

were many who habitually invoked his intercession. Father Berger details several instances where their prayers were answered. With Bishops Flaget and Baraga he is regarded as a saint, and his body is believed to be incorrupt.

He is a type of hierarchy of the United States; a man great in sacred and secular learning; an untiring missionary; a bishop fully impressed with his great responsibility and anxious to discharge it by guiding his clergy and people, old and young, in the way of salvation, and combining with this a life so pure, so recollected on God, so full of self-denial, as to impress all with his sanctity.

In thus taking by a kind of accident three types, we see the Church in her life in America since its discovery. Whether selected by the monarch of France or Spain, or chosen by the bishops of the country, we see unaltered by time the same faith, the same spirit, the same attachment to the See of Rome, the same love of the unity of the Church, devotion to her discipline, zeal for the sanctification of all committed to their care.

JASPER IN THE APOCALYPSE THE SYMBOL OF THE PRIMACY.

THE task of interpreting any portion of the Apocalypse is proverbially an arduous one. And yet its many difficulties are not without some little alleviation, whose apparent insignificance conveys a wrong idea of their actual value.

Amongst the not very numerous circumstances which happily combine to lighten a little the labor of interpretation may be classed the fact that we can begin our work with this initial certainty, viz., the meaning of St. John is conveyed to us, not directly, but veiled in symbolism. Not that this fact alone will always help us very much; in solving individual problems, however, it often comes in as a very useful factor.

The reason of this occasional utility arises from the necessity we are under of distinguishing in the Apocalypse two kinds of prophetic imagery. There is the imagery which foretells events yet to come, and there is the imagery which simply veils truths already familiar to us. Not that these two classes of symbolism are ordinarily found apart, for more frequently than not they are

intertwined in a way which almost defies unravelling. Hence it happens that while the knowledge that we are dealing with symbolism helps us but little in understanding passages belonging to the first category, it is of material assistance when we are dealing with passages belonging to the second. It is with passages belonging to this second group that our present task deals exclusively.

The twenty-first chapter of the Apocalypse presents us, in some detail, with a description of the celestial city which St. John, in his vision, saw coming down from heaven, and some of these details (mentioned principally in the eleventh, twelfth, eighteenth, and nineteenth verses) form the subject of this present somewhat limited inquiry.

Although all are agreed that the vision of this twenty-first chapter is typical of the Church, there is some difference of opinion as to whether it represents the Church on earth, or as it shall be, finally, triumphant in heaven. As to the relative value of these two interpretations the opinions of commentators are amicably discordant; although opposite they are not conflicting. Hence we may combine both explanations, and understand the vision of the heavenly city to be a figure of the whole Church, not indeed as, at any one time or place, it presents itself to our view, but the Church *as a whole*, freed from the conditions of time and place, and seen from a standpoint higher far than ours. It is a similitude of the Church as we may conceive it appearing, whole and complete, before the eye of its Divine Founder. We see only unfinished portions of the edifice, His glance takes in at one view the slow processes of toilsome labor and the finished work which that labor is gradually accomplishing. No doubt it is not easy to see in the sober, perhaps dull hues, which the Church militant may present to our sight any very pronounced likeness to the brilliant city built of sparkling gems. But we must bear in mind that we are looking at processes, not at the final result. The masons who roughly hewed and laid the foundations of one of our great cathedrals may never have realized the graceful edifice which should one day rise upon those very foundations. And this in some manner exemplifies the thought that should be in our minds when we turn from the city of the vision to the Church in our own day. While we are living out our lives we are looking upon the rough material out of which the city of the vision shall be built. The shapeless blocks lying about seemingly so uncared for are nevertheless the same stones which later on shall form the stately cathedral.

In his description of this city St. John frequently makes mention of jasper, mentioning it with peculiar prominence. Since the

city is symbolical of the Church, since the whole description is symbolical, jasper also must be symbolical of something connected with the Church. It is an emblem; its natural properties and the office it fulfils in the city of the vision typify to us some parallel in the Church. That we may ultimately unravel the emblematic meaning set before us under the name and natural properties of this precious stone, we must begin by knowing something about the stone itself.

