THE SEER OF PATMOS

OR

JOHN'S PLACE IN THE CHRISTIAN ECONOMY

By

JASPER SEASTON HUGHES

Author of
Mystery of the Golden Cloth

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CHAPTER I.

"Whence comes it that the knowledge that might advance us, the thought that might save us, is transmitted from one generation to another as barren and dead as a stone till some one seizes it, and strikes it into fire?"

—Adolph Harnack.

"Perhaps it is not very remarkable that certain books of the Bible come into special appreciation periodically, but the fact is worth mentioning at least. Such a period of interest seems to have recurred for the Apocalypse or Book of Revelation."

—Northwestern Christian Advocate.

"A recent revival of interest in this book brought about by him (Mr. Hughes) and others, is timely; for its aid is needed in the work that is now upon the Church. It would give a new conception to the whole program of Christianity."

—The Christian Evangelist, St. Louis, Mo.
"Peter was the first actor in the first stage of Apostolic Christianity, and fulfilled the prophecy of his name in laying the foundation of the Church among the Jews and Gentiles.

"In the second stage he is overshadowed by the mighty labors of Paul. He is chosen by the Roman Communion as a special patron saint, and as the first Pope. He is always named before Paul. To him most of the Churches are dedicated. Paul was a chief actor in the second stage of the Apostolic Church, the Apostle of the Gentiles, the founder of Christianity in Asia Minor and Greece, the emancipator of the new religion from the yoke of Judaism, the herald of evangelical freedom, the standard-bearer of reform and progress.

"His Epistle to the Romans is little read and understood by the Romans, even to this day; his church lies outside the Eternal City, while St. Peter's is its chief ornament and glory.

"In the sixteenth century he celebrated a real resurrection, and inspired the Evangelical Reformation. Then his
Epistles to the Galatians and Romans were republished, explained, and applied with trumpet tongues by Luther and Calvin. Then his protest against Judaism, bigotry, and legal bondage was renewed, and the rights of Christian liberty asserted on the largest scale.

"Of all men in Church history, Saint Augustine not excepted, Martin Luther, a prophet of freedom, has most affinity in word and work with the Apostle of the Gentiles, and ever since, Paul's genius has ruled the theology and religion of Protestantism. . . . As the Gospel of Christ was cast out from Jerusalem to bless the Gentiles, so Paul's Epistle to the Romans was expelled from Rome to enlighten and to emancipate Protestant nations in the distant North and far West.

"St. John, the most intimate companion of Jesus, the apostle of love, the seer who looked back to the ante-mundane beginning and forward to the post-mundane end of all things, and who is to tarry till the coming of the Lord, kept aloof from active part in the
controversies between Jewish and Gentile Christianity. He appears prominent in the Acts and the Epistle to the Galatians as one of the 'pillar apostles,' but not a word of his is reported. He was waiting in mysterious silence with a reserved force for his proper time, which did not come till Peter and Paul had finished their mission. Then, after their departure, he revealed the hidden depths of his genius in the marvelous writings which represent the last and coming work of the Apostolic Church. John has never been fully fathomed, but it has been felt throughout all the periods of Church history that he has best understood and portrayed the Master, and may yet speak the last word in the conflict of ages, and usher in an era of harmony and peace."

—Philip Schaff.

"In the Synoptics we have the condition of entrance into the kingdom—a childlike spirit, faith, repentance, and obedience; in St. John (the Gospel) we have the spiritual birth by which
alone these requisites are possible. In the Synoptics we have the parables of the kingdom; in St. John we have the inmost sense of those parables spoken directly to the soul in words of which Christ himself says, 'They are spirit and they are life.' In the Synoptics we have the supremacy of Christ's example over men's hearts; in St. John we have the supremacy of Christ's teaching over men's minds.

—Henry Van Dyke.
CHAPTER II.

PETER, PAUL, AND JOHN.

The supremacy of mind stands above these ages. Its great types have as true succession through generations as the created works of God in the world of matter, a natural law in the spiritual world. Jacob and Esau are still with us; Jacob in our cities, the tradesman familiar with every artifice for gain; and Esau, "his hand against every man," is the cruel, reckless slayer of Jacob's spiritual heirs, whose cries still go up to God from Armenia. Christ distinguished his apostles by names suited to their personal characteristics and to their respective places and offices in his kingdom and they themselves comment on each other's dispositions and acts.

There clearly stand above these Christian ages three great types of Christianity—the Petrine, the Pauline and the Jo-
hannine. These were distinguished as the “Pillar Apostles.” When Paul wrote that Peter, James, and John seemed to be “pillars,” such indeed they were; but time changed, and James drops from history, leaving no stream to represent his personal qualities, and Paul becomes a pillar—in fact, next to Peter, and second in place and time. Peter stands over the papal world as Paul stands above the Protestant world, with John yet to speak. These were witnesses and disciples of Christ, with different powers of discernment and of speech and of action, and, taken from different points of view, had different experiences, and have left their different personal characteristics stamped upon their works.

Peter, the inexorable Hebrew, saw and acted from favoritism, Paul from Gentile equality, and John from universality. Paul testifies to the resurrection as an apostle and a witness that “Christ was seen of Peter, then of the Twelve. After that he was seen of about five hundred
brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles; and last of all he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time.” But times changed. Peter, at first chosen to go to the Gentiles, had become the apostle to the circumcision, and Paul had been charged with that commission and honored it. He said he was born “out of due time” to do a work which Peter could not, and he could say at the zenith of his power, “Last of all he was seen of me also;” true at the time spoken, and true till the day of his death. But later by a quarter-century, another—John—might have repeated these words of himself: “Last of all He was seen of me also, as one reserved unto a due season beyond all other witnesses to the last, to see and to testify to “the things which shall come to pass hereafter.”

If Luke had lived and continued to write the Acts of the Apostles to the end
of the century, he would have shown Peter to be the foremost apostle at the beginning, confined to a doomed nation by his personal disqualifications for the larger field, Paul the chief actor in the middle in labors more abundant among the Gentiles, and John the crowning glory and power at the close of the Apostolic Church, teaching all nations and all ages in the larger light of the new conditions of the Church and the world.

Peter could not grow with the growth of opportunity. It required an apocalypse of a great sheet let down from heaven filled with living creatures, and a command to “rise, slay, and eat,” to teach him the greater Gospel—the spirit explaining the Revelation to mean that “God is no respecter of persons,” and that the “Gentiles should receive the good news, as well as they;” and yet he failed to accept the opportunity and to practice this larger freedom which it brought to him.

Paul had an apocalypse on his way to Damascus, and a sudden light surrounded
him and a voice from heaven, which said: “I send you hence to the Gentiles.” After this he was caught up to the third heaven to Paradise in vision, and “heard un-speakable words, which would not be lawful for him to utter.” But times changed, and progress brought a time when that which he could not then utter should be spoken; a time beyond his visions and revelations, beyond his ministry and suffering, beyond his stripes and imprisonments, beyond his tumults and labors, his watchings and fastings; a time when the clearest-minded and serenest of Christ’s apostles should receive all the revelations and all the promises of God in one mighty drama of the fall and rising again of the human family, purified and then glorified.

