

But is not the real crux of this passage in the words which follow, of which there can be no question that they refer directly to Peter himself, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven"? Dr. Hopkins holds that by proving the reference of "this rock" to be to Christ's deity, he has destroyed the foundation of the Romish claims. But if the Roman Catholic interpretation of the keys is to be left standing, it is doubtful if the basis of the claims has been very seriously shaken. This, however, does not enter into Dr. Hopkins' immediate purpose, and he does not touch that passage. But we may refer to an article of much greater power and elaboration than any of Dr. Hopkins' "Unwritten Books," an article in which the difficulty is keenly discerned and manfully grappled with. In the *Contemporary Review* for February, Principal Fairbairn, of Mansfield College, Oxford, writes on "Anglo-Catholicism and the Church." There he says that the only text which may seem to speak of peculiar official functions or offices as belonging to any of the Apostles is this saying to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." But he insists that the verse must be read in its connection. Peter had made his confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" on this rock, this truth confessed, His Church was to be built; and the confessor, the man who stood

by this truth, preached it, obeyed it, was as such to have the keys. It was not an absolute promise to an official, or to a man who holds an office, made because he held it, and to his successors, for of succession or successors there is no word; but it is a promise to a person who has made a confession, because of the confession which he has made.

Dr. Fairbairn strengthens his argument by calling attention to the startling saying to St. Peter in the very next paragraph of St. Matthew's Gospel. Because he rebukes Christ for prophesying of His death, St. Peter receives the awful rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" The saying, like the very different one which precedes it, is appropriate to the moment; "neither is absolute, nor significant of a permanent character, or inalienable office, or indefeasible function; but each is through and through conditional and relevant to the context. Peter, so far forth as he would dissuade Christ from His supreme act of sacrifice, is Satan, an enemy and tempter; so far forth as he confesses the highest truth as to Christ, Christ has committed to him the keys of the kingdom. Both must be conditional, or both absolute; but it were hardly reasonable to conceive Peter as through all time filling the incompatible offices of Satan and the keeper of the keys."

## The Office of the Ancient Jewish Priest.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM J. ADAMS, D.C.L., RECTOR OF ALL SAINTS', DORCHESTER.

THERE are few subjects in connection with Divine Revelation on which greater confusion prevails in the minds of Christians than the nature of the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, the analogy and relation which exists between them, and the distinctive characteristics of each.

This confusion is not a harmless one. It is fraught with practical consequences which affect the religious life and standing of the believer. For by reason of this want of a clear conception of these two "administrations" or "ministries," many Christians are being led away backwards into Jewish principles and doctrines and practices.

This confusion centres in the Jewish priesthood. Here it culminates, and from thence it wends its

way into almost every part of the Christian system. We propose therefore, in the present paper, to inquire into the nature of the office of the priest of the Old Dispensation; and, having ascertained what were *his* functions and their typical meaning, then in a subsequent paper to discuss their bearing upon the sacred ministry of the New Dispensation.

In the patriarchal age, and before the constitution of the Jewish economy at Mount Sinai, the father of the family was also the priest of the family. He only offered up the recognised sacrifices and conducted the religious worship of the household. Abundant instances illustrative of this will at once occur to the minds of our readers in the lives of the patriarchs.

At Sinai, however, the whole nation was consecrated to God, and every individual of that great family, now grown into a nation, was entitled to offer up the accustomed worship. The deed of consecration runs thus:—"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests*, and an holy nation" (Exod. xix. 4-8).

Notwithstanding, however, this priestly rank and office thus conferred upon the whole nation, it was subsequently enjoined by the Divine Lawgiver that for order and convenience, and as in no way prejudicial to the priestly character of the people at large, that one tribe should be set apart for the performance of the sacred rites. Henceforth the people only *brought* their offerings. The selected tribe offered them up. The family of Aaron was appointed for this purpose and divided into two classes—Priests and Levites. The former offered up the sacrifices, the latter attended to the general service of the tabernacle and temple, and, generally speaking, held a subordinate position. Nevertheless, the Levites were an essential portion of the priesthood. Their ministrations are in various places dignified and referred to under the same expressions as are applied to the priests. Thus in Deut. xviii. 7, compared with verse 5, we read: "If a Levite come," etc.—"then *he shall minister* in the name of the Lord his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, which stand there before the Lord. For the Lord thy God has chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for ever."

It is however with the "priest," and not with the "Levite," that we are now concerned. The word translated priest, is in the Hebrew כֹּהֵן (*cohen*). In tracing the use of this word downward from the time when it was first employed, and conferred upon the family of Aaron, we are confronted by the remarkable fact that constantly, in the Old Testament, the word is not limited to the sons of Aaron. It is also given to individuals holding high offices in the State, and given to them by virtue of these offices. That this is the case is evident from the fact that the term is applied to those who were not of the tribe of Levi. They were therefore not qualified to act as sacrificing priests, and yet they are called "priests."

One or two instances will, because of their clear and unmistakable nature, be sufficient for our purpose. Thus, in 2 Samuel viii. 18, it is stated that the sons of *David* were כֹּהֲנִים (*Cohanim*), and yet they were of the tribe of Judah, "as to which tribe," as the writer to the Hebrews says, and we

know, "Moses spake nothing concerning priests" (Hebrews vii. 14, Revised Version).

Again, in the same Book of Samuel (chap. xx. 26) we read: "And Ira also the Jairite was a *chief ruler* about David." Literally this is, "A cohen unto David." And, accordingly, this is properly rendered in the Revised Version was "priest unto David," and this is explained in the margin to mean "a chief minister."