It so happens that, in spite of the name, it is not so easy to determine what particular precious stone is meant by "jasper." But we have this negative, certainly, it cannot be the same stone as that which we call "jasper" now. St. John's jasper is translucent, ours is not. Nor do we at first appear to reach any very sharply defined result, if we turn to the various passages in Scripture where the word occurs. In the Apocalypse, the Greek word *ἰασπις* seems to be used as an equivalent for the Hebrew *יָשָׁפֶלֶת*, *ya-shi'peh* (not *yashpeh*, as the sound of the word is erroneously given in Mr. Spraker's *Commentary*), a word which occurs only three times in the Old Testament. In Exodus xxviii. 20, and xxxix. 13, the Vulgate, following the Septuagint *βήρυλλος*, renders the Hebrew word by "beryllus," the beryl. The beryl is closely allied to the emerald, the main difference between the two being the green color of the emerald, and the greater hardness of the beryl. This close affinity between the two, perhaps, explains the dissimilarity of the renderings of *יָשָׁפֶלֶת*, *ya-shi'peh* in Ezekiel xxviii. 13, for while the Vulgate has "jaspis" as the equivalent, the Septuagint renders the word by *αμάρανθος*, the emerald. Copyists might possibly be responsible for some change in the order of the precious stones mentioned in this passage. However, taking the texts as they stand, this much may be gleaned from the properties of the beryl and emerald being in some manner predicated of "jasper," viz., that this name is used of some stone, hard as beryl, and translucent as an emerald, and probably of a greenish color. This conclusion, drawn from our consideration of the word as used in the Old Testament, harmonizes fairly well with what we shall gather as to the nature of the "jasper" mentioned in the Apocalypse. It is in the Apocalypse only that the word is found, and there we meet with it four times. In chapter iv. 3, St. John says: "And he that sat was to the sight like jasper in sight like to an emerald," if, with Ribera, we couple together the opening and the concluding words of this verse. Supposing those intervening inclosed in a parenthesis, the final words give us the color of the jasper, of which St. John speaks. From its being used to symbolize Him who sat, we may gather the value of the stone, since a stone of inferior value would hardly be chosen as an emblem of one so great. In chapter xxi. 11, jasper

is spoken of as being transparent, "Having the glory of God, and the light thereof like unto a precious stone, as it were to a jasper stone, as crystal."

Here, then, we have some indications of the properties of the jasper of the Scriptures, its value, its color, its transparency. Moreover, from its being mentioned (xxi. 18, 19) as one of the twelve foundation-stones, as well as being itself the stone which formed the mighty wall, we may conclude that it represents some stone pre-eminently firm and enduring.

These properties of jasper form the groundwork of the symbolism whose meaning we wish to ascertain. It is well to bear in mind that we are not engaged in a purely antiquarian investigation, with the one object of finding out what particular precious stone St. John intends to specify under the name of jasper. For our purpose it is sufficient to know the qualities for which the stone has been selected to typify to us, more briefly and more clearly than words could do, the meaning, half concealed, half revealed by the symbolism.

Taking things, then, as they are, we must be content to set out on our voyage of discovery furnished with very simple data. The task before us, arduous as it is for us, would have been easy enough for the early Christians amongst whom St. John lived and wrote. They would have been familiar with the various moral qualities of which an Eastern imagination has made each precious stone a symbol. But for ourselves, we must gather his meaning from the various offices which he assigns to the stones in the structural economy of the city.

One feature of this economy is set before us in the twelfth verse of the twenty-first chapter, where three facts are put prominently before us. We are told (1) that the city coming down from the heavens was defended by a lofty and a mighty wall; (2) that the wall rested upon twelve distinct foundations; and (3) that upon these twelve foundations were the names of the twelve Apostles. We will begin with the consideration of this last-mentioned fact.

It must be remembered that in scriptural phraseology the *name* of a person is used as a compendious emblem of all that the person is, of all that he has become. In the Old Testament, to use a familiar example, we find the name of "Abram," the exalted father, changed by Jehovah Himself into "Abraham," the father of a multitude, that the new name might typify the office and the dignity of the father of the faithful, who should be numberless as the stars of heaven. Similarly, in the New Testament, Simon, "the obedient," is renamed Peter, "the rock." To say, then, that the names of the twelve Apostles are upon the twelve foundation-stones is equivalent to identifying the foundation-stones with the

Apostles themselves, and this imagery is put before us, not casually, but with a clear and definite design. It is not mere accident, it is of set purpose that the twelve foundations are represented as the common foundation of but one wall, inclosing one city. It is of set purpose, that while the Apostles are brought before our notice singly and individually, each one typified by a different precious stone, they are also represented as indissolubly connected with the one encircling wall. But of this later.