Peter having inquired of Christ concerning John, “What shall this man do?” was answered, “What is it to thee if he tarry till I come?”

Paul’s regret of being the last witness “born out of due time” was to be re-
lieved of its singularity by John, who had been among the first with Christ, and was now to be the last to witness his majesty. The truest and deepest thought of Christ's kingdom and coming was yet "dead as a stone," and to be "struck into fire" "last of all." Primacy merely in time, which stood so high in Peter's mind, proved unessential to the apostleship, for Paul was second to none, though he knew not Christ in the flesh. It is the true glory of the New Testament witnesses that they tell us without disguise the faults of the followers of Christ.

Peter's personal characteristics are open and striking. He was the swordsman among the disciples of peace, and used the blade to strike one of the emissaries sent to arrest his Master, for which away the sword. Peter resented Christ's proposal to die that he himself might live. He was an ardent but blundering follower, and asked that he might walk on the water to join his Lord, and was permitted; but doubt quickly arose above his
faith, and he began to sink. He confessed the Messiahship of Jesus and was blessed for it, and in the same conversation was rebuked as an enemy and offender, and bidden to "get behind me, Satan." He was the subject of Christ's greatest warning and prayer, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." He pronounced the death sentence on Ananias and Sapphira. He cruelly denied his Lord, and warmed himself at the enemies' fire while the trial was going on, and then repented and wept. He heard the news of the resurrection as an "idle tale," and ran with John to the tomb, and was outrun by him; but when he came, plunged into the tomb, it being empty. Had Christ been there, the conditions would have been reversed. John would have gone in and laid his head upon his bosom, and Peter would have remained on the outside; for a little bravado was the natural reaction of conscious cowardice and
guilt. Yet Peter was one of that inner circle of three disciples—Peter, James, and John. He was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He witnessed the transfiguration and the suffering in the garden, and for a time was the chief and leader of the disciple band. He held the leadership in the great commission to “preach to all nations,” and he received a countermand to wait at Jerusalem “till ye be endued with power from on high.” But he tarried so long a time that it required persecution to drive the gospel to the nations, and even then “all were scattered abroad from Jerusalem except the apostles.” But Peter did not entirely wait for the day of Pentecost to begin to exercise his primacy. He stood up and spoke, and said they should choose another apostle to take the place of Judas, the traitor, an office Christ had reserved to himself to supply. The importance Peter attached to this substitution and to the number twelve was strained, unless we count out both Judas and Matthias as apostles. He
uttered the first dogma of apostolicity, when he said that an apostle “must be chosen from one of those who have companied with us from the baptism of John the Baptist.” That was refuted when Christ called Paul, who had not companied with them, and also by a direct appointment, which was cried down as “too late” and as “born out of due time.” The very method which Peter proposed and carried on, that his friends should take the liberty to choose two from among those who had been witnesses of Christ’s ministry, and then pray to God to make choice between them, and give direction to their ballots, has a somewhat Petrine and premature appearance. But Peter is not entirely divested of error, even after Pentecost; for he does not yet understand the scope of his commission, that the Gentiles are to be fellow-heirs of Jesus Christ without the law; and hence his corrective apocalypse of the sheet let down from heaven. His error crops out again so that Paul had even to reprove him at
Antioch for dissembling about this matter. The doctrine of the conditions of apostleship and method of choosing, etc., which Peter announced at the election of Matthias, who left no record of apostolic labors commensurate with the gravity and ceremony of his appointment, must have had a great influence in the hands of Peter's friends in challenging Paul's right to the apostleship; and yet he filled the very world with vast activities, justifying the call which he had received direct from Christ. Here we note the change by the ongoing of time. The earlier circumstances and opinions of the disciples must not mislead us to disregard the middle and later conditions that followed and brought important changes in the life and work of believers. Though Paul seemed belated in beginning, he yet made a higher and broader ground for believers to stand upon, and the faith grew mightily. Peter could not act becomingly in the freer Church at Antioch, and it excites pity to see the noble Paul dwarf his larger
faith to conciliate Jewish prejudice by taking a vow and having his head shaved at Jerusalem, upon the advice and urgency of Peter's friends, to conciliate the Judaizing element.

These two apostles stand for two different conceptions of Christ, which were destined to produce under the circumstances two widely diverse civilizations. Peter was tenacious of his priority and the distinctions of his apostleship. He is at pains to mention it openly in the heated debate at Jerusalem over the Gentile question that "God made choice among us at the first that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the gospel and believe." Yet his field of operation was to "the circumcision." Peter's Church became alienated from the general Church and perished, and Jerusalem itself fell in the year 70 A.D., and that type of Christianity fell, to rise again upon the Tiber in the city of Romulus, where a long succession of Popes should claim to be Peter's successors, should use the carnal sword,
should claim to carry the keys and to wear the triple crown, should claim Peter as the foundation-stone, should claim to stand in Christ’s place, and, by so doing, deny him more than did Peter in his supreme claim to headship. There Peter’s legalism, his primacy, and his authority assumed, reappeared with all that was bad in Peter’s blasphemy and blunders, coupled with Roman legalism and pagan superstition under the dome of St. Peter’s Cathedral in the pretenses of Popedom. Peter’s faults were most apparent and most easily followed and perverted into a false and bastard religion; and as the name of St. Paul is more seldom used as the name of a Roman Church, so Peter’s name is little, if ever, used for a truly evangelical Church.
CHAPTER III.

PAUL.

Paul is the champion of liberty and of faith. His personal characteristics were boldness and confidence, supported by a vigorous conscience and great zeal. His acquaintance with Christ was from a very different point of view. He brought with him a different disposition and training. The message he gave us of Christ slept as "dead as a stone" till the reformers "struck it into fire." A great change followed. Out of that vision which Paul had on his way to Damascus came his wondrous conversion, his manifold ministry, and of recent years a vast Pauline library, a rich legacy to Christendom.

The Protestant Reformation is the light that came to the world through Paul’s resurrection. It has renewed and continued the battle for liberty of conscience and purity of personal faith, but
persecuted by the false claimants to apostolic succession.

Protestantism is a protest. The Reformation is the reverse side of Romanism, and Romanism is narrow and rigid. The limits to that controversy in the first century reappeared in the sixteenth. The hard, narrow limit of the pettifogger can cut the wing of the orator and the prophet, and cramp the greatest mind to its own confined limits. The Reformation has suffered from these limits. It has so mightily emphasized liberty as to place atheism on equal grounds with faith. The fruit of this condition is a state of Christendom described as intermediate; a compromise between Christianity at the lowest and at its highest expressions.

"Society inexorably holds at bay two classes, those who would attack it and those who would defend it."
—Victor Hugo.

"Society puts two kinds of men in jail, those who are not good enough, and those who are too good."
—Wendell Phillips.
And the road to promotion in Church and State seems most accessible to those who are outwardly fair enough to please the good, and inwardly foul enough to please the bad. Of the onesidedness of our view of Christianity, Henry Van Dyke says: "One reason of this one-sidedness lies in the fact that we have hitherto been looking almost entirely to the first three Gospels as the source of our knowledge of the kingdom of heaven, but the Fourth Gospel, if indeed it be, as the best modern scholars say it is, the most faithful image and memorial of Jesus that any man could produce, must be no less important in the light which it throws upon this controlling idea of the mind."

