Surrey Collections.

WALL PAINTINGS IN THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY, GUILDFORD.

By J. G. WALLER, F.S.A.

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THE Series of Paintings on the vault of the apse to the north aisle of Saint Mary's Church, Guildford, unlike so many which have exercised our attention for a long time past, are of no new discovery, but were disclosed as far back as 1825. In 1838, they were described, and a solution proposed by my old friends Edward John Carlos, and John Gough Nichols, in the *Archæologia*, Vol. XXVII, p. 413. There are no two names which recall to me more reverent associations than those of the friends I have mentioned. Mr. Carlos was my master in archæology, and Mr. Nichols's services are well known to this Society. But, at the time they wrote, little or nothing was known of the popular religious art of the Middle Ages. Didron had but begun his researches, and Maury had not written at all; whilst, in this country, whitewash still covered most of the walls of our churches. Therefore it is not a matter of surprise that their attempted solution is inaccurate, nor have those who have followed them been more fortunate. Guesses have been vaguely made, always

an unsure process, for there is nothing more likely to deceive than attempts to find out the meaning of a subject without any principle to go upon: it is like a voyage upon an unknown sea, without rudder or compass. In fact, the subjects I am about to explain, are exceedingly obscure until the clue is obtained; and, at one time, I feared I must have confessed my ignorance, though not admitting the accuracy of the solution given by my friends. They are unique to my experience, and especially curious in the manner in which they are associated together.

The several works in which they have been noticed have thrown but little additional light on the subject. Mr. Parker, in his account of the church, *Archæological Journal*, Vol. XXIX, p. 178, adopts Mr. Carlos's solution, but explains one medallion in his own way, to which I shall have to direct your attention presently. In Brayley's *History of Surrey*, Vol. I, p. 352, again the same solution is accepted with one or two variations, which advance more nearly to the truth in the special subject noted. Here are illustrations given, not absolutely accurate and insufficient for a true rendering, but fairly showing the general arrangement, and perhaps indicating some details now gone or more obscure; on the other hand, omitting others which remain and which were not understood by the artist.

Mr. Carlos stated, that it was not known to what saint the chapel was dedicated, but that there was one in the church dedicated to St. John. He does not give an authority, nor does he say whether it be to the Evangelist or to John the Baptist. In Manning and Bray's *History of Surrey*, a chapel dedicated to St. John is mentioned as in the Will of John Jeffson in 1547, he directing that his body should be therein buried. Brayley's *History of Surrey* assigns it to John the Baptist, but without giving any reason. Amongst the paintings, there is but one subject that can refer to the history of John the Baptist, but there are three to that of the Evangelist; so, in the absence of evidence, I am inclined to think that the dedication must be

to the latter, or the reference in the above-named Will would have been more explicit. There were two guilds or fraternities, one of Jesus, the other of Corpus Christi, attached to this church, and it is just possible that the paintings, about to be described, might have been executed under their influence or of one of them.

In studying the whole group together, with those of the spandrils of the arch in front of the vault, it is obvious one must view them as one subject, viz., "The second coming of Our Lord in Glory;" for the centre of the composition on the upper part of the vaulting has the figure known as "The Majesty." But the associated medallions and compositions within them I have never before seen thus brought together. Nevertheless, this figure at least suggests the spirit of the whole, and if we do not see the prescribed order of angels, prophets, apostles, saints, &c., as is usual, and which is authoritatively given by Durandus in the *Rationale*, lib. i, we are led at least to surmise, that some illustrations of divine power, as manifested in the lives of the saints or otherwise, would here be found, and thus form an harmonious whole. Acting on this principle my researches have been successful, and, I believe, I shall now place before you a complete and accurate solution, though in one instance there is still some obscurity.

