

likeness and the difference between persons human and divine. To de-absolutize human personality, while it may seem to promise a divinisation, can only end in a debasement. To remove its substantial basis must be to confound it with the stream of things that exist indeed, but not in their own right. To remove its specific differentiation, its intellectuality, is to deny the ground of its freedom which gives it its peculiar value. To over-relationalize it is to make the right relationships of charity and justice impossible. But within these relationships and by means of them the human person can indeed rise to fuller and fuller sharing in the mutual relational life of the divine persons, in which we more and more enjoy the relation of Sonship, for we have received the spirit of adoption by which we cry, 'Abba, Father'.

That life of adopted divine Sonship may flower into mysticism and knowledge gained through the appreciation which love brings, but assuredly it takes its rise and its normal development through love motivated by cognition. As St Catherine of Siena says in the opening words of her Dialogue: 'The soul, who is lifted by a very great and yearning desire for the honour of God and the salvation of souls, begins by exercising herself, for a certain space of time in the ordinary virtues, remaining in the cell of self-knowledge, in order to know better the goodness of God towards her. This she does because knowledge must precede love'. The subject of growth in which this life of relationship has its being is no spontaneous urge but an intellectual substance. The conditions of its growth are not the anarchic movements of blind desire, but the intelligible social and juridical relations established and ordered by human society and by the Church.

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE GREEK FATHERS

REFLECTIONS ON A FORTHCOMING LEXICON OF PATRISTIC GREEK

AS the catalogues of the publishers show there is a great revival of interest in the study of the Fathers, especially the Greek Fathers, so long overshadowed by their better known and more accessible Latin brethren. If we read that the *Editions du Cerf* have already brought out translations of authors as comparatively little known as the apologist Athenagoras, the Cappadocian Gregory of Nyssa, John Moschus and Maximus Confessor, a new spring of patristic studies seems indeed to be upon us, and from America there come the translations of St Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians and of the Seven Letters of St Ignatius. Will England, whose interest in the Greek Fathers has always been particularly keen (we need only

remember the work of Newman and Pusey, of Lightfoot and Prestige) take no part in this renaissance?

It is hoped that, in a few years' time, there will be brought out in this country a great and fundamental work, which has been in preparation for about forty years. We are referring to the *Lexicon of Patristic Greek*, begun in Cambridge in 1906 under the editorship of Dr H. B. Swete, and transferred to Oxford in 1915, for which material has been steadily collected throughout these years. Under the editorship of Dr F. L. Cross, the present Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, assisted by a small and harmonious team of Catholic and Anglican collaborators, this work has now entered on its final stage, in which the immense material, assembled in a large room in the New Bodleian Building, is being sifted and put into shape.

This Lexicon, designed to meet the special needs of the Patristic student, is an independent work, but presupposes access to the ordinary Greek Lexica, particularly to the new (ninth) edition of Liddell and Scott, for all those words well attested in pagan authors and without a special theological significance. To give an example: a word like *hippos*, horse, will not be found in the Lexicon; but *logos*, word, will have a long entry.

For the Lexicon aims at giving not only, as far as possible, all those out-of-the-way words—and they are many—which might baffle the ordinary reader who cannot consult Suidas, Suicer, Ducange, Sophocles and a host of other old lexica on the remote chance of finding the word he wants, but also at providing material on the big theological words, especially those that, like *Homoousios* or *Theotokos*, have played an important part in the great controversies of the Early Church. The immense material available for these words is carefully sorted out in order to approach as closely as possible to the ideal of showing the development of a term and the idea it conveys with a maximum of clarity and a minimum of quotations, an ideal the attainment of which requires much thought and more often than not long hours of patient verification of references and comparison of quotations.

Perhaps this may sound rather a tedious occupation to the uninitiated. But it can become actually exciting. For what can be more satisfying to the mind than to follow the development and progressive elucidation of a word intimately bound up with a fundamental doctrine of the Faith? There is, for example, such an extraordinary word as *agenetos*, which, if spelt with one 'n' means 'uncreated', and thus is applicable to all three Persons of the Holy Trinity; but, if spelt with two 'n's, means 'ungenerated', and can be predicated of the Father only. Nobody had paid much attention to this subtle

distinction until the Arians hit on it as an excellent means of producing confusion in minds not trained in verbal subtleties. By saying that the Father alone is *agenetos*, that is ungenerated, they sounded perfectly orthodox; but what they really meant was that the Father alone is *agenetos*, uncreated—and by denying this predicate to the Son they made of the Second Person of the Trinity a creature 'though not like one of the other creatures', as they hastened to add with a lack of lucidity that passed for profundity among their followers.

