Sine Fidei Sacramento." *De Animâ*, c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> "In signaculo Fidei." *De Spectaculis*, c. 24; *Signaculi nostri*, c. 4. Speaking of circumcision, Tertullian uses the expression "*Signaculum corporis*." *Apology*, c. 21.

<sup>3</sup> In the tract *de Pudicitia*, c. 10, Tertullian calls the baptism of John, the washing of repentance.

<sup>4</sup> "Igitur omnes aquæ de pristinâ originis prærogativâ Sacramentum sanctificationis consequuntur, invocato Deo. Supervenit enim statim Spiritus de coelis, et aquis superest, sanctificans eas de semetipso, et ita sanctificatæ vim sanctificandi combibunt." *De Baptismo*, c. 4, quoted in chap. v. note 7, p. 177. See also c. 8.

<sup>5</sup> "Igitur medicatis quodammodo aquis per Angeli interventum, et Spiritus in aquis corporaliter diluitur, et caro in iisdem spiritaliter mundatur," c. 4. Again in c. 6: "Non quod in aquis Spiritum Sanctum consequimur, sed in aquâ emundati sub Angelo Spiritui Sancto præparamur. Hic quoque figura præcessit. Sic enim Ioannes ante præcursor Domini fuit, præparans vias ejus; ita et Angelus Baptismi arbiter superventuro Spiritui Sancto vias dirigit ablutione delictorum." See chap. iii. note 2, p. 109.

<sup>6</sup> C. 5.

<sup>7</sup> C. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 20.

<sup>9</sup> The expression is "*in Ecclesiâ*," which Bingham translates *in the Church*. The translation may be correct, for in the same tract, c. 13, the word *Ecclesia* seems to mean the place of assembly. "Et ipsum curiæ nomen Ecclesia est Christi."

<sup>10</sup> "Sub Antistitis manu."

<sup>11</sup> Compare *de Spectaculis*, c. 4; *de Idololatriâ*, c. 6; *de Cultu Fæminarum*, l. i. c. 2.



plunged into the water three times, in allusion to the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity,<sup>1</sup> making certain responses which, like the other forms here mentioned, were not prescribed in Scripture, but rested on custom and tradition.<sup>2</sup> He then tasted a mixture of milk and honey<sup>3</sup>—was anointed with oil,<sup>4</sup> in allusion to the practice under the Mosaic dispensation of anointing those who were appointed to the priesthood, since all Christians are in a certain sense supposed to be priests—and was signed with the sign of the cross.<sup>5</sup> Lastly followed the imposition of hands, the origin of which ceremony is referred by our author to the benediction pronounced by Jacob upon the sons of Joseph.<sup>6</sup> With us the imposition of hands is deferred till the child is brought to be confirmed; but in Tertullian's time, when a large proportion of the persons baptized were adults, confirmation immediately followed the administration of baptism, and formed a part of the ceremony. It was usual for the baptized person to abstain, during the week subsequent to his reception of the rite, from his daily ablutions.<sup>7</sup> Some also contended that baptism ought to be followed by fasting, because our Lord immediately after His baptism fasted forty days and forty nights.<sup>8</sup> But our author replies that baptism is in fact an occasion of joy, inasmuch as it opens to us the door of salvation. Christ's conduct in this instance was not designed to be an example for our imitation, as it had a particular reference to certain events which took place under the Mosaic dispensation. In commenting upon the parable of the Prodigal Son, Tertullian calls the ring which the father directed to be put upon his hand, the seal of baptism; by which the Christian, when interrogated, seals the covenant of his faith.<sup>9</sup> The natural inference from these words appears to be that a ring used to be given in baptism; but I have found no other trace of such a custom.

Tertullian alludes to the custom of having sponsors, who made,

<sup>1</sup> "Nam nec semel, sed ter, ad singula nomina in personas singulas tingimur." *Adv. Praxeam*, c. 26.

<sup>2</sup> "In aquam demissus, et inter pauca verba tinctus." *De Baptismo*, c. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Marcionem*, l. i. c. 14.

<sup>4</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 7; *de Res. Carnis*, c. 26.

<sup>5</sup> *De Res. Carnis*, c. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 8; *de Res. Carnis*, c. 8.

<sup>7</sup> *De Coronâ*, c. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 20. But compare *de Jejuniis*, c. 8. "Ipse mox Dominus baptismum suum, et in suo omnium jejuniis dedicavit." This variation of opinion affords an additional presumption that the tract *de Baptismo* was written before Tertullian became a Montanist.