"The Majesty," a term of ancient use, is given to the figure of Our Lord seated within an aureole, holding up the right hand in act of benediction, in the other a book or orb. Mr. Carlos's description speaks of it as being here a book or table upon which is the Alpha and Omega, later describers have called it an orb. Both conventions belong to the subject, but, as it is not usual for the latter to have the monograms, I consider that Mr. Carlos is the most likely to be accurate; at present it is impossible to say what it is.

The chief authority for this subject is St. Matthew, ch. xxv. v. 31. "When the Son of Man shall come in his Majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit

upon the seat of his Majesty," &c.,[1] but other texts bear upon it and its various modes of treatment. The head of Christ has the nimbus, the aureole is coloured yellow, representing glory. He is in a white tunic ornamented, and a deep red mantle is cast over the right shoulder, and falls in folds over the knees, representing the royal purple, or as referred to by the text, "Who is he that cometh in dyed garments from Bosrah?" Two small figures of angels on each side of another face of the vault represent the heavenly host, thus cramped into a small space to make room for the series of subjects beneath. These I will now describe: They form a curious page out of the *Book of the Laity*, as developed in our country churches, illustrating the religious culture of our ancestors, for I do not doubt that these paintings acted as texts and were explained in sermons to the people. Commencing our reading of them from the right side of "The Majesty," the first that presents itself shows us a figure in a tub or vat tormented by an ugly miscreant using a pitchfork, a very usual instrument for such purposes in our mediæval paintings. The figure is youthful, and with hands conjoined in supplication is turned towards a seated figure of Christ, who gives the benediction with his right and holds a cross in his left hand in form similar to that of an archbishop. Reclining in front of the latter, resting on one hand as if in reflection or in sleep, is again a youthful figure in tunic and mantle.[2] By the side of this figure is a staff resembling in general shape that used by the arch-priest in some of the churches of Italy, or the *bourdon* of the pilgrim. As the rest of the subjects on this side are undoubtedly from the legend of St.

[1] Thus the Vulgate: in our version it reads: "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." It is a closer translation from the Greek. In the new version "holy" is rejected, thus following Griesbach's text, and agreeing with the Vulgate.

[2] Mr. Carlos calls this "Heavenly judgment," but his account cannot be for one moment accepted. Brayley's *Surrey* rightly suggests the true subject.

John the Evangelist, we are led at once to conclude that this is a brief illustration of the commencement. Here is St. John in the vat of boiling oil before the gate Porta Latina, at Rome, wherein he was placed by the command of Domitian, and whence he issued unhurt (unctus non adustus). Usually the saint is in a cauldron, under which is a fire, and the Emperor is present. Thus it is given in the Chapter House at Westminster. But it is to be noted that "dolium," the word used in the *Legenda Aurea*, more properly signifies tub or vat than a cauldron. It may be that the latter belongs to a later treatment. Christ giving the benediction is to exemplify his protection over the saint, by which he escapes the intended evil. It is to be remarked, that the figure of Christ alone has the nimbus wherever introduced, and the cross upon it, though extremely faint, yet is sufficiently clear to set all doubt at rest. The reclining figure must symbolise St. John at Patmos, whither he was banished, possibly agreeing with the text at chap. i. ver. 10, of the Book of the Revelation, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." (Fig. I.)[1]

The subject next to this, though belonging to the legend of St. John, is not here placed in its true chronological order; I shall therefore pass on to that which continues the story. "After the death of Domitian, the Evangelist returned from the isle of Patmos to the city of Ephesus, where he was received with much honour and rejoicing. When about to enter the city, Drusiana, a lady and disciple, who loved him and earnestly awaited his advent, died. Her relations, widows and orphans, said to him, 'St. John, behold Drusiana, whom we bring, who always observed your monitions, nourished us all, and greatly desired your coming, saying 'Oh, if I could but see the Apostle of God before I die. Behold, thou hast come and she cannot now see you.' Then he commanded them to set down the bier and loose the body, saying, 'My Lord

[1] The Society is also indebted to the Council of the Society of Antiquaries for the use of this and the following illustrations.