Assuming, then, as we are fully justified in doing, that the twelve foundations typify the twelve Apostles, we pass on to inquire, are the Apostles here represented in any definite order? The analogy of other passages in which all the Apostles are mentioned gives us the best method of answering which the nature of the case admits of. Turning to the passages which enumerate all the Apostles, we find that though there is some slight variation as to the precedence of the other Apostles among themselves, the first place is always assigned to Simon Peter. St. Matthew begins his list (x. 2) by saying, categorically, "The first [πρῶτος] is Simon, who is called Peter." St. Mark, though it almost seems as if he had not originally intended to give a catalogue, and had only accidentally glided off into giving a list of the Apostles in consequence of having mentioned that the name of Peter, "the rock," was "put upon" (ἐπέθηκεν) Simon, yet he too also follows what seems to have been the recognized order among the Apostles, certainly with respect to St. Peter (iii. 16), and mentions him first. So too with St. Luke (vi. 13, 14); since he gives the last place to the unhappy Apostle who, in public estimation, in some sense deserved the last place, we may argue *à pari*, that he gives the first place also in accordance with public estimation: "And He chose twelve of them, whom also he named Apostles, Simon, whom He surnamed Peter." In this way, then, we find that there is an unvarying order preserved, at least with respect to St. Peter, when all the Apostles are mentioned together, and in the complete absence of any argument proving a departure from this unvarying order, we arrive at the conclusion that in the passage in the Apocalypse now under consideration, this same order is tacitly understood.

The twelve foundation-stones typify the twelve Apostles, and under the symbol of the foundation-stone of jasper, the first among the foundation-stones, St. John presents us with an emblem of the first among the Apostles,—St. Peter. The prominence which the Apocalypse gives to the symbol of St. Peter is fully in keeping with the prominence with which St. Peter himself is set before us in the Gospels. The Apocalypse carries on in symbolism the *same ideas* which are more plainly expressed in the Gospels, as an example or two will prove.

The city of the vision was girt about with a high wall (v. 12), and this wall was of jasper (v. 18). Now jasper not only serves as a foundation-stone equally with the other eleven stones, but it moreover so encompasses the whole, that while parts of the city do not rest on one or another of the individual foundation-stones, there is absolutely no portion which is not girded and defended by the one wall of jasper. If we call upon our imagination to picture to us a city resting upon foundations of various colors, but the whole surrounded by one high encircling wall of jasper, would it be strange if we gathered the impression that jasper, being the most prominent, was *the* stone of the city? Compare this symbolism of St. John with the symbol used by our Lord Himself to typify the office of the first of the Apostles.

Amongst his brethren, Simon was singled out to be surnamed "The Rock," *the* stone par excellence. For though, in the Greek, there is a distinction and a difference between the word, λίθος, a stone, used in the Apocalypse, and the word, πέτρα, a large stone, a rock, used in the Gospel, there is no such difference of meaning in the Syriac word, Kipho¹ (whence κῆφος = πέτρος), probably used by our Lord, which means equally a rock or a stone, and is also employed with another noun to designate *precious* stones, exactly as St. John employs the Greek word, λίθος, stone. This word St. John, whose native language was Syro-Chaldaic, may have had in his mind, when writing of the "jasper stone." Be this as it may, it is not mere airy imagination to see in the vision of St. John a further application of the same symbol—the same word—originally chosen by our Lord to typify the office of Simon—the Rock. In the Gospel and in the Apocalypse, the firm unyielding stone is used as typical of the office, which one of the Apostles should fulfil in the economy of the Church.

There is another coincidence, which gives strength to this conclusion. The main purpose for which the walls of a city are raised is that they may guard and protect. Now, the command given to Simon Peter (John xxi.) is by no means adequately represented by the ordinary English rendering of the original Greek words, "ποιμαίνε τὰ πρόβατά μου." Perhaps no English word can fully convey the whole meaning of ποιμαίνε, embodying, as it does, an Eastern, and not a Western, idea. Of course, it means "feed my sheep," but it also means much more. It means, tend them, guard them, guide them to good pastures, watch them by day and protect them by night; in short, it means all that an Eastern shepherd is expected to do in keeping the flock committed to his charge.² In the Gos-

¹ Of Castell's *Lexicon Syriacum*, s. v.

