

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FORTUNE OF THE BOOK

The work then closes with this epilogue:

And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. And he saith unto me, see thou do it not; I am a fellow servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them which keep the words of this book; worship God. And he saith unto me, seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book. For the time is at hand. He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy let him be made holy still.

A distant voice, the voice of Jesus himself, is supposed to reply to these promises and to guarantee them.

Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me to render to each man according as his work is. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life and may enter in by the gates into the city. Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone that loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

Then the voices of heaven and those of earth cross each other and arrive *morien*do in a finale of complete sympathy:

And the spirit and the bride say come, and he that heareth, let him say, come. And he that is athirst let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city which are written in this book.

He which testifieth these things saith, Yea, I come quickly, Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all, Amen.

There is no doubt that, presented under cover of the most venerated name in Christianity, the Apocalypse made upon the Churches of Asia a very deep impression. A crowd of details now become obscure, were clear to his contemporaries. His bold announcement of an approaching convulsion was not all surprising. Discourses, not less formal, attributed to Jesus, were spread abroad every day and accepted. For a year, besides, the events of the world would present a marvellous confirmation of the Book. About the 1st February the death of Galba and the accession of Otho became known in Asia. Then each day brought some apparent indication of the breaking up of the empire; the powerlessness of Otho became known through all the provinces; Vitellius maintaining his title against Rome and the Senate, the two bloody battles of Bedriac, Otho deserted in his turn, the accession of Vespasian, the battle in the streets of Rome, the fire in the Capitol lit by the combatants, a fire from which many concluded that the destinies of Rome were drawing to a close; everything would appear astonishingly conformable to the gloomy predictions of the prophet. The deceptions did not begin till the taking of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the final termination of the Flavian dynasty. But religious faith is never cast down in its hopes; the work besides was obscure and susceptible in many passages of different interpretations. Thus a few years after the publication of the book a different meaning was attached to many chapters from that which the author had intended. The author had announced that the Roman empire would not be reconstituted, and that the temple of Jerusalem would not be destroyed. It was necessary on these two points to find some way of escape. As to the reappearance of Nero, that was not renounced so readily; even under Trajan, a certain class of people obstinately believed that he would return. For a long time they kept up the idea of the number of the beast. A variant was spread abroad even in Western countries for the accommodation of that number to Latin latitudes: Certain copies bear 616 instead of 666. Now 616 answers to the Latin form, *Nero Cæsar* (the Hebrew *noun* counting fifty).

During the three first centuries the general meaning of the book was preserved at least for some initiated persons. The author of the Sibylline poem, which is dated a little before the year 80, if he had not read the prophesy of Patmos, had heard it spoken of. He sees in it quite an analagous order of ideas; he knows what the sixth vial signifies. For him Nero is the Anti-Messiah: the monster has fled beyond the Euphrates; he will return with thousands of men. The author of the apocalypse of Esdras, (a work dating from certainly the year 96, 97, or 98), notoriously imitates the apocalypse of John, employs his symbolic process, his notations. and his language. We can say as much of the *Ascension of Isaiah* (a work of the second century), where Nero, the incarnation of Belial, plays a *rôle* which proves that the author knew the number of the beast. The authors of the Sibylline poems, which date from the time of the Antonines, penetrate likewise the enigmas of the apostolic manifesto, and adopted their utopias, even those which, like the return of Nero, were decidedly smitten with decay. St. Justin and Melito appear to have had a nearly complete knowledge of the book. We can say as much of Comodian who (about 250) mingled with his interpretation some elements from another source, but who does not for an instant doubt that Nero, the Anti-Christ, will be raised from hell to carry on a final conflict against Christianity, and who conceived the destruction of Rome-Babylon exactly as it was conceived of two hundred years before. Lastly, Victorinus of Pettau (died 303) comments upon the Apocalypse with a very correct sentiment. He knew perfectly that Nero raised again was the real Anti-Christ. As to the number of the beast it was lost probably before the beginning of the second century. Ironæus (about 190) deceives himself grossly upon this point, as also upon some others of major importance and opens the series of chimerical commentaries and arbitrary symbolisms. Some subtle peculiarities, such as the meaning of the false prophet and Armageddon, were lost at an early date.

After the reconciliation of the empire and the church, in the fourth century, the fortune of the Apocalypse was gravely compromised. The Greek and Latin doctors, who no longer separated the future of Christianity from that of the empire, could not admit as inspired a book whose fundamental basis was hatred of Rome and a

prediction of the end of its ruler. Nearly every enlightened portion of the Eastern church which had received a Hellenic education, full of dislike to the Millenarian and Judeo—Christian writings—declared the Apocalypse apocryphal. The book had taken in the Greek and Latin New Testament such a strong position that it was impossible to expel it; men had recourse, to disembarass themselves of the objections which it raised, to feats of exegetical power. Yet the evidence was crushing The Latins, less opposed than the Greek to millenarianism, continued to identify Anti-Christ with Nero. Up to the time of Charlemagne, there was a sort of tradition of that kind. St. Beat of Liebana, who commented on the Apocalypse in 786, affirms, by mixing up, it is true, more than one inconsequence, that the beast of chapters xiii. and xvii., which should reappear at the head of ten kings to destroy the City of Rome, is Nero, the Anti-Christ. For a moment even there are two elements of the principle which, in the nineteenth century, shall lead the critics to the true computation of the Emperors and the fixing of the date of the book.

It was not till about the twelfth century, when the Middle Ages threw themselves into the path of a scholastic rationalism, little concerned with the tradition of the Fathers, that the meaning of the vision of John was at all compromised. Joachim of Flores may be considered as the first who carried the Apocalypse boldly into the field of boundless imagination, and sought, under the bizarre figures of a circumstantial writing, which limited its horizon to three and a-half years, the secret of the entire future of humanity.

The chimerical commentaries to which this false idea gave rise have thrown on the book an unjust discredit. The Apocalypse has taken again in our days, thanks to a sounder exegesis, the high place which belongs to it in the sacred writings. The Apocalypse is, in a sense, the seal of prophecy, the last word of Israel. When we read in the ancient prophets, in Joel, for example, the description of "the day of Jehovah," that is of the grand assize which the supreme judge of human things holds from time to time, to restore the order constantly disturbed by men, we find there the germ of the Patmos vision. Every historic revolution or convulsion became, to the fancy of the Jew, determined to pass from the immortality of the soul and to

establish the reign of justice on the earth, a providential force, the prelude of a judgment much more solemn and final still. At each event a prophet rose, crying: "Sound, sound the trumpet in Zion; for the day of Jehovah comes; it is near." The Apocalypse is the sequel and the crown of this strange literature, which is the proper glory of Israel. Its author is the last great prophet: he is only inferior to his predecessors because he imitates them; it is the same soul, the same mind. The Apocalypse presents the nearly unique phenomena of a *pastiche* of genius, of an original *cento*. If we except two or three inventions peculiar to the author and of marvellous beauty, the entire poem is made up of features borrowed from the earlier prophetic and apocalyptic literature, especially from Ezekiel, from the author of the books of Daniel and the two Isaiahs. The Christian Seer is the true disciple of these great men; he knows their writings by heart, and draws from them the last results. He is the brother (less the serenity and harmony) of that marvellous poet of the time of the captivity of that second Isaiah, whose luminous soul appears as if impregnated (six hundred years in advance) with all the dew and all the perfumes of the future.

Like the larger number of people who possess a brilliant past literature, Israel lived in pictures consecrated by its old and wonderful literature. They were not composed of much else than scraps from the ancient texts; Christian poetry, for example, knew no other literary process. But when passion is sincere the form, even the most artificial, takes from the beauty. The *Words of a Believer* are in regard to the Apocalypse what the Apocalypse is in regard to the ancient prophets, and yet the *Words of a Believer* is a book of real effect; one never can re-read it without lively emotion.

The dogmas of the time present, like the style, something artificial; but they correspond to a deep feeling. The process of theological elaboration consists in a bold transposition, applying to the reign of Messiah and to Jesus every phrase of the ancient writings which appears susceptible of a vague relation with an obscure ideal. As the exegesis which presides over these Messianic combinations was thoroughly mediocre, the singular formations of which we speak imply often grave contradictions. That is seen especially in the passages of the Apocalypse concerning

Gog and Magog, if we compare these with the parallel passages in Ezekiel. According to Ezekiel, Gog, king of Magog, shall come "in the end of the time" when the people of Israel shall have returned from the captivity and are established in Palestine, to make a war of extermination with them. Already, about the time of the Greek translators of the Bible and of the composition of the book of Daniel, the expression which marks simply in the classical Hebrew an unfixed future signifies "at the end of the time," and is no longer applied except to the time of the Messiah. The author of the Apocalypse is led from this to connect chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. of Ezekiel with the Messianic times, and to look on Gog and Magog as the representatives of the barbarian and heathen world which shall survive the ruin of Rome, and shall co-exist with the millennial reign of Christ and his saints.

This method of creation by the outer way, if I may say so, this fashion of combining by means of an exegesis of appropriation—phrases taken from here and there, and of constructing a new theology by this arbitrary play—is found again in the Apocalypse in everything that regards the mystery of the end of time. The theory of the Apocalypse on this point is distinguished by essential features from that which we find in St. Paul, and from that which the synoptical gospels place in the mouth of Jesus. St. Paul seems, it is true, sometimes to believe in the reign of Christ during the time which should be before the last end of all things, but he never becomes so precise as our author. In fact, according to the Apocalypse, the coming of the future reign of Christ is very near—it ought to follow closely on the destruction of the Roman empire. The martyrs shall alone be raised again in this first resurrection: the rest of the dead shall not rise yet. Such absurdities were the result of the slow and incoherent manner in which Israel formed its ideas on the other life. We may say that the Jews have only been led to the dogma of immortality by the necessity of such a dogma to give a meaning to martyrdom. In the second book of the Maccabees, the seven young martyrs and their mother are strong in the belief that they shall rise again, while Antiochus shall not rise. It is in connection with these legendary heroes that we find in Jewish literature the first clear affirmations of an eternal life, and in particular this fine formula: "Those who die for God live in God's

sight." We even see a certain tendency leaning towards the creation for them of a sort of special outer tomb, and for ranging themselves near the throne of God, "from then to the present," without awaiting the resurrection. Tacitus, on his side, made the remark that the Jews did not claim immortality but for the souls of those who had died in the combats or in the punishments.

The reign of Christ with his martyrs takes place on the earth, at Jerusalem, doubtless in the midst of nations not converted, but bound in respect towards the saints. It will last a thousand years. After these thousand years there shall be a new reign of Satan over the barbarous nations, whom the Church would not have converted; he shall make horrible wars, and be on the point of crushing the Church itself. God will exterminate them, and then there will come "the second resurrection," that is the general, and the last judgment, which shall be followed by the end of the world. It is the doctrine which has been styled "millenarianism," a doctrine spread soon in the first three centuries, which never could become dormant in the Church, but which has re-appeared constantly at different periods in her history, and is supported by texts much more ancient and formal than those which support many other dogmas universally accepted. It was the result of a materialistic exegesis, ruled by the need of finding true both the phrases in which the kingdom of God was presented as being to endure "through the age of ages," and those in which, to express the indefinite length of the Messianic reign, it was said that it should last "a thousand years." According to the rule of the interpreters, who are called harmonists, they put end to end in a clumsy manner the data which can be made to coincide quite properly. They were guided in the choice of the number thousand by a combination of passages from Psalms, whence there appears to result "that a day of God equals a thousand years." Among the Jews is also found the thought that the reign of Messiah shall not be the blessed eternity, but an era of felicity during the ages which precede the end of the world. Many rabbis hold, like the author of the Apocalypse, the duration of this reign of a thousand years. The author of the epistle attributed to Barnabas declares that, just as the creation took place in six days, in the same way the accomplishment of the destiny of the world

shall be completed in six thousand years (a day for God being equivalent to a thousand years), and that after-wards, even as God rested on the seventh day, so also, "when His son shall come, and he shall abolish the age of iniquity and judge the impious and change the sun and moon and all the stars, he shall rest again on the seventh day." This is equivalent to saying he shall reign a thousand years, the reign of the Messiah being always compared to the Sabbath, which ends by rest the gradual agitations of the development of the universe. The idea of the eternity of individual life is so little familiar to the Jews that the era of future rewards is, according to them, confined to a number of years, doubtless considerable, but yet coming to an end.