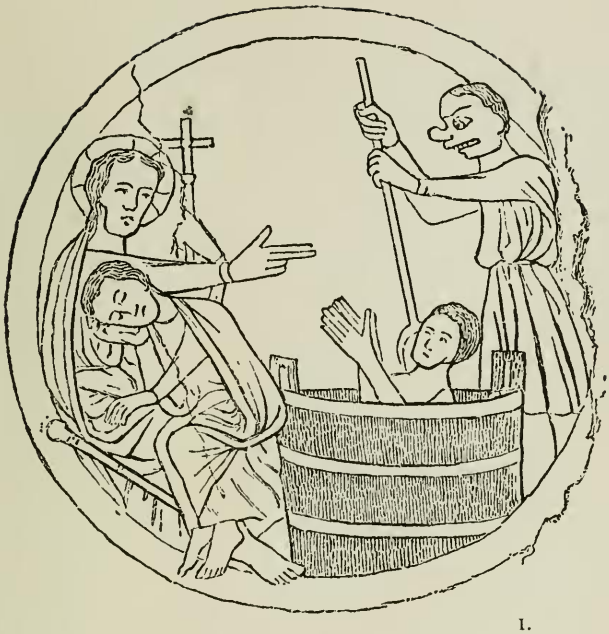
Jesus Christ raise thee up, Drusiana. Arise and go to thy house and make ready a repast for me.' Immediately she arose and began to go, solicitous of the Apostle's command, so that she might see him, and as if not from death but from sleep he had aroused her."

The illustration of this forms part of the medallion at the extreme end of the vault on the north side, or the right of "The Majesty." It exhibits an altar, on which is a chalice, a shrouded female figure lying down in front, apparently dead, yet raising up the hands. A priest in eucharistic apparel, holding up his right hand in act of benediction, indicates the Apostle performing the miracle; above, the hand of God in benediction is seen issuing from the clouds. The other part of the medallion continues the history. There is the Apostle again, similarly attired, and again in the act of benediction, performed, as it were, over some upright rods and a number of stones, details which are fortunately distinctly preserved.[1] (Fig. II.)

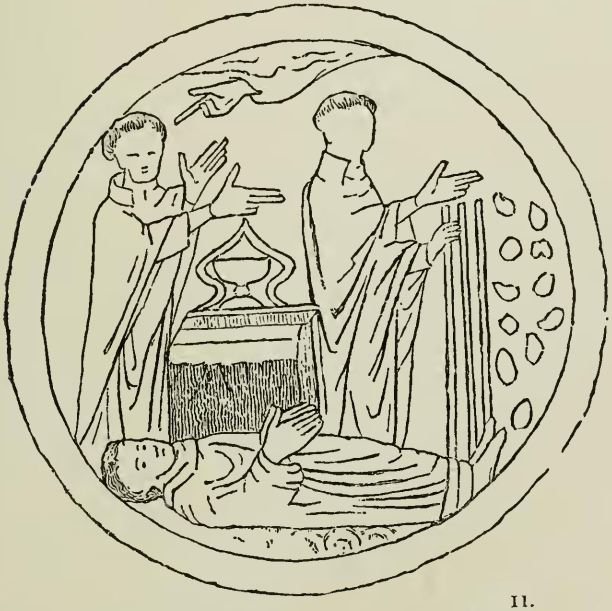
The explanation is in the following continuation of the legend. "One day Crato,[2] the philosopher, assembled the people in the forum, in order to declare unto them in what manner this world should be despised. He induced two young men, brothers, and exceedingly rich, to expend their whole patrimony in the purchase of the most precious gems, and then commanded them to

[1] It is to be noted that the artist has committed two singular errors. One is that the hand from the clouds wants a finger, and the Apostle in the latter subject gives the benediction with the *left* hand.