² In the *Land and The Book* (Thompson) there is a good description of a shepherd's life and duties, pp. 203-206: "The sheep are so tame that they follow their

pel, it is the office of Peter the Shepherd to guard and protect the whole flock, and to guard and protect the whole city is equally the office of Peter—the firm rock of jasper—in the Apocalypse.

It is difficult to give an explanation of symbolism which may not seem fanciful. All symbolism appeals to our imagination, and our imagination must naturally be the first to respond to this appeal. But our test of the correctness of any interpretation must be the naturalness and the ease with which that interpretation corresponds with doctrines elsewhere definitely proposed to us. Let us see how our interpretation stands this test.

If we had to choose some imagery which should set before us the doctrine of the primacy of St. Peter, typifying to us an authority coextensive with the limits of the Church herself, we could hardly choose better imagery than that which is presented to us by a firm high wall, completely encompassing a whole city. The strength of the city is really the strength of the city's wall. It is the wall which, so to speak, communicates the strength to the city. The office of that Apostle, for whom individually our Lord prayed, who was commanded to confirm, "to strengthen" his brethren, is evidently to communicate his qualities to the whole Church. This office, too, is meant to be permanent, as the walls of the city are meant to be permanent. Again, if we wished to show how their strength of apostolic authority, though possessed in some measure by individual bishops, is equally possessed, not independently, but only in virtue of the firm union with the principal possessor of that apostolic authority, we could hardly select a better picture for our imagination than is shown us in the imagery of many foundation-stones, each distinct, indeed, but firmly united among themselves, and each and every one indissolubly conjoined with the one encircling wall, which incloses the whole city.

It is not only on the firm enduring wall of the emblematic city that jasper is put before us. In the 11th verse it is said that this city "had the glory of God, and the light thereof like unto a precious stone, as it were to a jasper stone, as crystal." To explain this verse we must collate it with the 23d of the same chapter, where we are told that the city had no need of sun or moon, for "the glory of God illuminates it." It seems at first as if two different sources of light are indicated in verses 11 and 23, but if the

keeper. . . . It is his business to find pastures for them. . . . They must be taught to follow, and not to stray into the unfenced fields of corn which lie so temptingly on either side. The shepherd calls from time to time. . . . They know his voice and follow on, but, if a stranger calls, they turn and flee. . . . The shepherd goes before, not merely to point out the way, but to see that it is practicable and safe. He is armed, in order to defend his charge. . . . And when the thief and robber come, the faithful shepherd has often to put his life in his hand to guard his flock. I have known more than one case in which he had literally to lay it down in the contest."

two passages be considered a little more attentively, it will be found that they both refer ultimately to the same illumination. In verse 23 we are told that the brilliancy of God enlightens the city; in verse 11 the same truth is conveyed in a slightly different form and with some additional particulars. In both passages it is stated that the glory of God is "the light," but in verse 11 we are further informed as to the *medium* by which this light is transmitted to the city. This meaning is not so very well brought out in the ordinary translation, and for this reason. The word *φωστῆρ*, usually translated by "light" or "luminary," has two meanings. Primarily it signifies a *source of light*, a substance which of itself gives forth light. But a source of light may often be only the *means* by which light is not originated, but simply transmitted, and hence *φωστῆρ* has the secondary or metaphorical meaning of a medium by which light may penetrate—a window. Translators have usually preferred to give the primary meaning, but the secondary seems to be the one intended by St. John, for this reason, *inter alia*. Since "the light" has already been mentioned, and this light (*δόξα*) is more fully insisted upon in verse 23 as being exclusively all-sufficient, we are doing no violence to the sacred text if we understand *φωστῆρ* in verse 11 in its secondary or metaphorical sense, conceiving it to convey the idea of *the means* by which the light, already mentioned in the opening words of verse 11, passes on to be diffused over the city. This rendering makes the whole context more clear and consistent. The context is certainly more consistent, because if the Lamb (verse 23) is the lamp, the real light-giver of the city, and the glory of God which flows from the Lamb is its brilliant all-sufficient light, it is in open opposition to verse 23 to give the city another "light-giver," another *source* of light, in verse 11. But there is no opposition if we understand the *φωστῆρ*, the "luminary" of verse 11, as the *medium* which simply transmits light, and there is greater propriety in the figure employed, for while there is no incongruity in comparing the medium, through which light passes, to a transparent jewel, a transparent jewel is hardly a very fit image of the actual origin of the light itself.