But as John was a silent witness to the heated controversy of the first century, speaking not a word till near its close, so has he been a witness nearly silent during the long struggle between these two types of Christianity in the Protestant age. If John's Gospel was written long
after the death of Peter and Paul, it certainly shows a riper and richer view of Christ and of the Church's inward and true meaning. The present world-wide cry of "back to Christ" must not make the mistake of too partial and exclusive account of conditions and impressions at any one stage in the progress of the first century development; certainly not of the earliest stage. Such belated disciples were found at Ephesus, who knew only the baptism of John. Others there may have been who never heard the gospel, only according to the seventy sent out two by two.

The phrase "Old Jerusalem Gospel" is often too Petrine in spirit, just as "Faith alone" is too Pauline. "Going back to Christ" must receive him where he is freest from crude and prejudiced representations, and that place is in his own revelation of himself "last of all" through John, his reserved witness, who presents him as the "Word," as the "Alpha and the Omega," the faithful Wit-
ness, the First-born from the dead, the Prince of the kings, of the earth "the Son of God." The crudeness of Peter's understanding at the first and Paul's succession to the larger place in Church history at a later period, and the fragmentary character of the Acts of the Apostles by Luke, where the story ends before John had come into prominence, and the manifest change in the current ideas of the coming kingdom at the earlier and at a later period, must all be taken into the account to get a full, round, and true view of the Christ of all centuries. The prevalence of the Jew and Gentile controversy left us a one-sided view of Christianity, needing a balance sheet to be presented by John after Jerusalem had fallen and Jewish persecution had been broken.
CHAPTER IV.

JOHN.

John, contemporary with all that made the first century most eventful, his life was the compass of its tragic scenes and the best exposition of its inner meaning.

John is seen in two phases of character corresponding to two epochs in Christian development; that is, before Jerusalem fell, and after. In the first we see him the ardent youth, and in the second the serene old man, the middle being lost from view.

John, disciple of the Baptist, brother of James, fishing companion of Simon, Rock, son of Zebedee and Salome, son of Thunder, Boanerges, son of Mary by adoption, and by the last will and testament of Jesus from the cross.

In the second period we see John, the disciple of love, the bosom friend, guardian of Mary; John, the silent stu-
dent of two worlds; John the disciple prophet, John the "Pillar Apostle," John the "Elder," the Seer, the Scribe; John, the exile in tribulations and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ; John, the prince of satirists, first in the wilderness, where he heard the Baptist denounce the sins of Herod, and last with Christ in Patmos, where he denounces the emperors of Rome as Dragon, Satan, Serpent, and Devil; John, the tongue of fire suppressed till all other voices were hushed in death and the Church had but one ear, and the Powers of Darkness but one enemy; John, Valedictorian of the Apostles, of the Church, and of the Century, speaks above the storm of controversy over forms and ceremonies, above legalism and materialism, of that which is vital in all time.

"John certainly was the most gifted and the most favored. He had a religious genius of the highest order. Purity and simplicity of character, depth and ardor of affection, and a rare faculty of
spiritual perception and intuition were his leading traits, which became ennobled and consecrated by Divine Grace.

"He heard more and saw more but spoke less than the other apostles. He observed the deepest sayings of Christ which escaped the attention of others; and although he did not himself understand them at first, he pondered them in his heart till the Holy Spirit illuminated them. Mary must also have aided him in gaining an interior view of the mind and the heart of his Lord."

—Philip Schaff.

Peter had for his scribe Mark, who gave us Peter's Gospel. Paul had Luke for his companion and biographer, but John belonged to two generations, and so has an autobiography later than the character sketches given at the first by his fellow-disciples in the Synoptics. They present us with Boanerges, a rustic of Galilee, with the rugged topography of his hill country stamped upon him, and the spirit of the Maccabees bursting out
in patriotic and devotional impulses, even to requesting of Jesus that he might command fire from heaven to come down and consume the inhospitable Samaritans, as Elijah had done in the same place. He was rebuked and given a name that described his hasty temper, as thunder that warns us of lightning and tells of storm.

Mark reveals to us John’s jealous disposition in telling us that he took it upon himself to forbid one from casting out devils, “Because he followed not with us.” Luke shows us John’s early temper of vindictiveness in the account he gave us of his request to be permitted to avenge the people of Engannim with devouring fire from heaven, and Matthew gives us the story of John’s ambition when he aggravated his fellow-disciples by scheming for place and requesting to sit upon his right hand or upon his left in his kingdom.

We get none of these glimpses of his earlier character from John himself, but they make it certain with these flash-
lights we identify a man of true metal and force, and by no means the effeminate person some have imagined.

We seem to miss all this virility in his later years, but very far from it, in fact; it is changed into a vast and colossal satire in his poem of Patmos, where he presents a mock of true religion in the monstrous absurdity of a trinity of dragon beast and false prophet simulating the offices of Salvation in a crushing burlesque. But John was also silent, gentle, shy, and thoughtful. The later view of John comes from himself in this rather covert and incidental way; it is an autobiography that can be read in the dim tracery that runs through his Gospel and Apocalypse as delicately as the track of the evening star upon the placid face of the sea. John does not call himself by any of the titles or offices which have always been the source of so much strife and trouble in all the Petrine and Pauline Churches till this hour. How unlike to Peter, who was ever so ready to show his
authority, if he even kept within its bounds, and who in his accredited letters gives all his titles, "Simon Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ." John was not forced or driven, as Paul was, into claiming to be an apostle against Judaizing contradiction, for Paul twelve times expressly declares himself to be an apostle of Jesus Christ; but John, whom Paul calls a "Pillar Apostle," never called himself an apostle in all his five books, but is content to allude to himself in the third person as "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

John was engaged in none of the strife over the law and the ritual which separated Jerusalem from Antioch. When Paul rebuked the divisions in the Church, he said, "Some are of Paul, and some are for Apollos and some are for Cephas" (Peter), but there was no sect following John. In his Revelation, John describes himself as "I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation and the kingdom and patience of Jesus..."
John's Place in the Christian Economy.

Christ;” and in his letters, one of which is the only letter in the New Testament addressed to a woman, he only calls himself the “elder,” or old man, which likely led to the mistake that there was another person called the “elder John.” It was in giving us the truest picture and representation of Christ that John also gave us the truest of himself. Boswell, in writing the best biography ever given of any man, not only made us see Johnson in clear light standing before us lifelike, but gave us also a most interesting view of himself, an unintended and unconscious autobiography. It is in like relations to Christ, and in this kind of reflected light, we are enabled to see John himself with delight, though a sky mist enshrouds his supreme genius by its excessive heights. But neglected and disregarded during the long sway of Protestantism, as Paul was during the long reign of Popedom, John is just beginning to be understood.

But even now, when we contend for “the Bible, and the whole Bible,” we
scarcely mean to include the Revelation of John; and when we claim "we speak where the Bible speaks, we mentally reserve this crowning glory of all Divine communication; and when, even in the utmost awe of God's Word, we profess to be "silent where the Bible is silent," we know that we are silent also where it is loudest with voices and trumpets and hallelujahs, and richest with promises and praises.