[2] For Crato we must read Crates, a philosopher and native of Thebes, B.C. 324, who turning his whole estate into money, delivered it to a banker on this condition: that if his sons proved philosophers, he should give it among the poor citizens, a philosopher having no occasion for money; otherwise he should give it to his sons. Some write that he threw it into the sea, saying "Away, ye paltry cares, I will drown you, that you may not drown me." (Vide *Ainsworth's Dictionary.*) On the floor of the Cathedral of Siena, one of the most interesting of the incised designs is that of Fortune, by Pinturrichio, in which Crates is shown emptying a basket of jewels, as throwing them away. He was a pupil of Diogenes the cynic. It is needless to say, that our author Jacobus a Voragine, who makes him contemporary with St. John, is not accurate in his chronology.



I.



II.

Wall Paintings in the Church of St. Mary, Guildford.

Scale, about $\frac{1}{1\frac{1}{2}}$ linear.

break them to pieces in the sight of all. Now it so happened that the Apostle, passing by, called to him, the prophet of this world, and condemned his contempt in a triple reason. First, he was praised in the mouths of men but condemned in the divine judgment. Secondly, that in such contempt he cured no vice, and therefore it was vain, as medicine is said to be vain which in no way cures the disease. Thirdly, that contempt only is meritorious which relieves the poor, as the Lord said to the young man, 'If thou wouldest be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor.' To whom Crato said, 'If God is truly your master, and would that the price of these gems be given to the poor, do so that they may be made whole again, and thus advance His glory, as I the fame of men.' Then the blessed John, collecting the fragments of the gems in his hands, prayed, and they were made whole again as at first. Immediately the philosopher and the two young men believed, and, selling the gems, delivered the price to the poor. Others did the same, but repented on seeing their servants finely dressed; of which St. John being advised, he caused rods to be brought to him and stones from the sea shore, and converted them into gold and gems. And by his command all the goldsmiths and jewellers were sent for, who stated that such pure gold and precious stones they had never seen. Whereupon the Apostle said to them, 'Go and redeem the lands you have sold and thus lose the rewards of heaven.'" The legend then continues a sermon against riches, but the saint having resuscitated a young man, the latter, by the Apostle's command, told them of the glories of Paradise and of the pains of hell, quoting these lines on the latter:—

> Vermes et tenebræ, flagellum, frigus et ignis,
> Demonis aspectus, scelerum confusio luctus.

The young men repented, and by the Apostle's injunction they were to do penance for thirty days, praying that the rods and stones should return to their own nature, which done they were received into grace.

It is obvious that this somewhat tedious tale is here

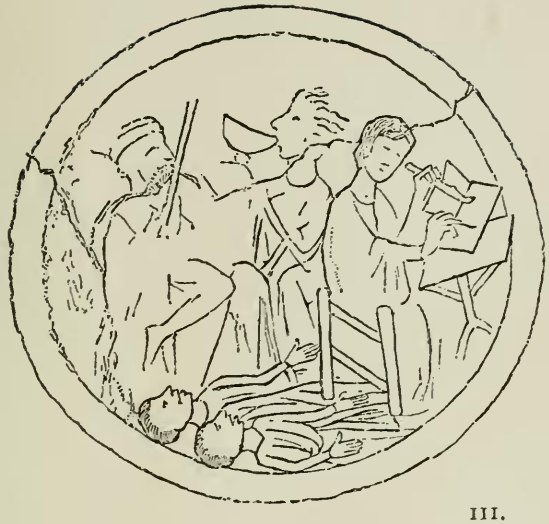
illustrated, and I never before saw either of the subjects amongst our wall paintings. It is not to be wondered at, that they were not unravelled by my two friends, as without some clue one might go on indefinitely guessing.[1]

The medallion now to be described is between the last two. On one side there is a youthful figure in a chair writing at a kind of desk or table. He has a large knife in one hand, often the accompaniment of a scribe. In the foreground are two ugly-visaged figures lying side by side as dead. In the centre is a youthful figure with flowing hair drinking from a chalice, and by the side are the remains of a seated figure, crossing the leg, and holding most likely a sceptre. (Fig. III.)