The Persian aspect of these dreams can be perceived at the first glance. Millenarianism, and, if it can be so expressed, apocalypticism have flourished in Iran for a very long time back. At the bottom of the Zoroastrian ideas there is a tendency to number the ages of the world, to reckon the periods of universal life by *hazars*, that is by millions of years, to conceive of a reign of salvation which shall be the final crowning of the trials of humanity. These ideas, joined to the statements as to the future which fill the ancient Hebrew prophets, became the soul of Jewish theology in the ages which preceded our era. The Apocalypses especially were penetrated by this; the revelations attributed to Daniel, Enoch, and Moses are nearly all from Persian books, from their style, doctrine, and images. Is that to say that the authors of these extraordinary books had read the Zend writings, such as existed in their time? Not at all. These borrowings were indirect: they arose from what the Jewish fancy had tinged with the colours of Iran. It was the same with the apocalypse of John. The author of this apocalypse had no direct connection with Persia any more than any other Christian; the foreign data which he brought into his book were already incorporated with the traditional *midraschim*; our Seer takes them from the atmosphere in which he lived. The fact is that since Hoschedar and Hoschedar-mah, the two prophets who preceded Sosiosch, up to the plagues which smote the world on the eve of the great days, up to the wars of the kings with each other, which shall be signs of the last struggle, all the elements on the apocalyptic stage are found

again in the Parsi theory as to the end of the world. The seven heavens, the seven angels, the seven Spirits of God, who recur constantly in the vision of Patmos, transport us into full Parsiism, and even beyond that. The hieratic and apostolic meaning of the number seven appears indeed to have its origin in the Babylonian doctrine of the seven planets ruling the fate of men and of empires. Some resemblances more striking still are to be noted in the mystery of the seven seals. Just as, according to the Assyrian mythology, each of the seven tables of fate was dedicated to one of the planets; in the same way the seven seals have singular relations to the seven planets, with the days of the week, and with the colours which the Babylonians associated with the planets. The white horse, indeed, answers to the Moon, the red horse to Mars, the black horse to Mercury, and the yellow horse to Jupiter.

The defects of such a system are manifest, and it was attempted in vain to hide them. Some hard and glaring colours, a complete absence of all plastic sentiment, harmony sacrificed to symbolism, something crude, bitter, and inorganic, made the Apocalypse the perfect antipodes of the Greek *chef d'œuvre*, whose type is the living beauty of the body of the man or woman. A sort of materialism lessens the most ideal conceptions of the author. He piles up gold: he has, like the Orientals, an immoderate taste for precious stones. His heavenly Jerusalem is awkward, puerile, impossible, in contradiction to all the good rules of architecture, which are those of reason. He makes it brilliant to the eyes, and he does not dream of having it sculptured by a Phidias. God, likewise, is for him "a *smargdine* vision," a sort of huge diamond, flashing a thousand fires on a throne. Assuredly Jupiter Olympus was a symbol much superior to that. The error which too often has led away Christian art towards rich decoration finds its root in the Apocalypse. A temple of Jesuits, in gold or in lapis-lazuli, is more beautiful than the Parthenon, if we were to admit this idea, that the liturgical use of a precious article glorifies God.

A most troublesome feature was this gloomy hatred of the profane world, which is common to our author and to all the makers of apocalypses, especially the author of the book of Enoch. His harshness, his passionate and unjust judgments on Roman

society, shock us, and justify to a certain extent those who summed up the new doctrine as *odium humani generis*. The virtuous poor man is always a little inclined to look on the world which he does not know as more wicked than that world is in reality. The crimes of the rich and of people at court appear to him peculiarly gross. That sort of virtuous anger, which certain barbarians, such as the Vandals, showed four hundred years later against civilisation, the Jews of the prophetic and apocalyptic school had in a very high degree. They feel among them a remainder of the old spirits of the nomads, whose ideal is patriarchal life, a profound aversion to the great cities regarded as the focus of corruption, and an ardent jealousy against the powerful States, founded on a military principle of which they are incapable, and which they do not admit.

This is what has made the Apocalypse a dangerous book in some points of view. It is the book *par excellence* of the proud Jew. According to its author, the distinction between Jews and heathens will continue even in the kingdom of God. While the twelve tribes eat of the fruit of the tree of life, the Gentiles must be content with a medicinal concoction of its leaves. The author looks on the Gentiles, even believing in Jesus, even martyrs of Jesus, as strangers introduced into the family of Israel, as plebeians admitted by grace to connect themselves with an aristocracy. His Messiah is essentially the Jewish Messiah; Jesus is for him beyond everything the good David, a product of the Church of Israel, a member of the holy family which God had chosen; it is the Church of Israel which works the saving work by this elect coming forth from its bosom. Every practice capable of establishing a bond between the pure race and the heathen (eating ordinary food, the practice of marriage in the ordinary conditions) appeared to him an abomination. The heathen, as a whole, are, in his eyes, wretches, polluted by all crimes, and who can only be governed by terror. The real world is the kingdom of devils. The disciples of Paul are disciples of Balsam and Jezebel. Paul himself has no place among "the twelve apostles of the Lamb," the only foundation of God's Church; and the Church of Ephesus, the creation of Paul, is praised for having tried those who say they are apostles without being so, and to have found out that they are only liars.

All this is very far from the Gospel of Jesus. The author is too passionate, he sees everything through the veil of a sanguine apoplexy, or the gleam of a fire. What was most lugubrious at Paris on the 25th May, 1871, was not the flames, it was the general colour of the city, when seen from an elevated position: a yellow and false tone, a sort of flat paleness. Such is the light with which our author colours his vision. Nothing resembles it less than the pure sun of Galilee. We feel from the present time that the apocalyptic species, no more than the species of the epistles, shall not be of the literary form which shall convert the world. There are these little collections of sentences and parables which are disdained by exact traditionists, that memory-help by which the less educated and the least well instructed set forth for their own personal use what they know of the acts and words of Jesus, who are destined to be the reading—the charm of the feature. The simple framework of the anecdotal life of Jesus has manifestly done more to enchant the world than the painful piling up of apocalypses and the touching exhortations in the letters of apostles. So true is that Jesus, Jesus only, had in the mysterious work of the Christian growth, always the great, the triumphant, and decisive part. Each book, each Christian institution is valued in proportion to what it contains of Jesus. The synoptical gospels, where Jesus is alone, and of which it may be said he is the true author, are *par excellence* the Christian book, the eternal book.

Yet the Apocalypse occupies in the sacred canon a legitimate place in many points of view. A book of menaces and terror, it gives a body to the gloomy antithesis which the Christian conscience, moved by a deep aesthetic, would oppose to Jesus. If the Gospel is the book of Jesus, the Apocalypse is the book of Nero. Thanks to the Apocalypse, Nero has for Christianity the importance of a second founder. His odious face has been inseparable from that of Jesus. Increasing century by century, the author coming forth from the nightmare of the year 64, has become the bugbear of the Christian conscience, the gloomy giant of the world's night. A folio book of 500 pages has been composed on its birth and education, its vices, riches, caskets, perfumes, women, doctrines, miracles, and festivals.

Antichrist has ceased to frighten us, and the book of Malvenda has no longer many readers. We know that the end of the world is not so near as the *illummati* of the first century believed it, and that that end shall not be a sudden catastrophe. It shall take place calmly, in millions of years, when our system shall not repair its losses sufficiently, and when the earth shall have used up the treasure of the old sun warehoused like a provision for the journey in its depths. Before this exhaustion of planetary capital, will humanity attain to perfect knowledge—which is nothing else than the power of mastering the forces of the world, or even the earth—an experience wanting among so many millions of others; will it freeze before the problem which shall kill death has been solved? We know not. But, with the Seer of Patmos, beyond changing alternatives, we shall discover the ideal, and we affirm that this ideal shall be realised some day. Across the clouds of a universe in their state of embryo, we perceive the laws of the progress of life, the consciousness of going on increasing unceasingly, and the possibility of a condition in which all shall be in a definitive being (God) what the innumerable boughs of the tree are in the tree, what the myriads of cells of the living being are in the living being—in a condition, I say, in which the life of everything shall be complete, and in which the persons who have been revived in the life of God, shall see, shall enjoy in Him, singing in Him an eternal *Alleluia*. Whatever may be the form under which each of us may conceive of this future event of the absolute, the Apocalypse cannot fail to please us. It expresses symbolically that fundamental thought that God is, but especially that He shall be. The features are heavy there, and the contour paltry; it is the thick pencil of a child tracing, with a tool it cannot use, the design of a city it has never seen. His *naïve* picture of the city of God, a grand toy of gold and pearls, remains no less an element of our dreams. Paul has better said no doubt when he sums up the final goal of the universe in these words: "That God may be all in all." But for a long time humanity yet shall have need of a God to dwell with them, have compassion on their trials, take account of their struggles, and "wipe away all tears from their eyes."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ACCESSION OF THE FLAVII.

The spectacle of the world, as we have already said, only answered too well to the dreams of the Seer of Patmos. The government of the military *Coups d'Etat*, bore its fruits. Politics were in the camps, and the empire was at auction. There had been some assemblies during Nero's time, where there could be seen gathered together seven future emperors and the father of an eighth. The real republican, Virginius, who wished the empire for the senate and the people, was only a Utopian. Galba, an old honest general, who refused to lend himself to these military orgies, was soon destroyed. The soldiers for a moment had the idea of killing all the senators, to make the government easy. Roman unity appeared on the point of being broken up. It was not only among the Christians that such a tragical situation inspired sinister predictions. Men spoke of a child with three heads, born at Syracuse in 68, and in whom people saw the symbol of the three emperors who ruled for less than a year, and who existed together all three for many hours.

Some days after the prophet of Asia had written his strange work, Galba was killed, and Otho proclaimed (15th January, 69). That was like a resurrection of Nero. Grave, economic, and disagreeable, Galba was in everything the contrary of him whom he replaced. If he had succeeded in making good his adoption of Piso, he would have been a sort of Nerva, and the series of the philosophic emperors would have begun thirty years sooner; but the detestable school of Nero prevailed. Otho resembled that monster; the soldiers and all those who had loved Nero made him their idol. They had seen him by the side of the deceased emperor, playing the part of first of his minions, and rivalling him by his affectation of ostentatious debaucheries, his vices and mad prodigalities. The lower classes gave him from the first day the name of Nero, and it appears as if he took it himself in some letters. He allowed them in any case to set up statues to the Beast; he re-established the Neronian coterie in the great places, and announced loudly as before to continue the

principles inaugurated by the last reign. The first act he signed was to secure the completion of the Golden House.

What is sadder is that the political lowering which had taken place did not give security. The ignoble Vitellius had been proclaimed some days before Otho (2nd January, 69) in Germany. He did not desist. A horrible civil war, such as had not been since that between Augustus and Antony, appeared inevitable. The public imagination was much excited; people only saw frightful prognostics; the crimes of the soldiery spread terror everywhere. Never had such a year been seen; the world sweated blood. The first battle of Bedriac, which left the empire to Vitellius alone, (about 15th April) cost the lives of 80,000 men. The disbanded legionaries pillaged the country, and fought among themselves. The people mixed themselves up with them; one would have imagined it was the breaking up of society. At the same time the astrologers and the charlatans of all sorts swarmed; the city of Rome was theirs; reason appeared confounded in presence of a deluge of crimes and follies, which defied all philosophy. Certain words of Jesus which the Christians repeated quite low, kept them in a sort of continual fever; the fate of Jerusalem was especially with them the object of an ardent pre-occupation.

The East, indeed, was not less troubled than the West. We have seen that at the opening of the month of June of the year 68, the military operations of the Romans against Jerusalem were suspended. Anarchy and fanaticism did not diminish for that matter among the Jews. The violent acts of John of Gischala and some zealots rose to their height, John's authority existed chiefly over a corps of Galileans who committed all imaginable excesses. The Jerusalemites often rose and forced John with his brigands to take refuge in the temple; but they feared him so much that, to preserve themselves from him, they believed themselves obliged to oppose a rival to him. Simon, son of Gioras, originally from Gerasa, who was distinguished from the commencement of the war, had filled Idumea with his acts of brigandage. Already he had had to struggle with the zealots, and twice he had appeared threateningly at the gates of Jerusalem. He came back there for the third time when the people called him, believing thus to put themselves under the shelter of a man offensive to John.

This new master entered Jerusalem in the month of March, of the year 69. John of Gischala remained in possession of the temple. The two chiefs sought to surpass each other in ferocity. The Jew is cruel, when he is master. The brother of the Carthaginians at the last hour, shows himself in his natural state. This people has always included an admirable minority; there lies its greatness; but never has there been seen in a group of men so much jealousy, so much ardour in the extermination of each other. Arrived at a certain degree of exasperation, the Jew is capable of everything, even against his religion. The history of Israel shows us people enraged against each other. We can say of this race the good we wish and the evil which we wish, without ceasing to be right; for, let us repeat it, the good Jew is an excellent being, and the bad Jew a detestable being. It is this that explains the possibility of this phenomenon, apparently inconceivable, that the gospel idyll and the horrors recounted by Josephus have been realities in the same land, among the same people, about the same time.

