

ORTHODOX ENGLAND

In this issue:

St George and the Dragon

*From the Holy Fathers:
Three Prayers to Christ
of St Theodore of Canterbury*

Eadweard Martir and Æthelræd Unræd

An Old Staffordshire Carol

and much more . . .

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CONTENTS

St George and the Dragon	1
From the Holy Fathers: Three Prayers to Christ of St Theodore of Canterbury	3
Paradise Just Beyond: Fragments of a Life	4
The Decline of England 4: Eadweard Martir ond Æthelræd Unræd	15
Orthodoxy Shines Through Western Myths (14)	
<i>Religion and the Rise of Western Culture</i>	19
Book Review: Sarah Foot, <i>Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England c. 600-900</i>	23
An Old Staffordshire Carol	24

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ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

A Speech given in New York on St George's Day, April 23rd, 1918

(Pp. 3-13 of the 1919 Edition)

FRIENDS, for a long time I did not know what say to you in this my second speaking here. I could fill a speech with thanks and praise: thanks for the kindness and welcome which has met me up and down this land wherever I have gone, and praise for the great national effort which I have seen in so many places and felt everywhere. We, who, like you, have had to lay by our pleasant ways, and take up hard ones, and go up a bitter path to an end men cannot see, know how great your sacrifice and your effort are. But I could not thank you or praise you enough, and even if I could, the best praise and thanks are silent. If and when I return to England, I will speak your praise.

So casting about for a theme, I thought, that to-day is St George's Day, the day of the Patron Saint of England, and that to-day, in the far past that great knight of God rode out, in the Eastern country, and killed a dragon which had been devouring women, and that Englishmen had thought that deed a holy, and most beautiful and manly thing, and had chosen St George from among all saints to be their saint, and had taken his banner to be their banner, and called upon him, century after century, when they went into battle. For they felt that such a man lived on after death, and would surely help all holy and beautiful and manly men for ever and for ever.

And I thought, too, that on this day, 354 years ago, the child, William Shakespeare, was born, in that old house in Stratford which so many of you have gone to see. And that on this same day, after he had done his day's work, he passed out of this life, into that Kingdom of England which is in the kindling mind, in all its moments of beauty, and that there he, too, lives for ever, to give peace, even as St George gives a sword, to all who call upon him.

So thinking these things, all the more keenly, because I am far from England, in this sweet season of April, when the apple blossom is beginning, I felt that I would talk of England. Not of any England of commerce or of history, nor of any state called England, but of that idea of England for which men are dying, as I speak, along 5,000 miles of war.

I believe that the people of a country build up a spirit of that country build up a soul, which never dies, but lingers about the land for ever. I believe that every manly and beautiful and generous and kindling act is eternal, and makes that soul still greater and more living, till in the land where manly and kindling souls have lived, there is everywhere about the earth, present like beauty, like inspiration, this living gift of the dead, this soul. And nations are only great when they are true to that soul. Men can only be great when they are true to the best they have imagined. And I believe that in times of stress, in national danger, in calamity, the soul behind a nation kindles and quickens and is alive and enters into men, and the men of the nation get strength and power from it.

I believe that that great soul, made by the courage and beauty and wisdom of the millions of the race, is the god of the race, to protect it and guide it and to lead it into safety. And men turning to it in time of trouble and calamity are helped and guarded by it, and brought out of the land of Egypt by it into their pleasant heritage.

Yet nations, like men, sometimes turn away from their true selves to follow false selves, and to serve false gods. All the old Bible is full of stories of a little nation sometimes true, sometimes false to its soul, and falling into calamity, and then being quickened and helped, and returning to the truth and coming to marvellous things, to the green pastures, where goodness and loving kindness follow men all the days of their life.

Understanding is the only thing worthwhile in this life. Art is nothing but complete understanding of something. All writers long to understand the spirit of their race.

Let me say now, that 25 years ago, it would have been difficult for an Englishman to speak here, about the spirit of England, and to claim that it is something of the spirit of St George, a manly and beautiful spirit, ready to help some one weaker, and something of the spirit of Shakespeare, a just and tender spirit, fond of fun and kindness and of the rough and busy life of men. That delicate, shy, gentle, humorous and most manly soul is the soul of England. It is in Chaucer, in

Shakespeare, in Dickens. It is in the old ballads and tales of Robin Hood, who stood up for the poor, and was merry walking in the green forest. It is in the little villages of the land, in the old homes, in the churches, in countless old carvings, in old bridges, in old tunes, and in the old acts of the English, a shy, gentle, humorous and most manly soul, that stood up for the poor and cared for beauty. No finer thing can be said of men than that, that they stood up for the poor and cared for beauty; that they cared to be just and wise.

Nearly 300 years ago, the life of England suffered a rude change in seven years of civil war. The ways of life which had been settled for five generations were suddenly and completely changed. There followed a turbulent and unsettled century, during which, for reasons of party, a foreign king, and line of kings, with foreign interests, and foreign methods, came into our land.

And at the same time, something else came into our land. Industry and adventure had long been virtues of the English; but now the two together began to create competitive commercialism. And just as competitive commercialism began, a small clique of corrupt politicians, gathered under the foreign king, and by bribery and iniquity of every kind, seized the common lands of the villages of England and enclosed them. Until then, the country folk in England had shared large tracts of land, so that, though they were poor, they still had grazing for cows and sheep and geese, and woodland for firing. Now by various acts of legal robbery these lands were taken from them, and they were reduced to an extreme poverty. They were forced into a position very like slavery. They had no possessions except their right hands. There was no St George to stand up for them, nor any Robin Hood, except that coarse and bitter truth-teller, William Cobbett. They had the choice to be the slaves of the landowners or of the factory-owners, and the great mass of the populace ceased to have any share of what life offers. The enclosing of the commons robbed them of leisure and independence, the coming of the factories took them from the fields and the old communities, and flung them into new ones, which were allowed to grow up anyhow, without art, without thought, without faith or hope or charity, till the face of the land was blackened, and the soul of the land under a cloud.

If you consider the thought and the voices of that time, you can see that the soul of the land was under a cloud. The thought and the voices of that time are things divorced from the body of the

people. The thought is the possession of a few leisured men. It is not the joy of a great body of men. The voices are the voices of a few men crying in the wilderness that things are evil.

The thought of that time was the thought of Dr. Johnson's Club, and of Joshua Reynolds' patrons. The voices are the voices of Wm. Blake crying aloud that he would rebuild the city of God among those black Satanic mills, and of Wm. Wordsworth, who saw that poetry, which should be the delight of all, was become an unknown tongue to the multitude. And later the voices become more passionate and wilder and bitterer. They are the voices of Byron, who saw the foreign king, that royal lunatic, and his drunken but jovial son, and the bought-and-sold politicians who ran the country, for what they were, and mocked them. And the voice of Shelley, who cried to the men of England to shake themselves free, and the voice of Carlyle, who saw no hope anywhere but in the drill sergeant, and the voice of Ruskin, who saw no hope anywhere but in the coming back of St George.

There was only one question to those men, the condition-of-England question. Thinking men might justly be proud of certain achievements in those years, many things were invented, many things were thought out, great books were written, and the world was charted and navigated and exploited, but there was no peace in that England for the men with souls to be saved.

The machine worked, it did great things, men could point to its results, but the great men, the seeing men, were unanimous that England was not a merry England for rich or poor. It was still a land where there was kindness and manliness and a love of life and sport and country. But with this, there was an apathy to things which were vital and kindling. The nation was drunken, and that was looked on with apathy, the nation had ceased to care, as it once had cared, with a most noble, intense, and passionate pride, for things of beauty and of style, in life, and art and music and the means of living. And this deadness and apathy and stupidity were become even matters of pride to some. Then the nation, with all its wealth, was an ill-taught, an ill-fed and an ill-clad nation, so that in every city in the land a vast number of souls were ignorant, and a vast number of bodies had not enough to eat nor enough to put on. And the rich, who owned the wealth, had lost the old English sense of splendour of life. They watched the beggary and the drunkenness with apathy. They watched the waste and the degradation of genius

without lifting a finger. One of the most delicate silversmiths of our time died of consumption as a seller of cat's meat. One of our most delicate lyric poets died of consumption as a seller of matches in the street. Not all the efforts of all the writers of England could get a theatre for the fit and frequent playing of Shakespeare. Not all the wealth nor all the industry could reduce the paupers of England, the men and women who could not make a living, to less than a million in the year.

So that, early in 1914, England was a troubled and yet an apathetic country, with small minorities breaking their hearts and sometimes people's windows in an effort to bring about a change, and with a vast, powerful, unthinking selfish weight of prejudice and privilege keeping things in the old ruts and the old grooves laid down by the foreign king a century and a half before.

And yet, with it all, there was immense virtue in the land. Work was well done. English goods were well made. And we were not afraid to let any nation compete with us in the open market. The nations could sell their goods in our markets on equal terms. We had no quarrel with any one. We wished to show that we had no quarrel with any one. During the years before the war, we increased

our Navy, so that no enemy should attack us with impunity, but we reduced our tiny army by some divisions, and our auxiliary army by an army corps.

People say now that we were wrong. We may have been. At any rate, we did the generous thing, and I don't know that the generous thing is ever wrong. And in any case, we have paid the price.

In the first week of July, 1914, I was in an old house in Berkshire, a house built eight centuries before by the monks, as a place of rest and contemplation and beauty. I had never seen England so beautiful as then, and a little company of lovely friends was there. Rupert Brooke was one of them, and we read poems in that old haunt of beauty, and wandered on the Downs. I remember saying that the Austro-Serbian business might cause a European war, in which we might be involved, but the others did not think this likely; they laughed.

Then came more anxious days, and then a week of terror, and then good-bye to that old life, and my old home in Berkshire was a billet for cavalry, and their chargers drank at the moat. I saw them there. And the next time I saw them they were in Gallipoli, lying in rank in the sand under Chocolate Hill, and Rupert was in his grave in Skyros.

From the Holy Fathers: THREE PRAYERS TO CHRIST OF ST THEODORE OF CANTERBURY († 690)

(From the Book of Cerne, c. 825)

O HOLY Creator, Sustainer, Lawgiver, bountiful Provider, Who art mighty in Thy laws, Thou art now a firm rock in heaven. By Thee were created all the calm seas where the swift keel runs seas and which bear ships and Thy power beyond the heavens created the light and the earth also. As I know my sins in prayer I ask Thee, O Christ from the height of heaven, spare me from my foul sins, those dire darts, with Thy shield thrust aside the sins that I often do and carry out in my loins, in the bond of the flesh. May the shield of Christ be on my loins, that the thief with his black strength of illusion may straightway surrender. O Father, O shield, drive far away from my ribs and the depths of my heart the Enemy's weapons and free me from filth, then may the very cruel and perilous darts fall straightaway. O kindly hand, protectress and nurse, sustain me that, purified in my guilty heart, I may say as best I can to Christ God,

Who is the lion, I give thanks to God and thus am made glad by Him.