This also is a continuation of the legendary history, which tells us that the saint by his preaching caused such a commotion that the temple of Ephesus with its celebrated image of Diana was destroyed. Whereupon Aristodemus, the pontifex, became indignant, and raised up a sedition amongst the people, so that the two parties prepared for combat. To whom the Apostle said, "What would you I should do that you may be appeased." He answered, "If thou wilt that I believe thy God, I will give thee poison to drink, and if no harm ensue it will appear that thine is the true God. He also insisted that it should be tried upon others. The Apostle agreed; and Aristodemus, sending to the Proconsul, asked for two men about to be decapitated, and gave them poison before them all, and they instantly died. The Apostle then took the chalice, fortifying himself by the sign of the cross, drank up all the poison, and incurred no evil. Aristodemus still expressed some doubt, but said that he would believe if the Apostle raised them up to life again. Which having been done by the tunic of the Apostle being cast upon them, the pontifex and proconsul believed with all their relatives, and were baptized in the name of Christ; and they built a church in honour of the blessed John.[2]

[1] Mr. Carlos calls the subject "The Death of the Good."

[2] Mr. Carlos called this subject "The Death of the Wicked," but no such conventional subject is known to ecclesiastical art. In Brayley's



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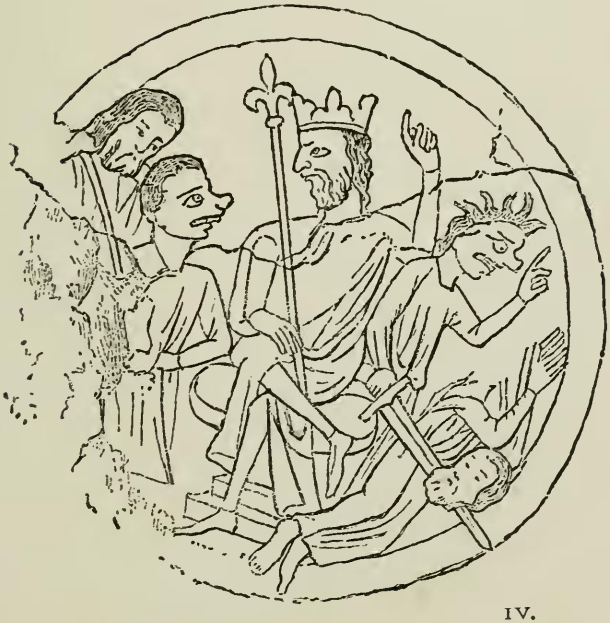


IV.

Wall Paintings in the Church of St. Mary, Guildford.

Scale, about $\frac{1}{12}$ linear.

The scribe is undoubtedly intended to represent the Evangelist, but separated from the rest of the subject, as in the first-described. The dead figures, betwixt whom is shown the tunic, and the Apostle drinking from the chalice, leave no sort of doubt as to the true reading, which is here submitted to you.

I now proceed to take note of the subject on the other half of the vaulting, and the first face of it, opposite to that which exhibits the figure of St. John in the vat of boiling oil, has a representation of a figure crowned, sitting with one leg across the other, a curious convention to which some meaning must be attached, as it is so often seen in mediæval paintings, when a king or other official personage is seated as in authority or in judgment. It holds a sceptre in the right hand, has a very ugly countenance, and is turning to the right, where an ugly official is bringing in one bound with a rope. On the opposite side is another ugly-visaged figure, who has just decapitated one whose body is prostrate. This executioner, by his stiff upstanding hair, seems to be horrified at his own act, which is the more shown by the uplifted left arm. It seems as if he had witnessed something mysterious ensuing. (Fig. IV.)