It is an almost æsthetic pleasure to follow step by step—represented in the Lexicon by a string of quotations and references—the development of Catholic doctrine through the very confusion of spellings and meanings. First St Athanasius, still somewhat inconsistent in the use of the one and the two 'n's, then the great Cappadocians, especially St Basil in his treatise against Eunomius ringing the changes on the *gennetos* and *agenetos*, *genetos* and *agenetos*—from time to time angrily addressing the 'impious Eunomius' who uses equivocal terms in order to make the eternal and co-equal Son of God a creature subject to the Father. Until at last comes St John of Damascus, and sums up the results of the controversies in a lucid definition of the two terms—the Word has won the victory over his word-splitting adversaries.

There is, indeed, drama in these great theological words that have made history in the Church; and that this drama should be partly hidden and partly revealed under pedantic sounding references makes it all the more exciting.

But there are not only these 'star words', so to speak, that will attract the Patristic scholar. The Lexicon will also be a help to those interested especially in the philological side of the study of the Fathers. There is, for example, St Cyril of Alexandria, the passionate defender of the Theotokos. His works are literally teeming with the strangest compounds, found in no other Greek author, whether pagan or Christian, and which are simply 'Cyrilline words'. They are particularly numerous in his Commentaries, where the allegorical flights of the Alexandrian School seem to have called for a corresponding wealth of imaginative terms. Many of them are incorporated in the new edition of Liddell and Scott, which professedly disregards the vocabulary of the Christian Fathers—they made their way into it because they were given in the Lexicon of Hesychius without an indication of their source; and it is one of the ambitions of the Lexicon of Patristic Greek to restore them to their author.

But, our utilitarian-minded contemporaries may ask, what is the use of such a highly specialised work to people who are not Patristic scholars? After all there are now many excellent translations of the Greek Fathers; even those—and they are becoming fewer in number

every day—who have learned Greek at school will prefer reading a good translation to struggling through the original with a Lexicon. But it is precisely that which would be such an invaluable help to a real understanding of the Fathers, even if it were done only from time to time for a key passage. It is very easy to overlook quite a number of important points when reading a translation; especially in such a subject as Patristics, when sometimes the whole controversy hinges on one letter, as in *genetos*—*gennetos* and *homoousios*—*homoiousios*—a source of confusion which simply cannot be reproduced in a translation.

And if these controversies may seem very remote in our troubled times and really 'Greek' to most of our contemporaries, perhaps the very fact that such an undertaking can be launched at the present moment may remind us all that it is not in the sphere of politics and economics that ultimate decisions are made, but in the realm of the spirit; the salvation of men depends not on the ephemeral success of this or that plan or scheme, but on the question whether Christ was *genetos* (created) or *agenetos* (uncreated), *homoousios* (of the same substance) or *homoiousios* (of similar substance) as the Father. These issues, it is true, were decided, as far as Catholics are concerned, once and for all more than 1500 years ago; but they have so often been questioned and ridiculed in these last centuries that any work that will facilitate their re-statement as well as the understanding of the world in which the early Christians lived, should be welcomed by all to whom their Christian heritage is dear.

H. C. GRAEF.

O B I T E R

WHO ARE THE GUILTY? A recent number of *Das Neue Abendland*, the German Catholic review, was devoted to the discussion of the 'guilt' of the German people. Seeing in the sublime liturgical invocation *O felix culpa* the symbol of a people's redemption, Dr Hans Hengstenberg continues:

It may be that other nations too are guilty, and that their guilt grows day by day. Certainly other nations have a heavy responsibility for the tragedy of Europe. But we, 'a people of thinkers and poets', must bear the chief burden of guilt. Let our pride be such that we will not evade our own guilt by pointing out that of others.

In confessing it we declare more boldly our national duty.

Herr Naumann, the editor, in an article called 'The Fifteenth Cross', sees in the Vezelay Peace Pilgrimage of last year a figure of hope. A fifteenth cross was made by German prisoners of war at work near