<sup>9</sup> "Annulum denuo signaculum lavacri." *De Pudicitia*, c. 9. "Annulum quoque accepit tunc primum, quo fidei pactionem interrogatus obsignat." *Ibid.*



in the name of the children brought to the font, those promises which they were unable to make for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

From the passages already referred to, and from others scattered through Tertullian's works, it is evident that in his day baptism was administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;<sup>2</sup> and that the candidate professed his belief in the Three Persons of the Trinity, who were at once the witnesses of his profession and the sponsors for his salvation.<sup>3</sup> We will take this opportunity of observing that, whatever might be the case with the Montanists in after times, the writings of Tertullian afford no ground for supposing that the founder of the sect introduced a new form of baptism.

After enforcing the necessity of baptism by water, and describing and explaining the forms observed in the administration of the rite, Tertullian proceeds, in the remaining chapters of the tract *de Baptismo*, to discuss some other points connected with the subject. He first considers the question proposed by Christ to the Pharisees—"The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?"<sup>4</sup> To this Tertullian replies, that it was of divine commandment, because John was sent by God to baptize. So far it was from heaven. But it conveyed no heavenly gift; it conferred neither the remission of sins nor the Holy Spirit. John's was the baptism of repentance, designed to fit men for the reception of that baptism, by which, through the efficacy of the death and resurrection of Christ, they obtain the remission of sins and the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.<sup>5</sup> Until the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, the disciples of Christ baptized only with the baptism of John, that is, unto repentance.<sup>6</sup> Tertullian's interpretation of the words—"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire"—is, that the baptism with the Holy Ghost applies to those whose faith is sincere and steadfast; the baptism with fire to those whose faith is feigned and unstable, and who are therefore baptized, not to salvation, but to judgment.<sup>7</sup> Our author supposes the Baptist's message to Christ

<sup>1</sup> "Quid enim necesse est sponsores etiam periculo ingeri?" *De Baptismo*, c. 18. See also c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *De Baptismo*, c. 6.

<sup>4</sup> C. 10. Matt. xxi. 25.

<sup>5</sup> On the subject of John's mission, see *adv. Marcionem*, l. iv. c. 33; l. v. c. 2.

<sup>6</sup> C. 11.

<sup>7</sup> C. 10, *sub fine*. Some in Tertullian's day appear to have contended that there was a contradiction between the Baptist's prediction that Christ would baptize, and St. John's declaration (iv. 2), that He did not baptize, c. 11.



to have originated in the failure of his faith, occasioned by the transfer of the Spirit from him to Christ—a notion founded on John's declaration—"He must increase, and I must decrease."<sup>1</sup>

In the passage just alluded to, Tertullian does not merely assert that the disciples of Christ baptized with the baptism of John, but assigns his reasons for making the assertion.<sup>2</sup> His words are—"Itaque tingebant Discipuli ejus (Christi) ut ministri, ut Ioannes ante præcursor, eodem baptismo Ioannis, ne qui alio putet, quia nec extat alius nisi postea Christi, qui tunc utique a discentibus dari non poterat, utpote nondum adimpletâ gloriâ Domini, nec instructâ efficaciâ lavacri per passionem et resurrectionem." From these words we may fairly infer that Tertullian knew no baptisms connected with the divine dispensations, besides those of John and Christ. Yet Wall, in the introduction to his *History of Infant Baptism*, has quoted a passage from this very tract, to prove that our author was acquainted with the Jewish baptism of proselytes. The passage is in the fifth chapter—"Sed enim nationes, extraneæ ab omni intellectu Spiritualium, Potestatem eâdem efficaciâ suis idolis subministrant, sed viduis aquis sibi mentiuntur. Nam et sacris quibusdam per lavacrum initiuntur, Isis alicujus, aut Mithræ—certè ludis Apollinaribus et Eleusiniis tinguntur. Idque se in regenerationem et impunitatem perjuratorum suorum agere præsumunt—quo agnito, hic quoque studium Diaboli cognoscimus res Dei æmulantis, quum et ipse baptismum in suis exercet." On this passage Wall makes the following remark:—"Now the divine baptism, which he says the devil imitated, must be the Jewish baptism. For the rites of Apollo and Ceres, in which he there instances as those in which the said baptism was used, were long before the times of the Christian baptism." This, however, is by no means a necessary inference. In describing the notions entertained by Tertullian respecting the nature of demons, we mentioned that their chief employment and pleasure was to prevent mankind from embracing the worship of the true God, and that they were assisted in the attainment of this object by the partial knowledge which they had acquired, during their abode in heaven, of the nature of the divine dispensations.<sup>3</sup> Availing themselves of this knowledge, they endeavoured to preoccupy the minds of men by inventing rites, bearing some resemblance to those which were to be observed under the gospel. Thus, by their suggestion, baptism

<sup>1</sup> C. 10. Matt. xi. Compare *de Oratione*, c. 1; *adv. Marcionem*, l. iv. c. 18. John iii. 30.