There can be little doubt that this is part of the story of John the Baptist.[1] The seated figure is Herod, the scorn of the mediæval dramatist, therefore shown ugly, as a matter of course. Two parts of the subject are here given; the saint being brought before Herod, and the decapitation. It is remarkable that this should be the only subject relating to the Baptist amongst the series, if it be true that the chapel is dedicated to him. It is tolerably perfect; that injured by time being the first part of the story.

On the reverse face to this we have a subject which is most obscure, and for that reason is particularly interesting, whilst the details are most curious. It exhibits

Surrey, the illustration gives this figure an arrow in one hand and a knife in the other. The artist has been misled by appearances; there could be no consistency in the introduction of such objects.

[1] Mr. Carlos calls this "Earthly Judgment."

a figure in a font, with hands conjoined, turning towards a standing figure of Christ, for so we must pronounce it to be, holding a cross, as in the previously given instance, and extending the right hand in benediction towards the figure, which is bearded. At the opposite side is a figure with a coif upon its head, such as is given to a doctor of law, holding in his hands a deed with two pendant seals.[1] This figure has its back to the rest of the composition. Beneath this is a fall of water, represented in the usual manner by waving lines. (Fig. V.)

The difficulty in interpreting this subject is very great. It is clearly not from Scripture, and equally clear, that the figure of Christ is expressive of a manifestation of his power, as in that of St. John in the vat of boiling oil. We may therefore fairly assume that it has a similar symbolic reference. The man of law, as before stated, has his back turned on the rest, and thence has no immediate part in the action, and so belongs to another part of the story. Every detail seems to symbolize. The falling water; the deed and its seals; and also the introduction of the figure of Christ, as well as the font. Let it also be noted, the flowing *water* is divided into equal *white* and *red broad* lines, and that the figure in the font has an unmistakeably Jewish face. It may show a conversion by baptism of some sinner; it might be a usurer. Some explanatory legendary story must certainly be extant, and that I am about to suggest is possibly the one required. It is that of the Jew who maltreated the representation of Christ, related by Athanasius; and probably the original of many like stories of the Middle Ages.

The tale, which is narrated at great length, tells us, that in the city of Berytus were a number of Hebrews. It happened that near to their great synagogue dwelt a

[1] The seals were described as water bougets, but, not being bigger than spoons, it was a singular oversight on the part of my friend. It requires close examination to see this part clearly, and it was only by going up a ladder that the real character of these objects was made known. My friend Mr. Ralph Nevill, F.S.A., who was with me at the examination, first suggested what proved to be correct.

Christian, who had placed an image of Our Lord over against his bed upon the wall. He changed his dwelling, leaving the image behind him. A Jew succeeded him, but apparently did not see, or, at all events, did not remove this. A friend having called upon him during a social banquet, perceived the image in the inner apartment. Thence he reviled him, and denounced him to the chief priests of the synagogue, whence he was driven out half-dead. They then put the image on the ground, and went through a series of outrages in imitation of those suffered in the Passion, ending by transfixing the body with a lance. To the amazement of all, blood and water profusely flowed from the wound. A vessel was brought and immediately filled by it, and was carried to the synagogue, where the fluid cured all sorts of diseases and maladies of the body,—the blind, the deaf, &c. In consequence of which all believed in Christ, and went to the Church, seeking the Metropolitan, to whom all things were narrated; and it was discovered that this image was the work of Nicodemus. After having declared their conversion and faith, they asked for baptism as the remedy for their sins. After which they desired that the synagogue should be consecrated in honour of the Holy Saviour of the world, which was done. And the quantity of blood and water was afterwards distributed throughout the churches in glass ampullæ, and the writer ends by the assurance that the narration is very true.[1]

Now the way in which I apply this to the painting is, that the figure in the font is an offending Jew, who, seeking baptism for the remission of sins, with his hands conjoined in supplication, turns towards the figure of Christ, giving him benediction, thus absolving him for the offences towards him in his image. The fall of water, which is certainly but a symbol, possibly represents the blood and water which flowed from the wound, the *white*