Once more, in 1 Kings iv. 5, we read: "And Zabud the son of Nathan was *principal officer* and the king's friend." And this is rendered in the Revised Version correctly, "was *priest*"; and this, as in the former passage, is explained in the margin to mean "chief minister."

These passages prove conclusively that the term "cohen" does not, of and in itself, convey the idea and meaning of sacerdotal office and work. If it can be used, as we see it *is* used, both of civil officers and of members of the religious order, then the *essential idea* conveyed by it and belonging to it must be that of service and not of sacrifice.

Indeed, it is more than probable that the correct rendering of the Hebrew word כֹּהֵן is that of the margin, viz. "chief minister," and that this is the proper force of the word. And this interpretation of the term is authorised by Rabbi Jonah in his *Book of Hebrew Roots* (p. 310), where on this point he refers to the passages above quoted, and says that כֹּהֵן has the force of וִזִיר (*vizier*), namely "prime minister," the office having nothing whatever to do with sacrifice.

The term "cohen" then would seem to have been used indifferently both for secular and sacred offices, the idea underlying the word in both uses being that of *service*, and of a service which was *intermediary* between the governing power and the people. In its sacred use the governing power was God, and in its secular application the governing power was the king.

The sacrificial character of the "cohen" was not essential to his office but an accidental feature of it. It was not inherent in the word, or necessarily indicated by it. The term is applied to Melchizedek, of whom, notwithstanding, we read nothing as to his offering sacrifices. If he was a "priest," he was king and prophet too.

It is probably also in the sense of "chief minister," and not that of a sacrificing priest, that the term is used of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. In Ex. ii. 16 he is called "priest of Midian," *i.e.* cohen. And that the signification of the term thus applied to Jethro was twofold, *i.e.* both *civil* and *religious*, appears from the fact that the Targum renders it כַּבֵּשׂ, "headman of Midian."

To sum up, then, we find that an examination of the original Hebrew word, which we translate "priest," leads us to the conclusion that the essen-

tial idea properly belonging to it is not that of sacrifice but of service, and that the service thus designated may be of a civil character as well as religious or sacred; and that, in general, a careful study of the Mosaic institutions leads us to the following conclusions:—That both priests and Levites appeared before God as the servants of the people, rendering *their* service; offering *for them* *their* sacrifices; acting as their representatives, and leading them in the public worship of God. In fact, their office was one of wide and varied duties, and by no means limited to the performance of a routine ritual. They were the appointed juriconsults of the people. It was their province to adjudicate upon all controversies between man and

man. They were bound to explain the law in cases of trespass or injury; to decide cases of conscience; to settle disputed points concerning rites and ceremonies; and, in short, to perform the office of judges and of teachers of religion. And it is to these high duties of his office that the prophet Malachi so pointedly and solemnly refers when he says (chap. ii. 7), "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts."

After this survey of the comprehensive character of the office of the ancient Jewish priest we shall be prepared to take up in our next article, as we have already intimated, the relationship, if any, between it and the ministry of the New Testament.

## Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John.

BY PROFESSOR RICHARD ROTHE, D.D.

### CHAPTER II. 9-11.

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes."

Ver. 9. Up to this point John has not expressly mentioned the commandment of brotherly love; he could all the more readily take for granted that his readers would understand him, as they were well aware how in all his exhortations brotherly love was the Alpha and the Omega. If he presupposed on the part of his readers a knowledge of his gospel, he could be altogether without doubt in regard to this matter; for in connection with ver. 8 they must inevitably have recalled to mind John xiii. 34. He, therefore, now repeats the thought that the keeping of the commandments of Christ is the sure token of one's Christianity being real (ver. 3); he repeats it by substituting for the abstract notion of the commandment of Christ the more concrete notion of *brotherly love*. To be a Christian now appears to him as a "being in the light;" for he has just set forth the state of the Christian as one in which the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shining. Here *one's own brother* is not one's neighbour in general, but one's fellow-Christian. Here, seeing he is writing to Christians of their relation to one another (i. 7), he can from the nature of the case be speaking only of Christian brotherly love in the narrower sense (2 Pet. i. 7). The *hating* spoken of is not to be weakened into a mere "not loving," although there is an important truth in the idea that each lack of love is actual hate. Here, however, John,

with a definite purpose in view, sets love and actual hatred over against one another,—they are opposed to one another as light and darkness, which also form a direct antithesis. Of the middle stages between the two, he does not speak at all here. Upon the basis of the position laid down here, such stages naturally judge themselves in accordance, namely, with their greater or less approximation to the one or other of the two mentioned poles. According to Paul also, hatred is the principal vice of the non-redeemed world (Rom. i. 29 ff.; Titus iii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 2-4).

The state of being in the light absolutely involves brotherly love. Not only do we in the new light recognise brotherly love as a commandment that cannot be set aside, but that new light by its quickening brightness also awakens in us this brotherly love by an inner necessity. Its opposite—hatred of the brethren—is absolutely incompatible with living in that new Christian light. If the Christian hates his brother, he is still in the old darkness. John cannot conceive the light that has risen upon us in Christ otherwise than as a power awakening brotherly love in us. For that light is a ray of the eternal love of God, a ray that shines upon us in mercy; and therefore it must bring forth love in us. Moreover, it shows us our brother in a form in which he appears not only in need of our love, but also worthy of it. Hatred has essentially a