We even ascribe this book to a strangeness or weakness in John, if not to a mistake; and yet he himself lays it directly upon Christ. When we say we "make Christ's teachings our guide and discipline," we scarcely include this book as containing either precept or example. In Peter's Apocalypse of the wide-spreading sheet let down from heaven we are taught that the Jews and Gentiles are brought to the same plane before God.

In Paul's Apocalypse on the road to Damascus we see the purpose of that
vision committed to a special apostle to be carried out in the world, where Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free, are to be one in Christ; but in the vision of Patmos we see all the saints of all the ages dwelling in one commonwealth, with God ruling over them.

Peter met the wants of Judaism, Paul of Gentilism, but John the wants of all nations, all tribes, all peoples, and all tongues, for all times.

Peter carried legalism to the highest point in the Church, Paul carried faith to the highest faculty in the mind of man, and John carried love to a climax in the highest attribute of God. But they were all accused of mystery, as was their Master, of whom they had demanded, "Why speakest thou to them in parables?" On the day of Pentecost, when Peter declared the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, "They marveled and said, How hear we each one in his own native tongue?" and some said, "These
men are drunk.” Peter himself accuses Paul with mysticism: “Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written some things hard to be understood;” and as for John, he continues to be charged with mysticism through these centuries. He alone, of them all, gives a denial of the charge, and explains the greatest mystery. He says, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life.” Here is realism. It is from John the Mystic. He is poet and realist and satirist superb.

Twice two is equal to four; that is exact, is scientific, is mathematical; but twice two trillions is equal to what? That no one ever saw, touched, handled or counted; but it is true, is mathematical; but it is also mystical, is also vague, is also transcendental, because it is beyond our experience, that is all.
Such was John. He is simplest; he is profoundest; at the base, where we see and know things perfectly simple, at the top, where we hope to see even as we are seen; infinite, inscrutable, inaccessible, sublime.
CHAPTER V.

JOHN AND JESUS.

The first century is spanned by a double compass, John and Jesus. The advent of Jesus to the home of Mary was about four years before our reckoning; and his advent to John in Patmos was about four years before the close of the century. Across this century we trace them; but Christ was absent for near seventy years, and for about the same period John was nearly silent to history. Bethlehem unites with Patmos; the Cross made them brothers, sons of Mary, and unites them at the cave. Christ is absent, and returns. John remains, and fills the most eventful life ever experienced by mortal man, and meets Christ at the end of the century. What an experience had this John! Two of his leaders had been slain, John the Baptist and Jesus the
Christ. His own brother, James, had been beheaded, and at the time of his last writing Peter and Paul had been dead a quarter century. He must have been born under Augustus Caesar. He outlived Augustus and Tiberius and Caligula and Claudius and Nero and Galba and Otho and Vitellius and Vespasian and Titus and Domitian, Roman Emperors in succession, if not also even Nerva and into the reign of Trajan. A contemporary of John the Baptist and a disciple of his fiery denunciations of sin in the wilderness, to solitary meditations among the rocks of the Ægean Sea, he passed through a longer and greater school of training than was ever allotted to any other single person on earth. No wonder tradition thought he could not die.

The story of the Magi who visited the cradle of Jesus may have been told to him or sung as a lullaby when he lay upon his mother's arms. He knew the life of Peter and of Paul from their beginnings.

He witnessed the changes in the
Roman Government, with the rise and fall of emperors. He knew of the fall of Jerusalem and of the Jewish nation, and the bitter anguish of her desolation. He knew of the dispersion of Peter's Church and of its suffering, and of Peter's and Paul's martyrdoms. He had witnessed the change from the earlier Petrine Judaizing form to the broader base of Paul, and himself had gone to Asia Minor to oversee Paul's work, and to face new dangers to the Church. He had passed through bitter persecutions and was now an exile in tribulation under Domitian's cruel edicts; and at the end of the century, in which the most antagonistic forces that ever came into collision on this earth had filled the world with bloodshed and commotion, he, the serenest man in all the world, sat down to write the greatest book.*

Of all circles about Christ, he belongs to the innermost, "circumcised

*See the author's work, "Mystery of the Golden Cloth."
the eighth day of the stock of Israel, a Hebrew of the Hebrews," as Paul was; and he was of the first disciples, an apostle, a pillar apostle, belonging to the inner circle who stood nearest to Christ—Peter, James, and John—and he the innermost of this inner circle. He was taken into his Lord's own secret when, at the Last Supper, Peter beckoned him to ask Jesus who it was that should betray him, and was told in a whisper, "He to whom I give the dip." He alone followed the Master into the palace of the high priest and into the Roman prætorium and to the cross, where the Lord spoke and conferred upon him the care of his mother. There he stood with the holy women, and saw Jesus expire, classed with brigands. His home in Jerusalem was a place of refuge for the scattered disciples. There the first news of the resurrection was broken on earth. Soon after the day of Pentecost he disappears from history, and then a long silence stretches over his life and labor.
Not only may we ask, What would such an eventful century do for such a man as he? but even more, What might his silent years have done for him? Moses had a long silence before God. The Master passed through such silent years from the age of twelve till he began to preach. Paul, after his conversion, went into Arabia three years, and then to his own native city of Tarsus for about five more years—in all, about eight silent years; but John drops from our history into silence for a longer period than either. How much of that quality of the infinite he possessed came out of this silence with God, we know not. But all that he wrote about Christ is pitched to the highest key. The genealogy of Jesus, which Matthew the publican is at pains to trace on the royal line from Abraham down to Mary, and which Luke the physician traces upward on the physical line from Joseph to Adam, John does not notice, but strikes into the antemundane, into the essence, and says, "In the begin-
ning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

When the other evangelists give the Great Commission, you think of the men who bore it, and of the strifes about its provisions for the nations; but John says, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life,” raising it above the accidents of time and of place to all men in all ages, and coming direct from God.

Peter was forewarned of his fate.

“When you were young you used to put on your own girdle and walk wherever you wished, but when you have grown old you will have to hold out your hands while some one else will put on your girdle and take you where you would not wish.”

This he spoke, signifying by what death he should glorify God. Paul was forewarned of his fate. “And when he [Agabus] was come to us, he took Paul’s girdle and bound his own hand and feet,
and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles;" and John was foretold of his future in answer to the question Peter asked of Jesus: "Lord, and what shall this man do?" "What is that to thee, if I will that he tarry till I come?" Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die. Yet Jesus said not unto him, "He shall not die," but "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

The truth at first began to be spread by persecution by the evil exorcists of truth, but at the close by the trained and reserved prophet John, who spread it abroad for the ages.
CHAPTER VI.

JOHN, THE AUTHOR.

"John's writings are the storm-center of modern religious controversy."
—Richard Moulton.