I beseech Christ, I pray to Christ, I give thanks to Christ with joyful heart. Like unto the thief hanging from the cross at his foul end, I, a man, seek from the depth of my being to enter into the Kingdom, having seen Paradise and the Enemy cast out and deceived in the abyss. Thus, as far as I am able, I raise up my hands to my God that I may enjoy Him and I sigh and pour out a stream of tears to our Holy Father as long as I live.

O God, O God, my Lord, I beseech thee, protect me, teach me that I may love Thee. O Lamb of God, O mighty Jesus, be pleased to deign to save me. True God, have mercy, support me, and preserve me. O King of the holy angels, protect me who loves Thee. I believe in thee the true God Who art now and before, without end, Holy Trinity, One God and not only One.

PARADISE JUST BEYOND: Fragments of a Life (conclusion)

Archpriest Andrew Phillips

6. Return: Service in England 1997–2008

O Lord, stir up Thy might and come and save us

IN 1997, we returned to England and went to live in Felixstowe. We had wanted to return to my native town in Colchester, but at that time there were no Russian Orthodox to look after there and property in Felixstowe was much cheaper. So we went nearby, waiting for better times. The move had mainly been on account of the financial and employment difficulties in France. An added factor was my mother's health. She had cancer. This was a difficult move, not least for me, in that I would now have to teach in high schools, instead of private French University institutions, centres of excellence, since the State sector there was so poor.

In Church terms, we were also quite unneeded, a priest surplus to needs. It was then the case that there were unwanted priests. More or less, I would come to England to serve for my own family – a quite unnatural and undesired situation. The only place where a priest was needed, in London, I could not go; there was no church to serve in (that was made clear to me by the new Ukrainian priest there) and we most certainly could not afford to buy a house in London in any case. We were, strangely, in exile, unrequired by the Church, surplus. Abandoned, we were now in involuntary isolation.

Our hope was to find suitable premises in Ipswich – the fact that we only found premises in



Felixstowe

Felixstowe was not at all our intention. That was all we could afford. We did not want to serve in a shared Anglican church, as we could have; we wanted our own premises where we could create an Orthodox atmosphere, an atmosphere of prayer. We did not want a convert chapel in our back garden or front room, but public and public-access premises. But at least geographically we were in a corner of a group of saints, St Felix in Felixstowe, St Botolph in Iken, St Edmund in Bury St Edmunds and St Audrey in Ely.

So we decided to do our unsupported best where we were, in Felixstowe, and wait for better days and some support and direction from somewhere. We put all our effort into this harsh desert. Mostly it was unappreciated, except by a few individuals, whom I accompanied as a priest on their last journeys to the other side. Some of these were beautiful deaths, those of righteous people. I was privileged to be with them. It was at this time that I composed services to some local saints: St Edmund, St Audrey, St Felix and especially the service to All the Saints of the Isles. These are used elsewhere now.

Apart from this, it was a hard situation, in a small rented upper room and later, from 2001, in a rented hall. Everything was against us and we had no human support. We nearly returned to France on several occasions. This was a battle just to survive against extremes and fantasies. It was very insular. People had little idea of real Orthodoxy. Either they watered it down with cultural excuses, or else they adopted monastic forms which were based not on sober humility, obedience and love, as in true monasticism, but on pride. But all this helped me to understand the selfishness of frustration.

In France and in England, and in many other places, we had over the decades very often seen people trying to enter the Church and failing. In this the Church resembles a great lighthouse. Many people, as we have seen, have sailed to the Church and yet remained in their boats, lacking the courage to get out of their boats. They are at the first stage. Others have approached the Church, but have been shipwrecked on the rocks which of course surround Her. They are at the second stage. Neither of these groups wishes to make the

necessary sacrifices, to change their way of life in order to enter the Church. Yet others have managed to sail to the lighthouse, get out of their boats un-wrecked and enter the lighthouse. Then they face the climb up the stairs to the light. They are at the third stage.

Those who simply sail up to the lighthouse and do not even get out of their boats are the spiritual tourists, whose only interest is intellectual, in books, in the mind and in the imagination. They merely look from afar and criticise. Those who are shipwrecked are those whose interest is only in the emotions, the feelings, the soul. These are they who drown in their sentiments. Neither of these groups actually enters the Church and knows Her, which is why they criticise the Church, mistaking dramatic waves and huge rocks for Her. Those who do successfully enter the lighthouse are those whose hearts (in the spiritual, noetic sense, not in the emotional sense) are alive. They face the fourth stage, the steep climb up the lighthouse, as it is buffeted by the chill winds and storms of this world, but they are spiritually comforted by the sacraments of the Church and their preparation for the sacraments, by prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Financially, the situation then was difficult, but the spiritual isolation was even harder. So we continued a kind of 'print mission', publishing books, we had already set up *Orthodox England*, a quarterly journal, to be followed in the first year of the new millennium by the website. Perhaps, I thought, it is true that the pen may be mightier than the sword; swords rust, but words can echo down the years.

We wanted only one thing: the Orthodox Tradition in English. Sad to say, the least enthusiastic people were often the English ones. So we came to rely on others. We saw that many English, ex-Anglicans, had little idea. They were anchored in the secular branch theory, but we still showed them the maximum of openness. What was disappointing was the lack of pastoral sense of ill-prepared ex-Anglicans. They had little idea of how their behaviour and beliefs upset faithful Orthodox. That is why they are not taken seriously. However, English is the international language. What happens in English comes to be known internationally. Hence the relative importance of what we do. It is not so much for indifferent English people, but for the world at large. French would never have had such influence.

By that time, the whole generation of my grandparents and great-uncles and great-aunts had



My 'home church' in Orthodox Eastern Slovakia

died out. During these years, my parents died, the last uncles and aunts, except for one, and then my generation, my cousins began dying. By early 2011, four cousins had died out of the ten, including my eldest brother. For the future the children grew up and we found that our sacrifices had borne fruit – they were much better off in England than in France. The five who have completed their studies all found good jobs.

In 2003 I was invited to speak at the ROCOR Youth Conference in Sydney. In 2005, I discovered my family links with Carpatho-Russia, which my mother had lost. This too was a Revelation. Within six months I visited eastern Slovakia via my good friend, Fr Joseph in Brno in Moravia, himself a Carpatho-Russian, whom I had known since 1990 and who had attended my ordination to the priesthood. Thus, part of me fell into place. I felt so much at home among these simple people.

During this period, I also travelled in 2006, when I was honoured to be asked to be one of the ten speakers at the Fourth All-Diaspora ROCOR Council in San Francisco. On the plane out of Heathrow we met another delegate who told us that the long-expected (since 1982) schism had at last taken place in the Sourozh Diocese in Great Britain; the renovationists had left. I could not believe that they had done this on the eve of our Council. It meant that the very last barrier preventing our unity had now been overcome. The last obstacle had fallen. This was God's Will. Our hearts were light.

In 2007 I was in Moscow for the reconciliation between the two parts of the Russian Church. This was an extraordinary event, a victory against the extremes of both left and right. That day all of us became part of history. Our destinies were being fulfilled and the personal destinies in particular of Patriarch Alexis II and Metropolitan Laurus were being fulfilled. We who had testified to the New Martyrs and Confessors now shared in their victory. Although I have written of all this elsewhere, I must repeat that theirs were examples of lives not wasted; they had done God's Will at a vital moment and no-one else would perhaps have been able to do that. Thus they fulfilled themselves. I am not sure if one day they will not both be declared saints.

I have been asked why I was for this reconciliation when we had been so mistreated by the old Patriarchate in England. Such people are missing the point about forgiveness. If we are Christians, we do not bear grudges for injustices perpetrated against us. We fight for the Truth. Those who are against the Truth are victims and slaves of their all too human ideologies, which are by essence fraudulent. That is why they lack love. Lack of faith always results in a lack of love. Each time these fraudsters have been shocked because we stood up to their frauds, intrigues and persecutions. That we were willing to die for Christ, for conscience, for the integrity of the Faith, for principles, was a novelty to them. They did not expect the uncompromising and independent spirit of Eastern England.

'Others would have walked out', they say. I am not others. I think about what I will answer at the Last Judgement, not the answers of others. Personal matters are irrelevant here and they should never be allowed to cloud our judgement. It is the same



*His Holiness Patriarch Alexei II and
Metropolitan Laurus together*

with the Paris Exarchate. We act with integrity. Those who made us victims are themselves victims of their own politics against the Church. There can be no room for personal grudges here. The Church stands above all this and so must we. I repeat: The fight is for the Truth of Christ and nothing else. Those against us are only victims themselves. The contempt and abuse we have suffered merely helps us towards salvation. However, it is a great pity that young people receive no encouragement, indeed only discouragement. I did not receive encouragement or support. Humanly speaking, it is not surprising that so few take up the cross of the priesthood.

At the same time, I was also invited to serve as a priest elsewhere. In 2002 Fr Michael, then aged 80, invited me back to Meudon to take over there. It was five years too late for us to move there. He died the following year. Eternal Memory! Also in 2002 I was asked to serve in a parish in California, in 2003 in New Zealand, in 2004 in Portugal, in 2006 in Cannes and in 2007 at the R O C O R church in London, after their well-known difficulties, which we had clearly foreseen in 1994. I gave up my job to take up this post in London, but then at the last moment the offer was withdrawn for unpleasant reasons, leaving me unemployed. This left us to live off Providence, whatever God sent us, which is what we have been doing all these years. This is a real test of faith. In any case, the above propositions had by then become unrealistic. They had all come 10-20 years too late. It was such a waste. Earlier I would have been delighted to accept any of these appointments, but now the opportunities had gone.

In 2006, I was asked to translate from Russian into English the official documents relating to the schism from the Sourozh Diocese, a schism that I had first heard proposed by its main perpetrator in 1982. Exactly 25 years after we had left, in 2007 we returned to the Russian Patriarchal Cathedral in London, I as a guest speaker on a subject for which I had been ridiculed by many in both parts of the Russian Church in the 1970s: The Saints of England. So there is justice – but only if you are patient. It had taken 25 years for anyone to listen to us, but we had been right. Such is the confession of the Faith. The irony was that the main person responsible for driving us out of the Church and so responsible for our departure to France in 1983 had himself a generation later to go to France.

I remarked only recently to one person, now a priest of the Sourozh Diocese, who had also

known those awful years that, 'I can remember the '70s and the whole period seems like a black cloud to me. Thank goodness the troublemakers and infiltrators left Sourozh'. He replied in words more eloquent than mine: 'The black cloud was very real and oppressive – but, ultimately, it was powerless. Only those who experienced it can appreciate what it was like. I believe the tragedy that culminated in the fiasco was also inevitable. What I found so terrible was the damage caused to the vulnerable, isolated, weak and insecure. They faced cynical manipulation and ridicule for their Orthodox convictions, as well as the 'attempted' destruction of the Church by those self-appointed persons who, having spiritually lost their own way, sought to mislead and draw others into their fantasies': very eloquent, very true. It is exactly what we had experienced, only in a double dose, once under Sourozh, a second time in Paris.