Vespasian, during this time, remained inactive in Cesarea. His son Titus had succeeded in engaging him in a network of intrigues, cunningly combined. Under Galba, Titus had hoped to see himself adopted by the old emperor. After the death of Galba, he saw that he could not arrive at the supreme power except as successor to his father. With the art of the most consummate policy he knew how to turn the chances in favour of a grave, honest general, without distinction, without personal ambition, who did nearly nothing to aid his own fortune. All the East contributed to it. Mucian and the legions of Syria impatiently endured the sight of the legions of the West disposing alone of the empire; they pretended to make him emperor in their turn. Now Mucian, a sort of sceptic more zealous in disposing of the power than in exercising it, did not wish the purple for himself. In spite of his old age, his middle-class birth, his second-rate intelligence, Vespasian found himself designated thus. Titus, who was twenty-eight years of age, raised besides by his merits, his address, his activity, what the talent of his father had obscured. After Otho's death, the legions of the east took only with regret the oath to Vitellius. The insolence of the soldiers of Germany revolted them. They had made them believe that Vitellius

wished to send his favourite legions into Syria, and to transport over the borders of the Rhine the legions of Syria, beloved in this country, and to which many alliances had attached them.

Nero, besides, although dead, continued to hold the die of human things, and the fable of his resurrection was not without some truth, as a metaphor. His party survived him. Vitellius, after Otho, placed himself to the great joy of the little people as a declared admirer, imitator, and avenger of Nero. He protested that, in his opinion, Nero had given the model of the best government of the republic. He made him magnificent funeral obsequies, ordered some pieces of his music to be played, and at the first note, rose transported, to give the signal for applause. Reasonable and honest people, fatigued by these miserable parodies of an abhorred reign, wished for a strong reaction against Nero, against his men, against his buildings; they demanded especially the rehabilitation of the noble victims of tyranny. They knew that the Flavii conscientiously played this *rôle*. In fine, the indigenous princes of Syria pronounced strongly for a chief in whom they saw a protector against the fanaticism of the revolted Jews. Agrippa II. and Berenice, his sister, were body and soul with the two Roman generals. Berenice, although forty years of age, gained Titus by some secrets against which an ambitious young man, a worker, a stranger to the great world, only preoccupied up till now with his own advancement, could not protect himself. She succeeded also with the old Vespasian by her amiabilities and her presents. The two *roturier* leaders, up till then poor and simple, were seduced by the aristocratic charm of a woman wonderfully beautiful, and by the exterior of a brilliant world they knew nothing of. The passion which Titus conceived for Berenice did not in any wise injure his concerns; everything indicates, on the contrary, that he found in this woman, accomplished in the intrigues of the east, one of the most useful agents. Thanks to her the little kings of Emesa, Sophena, and Comagena, all relatives or allies of the Herods, and more or less converted to Judaism, were gained over by this complot. The Jewish renegade, Tiberius Alexander, prefect of Egypt, entered fully into it. The Parthians even declared themselves ready to uphold Titus.

What was most extraordinary in this is that the moderate Jews, such as Josephus, adhered to him also, and wished with all their strength to apply to the Roman general the ideas by which they were prepossessed. We have seen that the Jewish surroundings of Nero had succeeded in persuading him that, dethroned at Rome, he would find at Jerusalem a new kingdom, which would make him the greatest potentate on the earth. Josephus pretends that from the year 67, at the time when he was made prisoner by the Romans, he predicted to Vespasian the future which awaited him according to certain texts in his sacred scriptures. By dint of repeating their prophecies, the Jews had made a great number of people believe, even some who were not connected with their sect, that the East would gain, and that the master of the world would soon come from Judea. Already Virgil had lulled to sleep the vague sadnesses of his melancholy imagination by applying to his time a *Cumæum carmen*, which appears to have had some relation to the oracles of the second Isaiah. The Magi, the Chaldeans, and astrologers also talked of the belief in a star of the East; the messenger of a king of the Jews reserved for high destinies. The Christians took these chimeras quite seriously. Prophecy had a double meaning like all oracles; it appeared sufficiently justified if the heads of the legions of Syria, established some leagues from Jerusalem, obtained the empire in Syriain consequence of Assyrian movements. Vespasian and Titus, surrounded by Jews, lent an ear to this discourse, and were pleased by it. While exercising their military talent against the fanatics of Jerusalem, the two generals had a considerable liking for Judaism, studied it, and shewed a deference towards the Jewish books. Josephus had penetrated some time before into their familiar society, especially that of Titus, by his gentle, facile, and insinuating character. He boasted to them of his law, related to them old Biblical stories which he often put in Greek, and spoke mysteriously of the prophecies. Some other Jews entered into the same sentiments, and made Vespasian accept a sort of Messianic position. Some miracles were joined to this; there is mention of cures very analogous to those described in the Gospels wrought by this Christ of a new kind. The heathen priests of Phenicia did not wish to remain behind in this flattering concourse. The oracle of Paphos and the oracle of

Carmel maintained that they had announced the advancement of the fortunes of the Flavii. The consequences of all this developed themselves at a later date. Having had the help of Syria, the Flavian emperors were much more open than the disdainful Cæsars to Syrian ideas. Christianity penetrated to the very heart of this family; some adherents were reckoned there, and thanks to this it shall enter on a phase of its destinies quite new. Toward the end of the Spring of 69 Vespasian appeared to wish to leave the military idleness in which policy held him. On the 29th of April he took the field and appeared with his cavalry before Jerusalem. During this time Cerealis, one of his lieutenants, burned Hebron. All Judea submitted to the Romans except Jerusalem and the three castles of Masada, Herodium, and Machero, occupied by the brigands. These four places needed arduous sieges. Vespasian and Titus hesitated to enter on that work in the precarious state in which they then were, on the eve of a new civil war in which they would have need of all their forces. Thus was prolonged for a year the revolution, which, for three years back, had held Jerusalem in the condition of the most extraordinary crisis of which history has preserved the recollection.

On the 1st July, Tiberius Alexander proclaimed Vespasian at Alexandria, and caused the oath to be taken to him; on the 3rd, the army of Judea saluted him as Augustus at Cesarea; Mucian, at Antioch, caused him to be recognised by the Syrian legions, and on the 15th all the East submitted to him. A congress was held at Beyrout, at which it was decided that Mucian should march upon Italy, while Titus continued the war against the Jews, and that Vespasian should await the issue of events at Alexandria. After a bloody civil war (the third which had taken place within eighteen months) power remained definitively with the Flavii. A middle-class dynasty, industrious in business, moderate, not having the energy of the Cæsar race, but exempt also from their errors, was thus substituted for the inheritors of the title erected by Augustus. The prodigals and the fools had so abused their privilege of spoiled children, that people hailed with gladness the accession of a brave man, without distinction, who had slowly risen by merit, in spite of his little absurdities, his vulgar air, and lack of habit. The fact is that the new dynasty conducted business for

ten years with sense and judgment, saved the Roman unity, and gave a complete contradiction to the predictions of Jews and Christians who already saw in their dreams the empire dismantled and Rome destroyed. The fire at the Capitol on 19th December, the terrible massacre which took place in Rome the next day, would for the moment make them believe that the great day was drawing nigh. But the undisputed establishment of Vespasian (at the beginning of 20th December) made them feel that they must live still, and forced them to find some shift for adjourning their hopes to a more distant future.

The wise Vespasian, much less shaken than those who fought with him to conquer the empire, spent his time at Alexandria, with Tiberius Alexander. He only revisited Rome in the month of July of the year 70, a little before the total destruction of Jerusalem. Titus, instead of pushing the war in Judea, had followed his father into Egypt; he remained beside him until the early days of March.

The struggles in Jerusalem only increased. Fanatical movements are far from excluding from them those who are actors in their hatred, jealousy, and defiance; banded together, men who are very self-opinionated and passionate usually suspect each other, and there is in that a power; for this reciprocal suspicion creates a terror among them, binds them together as by a chain of iron, and prevents defection and moments of weakness. It is policy, artificial and without conviction, which proceeds with the appearances of concord and civility. Interest creates the *coterie*; while principles create division, and inspire temptation to decimate, expel and kill their enemies. Those who judge human things by middle-class conceptions believe that the revolution is lost when the revolutionaries "eat each other." There is thereon the contrary, a proof that revolution has all its energy, and that an impersonal ardour guides it. We never see this more clearly than in that terrible drama of Jerusalem. The actors appear to have among them a covenant of death. Like these infernal *rondos*, in which, as the superstition of Middle Ages taught, men saw Satan forming the chain to draw to a fancied whirlpool files of men dancing and holding each other by the hand; so revolution permits no one to escape from the dance it leads. Terror is behind the conspirators; in turn exalting some, and then they, exalted by others,

go on to the abyss; nothing can keep them back, for behind everyone is a hidden sword, which at the moment they wish to stop, compels them to march forward.

Simon, son of Gioras, commanded in the city; John of Gischala with his assassins was master of the temple. A third party was formed, under the conduct of Eleazar, son of Simon, of priestly race, who detached a party of the zealots from John of Gischala and established himself in the inner *enceinte* of the temple, living on the consecrated provisions they found there, and of those which still continued to be brought to the priests, as first fruits. These three parties were at continual warfare with each other; they walked over heaps of corpses; they no longer buried the dead. Immense provisions of barley had been made, and this would permit them to exist for years. John and Simon burned these in order to keep each other from them. The situation of the inhabitants was fearful; peaceable people made prayers that order might be re-established by the Romans, but all the exits were guarded by the terrorists, they could not escape. Yet, strange indeed! from the end of the world people still came to the temple. John and Eleazar received the proselytes and profited by their offerings. Often the pious pilgrims were slain in the midst of their sacrifices, with the priests who read the liturgy for them, by the arrows and stones from John's machines. The rebels worked with activity beyond the Euphrates, to obtain help either from the Jews of these countries or from the king of the Parthians. They believed that all the Jews of the East would take up arms. The civil wars of the Romans inspired them with foolish hopes; like the Christians, they believed that the empire was about to be dismembered. Jesus, son of Hanan, had traversed the city, calling for the four winds of heaven to destroy it; on the eve of their extermination the fanatics proclaimed Jerusalem the capital of the world, in the same manner as we have seen Paris invested, hungered, and maintaining all the time that the world was in it, working through it, and suffering with it.

The oddest thing in all this was that they were not altogether wrong. The enthusiasts of Jerusalem, who declared that Jerusalem was eternal, while it was burning, were much nearer the truth than the people who saw in them nothing but assassins. They deceived themselves on the military question, but not on the distant

religious result. These disturbed days, indeed, well marked the moment in which Jerusalem became the spiritual capital of the world. The Apocalypse, the burning expression of love which it inspires, has made sacred the image of "the beloved city." Ah! who is able to say beforehand what shall be in the future, holy or wicked, foolish or wise? A sudden change in the course of a vessel makes a progress a retreat, and turns a contrary into a favourable wind. In view of these revolutions, accompanied by thunders and earthquakes, let us place ourselves among the blessed, who sing "Praise ye God," or among the four creatures, spirits of the universe, who after each act of the heavenly tragedy, say AMEN.

CHAPTER XIX.

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

At last the circle of fire had wound itself around the unfortunate city, never more to relax its hold. As soon as the season permitted, Titus left Alexandria, reached Cesarea, and from that city, at the head of a formidable army, advanced towards Jerusalem. He had with him four legions, the 5th, *Macedonian*, the 10th, *Fretensis*, the 12th, *Fulminata*, the 15th, *Apollinaris*, not to speak of the numerous auxiliary troops furnished by his Syrian allies, and many Arabs who had come to pillage. All the Jews who had rallied to him, Agrippa, Tiberius Alexander, now prefect of the prætorium, Josephus the future historian, accompanied him: Berenice doubtless waited at Cesarea. The military valour of the captain corresponded with the strength of the army. Titus was a remarkable soldier, and especially an excellent officer of genius, while he was also a very sensible man, a profound politician, and considering the cruelty of the manners of the age, very humane. Vespasian, irritated by the satisfaction the Jews showed in seeing the civil wars, and the efforts they were making to bring about an invasion by the Parthians, had ordered great severity. Gentleness, according to him, was always interpreted as weakness by haughty races, persuaded that they were fighting for God and with God.

The Roman army arrived at Gabaoth-Saul, a league and a half from Jerusalem, in the early days of April. They were just on the eve of the feast of the Passover; an enormous number of Jews from all countries had assembled in the city; Josephus gives the number of those who perished during the siege at 1,100,000; it appeared as if the whole nation had made a rendezvous in order that they might be exterminated. About the 10th April, Titus established his camp at the angle of the tower of Psephina (*Kasr-Djalond* of the present day). Some partial advantages gained by surprise, and seven wounds Titus received at first, gave the Jews an exaggerated confidence in their strength, and shewed the Romans with what care they must guard themselves in this war with furious people.