[1] Historiæ Aloysii Lipomani, "*De Vitis Sanctorum*" Libellus Athanasii Episcopi Alexandrini de Passione imaginis nostri Jesu Christi, qualiter crucifixa est in Syria, in urbe Beryto citatur in septima Synodo secunda Nicæna," &c.

band representing water, the *red* blood, whilst the man of law is examining a deed of conveyance, by which the synagogue was given up for consecration to the Christian worship. If this be not the real explanation of this singular subject, it must be very near to it, for the details all stand separate and can only symbolize and hint at the real meaning. It is also significant that the subject was cited in the second Council of Nicea, which decided on the use of paintings in the church.

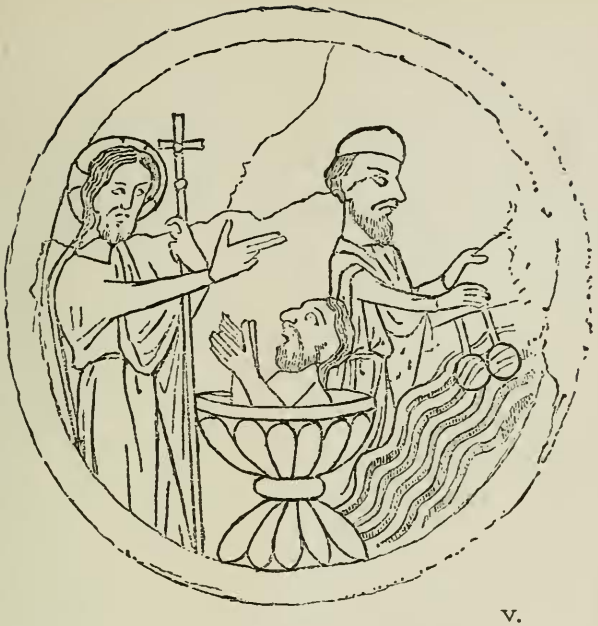
It is remarkable that Mr. Parker, accepting without change all Mr. Carlos's other solutions, should here interpose and emphatically declare it to be from the legend of St. Nicholas; "always," as he says, "represented as in this instance."[1] I must therefore as distinctly state, that no passage in the legend of that saint in any way explains this painting, nor does any painting illustrating that legend ever give such details. Mr. Parker could not have studied these subjects, and possibly wrote from memory with some confusion in his mind as to details.

The last subject cannot be a matter of much doubt. It shows us again Christ standing and holding the cross, now in the right hand, and extending the left in an action of command towards a figure who is being dragged with ropes by two demons. A female figure is kneeling at the feet of Our Lord in earnest supplication; above are two other demons, one white the other red, extending their arms menacingly towards Our Lord. The two menacing demons refer doubtless to the words of the text, "Art Thou come to torment us before the time?" Behind the figure being dragged there is another, apparently in authority, whose right hand points towards Christ, the left holding a naked sword. The latter part, however, is a little obscure.[2] (Fig. VI.)

This must certainly represent that manifestation of divine power, the casting out of devils, &c. The female figure is probably the Syro-Phœnician woman who

[1] *Archæological Journal*, XXIX, 179.

[2] Mr. Carlos calls this "Christ passing judgment," &c.