In speaking of the luminary (that is, the medium by which the light of which St. John speaks is spread over the city), it is said to be "as jasper." If this stone is chosen, we are compelled to suppose that St. John had a definite reason for choosing jasper rather than another precious stone. We gather from verses 19 and 20, where the names of twelve precious stones are given, that he was not driven to call the stone "jasper" from want of familiarity with the names of other gems or jewels. Having then a plentiful vocabulary from which to choose, it is only bare justice to suppose that he intentionally selected the stone which was most suited to con-

vey his emblematic meaning. Jasper, it has been shown, is the emblem under which we are to recognize the person and the office of St. Peter, and we are justified in supposing that the same meaning is shadowed forth here by the same symbol which has just been employed for this purpose in a passage so closely connected with this one, not only locally, but also in signification.

This imagery, by which jasper is shown to be the medium, and not itself the primary originator, of the light, corresponds without any strain with the doctrine of the Catholic Church as to the special teaching office of the first among the Apostles, St. Peter. In the economy of the Church, it is the permanent office of the Supreme Pontiff to transmit to the faithful the light of that truth which comes from God. It is not his office to originate light, but he is divinely appointed and divinely helped to transmit the light which is in the Scriptures and tradition. The light indeed exists independently of him, but it is not intended that it should reach the city of the Church by any other instrumentality than her. In the symbolism which conveys this truth we see that the light of God's brilliancy is not intended to reach the city by any other means, except through the jasper medium. The providence of God might have provided for the teaching of His Church in other ways, so too might other emblems have been selected. But taking things as they are, this idea of an appointed medium for the transmission of the light of truth is not a mere invention made to suit a preconceived interpretation. It is only a natural continuation, or rather development, of our Lord's own phraseology. The Lamb, which, in the Apocalypse, is the luminary of the city, is a figure of the Messias, who, in the Gospel, said of Himself that He was the light of the world. And yet, being Himself the light, He nevertheless said to His disciples (Mathew v. 14), "You are the light of the world," not because they were the originators of the light, but because they, not others, were the chosen means by which "the light" was to be diffused through all time and through all regions of the earth. None of the disciples could be called "the light," because they were to be the means of transmitting the light, in their measure and degree; with still greater propriety can the first and foremost amongst all the disciples be held up to us as "the light," the medium *par excellence* for communicating the light.

The imagery of the Apocalypse, therefore, is in perfect concord with the metaphorical language of our Lord in the Gospel; both the imagery and the metaphor find their realization in the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and in these matters such harmony must not be dismissed as being purely and simply an accidental coincidence.

These explanations will, no doubt, have to meet the objection that they wander off too much into minutiae. But this is an unreasonable and unreasoning objection. There is no reason *a priori* why minutiae should not be enveloped in figurative language as well as matters which may seem to us more worthy of such treatment. Nothing is small in the eyes of Him to whom nothing is great; and how are we to judge of relative importance here? If we make comparisons with other dispensations of God, we find the same infinite wisdom which gives laws to regulate in their orbits the mighty suns which shine upon us from the heavens as far-off stars, also frames the laws which order the growth and well-being of the smallest microscopic bacillus which lives and dies unnoticed upon a blade of grass. In the symbolism of the Apocalypse, as elsewhere, we are to deduce reasonable conclusions from reasonable premises; we must not take our prejudices and our disinclinations as our guide. It is as reasonable deductions from the given data that the conclusions here enunciated are put forward. The imagery of the city and of the stones, it is contended, was chosen with a definite object. The explanations which have been given show, with unavoidable brevity, the parallelism which exists between the teaching conveyed (1) in the metaphorical language of the Apocalypse; (2) in the symbolism of the Gospel; and (3) in the doctrines of the Catholic Church. From this agreement it is argued that the points of coincidence are too numerous, too minute, and converging, and at the same time too mutually consistent to be merely the unforeseen result of fortuitous chance.