The city could be reckoned among the strongest in the world. The walls were a perfect type of those constructions in enormous blocks which were always affected in Syria; in the interior, the *enceinte* of the temple, that of the high city, and that of Acra formed as if partition walls, and appeared to be so many ramparts. The number of the defenders was very great; provisions, although diminished by the fires, abounded still. The parties in the interior of the city continued to fight still; but they combined for defence. At the beginning of the days of the Passover, Eleazar's faction nearly disappeared and merged itself in John's. Titus conducted the operations with consummate skill; never had the Romans shown such a skilful *poliorcétique*. In the closing days of April, the legions had forced the first *enceinte* from the north side and were masters of the northern portion of the city. Five days after the second wall, the wall of Acra, was taken, the half of the city was thus in the power of the Romans. On the 12th May, they attacked the fortress Antonia. Surrounded by Jews who all, Tiberius Alexander excepted, desired the preservation of the city and the temple, ruled more than he would confess by his love for Berenice, who appears to have been a pious Jewess and much devoted to her nation, Titus sought, it is said, a means of reconciliation, and made acceptable offers; all was useless. The besieged replied to the propositions of the conqueror only by sarcasm.

The siege then assumed a character of horrible cruelty. The Romans displayed instruments of the most hideous tortures; the audacity of the Jews only increased. On the 27th and 29th of May they burned the machines of the Romans, and even attacked them in their camp. Discouragement fell on the besiegers. Many were persuaded that the Jews spoke the truth, and that Jerusalem was impregnable; desertion began. Titus, giving up the hope of carrying the place by sheer force, blockaded it closely. A wall of countervallation, raised rapidly (in the beginning of June) and doubled on the side of Perea by a line of *castella*, crowning the heights of the mount of Olives, totally separated the city from without. Up till then vegetables were procured from the neighbourhood; famine now became fearful. The fanatics, provided with necessaries, cared little for this. Rigorous perquisitions, accompanied by tortures, were made to discover concealed grain. Whoever wore a certain look of

strength at once passed as culpable in hiding provisions. Pieces of bread were torn from people's mouths. The most fearful diseases developed in the heart of this huddled-up, enfeebled, fevered mass. Some terrible stories were circulated and redoubled the terror.

From that moment hunger, rage, despair, and madness inhabited Jerusalem. It was a cage of wild madness, a city of shrieks, of cannibals, a hell. Titus, on his side, was cruel; five hundred unfortunates per day were crucified with odious refinements in sight of the city. There was not sufficient wood to make crosses, and there was no room to place them.

In this excess of evils, the faith and fanaticism of the Jews shewed themselves more ardently than ever. They believed the temple to be indestructible. The greater number were persuaded that, the city being under the special protection of the Eternal, it was impossible to take it. Prophets spread themselves among the people, announcing approaching succour. The confidence on this point was such that many who could have escaped, remained to see this miracle of Jehovah. The frenzied people, nevertheless, ruled as masters. They slew all those who were suspected of advising capitulation. Thus perished, by order of Siomon, son of Gioras, the high priest Matthias, who had caused this brigand to be received into the city. His three sons were executed before his eyes. Many people of distinction were likewise put to death. The mere fact of weeping together or holding a meeting was a crime. It was forbidden from the smallest assembly. Josephus, from the Roman camp, tried vainly to have some spies in the place; he was suspected by both sides. The position had been reached in which reason and moderation have no longer any chance of being heard.

Yet Titus became weary of these delays; he longed only for Rome: its splendours and its pleasures. A city taken by famine appeared to him an exploit insufficient to inaugurate brilliantly a dynasty. He then caused to be constructed four new *aggeræ* for a sharp attack. The trees of the gardens in the suburbs of Jerusalem were cut down a distance of four leagues. In twenty-one days everything was ready. On the 21st July the Jews attempted the operation in which they had succeeded on the

former occasion; they went out to burn and sap the tower Antonia. On the 5th July Titus was master of it, and caused it to be almost entirely demolished, to open a large passage for his cavalry and his machines, at the point where all his efforts converged, and where the last struggle must take place.

The temple, as we have said, was by its peculiar method of construction the strongest of fortresses. The Jews who had entrenched themselves with John of Gischala prepared themselves for battle. The priests themselves were under arms. On the 17th the perpetual sacrifice ceased for want of ministers to offer it. That made a great impression upon the people. It became known outside the city. The interruption of the sacrifice was for the Jews a phenomenon as grave as a stop in the progress of the universe. Josephus seized this occasion to try anew to conquer John's obstinacy. The fortress Antonia was only about 60 yards from the temple. From the parapets of the tower Josephus cried out in Hebrew by order of Titus (unless the story of the *Wars of the Jews* is false) that John could retire with as great a number of his men as he wished, that Titus would charge himself with having the legal sacrifices continued by the Jews, that he would allow John even the choice of those who should offer them. John refused to listen. Those whom fanaticism had not blinded escaped at this moment to the Romans. Everyone who remained chose death.

On the 12th July Titus began his works against the temple. The struggle was most bloody. On the 28th the Romans were masters of the whole gallery of the north from the fortress Antonia up to the vale of Kedron. The attack commenced then against the temple itself. On the 2nd August the most powerful machines were put to assail the walls wonderfully constructed with porticos which surrounded the inner courts. The effect was scarcely felt; but on the 8th of August the Romans succeeded in setting the gates on fire. The stupor of the Jews was then inexpressible; they had never believed that this was possible. At sight of the flames which leapt up they poured upon the Romans a flood of curses. On the 9th August Titus gave orders that the fire should be extinguished, and held a council of war at which there were present Tiberius Alexander, Cerealis, and his principal officers. The question was as

to whether the temple should be burned. Many were of opinion that so long as the edifice remained the Jews would never be quiet. As to Titus, it is difficult to know what he meant, for on this point we have two opposing stories. According to Josephus, Titus was of opinion that such an admirable work should be spared, as its preservation would do honour to his reign and prove the moderation of the Romans. According to Tacitus, Titus insisted upon the necessity of destroying an edifice with which two superstitions equally fatal were associated, that of the Jews, and that of the Christians. "These two superstitions," he is said to have added, "although contrary to one another are of the same source; the Christians come from the Jews, the root torn up, the shoot will perish quickly."

It is difficult to decide between two versions so absolutely irreconcilable, for the opinion attributed to Titus by Josephus may very well be regarded as an invention by that historian, jealous of shewing the sympathy of his patron for Judaism, cleansing himself in the eyes of the Jews of the crime of having destroyed the temple and of satisfying the ardent desire of which Titus had to pass for a very moderate man. It cannot be denied that the brief discourse put by Tacitus in the mouth of the victorious captain may be, not only for the style but for the order of ideas, an exact reflex of the sentiments of Tacitus himself. We have a right to suppose that the Latin historian, full of spite against the Jews and the Christians, and of that bad temper which characterizes the age of Trajan and the Antonines, had made Titus speak like a Roman aristocrat of his time, while in reality the middle-class Titus had more complacency for oriental superstitions than the high noblesse who succeeded the Flavii had for them. Living for two or three years with Jews who had boasted to him of their temple as the wonder of the world, won by the caresses of Josephus, Agrippa, and still more of Berenice, he might very well desire the preservation of a sanctuary whose worship many of his friends represented to him as being quite peaceable. It is therefore possible that, as Josephus has it, some orders had been given that the fire lit the evening before should be extinguished, and that in the frightful tumult which they foresaw, some measures should be taken against fire. There was in the character of Titus, besides real goodness, much pose and a little

hypocrisy. The truth is doubtless that he did not order the fire, as Tacitus says; did not countermand it, as Josephus says, but allowed it to go on, presenting some appearances for all the theories which people may be allowed to maintain in the different regions of probability, whatever may be on this point difficult to ascertain. A general assault was decided against the building, which had already lost its gates; as to military work, what remained to be done was an effort, bloody perhaps, but whose issue could not be doubtful.

The Jews anticipated the attacks. On the 10th of August in the morning they delivered a furious attack without success. Titus retired into the Antonia to rest and to prepare for the assault next day. A detachment was left to prevent the fire from being relit. Then took place, according to Josephus, the incident which led to the ruin of the sacred pile. The Jews threw themselves with rage upon the detachment which watched near the fire; the Romans repulsed them, entering pell-mell into the temple with the fugitives. The irritation of the Romans was at its height. A soldier "without any one commanding him, and as if impelled by a supernatural movement," took a joist which was in flames, and having raised it, with one of his companions, threw the brand through a window which opened upon the porticos of the north side. The flame and the smoke rose rapidly. Titus was resting at that moment in his tent. They ran to call him. Then, if Josephus must be believed, a sort of struggle was begun between him and his soldiers; Titus with voice and gesture ordered the fire to be extinguished; but the disorder was such that they did not understand him; those who might doubt his intentions affected not to hear him. In place of stopping the fire the legionaries stirred it up. Drawn by the wave of invaders, Titus was borne into the Temple itself—the flames had not reached the central building. He saw intact this sanctuary of which Agrippa, Josephus, and Berenice had spoken to him so often with admiration, and found it much superior to what they had told him. Titus redoubled his efforts, made them evacuate the interior, and gave even an order to Liberalos, a centurion of his guards, to strike those who refused to obey. All at once a jet of flame and smoke rose from the gate of the Temple. At the moment of the tumultuary

evacuation a soldier had set fire to the interior. The flames gained on all sides; the position was no longer tenable. Titus retired.

This recital of Josephus includes more than one probability. It is difficult to believe that the Roman legions could have shown themselves so disobedient to a victorious leader. Dion Cassius declares, on the contrary, that Titus needed to employ force to make the soldiers penetrate into a place surrounded by terrors, and of which all the profaners were believed to be struck dead. One thing only is certain—that Titus some years afterwards would have been glad if in the Jewish world they had told the same thing as Josephus did, and that they should have attributed the burning of the Temple to the discipline of his soldiers, or rather to a supernatural movement of some agent, unconscious of a superior will. The history of the war of the Jews was written about the end of the reign of Vespasian, in 76, or rather sooner, when Titus already aspired to be “the delight of the human race,” and wished to pass as a model of gentleness and goodness. In the preceding years, and that of another world than that of the Jews, he would surely have received eulogia of a different kind. Among the tableaux which were borne in the triumph of the year 71 was the image of “the fire set to the Temple,” in which certainly they would not seek to represent that fact otherwise than as glorious. About the same time the court poet, Valerius Flaccus, proposed to Domitian, as the finest employment of his poetical talent, to sing the war of Judea, and to represent his brother scattering burning torches everywhere—

Solyo ingrantem pulvere fratrem,

Spargentemque faces et in omni turre furentem?

The struggle during this time was hot in the court and parvis. A frightful carnage was made round the altar, a sort of truncated pyramid, surmounted by a platform, which was raised in front of the Temple; the corpses of those whom they killed upon the platform rolled over upon the steps and reached to the feet. Rivers of blood flowed on all sides, nothing was heard but the piercing cries of those whom they killed and who died adjuring heaven. There was time still to take refuge in the high city; many liked rather to go to be killed, regarding as a lot to be envied dying for

their temple; others threw themselves into the flames; others still precipitated themselves upon the swords of the Romans, while some slew themselves or each other. Some priests who had succeeded in gaining the crest of the Temple roof, tore the points which they found there with their leaden sockets and threw them upon the Romans; they continued this up till the time the flames enveloped them. A great number of Jews had assembled around the holy place, upon the word of a prophet, who had assured them that the very moment had come when God was about to shew them the signs of salvation. A gallery where it is said six thousand of these wretches had retired (nearly all women and children) was burned. Two gates of the Temple and a part of the *enceinte* reserved for the women were only preserved for the moment. The Romans planted their ensigns upon the place where the sanctuary had been, and offered the worship to which they had been accustomed. The old Zion remained; the high town, the strongest part of the city, having its ramparts still intact, and which still gave safety to John of Gischala, Simon son of Gioras, and a great number of combatants who had succeeded in forcing a way through the conquerors. This stand of madmen demanded a new siege. John and Simon had established the centre of their resistance in the palace of the Herods, situated near the site of the present citadel of Jerusalem, and covered by the three enormous towers of Hippicus, of Phasaël, and Mariamne. The Romans were obliged, to carry this last refuge of Jewish obstinacy, to construct some *aggerae* against the western wall of the city, opposite the palace. The four legions were occupied in this work for the space of eighteen days (from 20th August to 6th September). During this time Titus made them set fire to the parts of the town which were in his power. The low town especially, from Ophel up to Siloam, were systematically destroyed. Many of the Jews belonging to the middle classes were able to escape. As to, the people of inferior condition, they were sold at a very low price. This was the origin of a multitude of Jewish slaves who, coming down upon Italy and upon the other countries of the Mediterranean, took from thence the elements of a new ardour of propagandism. Josephus reckons the number at 97,000. Titus gave pardon to the princes of Adiabene; the pontifical dresses, the precious stones, the tables, the cups,

the candelabra, and the hangings were brought to him. He ordered that they should be preserved carefully, that they might be used in the triumph he was preparing, and to which he wished to give a particular mark of foreign pomp, by exhibiting there the rich material of the Jewish worship.