"I should place among the most prominent of John's peculiarities the tendency to group his thoughts around certain great central truths. . . . The apostle's mind penetrates to the heart of things. . . . It is contemplative, mystical, emotional, but not in the sense of being vague. . . . His expressions illustrate a mode of thought which it is extremely interesting to follow out, and one which has fascinated many of the profoundest minds of Christendom. All John's religious ideas are contained in a few elementary principles which are never lost sight of."
—Geo. B. Stephens.
"St. John's style is absolutely unique, supremely original, and full of charm and sweetness. . . . Unlike any other author, sacred or profane. . . . Under the semblance of extreme simplicity it hides unfathomable depths."
—F. W. Farrar.

"John's style may be called logical mysticism. . . . He chooses a theological position, and elaborates it by his Gospel. . . . His prologue, once its peculiar form is caught, may be called clear in spite of the profound matter with which it is dealing. . . . He records only the miracles that are spiritual signs. . . . Only those directly underlaid by spiritual facts."
—Richard Moulton.

"The author (John) thought in Hebrew, and wrote in Greek. But the gross violations of Greek grammar are not to be explained from ignorance. In the language of the Apocalypse, there is nothing of the happy-go-lucky style of a beginner. Indeed, it leaves the stamp of consistency and purpose. Al-
though he shows in a hundred passages, he knew very well the rules he has here broken; must have deliberately intended to break them, in order to give to the words of his greeting, a certain elevation and solemnity.” —Adolph Harnack.

“It is in John of Patmos, above all others, that the communication between certain men of genius and the abyss is apparent. In all other poets we guess their communication; in John we see it, and seem to lay a shuddering hand upon that somber portal. It is the door that leads toward God. In reading the poem of Patmos some one seems to push you from behind; the vague entrance dimly outlined arouses mingled terror and longing.” —Victor Hugo.

The quality of leadership in the Apostolic Church continued to be oratory and self-promotion, as mostly since. Paul, Apollos, and Peter had such following; but a deeper, a broader and profounder word remained to be spoken. It was
intrusted to the "bosom disciple" to sound its abysmal depths, and to tear away the veil of flesh, and to make the infinite and endless a realistic and present power on earth. If two adverse civilizations have sprung out of the differences between Peter's and Paul's conceptions of Christ, as understood, what may the future hold of a mightier civilization, if it turn to John to learn of the greater Christ, there to drink from the deeper, clearer well of Divine Truth?

John wrote five books. His authorship is the least doubted of any New Testament writer. No critic dare accuse his writings of being compilations. No other could reach these inner depths or touch these finer chords. His Gospel and his Revelation were written each at a single heat. They were written long after Peter and Paul had closed their ministries in holy martyrdom.*

*For a full exposition of the Apocalypse of St. John, the reader is referred to the author's work, "Mystery of the Golden Cloth; or, the Riven Veil."
Christianity had come to wear a new aspect, and a newly and more truly conceived view of Christ, and his Church is brought to view, in which the disciple's own words in the Gospel are often so closely blended with the words of Christ, and in the Revelation with the words of his Angel Guide, that we can not clearly distinguish which are John's words and which theirs. John wrote each time with a clear and definite purpose, carefully choosing his theme, and he leaves little to show the immediate pressure and heat that usually attended Paul's writings. He selected his matter with the greatest care, and it has none of the appearance of being struck off under the prompting of a passing impulse or for any special occasion or local purpose. He preserves a literary diligence over his writings. He closes his Gospel with a special mention of its purpose and its brevity, telling us that Jesus did many things in the presence of his disciples which are "not written in this book; but these were written that ye
might believe that Jesus is the Christ and, believing, you might have life through his name." He also closes two of his letters apologizing for their brevity and incompleteness; but when he closes the mightiest book which crowns the revelation of God to man, he pronounces it complete and inviolable, and avers a reprobation upon whoever shall assume to add to it or take from its words of prophecy.

Of the New Testament writers, Paul was the logician, John the theologian; Paul was discursive, John intuitive; Paul was polemical, John irenical; Paul was the orator, John the author. Paul reasoned from without, but always within an admitted circle reaching toward the inner and hidden meanings; John struck from the center outward, widening every circle and laying bare the innermost vital truth in its very essence. Paul remains more concerete; John rises from the concrete to the abstract and infinite and leaves no division line
between them. Paul was the educated apostle, John the intellectual. Paul’s method was analytic, John’s synthetic. Paul was perturbed like a reformer, John calm like a conqueror. Christ spoke to Paul out of heaven on the public road that led to Damascus. He whispered in John’s ear at the Last Supper among the chosen few in private. Paul laid most stress on Christ’s death, John most on his life. We identify Paul with Jerusalem and Antioch and Rome, but John with the wilderness beyond Jordan, with Golgotha, and with Patmos.

We think of Paul chiefly as moving in a world of thought which ended with the fall of Jerusalem and with Jewish persecution, which rendered all his chaffing controversy over the law as limited and partial and obsolete; we think of John as deliberately writing under the new conditions of ongoing time that arose after that epoch, and which looked to the newly-advanced stage of affairs and forward to the end of the world.
The prophecies which referred to the fall of Jerusalem received not any of his attention. That boding calamity, which so filled the earlier thought and animated the hopes of the believers and kept alive the Sermon on the Mount of Olives about "the desolation spoken of by Daniel," receives none of John's attention. It lay far in the dead past and had become history. The imminence of the Lord's return in the air with the trump of God, which so filled Paul's earliest letter, is nowhere to be found in John's writings. He does not even sum up the law of Moses into two commandments of love to God and to man, but gives one "new commandment" that reaches the profoundest depths and heights of Divine being and doing.

He tells us that "other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also will I bring with me, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." He is full in giving us the intercessory prayer of his Master for perfect unity, a thing impossible of being in Paul's time, as it has
been since his revival and supremacy; a unity pending the coming day when John shall again be heard. John wrote after a half century of acquaintance with the rise and progress of Christianity, and in his greatest book is passive, and is bidden to "write what he sees and hears," "the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him to show to his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John, who bears witness of the Word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ of all things that he saw."

Peter remained identified with the Judaizing believers, and his library is closely associated with bones and beads and candles. Paul remained identified with the Gentiles, and his great library is closely associated with the movements that opposed the papacy in the interests of faith and freedom. John has remained silent and slighted, but will be closely identified with Christ in the last times, and
his greater library yet to come, and now begun, will be closely identified with "Peace on earth and good will among men." The present most forward movements in the world of Christian thought are signs of this great change.
CHAPTER VII.

JOHN'S GOSPEL.

John wrote his Gospel in an entirely new atmosphere. It is in striking contrast to the Synoptic Gospels and is distinguished from them as "The Spiritual Gospel." The events in Christ's life which he records show clearly he observed Christ from a point of view entirely his own. He was by far the closest observer of men of any New Testament writer. He gives us with a single stroke of his pen some of the finest character sketches. We see more of the characters of Christ's followers through him than by all other means. He sets John the Baptist, and Andrew, and Nathanael before us with a striking vividness, and by a single touch, in the very pith of their personalities. He was a close observer of the effects which Christ's enigmatical sayings had upon the minds of his apostles, and he has given
us one of the finest groupings anywhere to be found. He presents a profound and dramatic scene by a group of five, in which Thomas and Philip and Andrew take part in prying into the meaning of the Lord's saying about his absence for "a little while," John himself, as usual, the silent observer. (John xiv, 4-22.) This saying of Christ's, which so bewildered the disciples at the time, reappears as a part of his satire on Satanic simulations in his Apocalypse. Nothing could throw a clearer light upon the state of their minds at that time, or show more clearly what an acute student John was of the deeper mind of his Lord and of the inner workings of the disciples' thoughts and dispositions. It also shows us how little John's companions discerned of his own nature that they gave us so little idea of him, and even that so very unlike the character we afterwards find him to be.