All this experience of the previous nearly forty years, of the intolerance of liberalism, has taught me of the potential for wickedness in human nature. We have to fight like soldiers in order to stand up for the Truth. If we do not, we shall be crushed by evil and evil people. The antidote to militant evil – and it exists, as I know only too well – is militant Christianity. Always to say 'yes' is simply not Christian. Sometimes we have to say a firm and resounding 'no', just as we do to spoiled children. And that 'no' which comes from fighting for the Truth is in fact the kindest thing we can do. You have to fight wildfires with fire, not with weakness. We are at war. Make no mistake about it. Real Christianity, the Church, is not for the faint-hearted.

There is great short-term advantage in compromise, in going against your conscience, against integrity, against your principles. If, on the other hand, you resist compromise and all the rest, you will be abandoned and be slandered by all. We were and still are. However, in the long term, if you remain faithful, you will always win. God is with us. Injustices hurt – but they are so good for our humility. Those who insult us unjustly are the ones who have problems. The many unpleasantnesses I have encountered have taught me to avoid extremes of both varieties, which are always based on pride.

Our struggle is for the purity of Holy Orthodoxy, for faithfulness to Christ, and we must avoid charlatanry which dilutes and so compromises the Faith, because such fraud is founded on spiritual delusion, on spiritual impurity. That is a

sickness, even unto death. God does not smite the wicked, the wicked smite themselves. And this, which I have seen time and again since 1975, frightens me. I pray in trembling for those whom I have seen who did compromise. For I may be next, so weak is our common human nature.

8. Providence: Full Circle 2008 – 2013

In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me not be put to shame in the age to come.

As we go through life, we are on more than one journey. We are travelling in the visible, tangible world, but we are also travelling within ourselves, in our own hearts and minds. It often seems that we have to go out into the world in order to come home again. But by the grace of God, we do come home.

It was 2008. Forty years had gone by since the initial revelation in Colchester in October 1968, forty years, in some ways, in the wilderness heading for the Promised Land. Then, despite everything being against us, the most extraordinary thing happened, as the long years and decades of waiting were over. The Lord did come and save us. There is a sunrise – even after the darkest night. The strangest thing was that all this happened in my native town – a quite unforeseeable event.

After the turning of the tide, the reconciliation between the two parts of the Russian Church, an abundance of grace came down on us all, on both sides. It was and still is an extraordinary time. Many mysteries that were written in my destiny then made sense. The unwound threads of my life began to come together. Many fragments of my life and experience began to come together in an organic whole. One day, if God grants it, I will write about this, with great thanks to God in my heart. I still feel very sorry for those who did not join in this movement of unity. They missed this grace.

We had thought of buying premises in Felixstowe. However, one who could have helped us with this opposed it and suddenly disappeared from the Felixstowe parish. After this, quite unexpectedly, God gave us the opportunity to buy something far more suitable than in Felixstowe, in a much larger and more central town, in Colchester. God had replaced our proposition with a far better disposition. Our abandonment and disappointment turned into a blessing. Through the generosity of benefactors, the parish was given the new, large and beautiful, white, wooden church in



The Church which St John sent us

my native town of Colchester, after all the decades in the desert. We had long had the vision to do this, but not the means. Now we had both.

After three months of extremely hard work, getting the church ready, we parishioners had our first services there, in the new St John's Church, at the end of November 2008. I had been unwanted by any church, so a church came to us. Such is Providence. First, there had to be failure everywhere for this to happen. You have first to die to be born, first you have to be rejected to be accepted. This is the experience of my life – rejection and even outright persecution by men, but acceptance by God. Providence had turned life full circle – as it always does. I confirm this to all who despair.

Obtaining the new church in Colchester in November 2008 was a miracle, literally a Godsend, a work of St John, despite us, not because of us. I am told that it is the largest church in terms of size in all ROCOR. Certainly it is the largest Russian Orthodox church in Great Britain and is the centre of Russian Orthodoxy in most of eastern England, with parishioners coming to us not only from Essex and Suffolk, but also from Kent, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. We are and always will be profoundly and entirely unworthy of it and of those generous English and other donors who gave it to us. This is not modesty or humility, this is just realism.

Providence was also of course here. This Church had been built for soldiers who were to fight in the anti-Orthodox Crimean War, but who never did. Now become a Russian Church, it is from here that we can spread the universal message of the Russian Orthodox Church and Tradition in these last times. Here we have compiled a list of over 700 Orthodox officers of the Imperial Russian Army and Navy who died

defending the Orthodox Faith in that War and we commemorate them at least once a month. We alternate their names with the list of 469 British soldiers, mainly victims of the Napoleonic Wars, who are buried around the Church. For the latter we cannot take out particles and place them in the chalice, but still our prayers can rise for them. The ground seems to rise with them on Easter Night. Often I have the impression that I have been left alive so that I can pray for others. It may be my only justification.

We cannot forget that the Crimean War began because Russia had simply wanted to defend the holy places in Jerusalem and free the Orthodox Balkans from Ottoman oppression. Only Western greed and hypocrisy had stood in the way. The British may have had the Bible, but they did not often live by it, they manipulated it to justify their unrighteousness and greed. Perhaps in Russia there will be someone to pray for simple English soldiers who died, sent off to a foreign war for no good reason. They too were victims.

And since then another five years have gone by. In this time Colchester has become the natural parish centre for over 400 Orthodox of 22 nationalities, in Essex and Suffolk and further afield. It is too early to write of all these more recent events, people and travels, both around my native Essex and Suffolk and in counties beyond, but also overseas, in order to spread the faith. Perhaps, if God grants it, I will write of all this later. For now much of this, as also much of the more distant past, must remain between the lines. This is but the latest chapter in my life, as ever, full of surprises, disappointments from some who have been self-serving and jealous, but also unexpected joys from others, who have shown great generosity.

This is a window of opportunity, unexpected for me after so many failures. A great moment of generosity was in Moscow in May 2012, when I was given an award by His Holiness Patriarch Kyrill, to be taken back, in his words, 'to Colchester'. Then I felt a sense of destiny, that all the sacrifices had at last been recognised after exactly thirty years, those that I had now been accepted. The brutal rejections I had received had at last been made up for by full-hearted acceptance. The fact that we had not given up had received recognition, even in this world.

Another important event took place in October 2012, when all the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia met for the first time at the London Conference. This was historic,

since at last unity was being achieved practically, the cause of the Church Outside Russia was vindicated and we knew how it would develop in the future. All our many, many years of work in the cause of unity were bearing fruit. At the same time my writings on the lives of the Saints of the Isles, together with many additional materials, were published in Russian and brought to London. I had been helping the Moscow translator closely with this since 2007. This was a great joy. The following year, 2013, came the 400th anniversary of the House of Romanov – a most significant event

In the last five years there have been many temptations, many attempts by Satan to destroy us. The devil well knows each person's weakness. All this is to be expected. Obtaining this new church provoked jealousy among others, but it was ever so. God's Will is done, not ours. We are not afraid of envy, slander and attacks of all sorts. We have seen it all before. We shall always tell the Truth. We pray for those who love us and those who hate us, as St Basil the Great says. We have seen the terrible things that happen to those who hate and slander. They always end up badly. The father of slander and jealousy is Satan, the devil (o diavolos = the slanderer) himself. One of them told us that we were not welcome and that if we came, it would be 'over his dead body'. Within a few months he was dead ...

I am puzzled to see how many Orthodox converts continue to remain 'converts', looking into the Church from the outside. They do not make their way inside the Church and so look from the inside to the outside. But to me it seems so natural to look from the inside outwards.

I have always been in a hurry. My sense of urgency has come from my sense of mortality, that it is all a race against time. My strong feeling is that there is little time left. Life is short and time passes ever more swiftly. And we have to use the little time that is left to save the vestige, 'redeeming the time'. Of course, I have wasted opportunities in life, above all by ignorance. I knew no better. There was no-one to tell me. So I have regrets, but I know that it is a waste to dwell on regrets. Regrets are just signs of our condition of sin. It is not worth wasting time on them, once we have told our faults in confession.

Looking back now, I see how I have been thwarted at every turn. One who is now an Archbishop in the Patriarchate of Alexandria told me 35 years ago how Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus (whom he knew well) told him how he had many

regrets. But why? Because he was a poor shepherd boy who had not had the education. There he was, up against the mighty and wealthy of this world, educated at Harvard, the Sorbonne, all the greatest places of study in the world. He had had none of the advantages. Archbishop Makarios used to say: 'If I had known then what I know now, I know exactly what I would have done'.

And of course this is so. But we could not have discovered these things if we had not made the mistakes ourselves. This is called experience. And that cannot be bought or studied for. So it is that the only glory is failure because failure gives vision. I just hope that some gleams of vision, hope and new life for the soul, 'the glory of the lighted soul', coming out of my failure and expressed in writing have helped others on their way. For the deeper the failure in the soul, the more intense and lively the brightness of the vision of the undying kingdom and the more imperishable the radiant perception and illumination of Unearthly Beauty. This knowledge that greater realms than this exist is the greatest companion to the soul. Moreover, the order given by this knowledge is Eternal, outliving death and giving purpose to the soul, and can be sought at every instant. This, which is Holiness, alone enables us to march through the darkness of every night, giving us stars to guide us. Green leaves come out of the desert of death when we converse with Paradise, for death softens the proud heart.

Here it is very important to know that although man proposes, it is God that disposes. All their schemes and plans will come to naught, if they are not God's Will. And little acorns do grow into great oaks, though only by the grace of God and following God's destiny for us, as that grace is planted in our souls.

What will I answer at the Last Judgement? I will not answer, I will just tremble and bow down and ask for God's saving mercy, because there is no justification that I can give. I am God's Creation, despite all my sins and utter unworthiness.

Sometimes I think of Gray's famous line, 'The paths of glory lead but to the grave'. This is true of all worldly glory. However, the paths of spiritual glory lead but to the Resurrection. We must muse on where we wish to spend eternity.

Afterword: Towards an Orthodox Europe

Say among the nations that the Lord is King.

I started life in what was an obscure and provincial corner of the English countryside, in the soul of England. Beyond the thin veil of daily life in this world, I perceived the brightness of Paradise. I did not ask for this or seek this, it just happened to me. My life has been devoted to piercing that veil and touching the Beauty of Paradise and transmitting to others its message. I asked God 'to enlighten the perceptions of my soul', as we say in the prayers before communion. This is that the only integral way of piercing the veil is through the Church of the God Who is Crucified and Risen. For without the Orthodox Church and Faith, that Paradise remains only a theory, a noble ideal, a disincarnate and untouchable dream.

Transmitting this message has been the work of patience, for I know that no-one can desire what he has not perceived. You have to wait until people are ready to understand the message in order to convey it. Willing and knowing how to wait make many a crooked path straight. These perceptions of Paradise have sometimes put me at variance with people who felt that their way should be mine. Those who were at variance are today mainly dead. Whenever I think of them, I pray for them, praying and laying flowers, as it were, on their far-scattered graves. If the way has been hard, it has been worth it: if the difficulties have made my life very hard for me at some points, such has been my lot: destiny has its justice and I will not question it. For this destiny contains my responsibility and witness before history. What exactly is this?