The aggeræ being finished, the Romans began to batter the wall of the high tower. At the first attack, 7th September, they overturned a part as well as some of the tower. Attenuated by famine, undermined by fever and rage, the defenders were nothing more than skeletons. The legions passed in without difficulty; up till the end of the day, the soldiers burned and slew; the greater part of the houses into which they went to pillage were full of corpses. The wretches who could escape fled to Acra, which the Roman force had nearly evacuated, and to those vast subterranean cavities, which mark the subsoil of Jerusalem. John and Simon grew weaker at this time. They possessed still the towers of Hippicus, of Phasaël, and Mariamne, the most astonishing marks of military architecture in antiquity. The ram had been powerless against enormous blocks, collected with unequalled perfection, and bound together by iron cramps. Amazed and lost, John and Simon quitted these impregnable works, and sought to force the line of countervallation on the side of Siloam. Not succeeding, they went to rejoin those of their partisans who were concealed in the sewers.

On the 8th all resistance was over; the soldiers were fatigued—they killed the weak who couldn't march. The remainder, women and children, were pushed like a flock towards the *enceinte* of the Temple, and enclosed in the inner court which had escaped the fire. Of this multitude set aside for death or slavery, they made lists. Everyone who had fought was massacred. Seven hundred people, the finest in figure and the best made, were reserved to follow the triumph of Titus. Among the others, those who had passed the age of 17, were sent into Egypt, their feet in irons, for the forced works, or divided among the provinces to be slain in the amphitheatres. Those who were less than 17 were sold. The sorting of the prisoners occupied many days, during which there died thousands, it is said, some because they gave them no food, others because they refused to accept it.

The Romans employed the following days in burning the rest of the city, overturning the walls, and rumaging in the sewers and subterranean passages. They found there great riches and many of the insurrectionists living, whom they killed at once, and more than two thousand corpses, without speaking of prisoners whom the Terrorists had shut up. John of Gischala, constrained by hunger to come forth, demanded quarter from the conquerors, who condemned him to perpetual imprisonment. Simon, son of Gioras, who had some provisions, remained concealed till the end of October. His food failing then, he took a singular step. Clothed in a white cloth with a mantle of purple, he came forth unexpectedly from under the earth to the place where the Temple had been. He imagined by this to astonish the Romans, and to pretend that he had been raised from the dead—perhaps to make himself pass as the Messiah. The soldiers were, in fact, a little surprised at first. Simon would only name himself to their commandant, Terentius Rufus. He made them put him in chains, sent the news to Titus, who was at Paneas, and caused the prisoner to be taken to Cesaræa.

The Temple and the great constructions were demolished to the very foundations. The sub-basement of the Temple was, however, preserved, and constitutes what is called at this day *Naramesch-scherif*. Titus wished also to preserve the three towers of Hippicus, Phasaël, and Mariamne, to make posterity know against what walls he had had to fight. The wall of the western side was left standing to shelter the camp of the 10th legion *Fretensius*, which was sent to hold guard over the ruins of the fallen city. Lastly, some houses on the extremity of Mount Sion escaped the destruction, and remained in the condition of isolated ruins. All the rest disappeared. From the month of September, 70, to the year 122, when Hadrian re-built it under the name of *Ælia Capitolina*, Jerusalem was nothing but a field of rubbish, in a corner of which the tents of a legion always on guard were set up. They believed they saw at every instant the fire re-lit which lay under these calcined stones. They trembled lest the spirit of life should come into the corpses which appeared still at the depths of their charnel-house, to raise their arms and declare that they had with them the promises of eternity.

CHAPTER XX.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

Titus appears to have remained about a month in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, offering sacrifices and rewarding his soldiers; the spoils of the captives were sent to Cesaræa. The season, already far advanced, prevented the young captain from leaving for Rome. He employed the winter in visiting different cities of the East and giving fêtes. He took with him bands of Jewish prisoners, who were delivered to the beasts, burned alive, or forced to fight against each other. At Paneas, on the 24th October, the birthday of his brother Domitian, more than 2,500 Jews perished in the flames, or in these horrible games. At Beyrout, on the 17th November, the same number of captives perished, to celebrate the birthday of Vespasian. Hatred of the Jews was the dominant sentiment in Syrian cities. These hideous massacres were hailed with joy. What was perhaps most frightful was that Josephus and Agrippa did not quit Titus during this time, and were witnesses of these monstrosities.

Titus made after this a long voyage into Syria going as far as the Euphrates. At Antioch he found the people exasperated against the Jews—they accused them of a fire which would have consumed the city. Titus contented himself with suppressing the bronze tables on which were engraved their privileges. He made a present to Antioch of the veiled *Cherubim* which covered the ark. This singular trophy was placed before the great western gates of the city, which took from that the name of the Gate of the Cherubim. Near that he dedicated a *quadriga* to the moon, for the help which she had given him during the siege. At Daphne, he caused a theatre to be erected upon the site of the synagogue; an inscription indicated that this monument had been constructed with the booty obtained in Judea. From Antioch Titus returned to Jerusalem; he found there the Tenth *Fretensis*, under the orders of Terentius Rufus, still occupied in searching the caves by the destroyed city. The appearance of Simon, son of Gioras, coming out of the sewers when they believed that no one was to found there, had caused the subterranean fights to be commenced; in fact,

every day they discovered some wretch and some new treasures. In looking on the solitude which he had created, Titus was unable, it is said, to restrain a motion of pity. The Jews who were near him exercised upon him a cross influence; the phantasmagoria of an Oriental Empire, which they had caused to glitter before the eyes of Nero and Vespasian, reappeared around him, and went so far as to excite umbrage at Rome. Agrippa, Berenice, Josephus and Tiberius Alexander were more in favour than ever, and many augured for Berenice the *rôle* of a new Cleopatra. On the morning of the defeat of the rebels, men were irritated at seeing people of such a kind honoured and all powerful. As to Titus, he accepted more and more the idea that he was fulfilling a mission in providence. He was pleased to hear them quote the prophecies which they said referred to him. Josephus claims that he connected this victory with God, and recognised that he had been the object of a supernatural power. What is striking is that Philostratus, 120 years after, admits clearly these data and makes them the basis of an apocryphal correspondence between Titus and Apollonius. To believe him, Titus would have refused the crowns which were offered him, alleging that it was not he who had taken Jerusalem—that he had done nothing but lend his services to an irritated God. It is scarcely to be admitted that Philostratus had known the passage in Josephus. He drew the legend, which had become common, from the moderation of Titus. Titus returned to Rome in the month of May or June, 71. He held essentially a triumph which would surpass all that had been seen up till then. Simplicity, seriousness, the somewhat common manners of Vespasian, were not of a nature to give him prestige with a population which had been accustomed to ask before everything from its sovereigns prodigality and a grand style. Titus thought that a solemn entry would have a grand effect, and managed to surmount the repugnances of his old father on that point. The ceremony was organised with all the skill of the Roman decorators of that time. What distinguished it was the choice of local colour and historical truth. It pleased them also to reproduce the simple rites of the Roman religion as if they had the desire to oppose it to the conquered religion. At the opening of the ceremony Vespasian appeared as pontiff, his head more than half veiled in his toga, and made solemn

prayers, and after him Titus prayed also according to the same rite. The procession was a marvel. All the curiosities, all rarities, the precious products of Oriental art, besides works achieved by the Græco-Roman art, figured there. It appears as if on the day after the greatest danger which the Empire encountered, they should make a pompous exhibition of their wealth. Some moving scaffolding, rising to the height of three or four tiers, excited universal wonder. All the episodes of the war were represented there; each series of tableaux terminated with the living representation of the strange appearance of Bar-Gorias and his capture—the pale visage and the haggard eyes of the captives disguised by the superb garments with which they clothed them. In the midst was Bar-Gorias being led with great pomp to death; then came the spoils of the temple, the golden table, the golden seven-branched candlestick, the veil of the holy of holies, and to conclude, the series of trophies, the captive, the conquered one, the culprit *par excellence*, the book of the *Torah*. The conquerors closed the procession. Vespasian and Titus were mounted on two separate oars. Titus was radiant; as to Vespasian, who saw nothing in all this but a day lost for business, he did not seek to dissimulate his vulgar appearance as a business man, because the procession did not move rapidly enough, and said in a low voice, "It is well done. I have deserved it . . . Have I been foolish enough at my age, too!" Domitian, who was robed and mounted on a magnificent horse, caracoled near his father and elder brother. They arrived thus at the Sacred way. At the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus the ordinary termination of a triumph was reached. At the *Clivus Capitolinus* they made a halt to disembarrass themselves of the gloomy portion of the ceremony—the execution of the chief enemies. This odious custom was observed from point to point. Bar-Gorias, drawn out of the band of captives, was seen led away with a cord round his neck, amid most ignoble insults, to the Tarpeian rock, where they slew him. When a cry announced that Rome's enemy was no more, an immense applause burst out and the sacrifices commenced. After the customary prayers the princes retired to the Palatine; the rest of the day was passed by the whole city in joy and festivity.

The volume of the Thora and the hangings of the sanctuary were taken into the imperial palace, the articles of gold, especially the table of the shew bread and the candlestick, were deposited in a great edifice, which Vespasian caused to be built opposite the Palatine on the other side of the Sacred way under the name of the Temple of Peace, and which was in some sort the Museum of the Flavii. A triumphal arch of Pentelic marble, which exists to this day, kept up the memory of this extraordinary pomp, and the representation of the principal objects which were borne in it. The father and son assumed that day the title of *Imperatores* but they refused the epithet of *Judaic*, either because they attached to the name of *Judæi* something odious or ridiculous, or to indicate that this war in Judea had been not a war against a foreign people, but a simple revolt of slaves put down, or in consequence of some secret thought analogous to that whose exaggerated expressions Josephus and Philostratus have transmitted to us. A coinage, in which Judea chained weeping under a palm tree, figured with the legend *IVDÆA CAPTA IVDÆA DEVICTA*, kept the remembrance of the fundamental exploit of the dynasty of the Flavii. They continued to strike pieces of this type until the days of Domitian. The victory was indeed complete. A captain of our race, of our blood, a man like ourselves, at the head of legions in the position in which we shall encounter if we can read it, many of our ancestors, has crushed the fortress of Semiticism and inflicted upon the theocracy, this redoubtable enemy of civilisation, the greatest defeat which it had ever received. It was the triumph of Roman or rational law, a creation quite philosophic, pre-supposing no revelation, over the Jewish Thora, the result of a revelation. This law, whose roots were partly Greek, but in which the practical genius of the Latins had such a splendid part, was the excellent gift which Rome made to the conquered in return for independence. Every victory of Rome was a progress of reason. Rome brought into the world a better principle in many points of view than that of the Jews; I mean to say the profane State resting upon a purely civil conception of society.

Every patriotic movement is entitled to respect, but the zealots were not only patriots, they were fanatics, assassins, of insupportable tyranny. What they wished

was the maintenance of a law of blood which would permit the stoning of the evil thinker. What they rejected was the common law, laic and liberal, which does not interfere with belief in individuals. Liberty of conscience ought to go the length of the Roman law, while that has never gone forth from Judaism. From Judaism nothing can go forth but the synagogue and the church, censure of manners, obligatory morality, the convent, a life like that of the fifth century when humanity would have lost all its vigour, if the barbarians had not relieved it. In fact the reign of the man of war has a better effect than the temporal reign of the priest. For the man of war does not interfere with the mind. People think freely under him, while the priest demands from his subject the impossible, that is, to believe certain things and to bind themselves that they will hold the priest's ways to be true. The triumph of Rome was therefore legitimate in some measure. Jerusalem had become an impossibility; left to themselves the Jews would have demolished it. But a great lacuna was to render this victory of Titus unfruitful. Our Western races, in spite of their superiority, have always shown a deplorable religious nullity. To draw from the Roman or Gallic religion anything analogous to the church was impossible. Now every advantage gained over a religion is useless if it be not replaced by another, satisfying, at least as well as it can, the needs of the heart. Jerusalem will be avenged for her defeat. She shall conquer Rome by Christianity, Persia by Islamism, shall destroy the old fatherland, and shall become for all higher minds the city of the heart.