John regards the miracles of Christ as signs, and records none that are merely wonders, but only such as are underlaid
with a spiritual lesson. In this characteristic is seen the foundation of that dualism which pervades his Apocalypse. John, though supposed to be more mystical, does in fact give us more data, and describes more places and persons than either of the other Gospel writers. His style is so unique, no one can well be accused of imitating him with success.

He begins by laying the foundation of his theme in “The Beginning,” and then moves forward toward the end. His method of arrangement surprises one by the deeper and unexpected affinities of spiritual things which it discloses. His genealogy of Christ takes no account of Jewish blood or regal descent, nor other details of a temporal nature, but rises to his pre-existence at once. All he gives us of the detailed account of the birth of the Baptist is that there was a man “sent from God whose name was John.” His Great Commission makes no allusion to details, but only “that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that
whosoever believeth might have enduring life." This want of detail and ceremony and definition also prepares us to understand his Revelation, which disappoints those who expect to find definitions or doctrines which seem to have been raised by the other New Testament writings, or by the theological refinement of the schools. John gives a broader, and for that reason a fuller, idea of the kingdom than can be found elsewhere after the day of Pentecost. John is in closer accord with much that Christ expressed in the earlier accounts of his discourses.

All the writings and sayings of Peter and Paul after Pentecost are more ecclesiastical, while John's are more ecumenical, and whereas the synoptics differ from each other only in unessential and partly curious ways, John differs from them all broadly. He shows the power of the Hebrew literature to illustrate spiritual things without illustrating any personal prejudices. He never betrays any special fondness for fleshly Israel, nor predicts
their conversion, as Paul does, nor makes any account of the doing away with the Jewish dispensation. He is broader than even Paul, and seems at home equally in Jerusalem, Samaria and in Asia Minor. The distinctions he draws among believers are not between Jews and Gentiles, but between the different stages and relations in family life, as “I speak to your fathers” and “to you, young men,” and “to little children;” and while Paul speaks of us as being “adopted” into the family of God, John says we are born into it, one being a forensic conception, the other a family relation. John presents more domestic scenes, such as washing the disciples’ feet, the home of Lazarus and his sisters and his own, the home of Mary, etc. He gives us most of the sayings of Christ that were profound, the new life, and most about the Holy Spirit, and most that we know of the sayings and doings of Christ just before his death and after his resurrection.

He gives to the word “life” a new
content, and shows that it is enduring, and in present actual possession of the believer, and that condemnation is present to the wicked; and he separates these both here and hereafter by a deep chasm, and this in his Apocalypse greatly simplifies his dealings with these two classes, for they are not divided by an imaginary death line, but the righteous are always righteous and the vile continuing vile, both living and dead. The Father in heaven and his saints, living in this body and out of it, are his children, members of one family, unbroken by death. John's use of symbols, his teaching about the kingdom, and his notices of Christ's absenteeism, all reappear in his Revelation in different forms. Even his symbol use of "Seven" and of "Three" in the Revelation can be seen in his other writings. Our super-refined theological training, and our persistent quest for definition, and our analytical habit of thinking as against the synthetic, all combine to place us at a disadvantage in under-
standing John. Says Henry Van Dyke: “Definition is limitation, vision is freedom. Definition is dangerous. The process involves a peril; . . . . definition has an inherent tendency to substitute itself for the thing defined.” The purely spiritual and infinite element in John shows the adaptation of his teaching to the highest range of Christian life and happiness. “The time is coming, and now is here, when neither in this mountain nor at Jerusalem shall the true worshiper worship the Father. God is Spirit, and they must worship him spiritually, with true insight.”

An abundance of quarreling has been done over Paul and Peter’s definitions, very little over John’s. John’s Gospel is coming now into greater appreciation, and its thorough study is a very important assistance to understand his Revelation, which must yet waken the world as from the dead.
CHAPTER VIII.

GROWTH.

"First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." (Mark iv, 28.)

The zealous attempts to restore the miracles of healing, etc., in modern times come from having over-observed the earlier stage of Christianity in its formative state. Such partial and distorted view limits our liberty, our ability, and our usefulness. Not only is this true of opinions and prejudices, but of ordinances and customs. The change that then took place can be seen in no way so fundamental as the different confessions of Christ and in the growing power and scope of the Good Confession of his offices. Peter’s confession of Christ in Caesarea Philippi was a confession of his Messiahship, and developed into a Christianized Judaism, which found congenial soil in Jerusalem; and whatever
else it may have included, this was its dominant note.

Paul's confession had its dominant note in the higher and broader truth that Christ is more than the Messiah of Israel. He is "Lord of all." But the third Good Confession, the most inclusive and comprehensive, is that of John, who confesses him as "The Son of God;" hence the "Word," the "Alpha and Omega," the First and the Last. This is the most advanced conception of the Christ not yet entirely unfolded. The Messiahship was the characteristic and the climax of the early period, with Peter for chief actor. The characteristic of the middle period, where Paul was the chief actor, was the proffer of salvation to all nations; and the characteristic of the last period held the dominant note of Sonship of God in the Brotherhood of Christ for all men, and assures its certainty, and the means of its accomplishment, and was reserved for the last, where John became teacher.

To this Good Confession we look for
the highest meaning of what is meant by “Going back to Christ,” and of far greater importance at this hour, we learn what is meant by the needier cry of going “forward to Christ.”

Peter's confession looked to the conversion of the Jews as an immediate result, and it inquired, “Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” And in a sense the kingdom came on the day of Pentecost and embraced Jews only, devout men out of every nation who believed. In Paul's conception the kingdom was the body of the elect, called out from among both Jews and Gentiles comprising the Church of Christ, with Israel to be converted at some distant day when the veil shall be taken away, “when it shall turn to the Lord.”

But in John's all-inclusive confession there is no local or controversial coloring as to the Jew and Gentile controversy, and there is no reference to the conversion of the Jews, either as a present or future
hope. There is less of the idea of calling the saints to come out from the world, but more of the purpose of Christ to reign over the world by the scepter of love and fraternity. While it bears this wider range, it also more closely individualizes the closeness of the believers, presenting Christ not only as walking among the candlesticks, but as ever standing at the door of the heart of each believer, knocking and saying, “If any man will hear my voice and open unto me, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me.” Peter’s Gospel separated men into elect Jews, who should reign with Christ in Jerusalem. Paul’s Gospel separated both Jew and Gentile believers into the general Church, called out from both Jews and Gentiles.

Paul, who had in every instance received favors from the Roman officers, commanded believers to be obedient to them, and said they were the ministers of God to execute judgment upon evil-doers, for so they had been to him, and
he commanded prayers to be made for them; but at a later time, when they had turned against the Church with a bloody massacre and persecution, and had exiled the last surviving apostle, John tells us these Roman officers were devils, dragons, and serpents, and all the angels led by Michael make war upon them, and cast them out by command of God. They had become to John's Church what they had been to Christ, murderers.