<sup>2</sup> C. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. iii. p. 107.



was introduced into the Eleusinian mysteries as a mode of initiation, being, if I may use the expression, an imitation by anticipation of Christian baptism.

That this is a correct exposition of our author's meaning will be evident from a comparison of the different passages in which he alludes to the subject. The reader will find some of them quoted at length in chapter iii. ;<sup>1</sup> and reference made to a passage in the tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*,<sup>2</sup> which is as follows:—“Tingit et ipse (Diabolus) quosdam, utique credentes et fideles suos: expositionem delictorum de lavacro repromittit: et si adhuc memini, Mithra signat illic in frontibus milites suos; celebrat et panis oblationem, et imaginem resurrectionis inducit, et sub gladio redimit coronam.” Here we find that not merely baptism, but also the custom of marking the forehead with the sign of the cross, and the consecration of the bread in the Eucharist, were imitated in the mysteries of Mithra. Are we therefore to conclude that the latter were also Jewish customs? I am aware that there are writers who answer this question in the affirmative, and among them Bishop Hooper in his *Discourse on Lent*, part ii. c. 3, sect. 1, c. 6, sect. 5. But I must confess that the learned prelate's arguments appear to me only to prove that, when our author has once taken up an hypothesis, he will never be at a loss for reasons wherewith to defend it. Wall's conclusion is founded entirely on the assumption that the imitation of divine rites, which Tertullian ascribed to the devil, was necessarily an imitation of rites actually instituted; whereas he held that its very purpose was to anticipate their institution. This is not the proper place for inquiring whether baptism was practised by the Jews before our Saviour's advent as an *initiatory* rite, or only as a mode of *purification*. Be this as it may, Tertullian's express declaration, that besides the baptisms of Christ and John there was no other baptism, renders him but an indifferent voucher for its use among the Jews as an *initiatory* rite.

To proceed with the tract *de Baptismo*. The next question discussed by our author is, whether the apostles were baptized—and if not, whether they could be saved, since our Saviour declared to Nicodemus that, “unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom”—a passage which

<sup>1</sup> Note 1, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> C. 40. See also the instances mentioned in the tract *de Spectaculis*, c. 23, one of which is referred to in chap. v. p. 192.



the ancients uniformly interpreted of baptism.<sup>1</sup> Tertullian admits that St. Paul is the only apostle of whom it is expressly recorded that he was baptized *in the Lord*—that is, with Christian baptism. He shows it, however, to be highly probable that the apostles had received John's baptism, which, as the baptism of Christ was not then instituted, would be sufficient; our Lord Himself having said to Peter, "He that is once washed needs not to be washed again."<sup>2</sup> "But if," Tertullian continues, "we should admit that the apostles were never baptized, theirs was an extraordinary case, and formed an exception to the general rule respecting the necessity of baptism." It is amusing to observe how greatly the ancients were perplexed with this difficulty, and to what expedients they had recourse in order to get rid of it. They argued, for instance, that Peter was baptized when he attempted to walk upon the sea, and the other apostles when the waves broke over the vessel in the storm on the lake of Gennesaret.

They who denied the necessity of baptism alleged the example of Abraham, who pleased God by faith alone, without baptism.<sup>3</sup> "True," replies Tertullian; "but as, since the promulgation of the gospel, additional objects of faith—the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ—have been proposed to mankind, so also a new condition of salvation has been introduced, and faith will not now avail without baptism." He confirms his argument by a reference to our Saviour's injunction to the apostles, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;" and to his favourite passage, the declaration to Nicodemus.

Another argument against the necessity of baptism<sup>4</sup> was founded on the statement of St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that "he was sent to preach, not to baptize."<sup>5</sup> Our author justly remarks, that these words must be understood with reference to the disputes then prevailing at Corinth; not as meant positively to declare that it was no part of an apostle's office to baptize. St. Paul had himself baptized Gaius, and Crispus, and the household of Stephanas.

With respect to the propriety of rebaptizing, Tertullian says

<sup>1</sup> C. 12. See chap. i. note 2, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> John xiii. 10. The verse is quoted inaccurately.

<sup>3</sup> C. 13.

<sup>4</sup> C. 14.