The most dangerous tendency of its Thora, a law in itself at once moral and civil, giving the advantage to social questions over military and political ones, shall rule in the church. During all the Middle Ages, the individual, censured and overlooked by the community, shall fear the sermon and tremble before excommunication, and that shall be a just return after the moral indifference of heathen societies, a protest against the insufficiency of the Roman institution to improve the individual. It is certainly a detestable principle the saw of coercion which has been accorded to religious communities over their members. It is the worst error to believe that there is a religion which must be exclusively the good; the good religion being for each man what renders him pleasant, just, humble and benevolent. But the question of

the government of humanity is difficult. The ideal is very high, the earth is very low. Even only to haunt the desert of philosophy, there one meets at every step madness, folly and passion. The old sages did not succeed in claiming any authority but by impostures which, for want of material force, gave them a power of imagination. Where would civilisation be if during centuries people had not believed that the Brahmin could blast by his glance; if the barbarians had not been convinced of the terrible revenges of St. Martins of Tours. Man has need of a moral pedagogy, for which the care of the family and that of the state do not suffice. In the intoxication of success, Rome scarcely remembered that the Jewish insurrection lived still in the basin of the Dead Sea. Three castles, Herodium, Machero and Masada were still in the hands of the Jews. It needed a man to close his eyes to the evidence to retain any hope after the taking of Jerusalem. The rebels defended themselves with as much passion as if the struggle had but just commenced. Herodium was scarcely anything but a fortified palace; it was taken without great effort by Lucillus Bassus. Machero presented many difficulties. Atrocities, massacres, and the sales of whole bands of Jews recommenced. Masada made one of the most heroic defences that history has recorded. Eleazar, son of Jairus, grand-son of Judas the Ganlonite, had possessed himself of this fortress in the early days of the revolt and made it a haunt of zealots, assassins, and brigands. Masada occupies the platform of an immense rock of nearly fifteen hundred feet high upon the shores of the Dead Sea. To possess himself of such a place it was necessary that Fulvius Sylvia should work positive miracles. The despair of the Jews was boundless when they saw to be lost a position which they believed impregnable. At the instigation of Eleazar they killed each other, and set fire to their property which they had heaped up. Nine hundred and sixty persons perished thus. This tragical episode took place on the 15th of April, 72.

Judea after these events was overturned from top to bottom. Vespasian ordered all lands to be sold which were unowned by the death or captivity of their proprietors. The idea was suggested to him which later occurred to Hadrian, to rebuild Jerusalem under another name, and establish a colony there. He did not wish this, and annexed the whole country to the emperor's own domains. He gave only to

eight hundred veterans the borough of Emmaus, near Jerusalem, and made of it a little colony, a trace of which is preserved to this day in the name of the pretty village of Kulonia. A special tribute (*fiscus*) was imposed upon the Jews. In all the empire they were to pay annually to the capital a sum of drachmas which they had been accustomed to pay to their temple at Jerusalem. The little coterie of allied Jews, Josephus, Agrippa, Berenice, and Tiberius Alexander, chose Rome as a residence. We see it continued to play a considerable part, at one time obtaining for Judaism favourable regard at court—at other times pursued by the hatred of the enthusiastic believers; at other times conceiving more than a hope, especially when it seemed to require little for Berenice to become the wife of Titus, and hold the sceptre of the universe.

Reduced to solitude Judea remained tranquil; but the enormous overthrow of which it had been the theatre continued to provoke difficulties in the neighbouring countries. The fermentation of Judaism lasted until the end of the year 73. The zealots who had escaped massacre, the volunteers of the siege, and all the madmen of Jerusalem, spread themselves in Egypt and Cyrenia. The communities of these countries, rich, conservative, and, far removed from the Palestinian fanaticism, felt the danger which these lunatics brought among them. They charged themselves with arresting them and giving them up to the Romans. Many fled into Higher Egypt, where they were hunted like wild beasts. At Cyrene a brigand named Jonathan, a weaver by trade, acted the prophet, and like all Messiahs, persuaded two thousand *Ebionim*, or poor people, to follow him into the desert, where he promised to let them see prodigies and strange signs. The sensible Jews denounced him to Catullus, the governor of the country, but Jonathan revenged himself by some informations which caused him endless trouble. Nearly all the Jewish community of Cyrene, one of the most flourishing in the world, was exterminated. Its property was confiscated in the name of the Emperor. Catullus, who shewed in this matter much cruelty, was disavowed by Vespasian; he died under frightful hallucinations, which, according to certain conjectures, must have furnished the subject of a theatrical piece of fantastic scenery, the "Spectre of Catullus."

Incredible fact! This long and terrible agony was not immediately followed by death. Under Trajan and under Hadrian we see the national Judaism revived, and still engaging in bloody combats; but the lot was evidently cast. The zealot was conquered beyond recovery. The way traced by Jesus, comprehended instinctively by the church of Jerusalem, who were refugees in Perea, became the way of Israel. The temporal kingdom of the Jews had been hateful, hard and cruel. The epoch of the Asmoneans when they enjoyed independence was their most sorrowful age. Was it Herodianism, Sadduceeism, that shameful alliance of a principality without grandeur with the priesthood, which was to be regretted? No, certainly, that was not the goal of "the people of God." One would need to be blind not to see that the ideal institutions which pursued the Israel of God did not agree with national independence. These institutions, being incapable of making an army, could not exist in the vassaldom of a great empire, leaving much liberty to its *rayahs*, and disembarassing them of politics and not asking them for military service. The Achemidian empire had entirely satisfied those conditions of Jewish life, later the Caliphate, the Ottoman empire, satisfied them, and shall see developed in their bosom free communities such as those of the Armenian Parsees, the Greeks, nations without fatherland, brotherhood, supplying diplomatic and military autonomy, by the autonomy of the college and the church.

The Roman empire was not flexible, to lend itself to the communities which it united. Of the four empires, this was, according to the Jews, the harshest and most wicked. Like Antiochus Epiphanes, the Roman empire led the Jewish people astray from their true vocation, by causing it through reaction to form a kingdom or separate state. This tendency was not that of men who represented the genius of the race. In some points of view these last preferred the Romans. The idea of Jewish nationality became each day an obsolete idea, an idea of the furious and frenzied, against which the pious men made no scruple to claim the protection of their conquerors. The true Jew, attached to the *Thora*, making the holy books his rule and his life, as well as the Christian, lost in the hope of his kingdom of God, renounced more and more all nationality. The principles of Judas the Galilite, which was the

soul of the great revolt, anarchical principles, according to which, God alone being "Master," no man has the right to take that title, could produce bands of fanatics analogous to the Independents of Cromwell, they could found nothing durable. These feverish irruptions were the indication of the deep throes which threatened the heart of Israel, and which, by making it sweat blood for humanity, must necessarily cause it to perish in frightful convulsions.

The nations must choose in fact between the long peaceful and obscure destinies of that which lives for itself, and the trouble and stormy career of that which lives for humanity. The nation which agitates in its bosom social and religious problems is nearly always weak as a nation. Every country which dreams of a Kingdom of God, which looks for general ideas, which pursues a work of universal interest, sacrifices by this its particular destiny, grows feeble and loses its role as a terrestrial country. It was so with Judea, Greece, and Italy. It shall be so with France. One never carries with impunity fire within oneself. Jerusalem, the city of middle-class people, would have pursued indefinitely its mediocre history. It is because it had the incomparable honour of being the cradle of Christianity that it was the victim of the Johns of Gischala, of the Bar Giorases, in appearance plagues of their country, in reality the instruments of their apotheosis. Those zealots, whom Josephus treats as brigands and assassins, were politicians of the lowest order, military men with little capacity, but they lost heroically that which could not be saved. They lost a material city, they opened the spiritual Jerusalem, seated in her desolation much more gloriously than she was in the days of Herod and Solomon.

What did the conservatives and Sadducees desire? They wished something paltry; the continuation of a city of priests like Emesa, Tyana, or Comanus. Certainly they were not deceived when they declared that the rising of enthusiasts was the loss of the nation; but revolution and Messianism were indeed the vocation of this people, that by which it contributed to the universal work of civilisation. We deceive ourselves no longer when we say to France, "Renounce revolution or thou art lost"; but if the future belongs to some ideas which are elaborated obscurely in the heart of the people, it will be found that France will have its revenge by what caused in 1870-

1871 its febleness and its misery. At least of many violent strains given to truth, (everything in this sort is possible) our Bar-Giorases, our Johns of Gischala would never become great citizens, but they would play their part, and we shall perhaps see that more even than sensible people they were in the secrets of fate.

How shall Judaism, deprived of its holy city and its temple, transform itself? How shall Talmudism leave the position which events have made to the Israelite? That is what we shall see in our fifth book. In a sense, after the production of Christianity, Judaism has no longer a *raison d'être*. From this moment the spirit of life has gone from Jerusalem. Israel has given all to the son of its sorrow, and it has been exhausted in this childbirth. The *Elohim* whom they believed they heard murmur in the temple: "Let us go forth, let us go forth!" spoke truly. The law of great creations is that the creator virtually expires in transmitting existence to another. After the complete inoculation of life with that which should continue it, the initiator is nothing but a dry stem, an attenuated being. But it is rare, nevertheless, that this sentence of nature is accomplished at once. The plant which has yielded its flower does not consent to die because of that. The world is full of these walking skeletons who survive the doom which has struck them. Judaism is of this number. History has no spectacle stranger than that of this conservation of a people in the state of a ghost, of a people who, during nearly a thousand years, have lost the sentiment of fact, have not written a readable page, have not transmitted an acceptable instruction. Should one be astonished if, after having thus lived for ages outside of the free atmosphere of humanity, in a cellar, if I may say so, in a condition of partial madness, it should come forth, astonished by the light etiolated?

As to the consequences which resulted for Christianity from the destruction of Jerusalem, they are so evident that one has but to indicate them. Already even many times we have had occasion to remark upon them.

The ruin of Jerusalem and of the temple was for Christianity an unequalled good fortune. If the argument attributed by Tacitus to Titus is exactly reported, the victorious general believed that the destruction of the temple would be the ruin of Christianity, as well as of that of Judaism. Never were men more completely

deceived. The Romans imagined to cut away at the same time the shoot, but the shoot was already a bush which lived by its own life. If the temple had survived, Christianity would certainly have been arrested in its development. The temple, surviving, would have continued to be the centre of all Judaic works. They could never have ceased from looking upon it as the most holy place in the world, going there on pilgrimage and bringing tributes thither. The church of Jerusalem, grouped around the sacred parvis, would have continued, by the name of its primacy, to obtain the homages of all the world, to persecute the churches of Paul, demanding that to have the right to to call himself a disciple of Jesus, one must practice circumcision and observe the Mosaic code. Every fertile propaganda would have been forbidden, letters of obedience signed at Jerusalem would have been exacted from the missionary. A centre of indisputable authority, a patriarchate, composed of a sort of college of cardinals, under the presidency of persons analogous to James, pure Jews belonging to the family of Jesus, would have established itself and would have constituted an immense danger for the nascent church. When one sees St. Paul after so much ill-usage remain always attached to the church at Jerusalem, one can conceive what difficulties a rupture with these holy personages would have presented. Such a schism would have been considered an enormity equivalent to the abandonment of Christianity. The separation between it and Judaism would have been impossible; now this separation was the indispensable condition of the existence of the new religion, as the cutting of the umbilical cord is the condition of a new being. The mother will kill the infant. The temple, on the contrary, once destroyed, the Christians thought no more of it; soon they even held it to be a profane place. Jesus shall be everything to them. The church of Jerusalem was by the same blow reduced to a secondary importance. We shall see it reforming itself in the element which makes its strength, the *desposyni* members of the family of Jesus, the sons of Clopas; but it shall reign no more. This centre of hatred and exclusion, once destroyed, the reconciliation of parties opposed to the church of Jesus shall become easy. Peter and Paul shall be reconciled officially, and the terrible duality of nascent Christianity shall cease to be a mortal wound. Forgotten at the

base of Batanea or Hauran, the little group which is connected with the relatives of Jesus, the Jameses, the Clopases, became the Ebionite sect and died slowly through insignificance and unfruitfulness.