Christ is to conquer them till the kingdoms of men become the kingdom of God and his Christ, and he shall reign over the world powers in a world-wide dominion for a thousand years. Petrinism, as revived in the Roman Church, raised Christianity in its crudest state interfused with the forms of Judaism and uncleaned from a pagan spirit.

Protestantism raised Christianity in its middle state, and has marked the spirit of controversy and of ongoing strife for personal liberty and personal faith. The regeneration seems to be rising from the
deep, calm feeling for the universal reign of peace and of brotherhood and the kingdom of God under the new commandment of which John is the exponent, "that ye love one another even as I have loved you," and that we overcome the world and the wicked one.

Peter could say he was an eye-witness of Christ's majesty and glory in the "holy mount." Paul could say, though he had witnessed Jesus on his way to Damascus, "seen of me last of all," he had "not yet attained," not yet apprehended, etc., but was pressing forward; but John, having written the Revelation of Christ, puts a limit and forbids adding to, or taking away from, the word of prophecy, as having attained and fully apprehended the finale of revelation.

The law of the kingdom's growth was announced by its founder as "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The advancing steps of his disciples' understanding was prophesied in these words, "Ye shall see greater
things than these;” ye shall see the heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” “Greater things than these shall ye do.” “The disciples did not understand this at the first.” “I did not tell you all at the first because I was with you;” “We know in part and we prophesy in part, but that which is in part shall be done away;” “I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it.”

That which may at one time or to one people be an indispensable furtherer of its good, may at another time become an insurmountable obstacle to its progress. “When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things.” The gospel which Peter and his friends could not receive at Jerusalem found a home at Antioch. It has been contended that even papalism was a blessing in the Dark Ages of heathen night. In the same manner of
speaking has Protestantism been a blessing in the dusky age that followed, but both are fragmentary and partial, and "that which is in part shall be done away;" that is, surpassed in fullness and breadth and overshadowing because of present living importance.
CHAPTER IX.

JOHN’S APOCALYPSE.

Romanism and Protestantism stand to each other as Hagar to Sarah, as slavery to freedom, as the law to the gospel. So stood Jerusalem and Peter to Antioch and to Paul in the middle of the first century; so stood Rome and the Pope of Wurtemberg and to Luther in the sixteenth, and so stand the Reformation and Paul to John and the Regeneration at the opening of the twentieth.

We approach the poem of Patmos with the air full of phantoms. “The vague entrance dimly outlined arouses mingled terror and longing.” In the dark, things have an abnormal size; in pitch dark, one size and shapeless. But darkness and vacuity are here, only because our eyes are withholden. We have hitherto followed the heavenly vision, not as Israel
followed the pillar of fire, but as the Egyptians on its dark side, and the gulf of doubt yawned and swallowed us at every attempt. We despair of the Revelation, yet it, more than any other book, urges on our attention and appeals to our wisdom. We think of it as of the must of the crypt, but it is the attar of roses. We accuse it of complexity, yet it is the honey of simplicity. We are gloomy in the face of its bright optimism. The fault is all our own. We are protestant and polemic, partial and doctrinarian; the Revelation is asseverant, irenic, and total. We are legal and microscopic; it is poetic and altoscopic. We proceed logically and circuitously, with misgivings; it proceeds theologically and sees and knows with certainty.

We chafe and palter with doubt; it raises us above the very processes that beget doubts. We are "lukewarm and wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." It is rich with "gold tried in the fire and with eyesalve and
with white raiments.” We are listening to the voices of the sects, to the institutions, to the newspapers. It says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open to me, I will come in and will sup with him, and he with me.” We two?

We take alarm at its strange magnificence, like a timid orphan, who, bidden to the home of a rich man, takes fright at the bronze lion which stands at the door, and runs away. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the word of this prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein.”
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"I have finished your book, and it has grown upon me to the end. Nothing on the subject I ever read satisfies me as it does. I can not escape the conviction that you have solved the problem of its right interpretation. Surely it will be a blessing to many. I shall commend it to the Presbyterian ministers next Monday."—Howard Agnew Johnston, D. D. (Presbyterian), Madison Avenue, New York.

"The author has evidently studied with great care this wonderful book. . . . His style is attractive, and the book is at least suggestive."—The Presbyterian Banner, November 24, 1898.

"The Mystery of the Golden Cloth; or, The Riven Veil," by J. S. Hughes, is by far the best work we have ever seen on the Book of Revelation."—Ind. Christian, November 15, 1898.

"This is an original study of the Apocalypse of St. John. The author, with his soul stripped of worldliness by an absorbing sorrow, sought complete communion with the Holy Spirit, and, by His aid, to discover the comfort and assurance involved in the last book in the Bible. Dr. Hughes has escaped the tether of literalism and the art of the fanciful adjuster of historical items to this and that fragment of the book. He has found the book no riddle, given to puzzle God's children—no narrow string of prophecies according with isolated after-events, but a book of truth, principles, and universal bearings; a book of assurance, promise, and comfort; a book true for the time written, true for the present, and true for all ages. It relates to the inherent antagonism between the kingdom of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of evil and worldliness. It is full of symbolism, but these symbols the writer of this volume does not find to be far-fetched and fanciful. Under his interpretation it becomes intelligible, helpful, practical, and comforting."—Michigan Christian Advocate (Methodist Episcopal) Detroit, Mich.

"Dr. Hughes has given me the golden key to the meaning of the Apocalypse. Under his guidance the most difficult Book of Revelation becomes translucent, and a joy and comfort to the hearer."—H. B. Townsend, D. D., Presbyterian Church, Elkhart, Ind.
"The world is indebted for the progress that has been made along almost every line of human thought to men who have thrown their hearts and lives into some particular subject, and sought to master its meaning and convey it to others.

"The author of this volume has made a special study of this wonderful book. . . . It is not a book thrown off at first hand without any cost to the writer, and, consequently, of little value to the reader. One can trace the results of mental labor and heart struggle as the author has sought to attain the true meaning of the book. . . . "The whole gospel history, according to his theory of interpretation, is reproduced here by John in symbols to greatly heighten the effect of the statement in mere words. . . . It is wonderfully interesting reading, and can not fail to greatly stimulate interest, not only in this book, but in the whole Bible, and in the great movements of history. We do not believe any one can afford to miss this book who has any special interest in the Apocalyptic literature of the Bible.

"We sincerely wish that this volume may be extensively read, believing that such reading and study will do much to increase faith in the inspiration of the Bible, and in the glory and perfection of the Christian system."—Christian Evangelist, St. Louis, Mo.

"One has only to read a few pages to be forced to confess that the author knows his task and is able to handle it. . . . We would caution any would-be critics in attacking his interpretation."—Christian Leader, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"A commentary on John's 'Revelation' which has the merit of considering the whole book with evident ardor of conviction and sincerity."—Western Christian Advocate, Methodist Episcopal.

"There can no longer be any doubt . . . that he is really giving a new way of reading these Scriptures, and throwing a most exquisitely-beautiful light upon their meaning."—Rev. Alex. Dodge.