I was born in a century which began with a mighty Europe, but because of Europe's suicide in two World Wars, the century ended with a mighty America, not Europe, though still the West. However, today, in the 21st century, the might of the world is passing to Asia. And between the West and Asia lies the Russian Federation, all of northern Eurasia, stretching around half the planet. Its great tasks were cruelly interrupted in 1917; perhaps they can be brought to fruition after 2017.

I was born in 1956. That was a year of great change. It was the year when Stalin and his obscenities were denounced, but when the same obscenities were continued in Hungary – in other words it was the beginning of the realisation that Communism was doomed – its fall would be a question of patient suffering. 1956 was also the year of the Suez Invasion and the humiliation by

the USA of the last Western European colonial empires of France and Great Britain. As a result Western European countries, feeling betrayed by the USA, naively turned to forming a Common Market and from there a European Union, vainly imagining that this in fact American project would give them some measure of independence.

I grew up then as the old Russian *émigrés* died out, those who had known the Tsar well had died by the mid-1960s. It therefore fell to my lot to help so modestly in the struggle for the restoration of the Faith, that is, for the authentic, un-compromised Tradition of Russian Orthodoxy, for the old, local saints of Europe and their integration into 'Rus', that is, for the integrality of Holiness in all lands, and for the restoration of Sovereignty in Russia. However little I can contribute to these struggles for restoration, these are my duty and responsibility and witness before history.

In this way, my first struggle has been for Orthodox England, where first I encountered Paradise. But as the years have passed by, the world has become smaller and my perception broader, so I have come to take part in a wider struggle, for all the Isles without 'the Normans' and more generally for all Europe without 'the Franks', a free and authentic Orthodox Europe. I have strived to 'say among the nations that the Lord is King'. This has begun from a base in England. My task has been to gather the local saints together to show that in their lives they are indeed part of Holy 'Rus'.

This feeling for Europe is why I and all my family have always been so much against the masonic and ultimately Antichristic project of the Babylonian European Union. This is not out of some chauvinistic dislike for Europe: quite the contrary. The European Union is no less Babylonian than was the British Empire. My struggle has always been for the English Jerusalem and all the other Jerusalems in every nation of Europe, against all these spiritually paltry but physically mighty empires and unions. We fight for the Kingdom of Heaven against the Republic of Hell. This is why I spoke in Moscow in 2007 for the restoration of the New Jerusalem Monastery outside Moscow and looked forward to the day when the Orthodox Monarchy is restored in Russia.

This absolute opposition to the EU does not come from some isolationist insularity; it comes from the desire to save Europe as a Free and Sovereign Confederation of Nations. This is the battle for the soul of Europe against the restoration

of the tyranny of a neo-pagan Roman Empire and its usury.

My life has taught me that the future of Orthodox England is in a Church based in Orthodox Europe under the authority and discipline of Russian Orthodoxy. We cannot be insular isolationists. That is unrealistic. This is the only realistic, and not fantastic, Orthodox West, Western Orthodoxy.

Put simply, the Faith (Orthodoxy) is a large, central circle. The West (culture) is one of a group of other circles around the central circle. However, since the West was once Orthodox, its circle (like many others) overlaps with the central Orthodox circle, as in a Venn diagram. Over forty years ago I first consciously placed myself in the overlapping section, in Orthodoxy in the West, where, spiritually, I had been from conception onwards. The overlapping section is a difficult place to live in. Many of those in the non-overlapping part of the Orthodox circle do not always understand, for example, our veneration of the Saints of the West. Those in the non-overlapping part of the Western circle rarely understand us either. They place culture above Faith, the world above the Church.

Inside the Church we find ourselves misunderstood by those on the outside and often by those who are new to the Church and have been received into the Church without preparation and understanding. They stand on the fringes, on the margins, on the very lines of the overlapping circles. They tend to put their Western culture above Faith, above the Church.

This was the whole tragedy of those for whom Western culture was so much more important than the Church that they had to be defrocked. This was in some ways the whole tragedy of the Amphilipolis schism of 2006 and also of the fragment of the Russian Church which had much earlier broken away from both parts of it to form the Paris Exarchate. Amphilipolis, mainly composed of ex-Anglicans, failed to understand that culture will only come right when Faith is right. Culture depends on Faith, not the other way round. To put it the other way round is deeply secular, because it puts culture above Faith, the world above Christ. To try and create some artificial, 'British' (= Establishment) Orthodoxy is simply to neuter the Church spiritually, so that it conforms to the secular Establishment. Parts of the OCA in the USA have also suffered from this. There is also the tragedy of those on the right side, who have veered into Anglican 'beard club Orthodoxy' or old

calendarist sectarianism. That ethos is also in fact deeply Protestant. They say: 'We do not agree with the Church. Therefore we will start our own church'. This is pride.

Those who stand on the fringes of the overlapping section, are often too frightened or else sometimes too self-serving to come inside, to enter the arena. Those who are on either the left side or the right side always work together against us. Extremes meet. This I long ago discovered. Christ was persecuted by both the Jews and the Romans, by the Pharisees and the Sadducees; the early Orthodox Church was attacked by Monophysites and Arians; New Rome was attacked by Muslims and Crusaders; Russia was attacked by Tartars and Teutonic Knights, the Ottomans and the West, the Kaiser's Germany and the so-called Allies. It was ever thus. But Christ still could not come down from the Cross; He was Resurrection-bound. And so are we.

There are those who dislike us because we refuse to tell lies and the Truth upsets their convenient and all too comfortable illusions, which they prefer. They are offended by the fact that we are loyal to the fullness of Orthodoxy, to the Truth, refusing to veer either to the left or the right. They accuse us of being 'too Orthodox'.



Inside the Church at Eastertide.

(How many times have we heard that!). How many disown the Truth. I answer them with the words of the Gospel, 'The Truth will set you free'. Sadly, so many prefer to be enslaved to their illusions. As Dostoyevsky explained, they hate those who destroy their illusions by telling the Truth, for freedom is not something that many want. That is why truth-tellers are always rejected. The secular author, George Orwell, said: 'In an age of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolution-ary act'. We have been revolutionaries, refusing to swim with the amoral Western consumerist tide of bread and circuses.

Today, in these troubled and uneasy times, attacks come not so much from the right, but from the left. Since 1945 the right has been discredited in the Western world. The whole trend of modernity has been to humanistic, liberal secularism. In Church terms, this means modernism, renovationism, the desire to destroy our ascetic, 'liturgical piety', as they call it, and to 'protestantise' (though to use that word is unfair to traditional Protestants), as the Roman Catholics did to themselves fifty years ago. For instance, modernists repeat without ceasing that the Eucharist stands at the centre of the Church, but they forget that repentance stands side by side with it, for to take the Eucharist without repentance is to condemn ourselves.

Experience has taught me, that however ancient, deep and spiritually meaningful the Balkan and Middle Eastern Orthodox Churches (and the Patriarchate of Constantinople is one of them), we cannot expect a great deal in the international field from them. Too often they have been compromised in the tangled net, first of the British Empire, then of the US and the EU. They are not politically free, just as the Russian Church inside Russia was not free under the atheists. That is why we fled to the free Russian Church and will always belong to it. In reality, the other Local Churches generally look after one nationality (whatever some may claim officially or whatever isolated, remarkable and holy individuals there are inside them and who do care for other nationalities). As mono-national Churches, they are generally left on the sidelines, despite the exceptions.

Only the Russian Church has the potential (true, as I know full well from hard experience, it is often not realised, either through incompetence, or racial narrowness, or else the suicidal spirit) multinational and multilingual qualities that are necessary to save Europe (and North America and

the other Continents) from itself. This incompetence is proved by the fact that there are little groups outside the discipline and jurisdiction of the Russian Church who yet copy our music, our dress and our customs. True, this is usually due to their own lack of faithfulness, but sometimes it is our fault. I was brought up on the words: 'If something is worth doing, it is worth doing properly'. I believe in them. There is no place for a spiritually neutered half-Orthodoxy here.

It fell to my lot to be born into a very decadent age, which numbs the mind and darkens the soul, in fact, into an age of devilry. This period has been the end of civilization in the West, which has lost faith in its religion. All civilizations end when they lose faith in their religions. We can become very negative about this, but it is better to be constructive, for every ending is also a beginning. To have been born now must be what I deserved. Wisdom went from the city. Nations slaughtered each other in the twentieth century; this was idolatry, sacrifice to the god of cannibalism on an industrial scale. Believers could never have done this; living hearts do not kill others. Death is the enemy of life, which triumphs over death. And so, in the tragic twentieth century the devil came to replace the dethroned God in the vacant souls of so many. And he filled them with squalid and sordid illusions, all touched by death. Nature abhors vacuums, but the devil loves them because they are places which he can fill.

As regards the Orthodox Church, a smaller part of it fell captive to Balkan nationalism when the then Centre fell to the Ottomans in 1453. Afterwards, that part was further debased by various Western nationalisms, interference and intrigues from France, Anglican freemasonry from Great Britain and, from 1948 on, from the USA with the tyranny and machinations of its 'democracy'. And so that part of the Church has lived in great decadence, the victim of nationalistic clubs. And what is nationalism? It is merely an attachment to the world, worldliness.

As for the major part of the Church, in 1917 it fell to militant atheism, which took captive the Third Centre of the Orthodox world, Moscow the Third Rome, and deformed it into the Third International. Since much of the Russian emigration lost the Centre, it too was paralysed. Parts of it lost its balance and fell victim to personality cults, to fallen aristocrats and fantasist, Gnostic intellectuals and so to division. Only part of it was

able to speak freely on behalf of the captive Centre inside Russia.

Only in the last few years has it been our joy and consolation to see the Centre start to reconstitute itself, however modestly. I hope that in some little way I have helped that ongoing process of reconstitution in the Diaspora, all parts of which I have come to know through Providence. However, my heart weeps with those who are still cut off from unity with the Centre. One of the greatest struggles in this matter has been the struggle with those who see only the details, but have no overall picture, those who see only fallen and rotting trees, but cannot see the great, green, Orthodox forest. Only when they are able to see this forest will they be able to accept that the source of unity is in the Centre, the Russian Orthodox Church. At least now we know that we have a reserve in Moscow, even though the process of restoration there is still very modest, very fragile, and still has very, very, very far to go. We have no illusions about that and the need to see an end to the old, exploitative Soviet mentality, with all its aggressiveness and pride.

As a result of the great frustration brought about by this captivity of the Church, I have had to learn to accept captivity for myself and to expect nothing from others. We have to do things ourselves. We will not get help on earth. Expect nothing and you will never be disappointed. We travel in hope. But self-reliance is also a sin. We have to learn to be guided by God, to obey Him, by renouncing our own will. We must rely on God, because He Alone knows what is best for us. He Alone knows how to look after us – despite us and our poor knowledge of Him, despite others and ourselves. The only way of knowing what God's will is for us is to renounce our own will. Passivity in this respect is not a solution, though of course activism can also be very wrong. Here too, as in everything, a balance must be struck. However, I still plead for bishops simply to encourage and thank, and not to discourage and crush, as has so often been my own sad experience.

I have also learned that there is little immediate justice in this world, that faithfulness is always persecuted in and by this world. 'Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men'. The only justice that operates in this world is that worked by God despite the world. And the world so often enters into the human aspect of the Church. But God's justice defeats all the thwarters, mockers, persecutors and slanderers. There is no human justice,

but to counter this fact there is Divine Justice. 'I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me'.