The situation much resembles some things in the Catholicism of our days. No religious community has ever had more internal activity, more of a tendency to send forth from its bosom original creations than Catholicism for sixty years back. All these efforts, nevertheless, remain without result for one single reason; that reason is the absolute rule of the court of Rome. It is the court of Rome which has chased from the church Lamennais, Hermes, Döllinger, Father Hyacinthe, and all the Apologists who have defended it with some success. It is the court of Rome which has distressed and reduced to powerlessness Lacordaire and Montalembert, it is the court of Rome which by its *Syllabus* and its council has cut the whole future from liberal Catholics. When is this sad state of things to be changed? When Rome shall be no more the pontifical city, when the dangerous oligarchy which Catholicism has possessed itself of shall have ceased to exist. The occupation of Rome by the King of Italy will one day be probably reckoned in the history of Catholicism for an event as fortunate as the destruction of Jerusalem has been in the history of Christianity. Nearly all Catholics have groaned over it, just as without doubt the Judeo-Christians of the year 70 looked upon the destruction of the temple as the most sad calamity. But the result will shew how superficial this judgment is. Whilst weeping over the end of Papal Rome, Catholicism will draw from it the greatest advantages. To material uniformity and death we shall see following in its bosom discussion, movement, life, and variety.

APPENDIX.

CONCERNING THE COMING OF ST. PETER TO ROME AND THE RESIDENCE OF ST. JOHN AT EPHEBUS.

All are agreed that, from the end of the second century, the general belief of the Christian churches was that the Apostle Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome, and that the Apostle John lived at Ephesus until an advanced age. Protestant theologians from the sixteenth century have pronounced strongly against the visit of St. Peter to Rome. As to the opinion regarding the residence of John at Ephesus, it is only in our day that it has found contradiction.

The reason why Protestants attach so much importance to the denial of Peter's coming to Rome is easily grasped. During the whole Middle Ages the coming of St. Peter to Rome was the basis of the exorbitant pretensions of the papacy. These pretensions were founded on three propositions which were held to be "of the faith," 1st, Jesus himself conferred on Peter a primacy in the Church; 2nd, that primacy ought to be transmitted to Peter's successors; 3rd, the successors of Peter are the Bishops of Rome. Peter, after having resided at Jerusalem, then at Antioch, having definitively fixed his residence at Rome. To overthrow this last fact, was therefore to overturn from top to bottom the edifice of Roman theology. Men expended much learning on this; they showed that Roman tradition was not supported on direct or very solid evidences; but they treated lightly the indirect proofs; they pointed in a troublesome way to the passage in **I. Peter, v. 13**. That *Βαβυλών* in that passage really means Babylon on the Euphrates, is an untenable thesis, first because at that time "Babylon," in the secret style of the Christians, meant Rome; in the second place, because the Christianity of the first century had scarcely left the Roman empire, and spread itself very little among the Parthians.

To us the question has less importance than it had for the first Protestants, and it is easier to solve it impartially. We certainly do not believe that Jesus intended to establish a leader in his church, nor especially, to attach that primacy to the episcopal succession of a fixed city. The episcopate, at first scarcely existed in the

thoughts of Jesus; besides, if it was a city of the world, among those whose names Jesus knew, to which he did not think of attaching the series of heads of his church, it was doubtless Rome. They would probably have horrified him if they had told him that this city of perdition, this cruel enemy of the people of God, should one day boast of his Satanic kingdom, to claim the right of inheriting by a new title the power founded by the Son. That Peter had not been at Rome, or that he had been, has therefore for us no moral or political consequence; there is in it only a curious historical question beyond which it is unnecessary to examine farther.

Let us say first that Catholics have exposed themselves to the most weighty objections on the part of their adversaries with their unfortunate theory as to Peter's coming to Rome in the year 42—a theory borrowed from Eusebius and St Jerome, and which limits the duration of the pontificate of Peter to twenty-three or twenty-four years. It is sufficient not to retain any doubt on that point, to consider that the persecution of which Peter was the object at Jerusalem on the part of Herod Agrippa I. (*Acts xii.*) took place in the very year in which Herod Agrippa died, that is, in the year 44 (*Jos. Ant.*, xix., viii., 2). Apollonius the Anti-Montanist (at the end of the second century) and Lactantius at the beginning of the fourth did not certainly believe that Peter had been at Rome in 42, the former, when he affirms having heard by tradition that Jesus Christ had forbidden his apostles to leave Jerusalem before twelve years had passed from the time of his death; the latter, when he saw that the apostles employed the twenty-five years which followed the death of Jesus in preaching the gospel in the provinces, and that Peter did not come to Rome till after the accession of Nero. It would be superstitious to combat at length a theory which cannot have a single reasonable defender. We can go much further, indeed, and affirm that Peter had not yet come to Rome when Paul was brought there, that is in the year 61. The epistle of Paul to the Romans, written about the year 58, or at least which had not been written more than two years and a half before the arrival of Paul at Rome, is here a very considerable argument; we can scarcely conceive St. Paul writing to the believers whose leader Peter was, without making the smallest mention of him. What is still more demonstrative is the last chapter of the *Acts of*

the Apostles. That chapter, especially vv. 17-29, is not intelligible if Peter was at Rome when Paul arrived there. Let us hold then as absolutely certain that Peter did not come to Rome before Paul, that is to say before the year 61, or nearly so.

But did he not go there after Paul? This is what Protestant critics have never succeeded in proving. Not only does this late journey of Peter to Rome offer no impossibility, but some strong reasons militate in its favour. I believe that those who read our account with care will find that everything fits in well enough in this hypothesis. Besides that, the testimony of the Fathers of the second and third centuries are not without value in this matter, and here are three arguments, the force of which does not appear to me to be disdained.

1. An incontestable thing is that Peter died a martyr. The evidence of the fourth gospel, Clemens Romans, and of the fragment called the *Canon de Muratori*, Dionysius of Corinth, Caius and Tertullian, leave no doubt on this matter. That the fourth gospel may be apocryphal, and that the twenty-first chapter has been added at a latter date, is of no consequence. It is clear that we have in the verses where Jesus announces to Peter that he will die by the same penalty as himself, the expression of an opinion established in the churches before the year 120 or 130, and to which allusions are made as to a thing known to all. It was almost alone at Rome, indeed, that Nero's persecution was violent. At Jerusalem or at Antioch, the martyrdom of Peter could be less easily explained.

2. The second argument is drawn from chapter v. verse 13, of the epistle attributed to Peter. "Babylon" in this passage evidently means Rome. If the epistle is authentic, the passage is decisive. If it is apocryphal, the induction to be drawn from this passage is not less strong. In fact the author, whoever he was, wished to have it believed that the work in question is indeed Peter's work. He needed consequently to give probability to his fraud, to dispose the circumstances of the case in a way agreeable to what he knew and to what was believed at his time as to the life of Peter. If, in such a disposition of mind, he dated the letter from Rome, it was because the received opinion at the time when that letter was written was that St.

Peter had resided at Rome. Now, in every hypothesis, 1st Peter is a very ancient work and enjoyed very early a high authority.

3. The system which served as the basis for the Ebionite Acts of Peter is also well worthy of consideration. This system shows us St. Peter following Simon Magus everywhere (see on that point St. Paul) to combat his false doctrines. M. Lipsius has brought into the analysis of this curious legend an admirable sagacity of criticism. He has shown that the basis of the different editions which have come down to us was a primitive record, written about the year 130, a writing in which Peter came to Rome to conquer Simon-Paul in the centre of his power, and found it dead, after having confounded this father in all his errors. It seems difficult to believe that the Ebionite author, at a date so remote, should have given so much importance to the journey of Peter to Rome, if that journey had not had some reality. The theory of the Ebionite legend must have a foundation of truth, in spite of the fables mixed up with it. It is indeed admissible that Peter came to Rome as he came to Antioch, following Paul and partly to neutralize his influence. The Christian community in the year 60 was in a state of mind which in no way resembled the tranquil waiting of the twenty years which followed the death of Jesus. The missions of Paul and the facilities which the Jews found for their journey, had put in fashion distant expeditions. The apostle Philip is even pointed out by an ancient and persistent tradition as having become settled at Hierapolis.

I regard then as probable the tradition of Peter's residence at Rome; but I believe that this sojourn was of short duration, and that Peter suffered martyrdom a little time after his arrival in the eternal city. A coincidence favourable to this theory is the record of Tacitus, *Annals* xv., 44. This record presents a quite natural occasion with which to connect Peter's martyrdom. The apostle of the Judeo-Christians formed part of the list of sufferers whom Tacitus describes as *crucibus affixi*, and thus it is not without reason that the Seer of the Apocalypse places, "the apostles" among the holy victims of the year 64, who applauded the destruction of the city which slew them.

The coming of John to Ephesus, having a dogmatic value much less considerable than the coming of Peter to Rome, has not excited such lengthened controversies. The opinion generally received up to the present day, was that the apostle John, son of Zebedee, died very old in the capital of the province of Asia, Even those who refused to believe that during his residence the apostle wrote the fourth gospel and the epistles which bear his name, even those who denied that the Apocalypse was his work, continued to believe in the reality of this, journey attended by tradition. The first, Lützelberger, in 1840, raised upon this point some elaborated doubts; but he was little listened to. Some critics who cannot be reproached with an excess of credulousness, Baur, Strauss, Schwegler, Zeller, Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, all by making a large part in the legend in the records as to the sojourn of John at Ephesus, persisted in regarding as historical the very fact of the apostle's coming into these regions. It is in 1867, in the first volume of his *Life of Jesus*, that M. Keim has directed against this traditional opinion quite a serious attack. The basis of M. Keim's theory is that Presbyteros Johannes has been confounded with John the Apostle, and that the statments of the ecclesiastical writers upon him ought to be listened to first. This was followed by M.M. Wittichen and Holtzmann. More recently M. Scholten, of the University of Leyden, in a lengthened work, was forced to destroy one after another all the proofs of the formerly received theory, and to demonstrate that the Apostle John had never set foot in Asia.

The tractate of M. Scholten is a true *chef d'œuvre* of argumentation and method. The author passes in review not only all the evidences which are alleged for or against the tradition, but also all the writings where it can and according to him ought to be mentioned. The learned Professor of Leyden had been formerly of a different opinion. In his long arguments against the authenticity of the fourth gospel, he had strongly insisted on the passage in which Polycrates of Ephesus, about the end of the second century, represents John as having been in Asia, one of the pillars of the Jewish and Quarto-deciman parties. But it is nothing to a friend of truth that it should be necessary in these difficult questions to modify and reform his opinion. M. Scholten's arguments have not convinced me; they have put John into Asia among

the number of doubtful facts; they have not put it among the number certainly of apocryphal facts. I believe, indeed, that the chances of truth are still in favour of the tradition. Less probable in my view than Peter's residence at Rome, the theory of the residence of John at Ephesus maintains its probability, and I think that in many cases M. Scholten has given proof of an exaggerated scepticism. As I may permit myself once more to say, a theologian is never a perfect critic. M. Scholten has a mind too lofty to allow himself ever to be ruled by apologetic or dogmatic views; but the theologian is so accustomed to subordinate fact to idea, that rarely does he place himself in the simple point of view of the historian. For twenty-five years back, especially we have seen that the Protestant liberal school have allowed themselves to be carried away by an excess of negativeness in which we doubt whether the laic science which sees in those studies nothing but simply interesting researches, will follow it. Their religious position is come to this point, that they make a defence of supernatural beliefs more easy by "cheapening" the texts and sacrificing them largely, rather than by maintaining their authenticity.

I am persuaded that a criticism unprejudiced by all theological prepossession shall find one day that the liberal theologians of our century have been too much in doubt, and that it will agree not certainly in spirit, but in some results, with the ancient traditional schools.