<sup>5</sup> C. 1, v. 17.



explicitly that baptism ought not to be repeated; but he considered heretical baptism as utterly null.<sup>1</sup> "As heretics," he argues, "have neither the same God nor the same Christ with us, so neither have they the same baptism. Since, therefore, they never were baptized, they must be cleansed by baptism before they are admitted into the Church." We should, as has been already observed, bear in mind that the heretics, with whom Tertullian had principally to contend, were those who affirmed that the Creator of the world was not the Supreme God.<sup>2</sup>

We have already seen that Tertullian calls martyrdom a second baptism.<sup>3</sup> He says that martyrdom will both supply the want of baptism by water, and restore it to those who have lost it by transgression.<sup>4</sup>

In our remarks on the twenty-third Article of the Church, we alluded to a passage in the tract *de Baptismo*, in which Tertullian ascribes to the laity an inherent right to administer baptism.<sup>5</sup> We should now deem it sufficient to refer the reader to what we have there said had we not observed that the passage has been mistranslated by Dr. Waterland, in his second letter to Mr. Kelsall on lay baptism.<sup>6</sup> The passage is as follows:—"Dandi quidem habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est Episcopus. Dehinc presbyteri et diaconi, non tamen sine Episcopi auctoritate, propter Ecclesiæ honorem, quo salvo salva pax est. Alioquin etiam laicis jus est; quod enim ex æquo accipitur, ex æquo dari potest; nisi Episcopi jam, aut presbyteri, aut diaconi vocantur discentes.<sup>7</sup> Domini sermo non debet abscondi ab ullo; proinde baptismus, æquè Dei census, ab omnibus exerceri potest." Of this passage Dr. Waterland gives the following translation:—"The chief priest, who is the bishop, has power to give (baptism), and next to him the priests and deacons (but not

<sup>1</sup> C. 15. "Hæretici autem nullum habent consortium nostræ disciplinæ, quos extraneos utique testatur ipsa ademptio communicationis. Non debeo in illis agnoscere quod mihi est præceptum, quia nec idem Deus est nobis et illis, nec unus Christus, id est idem." See also *de Pudicitia*, c. 19. "Unde et apud nos, ut Ethnico par, immo et super Ethnicum, Hæreticus etiam per baptismum veritatis utroque homine purgatus admittitur." But when the tract *de Pudicitia* was written, Tertullian had seceded openly from the Church.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. v. notes 2 and 3, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> C. 16. See chap. ii. note 2, p. 71.

<sup>4</sup> "Hic est baptismus, qui lavacrum et non acceptum repræsentat, et perditum reddit." Compare *de Pudicitia*, c. 13. "Quæ exinde jam perierat baptismate amisso."

<sup>5</sup> C. 17. Chap. v. p. 175.

<sup>6</sup> Waterland's *Works*, vol. x. p. 108.

<sup>7</sup> We believe the true reading to be "vocarentur discentes." Some editions have "vocantur dicentes," which reading Waterland follows.



without the authority of the bishop) *because of their honourable post in the Church*, in preservation of which peace is preserved; otherwise even laymen have a right to give it; for what is received in common, may be given in common. Except then that either bishops, or presbyters, or deacons *intervene*, the ordinary Christians are called to it." Dr. Waterland subjoins the following observation:—"I have thrown in two or three words in the translation, to clear the sense of this passage; I have chiefly followed Mr. Bennet, both as to the sense and to the pointing of them, and refer you to him for their vindication."<sup>1</sup> To us, however, it appears certain that both Dr. Waterland and Mr. Bennet have mistaken the meaning of the passage; which is—"The chief priest, that is, the bishop, possesses the right of conferring baptism. After him the priests and deacons, but not without his authority, *out of regard to the honour (or dignity) of the Church*, on the preservation of which depends the preservation of peace. Otherwise the laity possess the right: for that which all equally receive, all may equally confer; unless bishops, or priests, or deacons were alone designated by the word *discipules*, *i.e.* disciples."<sup>2</sup> The word of God ought not to be concealed by any; baptism, therefore, which equally (with the word) proceeds from God, may be administered by all." Our author then goes on to say that although the laity possess the right, yet as modesty and humility are peculiarly becoming in them, they ought only to exercise it in cases of necessity, when the eternal salvation of a fellow-creature is at stake. He does not, however, extend the right to women; on the contrary, he stigmatizes the attempt on their part to baptize as a most flagrant act of presumption.<sup>3</sup> In the passage just cited, Tertullian rests the right of the laity to administer baptism on the assumption that a man has the power of conferring upon another whatever he has himself received, and on the comprehensive meaning of the word *discipules* in John iv. 2. On other occasions, as we have seen,<sup>4</sup> he rests it on the ground that all Christians are in fact priests. It is not easy to determine which of the three arguments is the least conclusive.

<sup>1</sup> *Rights of the Clergy*, p. 118. Mr. Bennet does not quote the latter part of the passage.

<sup>2</sup> The allusion is to John iv. 2. *Though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples.* Tertullian frequently uses the word *discipules* in this sense. Thus in c. 11: "Qui tunc utique a *discipulis* dari non poterat." *Adv. Marcionem*, l. iv. c. 22: "Tres de *discipulis* arbitros futuræ visionis, et vocis assumit." See *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, cc. 3, 20, 22, 30, 44.

<sup>3</sup> Compare *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 41.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. iv. p. 112, note 1.