However, I have seen in my own life that justice does come eventually, but we must wait decades to see it; even after 25 and 30 years Divine justice will come and there is a terrible, self-inflicted retribution and isolation for those who have practised injustice and have forgotten the essence of the matter – Love. I have seen how people try to imbue the Church with the darkness of their own minds. We have learned to be confessors of the Faith and have experienced every kind of ill-will on the part of others. But we will always pray 'for those that love us and those that hate us'. For the Church is God's, not ours. He gives and He takes away.

There are those who are naïve at the beginning. There is perhaps Providence in this, as with a faith that is too weak, they are protected by the blindness of naivety at the beginning. However, what is disturbing is to meet those who are still naïve, who have still not entered the Arena, ten, twenty, thirty, forty and fifty years later. They have not yet grown. To them I say: Avoid bishops who make of their episcopate a personality cult and, like all gurus, then demand emotional, financial or sexual favours in return for devotion to the Church, attempting to make the noble into the ignoble – they have lost their inner freedom; avoid bishops who are freemasons, or else are manipulated by clerical and lay freemasons – they have lost their outer freedom; and avoid bishops who, from some personality defect, maltreat, abuse or simply neglect and ignore their clergy on racial or some other irrational grounds, ordaining the clearly unfit, promoting clearly unworthy clergy and showing them favouritism.

I have learned that understanding can only come through purity of heart, not through booklore. Intellectualism usually only leads to the foolishness of arrogance, to the fantasy of self-importance, of imagining oneself to be indispensable. This is simply a lack of intelligence. The cemeteries are full of people who thought that they were indispensable. There is nothing so strange as folk. Psychology is very important. We have to understand the motivations and intentions of others first. It is often not what people do that is important but why and how, in what spirit, they do it. Certainly, reality as I have seen it, is far, far stranger than anything imagined in fiction. One day I will perhaps tell it all. I have tried to be positive in my life. I believe that it is better to use honey, rather

than vinegar, in order to attract I have always liked the English proverb: 'It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness'.

There is nothing new under the sun – for human nature does not change – and that everything is possible in life. However, the main lesson in my life must be that God is present among us. True religion is about the seeing of God in Paradise. From the earliest years of childhood I have sensed His presence – not because of myself, but in spite of myself. His presence, the presence of Love, is clearly visible in the presence of His Providence. God is always working His miracles amongst us.

The world calls these 'coincidences', but we know better than this. I am unceasingly astonished by God's acts of Providence, His Love, in our lives, how, years and decades later, we do finally understand how everything was written in our most mysterious destinies and how everything, intertwined and interwoven, finally makes sense. Everything I have learned, however unwillingly at the time, has come to be useful later on. Life is the great apprenticeship and my only important degree has come from the University of Life. Through His Providence and the gift of foresight that He gives us, God leads us patiently to salvation. All things are interconnected. Unfortunately, we are such slow learners ...

I have been writing these words for eighteen months, adding a little bit at a time, as the memories and thoughts come flooding back to me. I have been asked what I look forward to. If God gives me life, this is to be present in 2018 in Ekaterinburg on the night of the one hundredth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Royal Martyrs. I was born on the third day after the anniversary of their martyrdom, the third day being the day of Resurrection. I would like to witness that act of repentance in 2018, after which the whole world may yet change.

Over a thousand years ago the early English preacher Ælfric wrote in his Colloquy: 'It is most disgraceful and shameful when a man does not

want to be what he is and what he has to be'. At least I have tried to be what I am and what I have to be.

After over fifty years and more, what is to come is still unsure. It may be that there is not much further to go. That is of concern, because on account of my lack of repentance I am not ready for death. But perhaps death will be slow. That will give me the chance to repent. Perhaps I will be given the opportunity to save myself by giving my life for the love of others. 'Greater love hath no man than this...'.

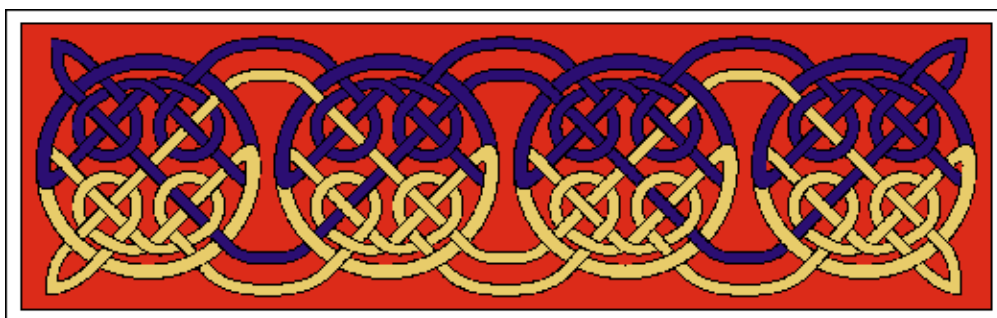
I have always had a strong sense that I will be martyred. As a child, hearing stories of French Resistance workers tortured by the Gestapo, I was fascinated. The fact is that martyrdom may now well be my only hope of salvation. But I am probably not even worthy of martyrdom, because I would fail the test. All is in God's hands, but I ask for the prayers of my readers and beg their forgiveness.

Paradise is still just beyond, but almost within our grasp. I saw it in childhood. It is still there. It is called Jerusalem:

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the Holy Lamb of God
In England's pleasant pastures seen?
And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold
Bring me my Chariot of Fire!
I will not cease from mental fight
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand
Till I have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.
My tale is told, my song is ended – for now.

Easter 2013



The Decline of England 4

EADWEARD MARTIR OND ÆTHELRÆD UNRÆD

By Eadmund

OUR last look at the history of England finished with King Eadgar's early and unexpected death, and I said that it nearly precipitated a civil war. Eadgar had been married twice: by his first marriage he had a son, Eadweard, who was about fifteen at the time of his death. By the second, to Ælfthryth, widow of Ealdorman Æthelwold of East Anglia) he had another son, Æthelræd, aged barely ten.

Eadgar's wholehearted support of the monastic reform party had meant a number of new foundations of monasteries, and these had to be funded somehow, by providing them with lands, from the profits arising from which they could obtain their income. A certain Ealdorman, Æthelhere of Mercia, was becoming increasingly restive at Eadgar's constant alienation of land to these new monasteries, a process that, if continued indefinitely, would make the abbots of the Church the predominant landowners in the shires. This would inevitably weaken the local influence of the thegns¹ of the shire, on whom the king's officers were compelled to rely for the maintenance of public order. The Church herself relied on a strong monarchy for her continued well-being (it could even be argued, in the earlier periods, for her continued existence). The resentment at the large amounts of patronage acquired by Ramsey and Ely and other large monasteries has been attributed to resentment of the monastic ideal by many thegns and some ealdormen. This is not necessarily so, and could be produced by other, less base motives: namely the wish to see Royal authority re-imposed and strengthened. Eadweard was likely to support and to continue his father's policies, so Æthelhere and his party therefore started to press for the succession of Æthelræd. Eadweard had the support of Dunstan and the rest of the Church party, however, and as these men had a majority in the Witan, they were able to secure the throne for Eadweard².

King Eadweard's character

Eadweard was not a particularly attractive individual, in that he had an evil temper. According to the anonymous biographer of St Oswald of York, 'he inspired in all not only fear

but even terror, for he scourged them with words and truly even with blows, and especially his own men dwelling with him.' The prospect of a violent, tantrum-throwing, pro-monastic teenager as king certainly cannot have been less irksome than the notorious self-centred fecklessness of Eadwig, twenty years before, and Æthelhere's party continued its objections. They started to hinder the monastic life by destroying the new monasteries set up by Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester and dispersing the monks. Many persons with an hereditary title to monastic lands took advantage of the change in government to assert their claims. To these misfortunes were added the appearance of a comet in the skies – a bad omen – and the year 976 began with a famine.

On the surface, in spite of the fierce disagreement between various noblemen who supported one half-brother against the other, relations between the two half-brothers Eadweard and Æthelræd themselves remained friendly. On the evening of 18 March 978, King Eadweard, having been hunting in the area, came to visit Ælfthryth and Æthelræd informally at Corfe Castle in Dorset. Anyone visiting that site today cannot but be impressed by the castle perched on its dramatic hilltop. There would have been no castle there then, of course, only a wooden hall with a group of outbuildings, maybe within an earth rampart or perhaps only a simple fence of wooden boards. The account of what happened next is given to us by an anonymous monk, allegedly a member of the King's entourage at the time of the attack, in the *Life of St Oswald*, written about the year AD 1000.

Eadweard's martyrdom

Ælfthryth and Æthelræd appeared at the doorway to welcome their visitor, and their *gesipas*³ came out to greet him with ostentatious signs of respect. Two of them approached him, one on his left and the other on his right. The latter, while pretending to give him the kiss of peace, grasped his left shoulder with his right arm, at the same time getting a grip on the King's right forearm with his left hand. While Eadweard was pinioned in this fashion, the man on his left grasped his left arm and

stabbed him with a knife. The King's horse, frightened, reared up and forced the King back onto the high cantle of the saddle. The gesith on the right was still gripping the King and his thigh was pressed across the cantle with enormous force. His horse bolted, and his body was dragged along the ground by his left foot, which remained caught in the stirrup. (These facts were incidentally crucial to the later identification of the relics when they were eventually rediscovered last century). His body was subsequently buried without any special honour at Wareham.⁴

This was a crime involving abominable treachery, which shocked men in a period that was ready to tolerate most crimes of open violence. Æthelræd himself has been exonerated from any part in the affair owing to his youth. There is also no evidence to support the allegation that any guilt lay with his mother, Ælfhryth, who has been represented as the wicked stepmother, eliminating her stepson in order to procure the throne for the child of her own body. No such allegation was made at the time, when one would have expected it to arise if it were indeed true. The first we hear of it is more than a hundred years later in a life of St Dunstan by one Osbern, precentor of Canterbury in the time of the Norman Archbishop Lanfranc. Now although these two testimonies might appear to have equal weight, in the context of the court of history I do not think that it can be seen as just to accept the statement of a single witness a century removed from the events as being of equal weight to the silence of contemporaries. The modern craft of Historiography warns us to examine the situation and probable motives of the man making the statement, as well as the events about which it is made. Also, incidentally, it is a statement by a single schismatic – contradicting the silence of hundreds of Orthodox Christians.

As far as it is possible to ascertain, the crime was planned and carried out by Æthelræd's gesithas, in order that their young master might become king. One cannot help but wonder whether they were suborned by some other nobleman, and it is possible that a modern-style investigation, had it been possible to conduct it at the time, would be able to point a conclusive finger. However such speculations at this distance from the event, when the evidence has long been lost in the mists of time, are fruitless and the province of the Historical Novelist rather than the Historian.

It is a fact that nobody was ever called to account for the crime. The bond between retainer and lord was sacrosanct, the equivalent of that between close kin, and it was out of the question for one to take vengeance on the other. Vengeance was the only method of bringing home punishment for such an outrage on the perpetrator. The present system of courts and police simply did not exist then. There was no other possible redress.