Among the writings passed in review by M. Scholten the Apocalypse holds naturally the first rank. This is the point where the illustrious critic shews himself weakest. Of three things, one is true either the Apocalypse is by the Apostle John, or it is by a forger who has intended to make it pass for a work of the Apostle John, or it is by a homonym of the Apostle John, such as John Mark or the enigmatical *Presbyteros Johannes*. On the third hypothesis it is clear that the Apocalypse less nothing to do with the residence of the Apostle John in Asia, but this hypothesis has little plausibility and in any case is not that which M. Scholten adopts. He is for the second hypothesis; he believes the Apocalypse apocryphal in the same way as the Book of Daniel. He thinks that the forger wished, according to a very common proceeding among the Jews of his time, to cover himself with the prestige of a

venerated personage, that he has chosen the Apostle John as one of the pillars of the church of Jerusalem, and that he represents himself to the churches of Asia under that venerable name. Such a falsehood scarcely being conceivable during the lifetime of the apostle, M. Scholten declares that John had died before the year 68. But this theory includes downright impossibilities. Whatever may be the authenticity of the Apocalypse, I dare to say that the arguments which are drawn from that writing to establish the truth of a residence of John in Asia are as strong in the second hypothesis set forth here as in the first. There is no question here of a book being produced like the Book of Daniel some centuries after the death of the author to whom it is attributed. The Apocalypse was circulated among the believers in Asia in the winter of 68-69, while the great struggles between the generals for the competition of the empire and the appearance of the false Nero, of Cythnos, kept the whole world in a feverish expectation. If the Apostle John were dead as M. Scholten says, it was shortly before; in any case in M. Scholten's hypothesis the faithful of Ephesus, of Smyrna, &c., knew perfectly at that date that the Apostle John had never visited Asia. What reception would they give to the account of a vision represented as having taken place in Patmos at some leagues from Ephesus, an account which is addressed to the seven principal churches of Asia by a man who is credited to have known the concealed thoughts of their consciences, who distributes to some the hardest reproaches, to others the most exalted praise, who takes with them the tone of an indisputable authority, who represents himself as having been the partaker of their sufferings; if that man had been neither in Patmos nor Asia, if their imagination had always fixed him settled at Jerusalem? The forger must be supposed to have been endowed with little good sense to have created in lightness of heart for his books such reasons of dislike against them. Why does he place the scene of the prophesy at Patmos? That island had never up till then any importance, any significance. People never touched at it except when they went from Ephesus to Rome or from Rome to Ephesus; for such travelling as that Patmos offered a very good part for resting, a small day's journey from Ephesus. It was the first or the last halting-place, according to the rules of the little navigation described in the Acts, and

of which the essential principle was to stop as much as was possible every night. Patmos could not be the object of a voyage. A man coming to Ephesus or going from Ephesus alone needed to touch there. Even admitting the non-authenticity of the Apocalypse, the first three chapters of this book constitute therefore a strong probability in favour of the theory of John's residence in Asia, in the same manner as 1st Peter, although apocryphal, is a very good argument for the residence of Peter at Rome. The forger, whatever may be the credulousness of the public whom he addressed, seeks always to create for his writing conditions in which it may be acceptable. If the author of 1st Peter believed himself obliged to date his writing from Rome, if the author of the Apocalypse imagined that he would give a good exordium to his vision by making it appear to be written upon the threshold of Asia, nearly opposite Ephesus, and by addressing it with counsels which remind one of those of a director of the conscience to the churches of Asia, it is because Peter has been at Rome and John has been in Asia. Dionysius of Alexandria at the end of the third century feels perfectly the great embarrassment which the question thus placed presents. Shewing that antipathy against the Apocalypse which all the Greek fathers possessed in a true Hellenic spirit, Dionysius accumulates the objections against attributing such a writing to the Apostle John, but he recognises that the work cannot have been composed except by a personage who had lived in Asia, and he puts aside the homonyms of the apostle; so much does this proposition agree with the evidence that the true or supposed author of the Apocalypse has really been connected with Asia.

M. Scholten's discussion relative to the text of Papias is very important. It has been the lot of this ἀρχαῖος ἀνὴρ to be badly understood since Irenæus, who has certainly wrongly made him an auditor of the Apostle John, until Eusebius, who also wrongly supposes that he knew directly Presbyteros Johannes. M. Keim had already shewn that the text of Papias, well understood, proves rather to be against than for the residence of the Apostle John in Asia. M. Scholten goes much further; he concludes from the passage in question, that even Presbyteros Johannes had not resided in Asia. He believes that this personage, distinct in his view from the Apostle

John, resided in Palestine, and was a contemporary of Papias. We agree with M. Scholten, that if the passage in Papias is correct, it is an objection against the residence of the apostle in Asia. But is it correct? Are the words ἡ τί Ἰωάννης not an interpolation? To those who find this idea arbitrary, I would reply that, if they maintain ἡ τί Ἰωάννης, the words οἱ τοῦ κυρίου μαθηταί, placed after Ἀριστίων καὶ ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωαννης made a *bizarre* and incoherent collection. What, nevertheless, confirms M. Scholten's doubts is a passage in Papias, quoted by George Hamartolus, and according to which John was killed by the Jews. This tradition appears to have been created to show the realization of words of Christ ([Matt. xx. 23](#)); [Mark x. 39](#); it is not reconcilable with residence of John at Ephesus, and if Papias had really adopted it, it is because he had not the least idea of the coming of John into the province of Asia. Now it would be very surprising that a man zealous in research in apostolic traditions should have ignored such an important fact, which would take place in the same country as that in which he lived. The omission of all reference relative to the residence in Asia in the epistles attributed to St. Ignatius and Hegesippus gives certainly cause for reflection. At the beginning of the year 180 A.D., tradition is definitely fixed. Appollonius, the Anti-Montanist, Polycrates, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, have no doubt as to the remarkable honour which the city of Ephesus enjoyed. Among the texts which might be alleged, two are especially remarkable, that of Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, about 196, and Irenæus (at the same time) in his letter to Florinus. M. Scholten puts aside too lightly the text of Polycrates. It is important to find at Ephesus at the end of one century all the traditions so distinctly affirmed. "The small critical mind of Polycrates," says M. Scholten, "draws from this circumstance that he represents John to us as decorated with the *πέταλον*, thus making recede by an anachronism to the apostolic age the usage existing then of giving to the Christian Bishop the dignity of high priest." Formerly, M. Scholten did not judge thus; he saw in the *πέταλον* and in the title of "high priest" given to the Apostle John by Polycrates, a proof that the apostle was in Asia, the head of the Judeo-Christian party. He was right. The *πέταλον*, far from being an episcopal mark of the second century, is only attributed

to two personages, and to two personages of the first century, to James and John, both belonging to the Judeo-Christian party, and this party believed to exalt them by attributing to them the prerogatives of the Jewish high priests. M. Keim and M. Scholten likewise reproach Polycrates with believing that the Philip who came to settle at Hierapolis with his prophetess daughters, is the apostle. I believe that Polycrates is right, and that if we compare attentively [Acts xxi., v. 8](#), with the passages in Papias, Proclus, Polycrates, and Clement of Alexandria, as to Philip and his daughters, residing at Hierapolis, I think we shall be convinced that it is the apostle that is spoken of. The verse in Acts has all the appearance of an interpolation. M. Boltzmann seems to adopt upon this point the hypothesis which I have proposed in my Apostles. I hold to it more than ever.

The most curious passage in the Fathers of the Church on the question which occupies us is the fragment of the epistle of Irenæus to Florinus, which Eusebius has preserved for us. It is one of the finest pages of Christian literature in the second century. "These opinions of Florinus are not of a sound teaching; these opinions are not those which the elders who have preceded us, and who knew the Apostles, transmitted to thee. I remembered that when I was a child in Asia Minor where thou didst shine first by thy office at court, I saw thee near Polycarp seeking to acquire his esteem. I remember things which happened first rather than things which come later, for that which we have known in infancy grows with the mind, identifies itself with it; so much so that I could tell the place in which the blessed Polycarp sat to speak, his walk, his habit, his method of life, the features of his body, his manner of rendering assistance, how he related the familiarity he had had with John and with the others who had seen the Lord, and what he had heard them say as to the Lord and his miracles, and as to his doctrine. Polycarp reported it as having received it from eye witnesses of the Word of Life conforming all to the scriptures. Those things, thanks to the goodness of God, I listened to from the first with appreciation, not consigning them to paper, but in my heart, and I always, thanks to God, recorded them with authenticity. And I can attest in the presence of God, that if this blessed and apostolic elder had heard something like thy doctrines, he would

have closed his ears and would have cried according to his custom: 'Oh good God! to what times hast thou reserved me, that I should hear such words!' and he would have fled from the place where he had heard them."

We see that Irenæus did not make an appeal as in the greater part of the other passages in which he speaks of the residence of the apostle in Asia, to a vague tradition; he recites to Florinus some remembrances of childhood, under their common master Polycarp. One of these souvenirs is that Polycarp spoke often of his personal relations with the Apostle John. M. Scholten has seen thoroughly that it is necessary to admit the reality of these relations, or to declare apocryphal the Epistle to Florinus. He decides for this second view. His reasons seem to me to be very weak. And first in the book *Against Heresies* Irenæus expresses himself nearly in the same manner as in the letter to Florinus. The principal objection of M. Scholten is drawn from this, that to explain such relations between John and Polycarp, there must be supposed for the apostle, for Polycarp, and for Irenæus, an extraordinary longevity. I am not much moved by that; John could not be dead, until about the year 80 or 90, and Irenæus wrote about 180. Irenæus was therefore at the same distance from the last years of John, as we are from the last years of Voltaire. Now without any miracle of longevity whatever our fellow worker and friend M. Remusat knew with great intimacy the Abbé Morellet, who conversed at length with Voltaire. The difficulty which it is believed we find in the fact recorded by Irenæus, is that the martyrdom of Polycarp is placed in 166, 167, 168, 169 under Marcus Aurelius. Polycarp was at that time eighty-six years of age; he would therefore be born in the year 80, 81, 82, or 83, which would make him too young at the death of John. But the date of the martyrdom of Polycarp should be modified. This martyrdom took place under the Pro-Consulate of Quadratus. Now M. Waddington has demonstrated in a manner which leaves no room for doubt, that the Pro-Consulate of Quadratus, in Asia, ought to be placed in 154-155, under the reign of Antoninus the Pious. Polycarp was therefore born in 68-69. If the Apostle had lived until the year 90, which nothing contradicts (he might be twelve years younger than Jesus), it is not unlikely that Polycarp had in his youth some conversations with him. It is not the Acts of the

martyrdom of Polycarp which assigns as the date of that martyrdom the reign of Marcus Aurelius, it is Eusebius who by an erroneous calculation, of which M. Waddington gives a clear exposure believed that the Pro-Consulate of Quadratus fell under that reign.

A difficulty in the chronological system, which we would explain is the journey which Polycarp made to Rome, under the pontificate of Anicet. Anicet, according to the received chronology, became Bishop of Rome in the year 154, or rather sooner. There is, therefore, some little difficulty to find a place for the journey of Polycarp. M. Waddington's results appeal decisive; if it be necessary to be in sequence with these results, to ante-date a little the elevation of Anicet to the pontificate, we ought not to hesitate, seeing that the pontifical lists offer some trouble in that direction, and that many lists place Anicet before Pius. It is to be regretted that M. Lipsius, who has published recently a very good work upon the Chronology of the Bishop of Rome up to the Fourth Century, had not known M. Waddington's treatise; he would have found there matter for an important discussion.

Is it likely, says M. Scholten, that an old man, already nearly a centenarian, would have taken such a voyage and that at a time when it was much more difficult to travel than in our days? The voyages from Ephesus or from Smyrna to Rome would have been more easy. A merchant of Hierapolis tells us in his epitaph that he had made seventy-two times the distance from Hierapolis to Italy by doubling the Malean Cape. This merchant continued therefore his journeys up to an age advanced as that when Polycarp made his voyage to Rome. Such navigations (they travelled very little during the winter) did not entail any fatigue. It is possible that Polycarp carried out his voyage to Rome during the summer of 154 and yet suffered martyrdom at Smyrna on the 23rd February, 155. M. Keim's hypothesis, according to which the John whom Polycarp would know would not be John the Apostle, but *Presbyteros Johannes*, is full of improbabilities. If this Presbyteros was as we believe a secondary personage, the disciple of John the Apostle flourishing in the year 100 to nearly the year 120, the confusion of Polycarp or Irenæus would be inconceivable. As to the Presbyteros being really a man of the great apostolic generation, an equal of

the apostles, who might be confounded with them, we have already presented our objections to this theory. Let us add that even then the error of Polycarp would not be much more easy to explain.

One of the most curious parts of M. Scholten's treatise is that in which he recurs to the question of the fourth gospel, which he had already treated with no much fulness some years before. M. Scholten does not only admit that this gospel may be the work of John, but he still refuses it all connection with John. He denies that John is the disciple named many times in this gospel with mystery and designated as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." According to M. Scholten that disciple is not a real person. The immortal disciple who, as distinguished from the other disciples of the Master, should live until the end of the ages by the force of his mind, this disciple, whose evidence, reposing upon spiritual contemplation, is of an absolute authenticity, ought not to be identified with any of the Galillean apostles. He is an ideal personage. It is quite impossible for me to admit that opinion. But let us not complicate difficult questions by another more difficult still. M. Scholten has removed many supports upon which formerly rested the opinion of the residence of the Apostle John in Asia. He has proved that this fact does not arise from the penumbra through which we see nearly all the facts of Apostolic history. In what concerns Papias he has raised an objection to which it is easy to reply; nevertheless he has not set forth all the arguments which can be alleged in favour of the tradition. The first chapters of the Apocalypse, the letter of Irenæus to Florinus, the passage in Polycrates remain three solid bases upon which we cannot build up a certainty, but which M. Scholten, in spite of his trenchant dialectic, has not overturned.