"It is quite impossible even to indicate his method of interpretation here, but it is not fanciful nor grotesque nor forced, but dignified, reverent, and done solely with the desire to open new spiritual vistas before our human eyes."—The Christian Advocate (Methodist Episcopal), New York, Dec. 15, 1898.

"I am delighted with the book. It is as interesting as a novel. I could hardly find the time or place to lay it down. . . . So far as I can see, the theory explains all the phenomena, and this is the test of all hypothesis, both
in science and philosophy. The more I come to see what the story is all about, and that the numbers in the book are signs in which all the persons and principles in the great struggle are written, the more beautiful it all seems to me."—Rev. J. L. Parsons.

"Mr. Hughes is appreciative. His heart is in his exposition, and his exposition is heartening, enthusiastic, and comforting. Whatever else one has read on the subject, nothing else will quite take the place or do the work of this little appreciation. The author is consistent with himself and the Scripture he illuminates. He is wholly neither a preterist nor a continuist nor a futurist nor a spiritualist, but in certain respects he is all four of these. He has tried to place himself in precisely the position of St. John looking before and after. The story of Israel and the suffering Messiah of the world, the risen Christ and the Pentecostal baptism are shadowgraphs of the revelation of St. John. The author's cryptogram is excellent—not chronological but Christological. 'Our fault has been that of being too fond of the superficially religious, like our Lord's first followers, looking for signs in the personalites, localities, and times, instead of principles, essentials, and relations.'"—Northwestern Christian Advocate.

"This volume, according to our way of judging of the merits of a book, belongs easily to the front rank of the first class. The work has the merit of as near complete originality as it is possible to exhibit. We unhesitatingly commend it to our readers as the best book of which we have any knowledge on the Revelation."—The Worker, Pittsburg, Pa.

"The author has given much time and thought to the Book of Revelation. He loves it as Luther loved the Epistle to the Galatians, and is as familiar with every verse and word as he is with the letters of the alphabet.

"In his denunciations of oppression and corruption there is something of the old prophets; at other times he is as tender as the loving apostle. . . . There are passages of rare beauty and power."—Christian Standard, Cincinnati, O.

"There is in the author a touch of the Johannine genius, and it is clearly out of this affinity that this great interpretation of Revelation has proceeded. He has a profound, sympathetic insight into John's mind and spirit, and his way of looking at life and the world. When the author tells us that John has no shadings or gradations in his characters and principles, that men and things are either black or white, bad or good, either for the devil or for God out and out, he draws a good picture of John."—J. J. Haley.
"Probably no lecturer has created such an interest in this city as has the Rev. Dr. J. S. Hughes, of Chicago, who closed a series of seven lectures at the First Presbyterian Church yesterday afternoon. He spoke on the 'Book of Revelation,' and the church was crowded every night to hear him.

"It is said that the distinguished gentleman will make a return visit during the winter months. If so, he will be greeted with much larger audiences than during his recent visit.

"At the close of the lecture the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

"'We have listened with deepening interest to the lectures of Dr. Hughes on the Revelation of St. John, and we desire to thank him for the deep insight we have obtained, and the meaning of its prophecies; for the clearer view of divine truth given us, and for the glad hope awakened in our minds by the opening of the meaning of this work which has so long been a puzzle to us.'

"This was adopted after several short speeches, in which the different pastors expressed their satisfaction with the course of lectures now finished.

"The Ministerial Association adopted the following resolutions:

"'The Ministerial Association of Elkhart has heard the seven lectures by Rev. Dr. Hughes, of Chicago, on the Revelation of St. John, and the members wish to express in this public way their appreciation of the new views presented, and the satisfactory interpretation given to many obscure passages.

"'We believe that the interest in and study of the Apocalypse will be greatly increased by the additional light thrown upon the word.

"'We wish that a large number of Bible students in every community could be interested in these lectures.

"'Dr. Hughes is a safe and able expositor, avoiding all the dangerous 'isms' to which the one-sided study of the book has led men.

"'We have been surprised by the deep interest taken in the course by the large audiences which have assembled to hear the lectures, and the enthusiasm shown by those who remained after the close of the lectures to ask further questions concerning subjects slightly referred to.

"'We commend Dr. Hughes heartily to any of the Churches which desire to arouse deeper interest in the study of the Scriptures.'"—The Truth, Elkhart, Ind.

"LAGRANGE, ILL., February 14, 1897.

"Rev. J. S. Hughes, of Chicago, has given in my church his 'Seven Evenings with St. John in Patmos.' After hearing him and having personal interviews with him on the subject, a deep sense of gratitude and of duty requires me, not only to say that all my doubts of the
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intelligibility of the Apocalypse have vanished, but also to say to all brother ministers and others that Dr. Hughes has gloriously rescued the Revelation from the hands of quackery of every kind, and shows it to be the literary and spiritual wonder of the ages, the true Revelation of God, and the book most desired for the world's present need.

"Pastors may assure their people, without the least hesitation, that in these lectures there is everything to gain and nothing to lose—that the book is shown to be most orderly and constructive in arrangement, and the story is most fascinating and helpful."—H. A. Bushnell, D. D., Pastor Congregational Church.

"The Preachers' Association, at its last meeting, enjoyed a treat. It was an address by J. S. Hughes, of Chicago, on the 'Apocalypse.' The unanimous verdict was that this was the finest thing on this difficult subject that the members had ever heard. A unanimous vote of thanks was extended Brother Hughes, and a committee was appointed to arrange, if possible, to have his course of lectures delivered in Cleveland. He is delivering the lectures to the students of Hiram this week. He awakened widespread interest in this subject while here. A number of preachers have followed him to Hiram to take the course."

—J. H. Moharter (Presbyterian), Cleveland, O.
Institute of St. John.

The Institute of St. John is a new propaganda of the writings of the Apostle John, his Revelation being the leading attraction. The work of Mr. Hughes on this weird and proscribed book is a new departure, being a highly original and very interesting interpretation. The testimonials of the Church press and of evangelical ministers are very appreciative, and the more so when we think that they are given despite the prevalent cynicism as to there being any intelligibility to the Apocalypse.

The Institute is neither a popular series of lectures made up of snatches of hits and wits which one might take and sample for a single evening as a passing sensation, nor, upon the other hand, anything like a dry historical or theological lecture for the seminary; but a series of revelations entirely new, and of Oriental beauty, fascinating as the Arabian nights, delivered with chaste fervor in the best colloquial oratory, in a voice full of tenderness and spiritual power.

The course occupies not fewer than seven nights, one hour being devoted to opening and illustrating the literary forms and spiritual opulence of the meaning, and is followed by questions from the members and answers given in the form of institute work.

The deep interest manifested by the members in this new treatment is a surprise to most ministers, and is in wide contrast to some of the superficial methods of evangelization now current. The Institute, wherever held, has left the purest and deepest impression, with no reaction following. It is an instance in which truth exceeds fiction in attractiveness, and with no appeal whatever to the humorous, trivial, or sensational.

The Institute is not a series of lectures about the Revelation, but an actual disclosure of its rich treasures of wisdom and power.