King Æthelræd crowned, but fails to control events

However Æthelræd, who was crowned a month after the murder, began his reign in an atmosphere of suspicion which destroyed the prestige of the Crown. The crime might have been committed without his knowledge or consent, but it had been committed for his sake, and he never escaped its consequences. 'Throughout his reign he behaved like a man who is never sure of himself. His ineffectiveness in war, his acts of spasmodic violence, and the air of mistrust that hangs over his relations with his nobles, are signs of a trouble that lies deeper than mere incapacity for government. They suggest the reaction of a weak king to the consciousness that he has come to power through the worst crime committed among the English peoples since their first coming to Britain.'⁵

Viking raids started again on the coasts of England within two years of Æthelræd's accession. The greatest figure in the north at that time was the Danish king Harold 'Gormsson', who in his own words, 'won for himself all Denmark and Norway and made the Danes Christians'. His chief interests lay in the Baltic and he incorporated many of the most formidable warriors of the north into a highly organized Viking community at Jömsborg by the mouth of the Oder. However many of his subjects resented an autocratic master and an imposed religion, and it is possible that the first Viking raiders were disaffected Danes who had left Denmark in search of pastures new. Shortly before 988, Swein, his son, put himself at the head of an army of these malcontents and drove his father from his kingdom. One of the problems for the English was that while it was no longer possible for Scandinavian adventurers to carve out new patrimony for themselves in Normandy, the Normans, conscious of their own origins, were well disposed towards them, and offered them a safe haven. Relations between the Norman and English courts reached such a pitch that Pope John XV sent an envoy to arrange a treaty between them, and

eventually an agreement was devised in March 991 that in future the king and the duke should accept a peaceful reparation of all injuries which one might suffer from the other, and that neither of them should entertain the other's enemies, nor any of his subjects except those who could show letters of commendation under his seal.

However five months after this a larger force than any that had previously harried the coasts, with some of the character of an organized army⁶, arrived and started to ravage the east coast. It fought the famous Battle of Maldon⁷, in which the English Earl Byrhtnoth was killed, and then compelled the local magnates of Kent, Hampshire and western Wessex to buy peace from it. Before the end of the year it had entered into a treaty with the English government by which, in return for provisions and a large sum of money, it undertook to keep the peace towards the king and his subjects, and to join them in attacking any other Viking raiders descending on England. The sum of money was so large that it necessitated a special and heavy tax to raise it. This established a precedent, and these emergency levies of 'Danegeld' were to become commonplace. In 994 another combined fleet appeared, commanded by Olaf Tryggvason and accompanied by Swein, son of Harold, king of Denmark, their combined forces amounting to 94 warships, probably carrying more than 2,000 fighting men. Peace was bought again for 16,000 pounds.

The Viking raids get worse

After a respite of two years the war began to take on an even more serious character, for whereas before each raid had been the work of a separate group of ship's companies, which had dispersed as soon as the expedition had produced an adequate return, in 997 England was visited by an army which was prepared to devote a number of consecutive years to systematic plundering. At last it moved to Normandy in 1000, returning in the new season of 1001 to raid Sussex and then embark on a campaign in south Devon, which was marked by a successful defence of Exeter. But the combined militia of Devon and Somerset failed to hold the enemy in check, and its ships, stationed off the Isle of Wight, were masters of the channel. In the spring of 1002 this intolerable situation was relieved by a truce for which 24,000 pounds of tribute money were paid.

Æthelræd seems to have been unwilling to lead his forces in person: he is on record as having

taken the field only three times in his 38-year reign, in 1000, 1009 and 1014. On none of these occasions did he accomplish anything of strategic value, let alone bring the Danes to battle. In 1009 he actually intercepted the Danish army as it withdrew to its ships with 3,000 pounds extorted from the people of East Kent and the spoils of Sussex, Hampshire and Berkshire. The English army was burning to attack; but Æthelræd was dissuaded by Eadric, Ealdorman of Mercia, whose double-dealing was to make him the most hated man in England.

There is no evidence to suggest that Æthelræd's position was ever jeopardized because he was not a royal war-leader. What people found intolerable was his failure to appoint loyal and competent commanders to do the fighting for him. Ealdorman Ælfric of Mercia had been exiled in 985, but by 992 Æthelræd had reinstated him. In that year Ælfric was made one of four commanders appointed to try to trap the Danes anywhere at sea. Ælfric betrayed the plans to the enemy, who escaped, and then abandoned his command and fled. Æthelræd's response was to have Ælfric's son blinded, but by 1003 he was back again, in command of the English army. However as soon as he got within sight of the Danes, he feigned illness.

Even after this it was another four years before Æthelræd replaced him, but the replacement was even worse: Eadric Streona, a ruthless turncoat whose skill at exploiting his importance to both sides was unequalled.

Æthelræd's marriages

Æthelræd had married Ælfgifu, daughter of Thored, ealdorman of Northumbria, in about 985, and had ten children by her. She had died by 1002, however, and he now took to wife Emma, the sister of Richard II, Duke of Normandy. This might be thought to have been a sound political move, but unfortunately little or nothing is known of the background to the marriage. The treaty between England and Normandy cannot be assumed to have been still in force, and it is possible, though unlikely, that the raiders who had crossed to Normandy in the summer of 1000 had enjoyed the Duke's peace. But there is some evidence that Æthelræd quarrelled with the Duke shortly afterwards, so his marriage did not do him any political good in the long term. His sons by this marriage were educated in the Duchy, brought up as Norman princes, and in the light of future events this was to have a grave significance.

The St Brice's day Massacre

The king's next piece of political ineptitude and even downright criminality was to initiate a massacre of the Danish population, apparently because he distrusted them as potential fifth columnists. In more than a third of England these orders could never have been carried out: many officials simply ignored the king's instructions. However many Danes were killed, among them Gunnhild, sister of King Swein of Denmark, who was then living as a hostage in England, thus making Swein into an implacable enemy. In 1009 he arrived with an army made up of many specialized warriors from Jomsborg, and commanded by men of reputation from all over the Viking world. It took him ten years to conquer England – rather less time than it had taken Edward the Elder to reconquer East Anglia and Danish Mercia nearly a century earlier. Swein had learned that not only was England the most profitable country in Europe for plunder, but also that it was possible for a Danish army to march the length and breadth of it without serious opposition, extorting not merely tribute but also transport and supplies from the hapless population. The Witan met, agreed to grandiose defence measures that were never implemented, and urged the English to loyalty, obedience and religious atonement for their sins. The king acknowledged the sainthood of his murdered stepbrother.

Bereft of effective leadership, the English resisted where they could. London stood like a rock, but Canterbury was betrayed and sacked, and one of the captives was Archbishop Ælfheah. The Danes demanded an extra ransom for him, which he refused to allow his people to pay. The Danes pelted him unconscious with meat-bones from their feasting and finally smashed his skull with an axe. He was the only English Archbishop ever to suffer martyrdom.

Æthelræd Goes into Exile

1013 marked the beginning of the end when Swein headed north and overran the Danelaw, which submitted to him. The ealdormen and thanes of the western shires followed suit. Then the Londoners bowed to the inevitable and submitted. By the new year of 1014 Æthelræd went into exile in Normandy. However Swein's triumph was short-lived. He died on 3 February 1014.

The Danish fleet acclaimed Cnut⁸, Swein's son, as their king, but the English Witan had other ideas.

They unanimously decided to recall Æthelræd from Normandy, saying that 'No lord was dearer to them than their natural lord, if he would govern them more justly than he had before.' His son Eadweard brought acceptance, saying the his father would be a gracious lord to them, reforming all the things that they hated and that all the things that had been said or done against him should be forgiven. The real leader, however, was now Eadweard, given the nickname of 'Ironside'. He and his father advanced so quickly that Cnut was forced to take to his ships, abandoning the hapless people of Lindsey where he had established himself. Æthelræd let loose the English army on them to burn and take vengeance, so that it was hard to know which was the most hated: he or Cnut. Cnut riposted by sailing south and mutilating the hostages who had been surrendered to his father. He landed them at Sandwich.

Eadweard now challenged his father's authority, declaring himself the champion of the Danelaw. Eadric of Mercia predictably turned his coat again, declaring for Æthelræd, and killing the leading thegns of the Danelaw, Sigferth and Morcar, whose property Æthelræd seized. He also ordered that Sigferth's widow Aldgyth to be brought to Malmesbury, presumably as a hostage to keep the Danelaw quiescent. Eadmund, however, took charge of Aldgyth himself, married her, and brought her home to take charge of the estates of the dead thegns. The Danelaw promptly accepted him as their lord.

By the late summer of 1015, Cnut returned with a reinforced Danish army. Æthelræd was in London, ill. Eadric of Mercia, ostensibly honouring his allegiance to Æthelræd, marched the Mercian army to join Eadmund's against Canute, but Eadmund, unsurprisingly, hesitated to join forces and lay himself open to Eadric's notorious gambit – betrayal at the earliest favourable moment. Eadric then won over the crews of forty ships and deserted to Cnut, hopelessly isolating Eadmund and his scanty forces away to the northeast. For the winter of 1015–16 the West Saxons prudently yielded to Cnut and paid tribute. There was a popular clamour for Æthelræd to join the English side with the redoubtable defenders of London, but the ailing king was too fearful of treachery and stayed put. He died on 23 April 1016 after the longest reign of any English king. Would that it could have been more fortunate.

Conclusion

Æthelræd means 'noble counsel' and some wit aptly nicknamed him 'Unræd', which means 'bad counsel', a punning reference to his political ineptitude and his poor judgement of character. Amazingly however, thanks to the strength of Æthelstan and the wisdom of Eadgar, England was now sufficiently prosperous to withstand Viking raids and foreign occupations. Despite the repeated raids and Viking armies marching about the country, the basic system of government carried on regardless, efficiently raising Danegeld when necessary to pay off the raiders. There was still a chance for a strong leader, someone like Ælfred the Great, to re-establish English rule.

Further Reading

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Dorothy Whitelock, *The Beginnings of English Society*, Penguin Books, 1954.

G. N. Garmonsway (trans.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Dent, 1954

Richard Humble, *The Saxon Kings*, George Weidenfeld and Nicholson Ltd, London, 1980.

N. J. Higham, *The Death of Anglo-Saxon England*, Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1997

- 1 A thegn (the Englisc 'g' could be soft, and was pronounced as if it were a 'y', hence 'theyn') was a local official and royal retainer, roughly corresponding to a knight in post-Conquest times
- 2 This is another example of the fact that the kingdom of England was elective at this time rather than following a fixed line of succession. The successful candidate for the monarchy had to be chosen from the royal house, but it was the Witan, or 'council of wise men', who had the final say.
- 3 The closest that we can come today to translating the word 'gesith' is 'companion', but this does far less than

justice to a term that is really idiomatic to Englisc thought and language. A gesith was a sworn arms-brother, whose deeds of valour were often offered to his lord and whose very life was at his lord's command. For example, no gesith would expect to survive his lord in battle, but was expected to die exacting vengeance for him and, in the unlikely event of his surviving, would consider himself deeply and eternally shamed.

- 4 Later a column of light appeared over Eadweard's grave at Wareham, and a spring broke out near the grave, which healed the afflictions of many who bathed in it. After a year Ælfhere, ealdorman of Mercia (the same ealdorman who had been accused of destroying monasteries in direct contravention of the King's wishes), had the body of the King translated to the house of nuns founded by King Ælfræd at Shaftesbury. The remains of King Eadweard were said to be whole and incorrupt at that time. At Shaftesbury the miracles around his tomb continued, and so many were associated with it that he came to be regarded as a Saint and Martyr. Thirty years after the murder, King Æpelræd himself ordered the general observation of his brother's festival. The sacred relics were again translated to an elaborate shrine in Shaftesbury Abbey church, owing to the miraculous levitation of his tomb (a gradual raising of the stone out of the ground, which was witnessed by many folk) by which St Eadweard made it known that he wished his body to be exhumed. The devotions and the miracles continued and the town of Shaftesbury became known as St Eadweard's borough.

The relics came to be lost during the Protestant 'reformation', and were found again in the twentieth century when, after a lawsuit, they eventually ended up in the church of St Edward at Brookwood, where they still remain.

- 5 Sir F. M. Stenton, *ibid*.
- 6 Among the raiders was Olaf Tryggvason, a descendant of Harold Fairhair, king of Norway, who some four years later made himself master of his own country.
- 7 This battle was celebrated in a famous Englisc poem known as *The Battle of Maldon*, which describes the events in detail, and incidentally shows that the heroic code was definitely still operative.
- 8 Cnut should not be pronounced to rhyme with 'nut': the vowel is lengthened to 'oo', to rhyme with 'hoot'.

Orthodoxy Shines Through Western Myths (14)

RELIGION AND THE RISE OF WESTERN CULTURE

Older Western scholarship on Church history is not generally of much use to Orthodox. Most of it is simply anti-Orthodox and therefore anti-authentic Christianity, even openly boasting of its 'Judeo-Christian' and not Christian civilisation. The anti-Orthodox prejudices of such scholarship, when it mentions Orthodoxy at all, come simply from the fact that history is 'written by the winners', and even despite the First World War, up until the Second World War most Western scholars thought that the West had won.

It is different today, when the near-millennial crimes of the West are visible to all and nobody any longer listens to the voices of ecclesiastical institutions which moulded the last thousand years of Western history – they are clearly compromised. Interestingly, contemporary secular scholarship, which in its ignorance of Orthodoxy cannot in any way be accused of being pro-Orthodox, is an excellent source for Orthodox to understand what went wrong with the West. We can understand how, by renouncing the Orthodox Christian Faith

in its anti-Trinitarian and anti-Christic *filioque* heresy, its former Church became a series of -isms, Catholicism, Protestantism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anglicanism etc, which have bred modern-day secularism and will eventually lead to the end of the world.

In the following article, the fourteenth in a series taken from various works of secular scholarship, we have selected extracts from a religious scholar. These are from *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* by the well-known Roman Catholic scholar Christopher Dawson, Sheed and Ward, 1948. Although he was a very respectable and traditional Roman Catholic (he suffered a great deal after the Second Vatican Council), yet his insights into the history of religion largely support the Orthodox thesis because his prophetic spirit was so far ahead of his time. (See our article on him in *Orthodox England*, Vol 6, No 4). In fact, these extracts seem to illustrate abundantly the post-Orthodox deformations of Western culture which began with the spread of the new *filioque* culture behind the Papacy.

Although ominously threatened for nearly three centuries before, under Charlemagne, these deformations were not definitively implemented until the eleventh century. The date of 1054 is thus seen to be symbolic of the very real spiritual fall which took place in Western Europe in the eleventh century. In the year 1000, the fall had by no means been certain. In 1054 it was. And it is that fall which has defined the subsequent history of not just Western Europe, but the whole world. But let the learned author speak:

p. 7. Religion the Key

'Religion is the key of history', said Lord Acton.

p. 8. The West would have been 'utterly different', had it remained faithful to the spiritual force of the Orthodox Church

How did it come about that a small group of peoples in Western Europe should in a relatively short space of time acquire the power to transform the world and to emancipate themselves from man's age-long dependence on the forces of nature? In the past this miraculous achievement was explained as the manifestation of a universal Law of Progress which governed the universe and led mankind by inevitable stages from apehood to perfection. Today such theories are no longer acceptable, since we have come to see how much

they depend on an irrational optimism which was part of the phenomenon they attempted to explain. Instead we now tend to ask ourselves what were the factors in European culture which explain the peculiar achievement of Western man. Or to use the brutal and expressive American phrase, 'What makes him tick?' But when we reach this point we shall find the religious factor does have a very important bearing upon the question.

For as I wrote eighteen years ago: 'Why is it that Europe alone among the civilizations of the world has been continually shaken and transformed by an energy of spiritual unrest that refuses to be content with the unchanging law of social tradition which rules the oriental cultures? It is because its religious ideal has not been the worship of timeless and changeless perfection but a spirit that strives to incorporate itself in humanity and to change the world. In the West the spiritual power has not been immobilized in a sacred social order like the Confucian state in China and the Indian caste system. It has acquired social freedom and autonomy and consequently its activity has not been confined to the religious sphere but has had far-reaching effects on every aspect of social and intellectual life.

These secondary results are not necessarily of religious or moral value from the Christian point of view – but the fact remains that they are secondary to and dependent on the existence of a spiritual force without which they either would not have been or would have been utterly different'.

p. 10. The Origins of Western Domination

... Side by side with the natural aggressiveness and the lust for power and wealth which are so evident in European history, there were also new spiritual forces driving Western man towards a new destiny. The activity of the Western mind, which manifested itself alike in scientific and technical invention as well as in geographical discovery, was not the natural inheritance of a particular biological type; it was the result of a long process of education which gradually changed the orientation of human thought and enlarged the possibilities of social action. In this process the vital factor was not the aggressive power of conquerors and capitalists, but the widening of the capacity of human intelligence and the development of new types of creative genius and ability.

The other great world cultures realized their own synthesis between religion and life and then

maintained their sacred order unchanged for centuries and millennia. But Western civilization has been the great ferment of change in the world, because the changing of the world became an integral part of its cultural ideal.

p. 15. The Weakness of Tradition in the West and so Continuous Revolution

It is only in Western Europe that the whole pattern of the culture is to be found in a continuous succession and alternation of free spiritual movements; so that every century of Western history shows a change in the balance of cultural elements, and the appearance of some new spiritual force which creates new ideas and institutions and produces a further movement of social change.

Only once in the history of Western Europe do we see an attempt to create a unitary, all-embracing, sacred order, comparable to that of the Byzantine (*sic*) culture or to those of the oriental world. This was the Carolingian Empire which was conceived as the society of the whole Christian people under the control of a theocratic monarchy ...

p. 27. If the West had remained Orthodox ... The Fatal and Undermining Influence of Barbarism in the West

It is interesting to speculate on what might have been the result if the Western development had followed the Eastern pattern – if a kind of Latin Byzantine culture had arisen in the fifth and sixth centuries with its capital at Rome or Milan or Treves, as might well have happened, if external forces had not intervened. In fact, however, the imperial system in the West had broken down under the pressure of the barbarian invasion, before the new religion had had time to permeate the culture and social life of the Western provinces.

p. 33. The Conversion of the West by the Grace Acquired by Orthodox Saints

The barbarians could understand and accept the spirit of the new religion only when it was manifested to them visibly in the lives and acts of men who seemed endowed with supernatural qualities. The conversion of Western Europe was achieved not so much by the teaching of a new doctrine as by the manifestation of a new power, which invaded and subdued the barbarians of the West, as it had already subdued the civilized lands

of the Mediterranean. And as the martyrs had been the heroes and witnesses of the conquest of the Empire, so it was the hermits and the monks who were the confessors and apostles of the faith among the barbarians.

p. 35. Early Western Christianity was Orthodox, not Pietistic

But though the religion of that age was intensely otherworldly, its other-worldliness had a very different character from much that we have come to associate with the word in its modern pietist form. It was collective rather than individualist, objective rather than subjective, realist rather than idealist.

pp. 37 and 42. The Importance of the Liturgy the same in the East and the Ancient West

In the religious cultures of the Byzantine (*sic*) and mediæval world the Christian liturgy held a similar position. The centuries which followed the fall of the Empire in the West, in spite of the impoverishment of their material culture, were from the liturgical point of view a great creative age, and it is remarkable that this is no less true of the semi-barbaric West than of the stable and comparatively prosperous Byzantine (*sic*) world. All these ages possessed of poetry, music and art found expression in the liturgy – an expression which no later age has been able to surpass.

The theological and metaphysical aspects of this conception of the liturgy were worked out most fully during this period in the Byzantine (*sic*) Church by writers like the Pseudo-Dionysius (*sic*) and Saint Maximus the Confessor. But there was no real divergence between East and West in this matter, since in the sixth and seventh centuries all the different liturgical traditions shared the same liturgical spirit and *theoria* which was the common inheritance of Eastern and Western Christendom.

Thus in the West, after the fall of the Empire, the Church possessed in the liturgy a rich tradition of Christian culture as an order of worship, a structure of thought and a principle of life. And in spite of the general decline in culture this tradition continued to develop spontaneously and to bear fruit in different forms according to the complicated evolution of the different Western Rites. There were the rich and colourful liturgies of Visigothic Spain and Merovingian Gaul. There was the Northern Italian tradition, represented by the Ambrosian Rite. And finally there was the ancient and conservative Roman tradition, which from the

time of St Gregory the Great came to exercise a far-reaching normative influence on all the Western Churches.

p. 158. The Eleventh-Century Revolution, the Pope becomes Emperor (papocaesarism) – the West cuts itself off from Preceding Christian Tradition

There is nothing political in this ideal of reformation. But the uncompromising simplicity with which it was formulated made it a revolutionary force in a world in which the Church had become a part of the social order, and ecclesiastical and political relations had become inextricably entangled. Above all, the old Byzantine (*sic*) and Carolingian ideal of the sacred monarchy was an obstacle to any radical programme of reform, since it consecrated the *status quo* and surrounded vested interests with the halo of sacred tradition. Hence Gregory VII's uncompromising determination to free the Church from its feudal dependence on the secular power meant the abandonment of the old Byzantine (*sic*) and Carolingian conception of the divine right of kings and the passive obedience of their Christian subjects. But since the reformers no less than the conservatives continued to accept the unitary character of Christian society, the denial of the imperial theocracy involved the assertion of the supremacy of the spiritual power in the social life of Christendom, so that it was inevitable that the Pope should take the place which the Emperor had hitherto occupied as the supreme leader and judge of the Christian people.

This change, revolutionary as it was, was in harmony with the changing conditions of the new age. The Empire was no longer able to fulfil even formally the universal functions which the Empire of Charlemagne had represented. It had become an archaic survival, from the point of view of Western Europe as a whole, where the new feudal states had become the leaders of culture. Yet the sense of the unity of Christendom was stronger than ever and demanded some new institutional expression, and the reformed Papacy provided such an expression more effectively than any political institution could have done ...

p. 163. The Tragedy Inherent in Papal Triumphalism

It (the mediæval Church) was a sovereign power which imposed its own laws and enforced them in

its own courts by its own judges and lawyers. It possessed an elaborate system of appellate jurisdiction, an organized bureaucracy and an efficient system of centralized control carried out by permanent officials and supervised by the visits and reports of the legates who played such a prominent part in the international life of Christendom.

All this was the direct outcome of the reforming movement, for the emancipation of the Papacy from its dependence on the Empire and the separation of the spiritual authority of the bishop from his secular obligations as a member of the feudal hierarchy made it necessary to reconstruct the whole order of ecclesiastical administration and jurisdiction as an organized unity.

But the creation of this great machine of ecclesiastical government was not the original aim of the movement of reform, which as we have seen was inspired by the unworldly, spiritual ideals of men like St Peter Damian. The reformers themselves were well aware that the growth of ecclesiastical power and wealth involved a danger of secularization from within which was as deadly though more insidious than the external evils against which they fought.

pp. 167–68. Papal Revolution and Feudalism – the Return to Barbarism

In the eleventh century the movement of reform of which I wrote in the last chapter was no longer limited to the monastic life, but had become the inspiration of a wider movement of spiritual change which transformed the order of the Western Church and the spirit of Western culture. In this way there arose the new unity of mediæval Christendom which was no longer dependent on the existence of the Empire as in Carolingian or Byzantine society, but had a superpolitical or international character and possessed its own independent centre of authority in the reformed Papacy ...

Here the real unit of political life was not the kingdom but the new feudal states which had been built out of the ruins of the Carolingian state by rebellious vassals or successful military adventurers or even, in the case of Normandy, by the settlement of barbarian invaders from the distant North. These feudal states had been created by war and for war. Their whole structure and ethos were military, and the only force which kept society together was the primary bond of fidelity which

united the warrior and his chief, as it had done in the days of the barbarian invasions.

Thus the rise of feudalism seems to mark a return to barbarism, in which the fundamental institutions of civilized society have practically disappeared and the world was ruled by 'the good old law, the simple plan, That he should take who has the power, and he should keep who can'.

But though feudalism was a reversion to barbarism, it also contained its own remedy. The very ferocity and barbarism of the early feudal princes made them ill men to quarrel with ...

pp. 170-71. The Medieval West – the fusion of Orthodox Christianity and Barbarism

This is due to the fact that the feudal society of Northern France had achieved a new fusion or synthesis between the Christian and the barbarian elements in mediæval culture. Hitherto these elements had coexisted in Western culture side by side with one another, but they did not form an organic unity. They remained two separate worlds – on the one side, the peace society of the Church, which found its centre in the monastic life and culture; on the other, the warrior society of the Western barbarians, which remained pagan at heart in spite of the external and partial acceptance of Christianity.

The Carolingian Empire seemed for a moment to represent the triumph of the Christian element and the unification of Western culture on Christian principles. But it was soon evident that the imposing theocracy of the Christian Empire was a pretentious sham ... The rule of law and the political authority of the state had disappeared, and the only remaining principle of social cohesion was the direct personal bond of loyalty and mutual aid between the warrior and his chief, and that of service and protection between the serf and his lord. There is an obvious resemblance between the feudal society and the traditional relation of the barbarian war leader to his *comitatus* or 'hyrd'. And, similarly, both societies are inspired by the same primitive code of honour and loyalty, of contempt of death and the spirit of implacable revenge.

Nothing could be further from the Christian ethos ...

p. 228-29-30. The Individual Reason replaces the Common Faith in the 12th century. The break with Christian culture

But in spite of the contrast in spirit and institutions between Paris and Bologna, they both contributed equally to the transformation of Western education and to the formation of the professional intellectual classes which were henceforth to dominate Western culture. In the past the spiritual unity of Christendom had been realized in a common faith and a common moral or ascetic discipline which was the tradition of Western monasticism. It was only with the rise of the universities that Western culture acquired that new intellectual and scientific discipline on which its later achievements were dependent

... But I believe we can go further than this, and see in the mediæval scholastic discipline one of the main factors which have differentiated European civilization from the great religion-cultures of the East, to which the earlier mediæval culture and that of the Byzantine (*sic*) Empire were so closely akin. No doubt the Roman tradition which survived in Western culture may have been responsible for the social activity and the constructive political sense that were distinctive of the Western Church since the days of St Gregory or even St Leo the Great, but this Roman tradition with its sense of the value of discipline and law and authority was essentially a conservative force. It was not thence that Europe derived the critical intelligence and the restless spirit of scientific enquiry which have made Western civilization the heir and successor of the Greeks. It is usual to date the coming of this new element from the Renaissance and the revival of Greek studies in the fifteenth century, but the real turning-point must be placed three centuries earlier in the age of the universities and the communes

p. 246-7-8. The Papacy becomes inherently secular. The Secularisation of 'the Church' in the West, its domination by 'Judaism and Paganism'

For, as we have seen, the victory of the Church created new problems and new temptations. In so far as the spiritual authority of the Papacy was embodied in a concrete system of international government, it was forced to make use of temporal means, above all a system of revenue and finance. And since there was as yet no system of ecclesiastical taxation, the mediæval Papacy, like

the mediaeval state, was driven to use its rights of jurisdiction as a source of revenue – a system which inevitably led to abuse and to the exploitation of litigants and local churches by the Curia and the Papal legates.

St Bernard complains that the increase of litigation has turned the Curia into a secular law court.

The Palace resounds with the sound of laws, but they are the laws of Justinian, not those of the Lord. Is not the enriching of ambition the object of the whole laborious practice of the laws and canons? Is not all Italy a yawning gulf of insatiable avarice and rapacity for the spoil it offers? So that the Church has become like a robber's cave, full of the plunder of travellers.

Against these evils of the Curia and this tendency towards an ecclesiastical imperialism which made the Pope the successor of Constantine rather than Peter, St Bernard sets up the reformer's ideal ...

The perplexity and despair of the reformers in face of this tragic confusion (of the secular and the spiritual) is clearly expressed by Gerhoh of Reichersberg (1093–1169), one of the greatest representatives of the spiritual party in the German Church during the twelfth century. He remained

faithful to the cause of the Papacy on the question of the Investitures, and during the great struggle between the Emperor Frederick I and Pope Alexander III endured persecution and exile on behalf of his principles. But at the same time he censured the views of the extreme papalist party which asserted the direct power of the Papacy over the Empire. In his last work, which he entitled *The Fourth Watch of the Night*, written in exile two years before his death, he is concerned, like St Bernard, with the perils that threatened the Church from the avarice and ambition of her rulers. He saw the coming of the end, not in the external distress and persecution of the Church, but in its corruption from within by the 'Jewish and pagan avarice that reigns in the very Kingdom of Christ' and makes Rome a second Babylon. In despair he looks to the speedy coming of Christ as the only hope of the Church. 'Come then, Lord Jesus,' he prays. 'Come to Thy ship, the Holy Church, which is labouring heavily in this Fourth Watch of the Night; come O Lord, rule in the midst of Thine enemies, the false priests who sell and rob in Thine house and the princes who tyrannize in the name of Christ. Come, Saviour Jesus, working salvation in the midst of the earth and the midst of the Church, making peace between the Kingdom and the Priesthood'.

BOOK REVIEW: Sarah Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England* c. 600–900, Cambridge 2006. by Eadmund



SARAH FOOT is Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Christ Church College, Oxford, and so it is a slight surprise to find this book published by the Cambridge University Press; but this in no way detracts from the contents. Sarah Foot also performed the amazing and almost miraculous task of creating a biography of King Æthelstan from a paucity of scattered references, which formed the basis of my earlier article in this journal (*Orthodox England* 17.1 p.3) and she has done the same thing with her present subject. The monasteries, or Minsters as they should really be called, were a very strong force in England, and were largely responsible for performing and maintaining the conversion to Christianity.

Sarah makes a significant, scholarly examination of the subject, and draws the whole matter

together. She writes lucidly, including plans and photographs where relevant, and also takes in the surrounding cultural and social attitudes. She shows how right from the start the desire for solitude and contemplation implicit in the Benedictine Rule were compromised by the missionary and pastoral situation in which the monks found themselves, and how the Minsters developed in order to provide an answer to this problem.

She has also shown how the circumstances were different from Minster to Minster, and that there can be no absolute approach to the subject. Actually it was not until the Monastic Reform of the late tenth century that a consistent form of the Benedictine Rule was universally accepted and imposed on all monastic institutions.

Sarah demonstrates that, largely owing to the writings of St Bede, whose monastery at Jarrow was very tightly run, the senior clergy developed a somewhat false impression of the state of monasteries in England prior to the Viking disruption, and their reforms, as is often the case, were in the case of many Minsters not so much a reform, more of a revolution. However it was probably a very

necessary revolution, as the circumstances that brought forth the old, *laissez-faire* style of Minster had changed, and a new and more robust system was necessary to confront the next century.

This book should become the standard text for anyone looking at early monasticism in England, and has given me many insights into this fascinating period of our history.

AN OLD STAFFORDSHIRE CAROL

As it fell out upon a day,
Rich Dives made a feast,
And he invited all his friends,
And gentry of the best.

Then Lazarus laid him down and down,
E'en down at Dives door;
Some meat some drink brother Dives,
Bestow upon the poor.

Thou art none of my brother, Lazarus,
That lie begging at my door,
No meat nor drink will I give thee,
Nor bestow upon the poor.

Then Lazarus laid him down and down,
E'en down at Dives wall,
Some meat some drink brother Dives,
Or with hunger starve I shall.

Thou art none of my brother Lazarus,
That lies begging at my wall,
Neither meat nor drink shall I give thee,
But with hunger starve you shall.

Then Lazarus laid him down and down,
E'en down at Dives gate,
Some meat some drink brother Dives,
For Jesus Christ his sake.

Thou art none of my brother Lazarus,
That lies begging at my gate,
No meat nor drink will I give thee,
For Jesus Christ his sake.

Then Dives sent out his merry men,
To whip poor Lazarus away,
They had not power to strike one stroke,
But flung their whips away.

Then Dives sent out his hungry dogs,
To bite him as he lay,
They had not Pow' to bite one bite,
But lick' his sore away.

As it fell out upon a day,
Poor Lazarus sicken' and died,
There came two angels out of heaven,
His soul therein to guide.

Rise up, rise up brother Lazarus,
And go along with we,
For there' a place provided in heaven,
To sit on an angel' knee.

As it fell out upon a day,
Rich Dives sicken' and died,
There came two serpents out of hell,
His soul therein to guide.

Rise up, rise up brother Dives,
And go along with we,
For there is a place provided in hell,
To sit on a serpent' knee.

Then Dives look' up with his eyes,
And saw poor Lazarus blest;
Give me one drop of water brother Lazarus
To quench my flaming thirst.

Oh! had I as many years to abide,
As there are blades of grass,
Then there would be an ending day,
But in hell forever must last.

Oh! was I now but alive again,
The space of one half hour,
I'd make my peace and so secure,
That the devil shou'd have no pow'r.