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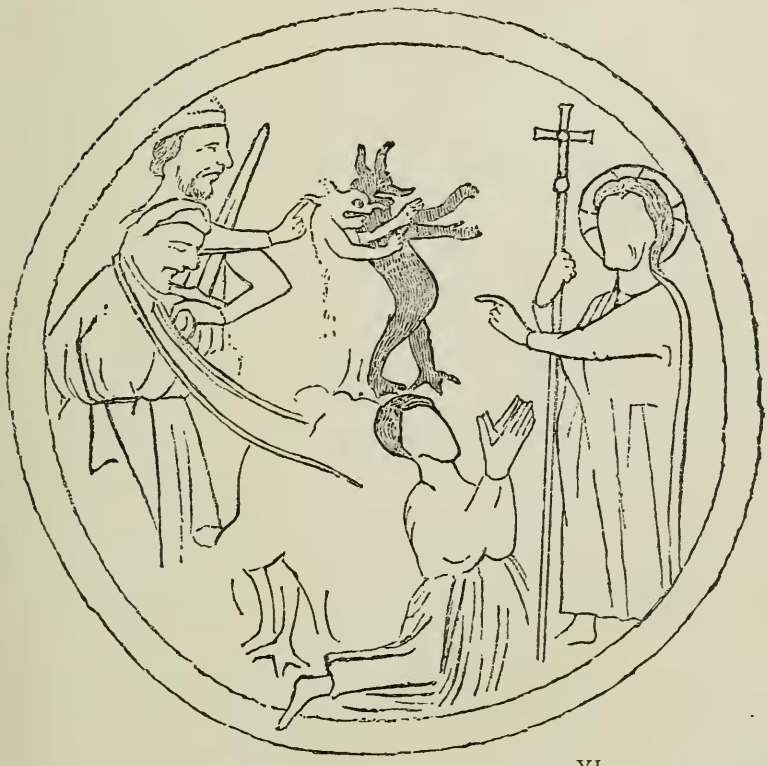

VI.

Wall Paintings in the Church of St. Mary, Guildford.
Scale, about $\frac{1}{12}$ linear.

threw herself at the feet of Jesus beseeching that he would cast the devil out of her daughter (St. Mark, ch. vii. v. 25). Again (ch. ix. v. 17), one is brought to him and the spirit is rebuked and comes out of him. The figure with the sword may possibly represent the centurion whose servant was sick of the palsy (St. Matthew, ch. viii. v. 6). This medallion, and that which contains the beheading of John the Baptist, are the only two which have subjects in any way referable to Scripture.

No other instance has ever occurred, as far as my experience goes, of such an association of subjects with "The Majesty." The intent is that which we are familiar with, yet here is a remarkable divergence from usual conventions. The series therefore are of the greatest possible value, and take place after the painting at Chaldon in Surrey in point of interest.

I now proceed to describe the subjects of the spandrils above the arch, viz., "Soul-weighing" and "Punishment," for these complete the general subject and composition. On one side, the right as regards "The Majesty," stands St. Michael holding the balance; he is in an ornamented tunic, over which is a mantle, and with wings outstretched almost horizontally. Opposite to him is a demon winged, who is placing one foot in a scale to depress it.[1] A small figure is beneath, and between the two, the soul, which, turning towards St. Michael, is imploring his aid. A similar incident is in the Chaldon painting, but I do not think this is ever seen beyond the thirteenth century, as then another development takes its place. In the *Pèlerinage de l'Âme*, an ancient spiritual romance, there is a contention for the possession of a soul which calls to mind this incident, as St. Michael is there appealed to against the power of Satan. But one cannot pass from this part of our subject without referring to the identity of feeling exhibited in Egyptian papyri of the Ritual of the

[1] One of the descriptions places a candlestick in one of the scales. It is purely imaginary, and utterly out of place.

Dead, where the deeds of one deceased are being weighed before Osiris, and the soul or shade appears in the act of supplication for mercy. On the opposite spandril stands an angel, who has driven out the condemned souls, which are tied together in a bundle, as we also see them in the Chaldon painting, and are being carried off by a demon to the fires of Hell, which are seen beneath.

In order to understand the prevailing theology on this subject during the Middle Ages, I will now turn to the sermon, *De Angelis*, of Herolt, the Dominican, an extract from which, in his own words, will be better than any of my own. "Michael the Archangel, whose feast to-day (September 29) we celebrate, has the office of weighing the merits and demerits of souls. For, according to the pictures, which are the books of the laity, Michael weighs souls in the balance in order that those which are full and those which are empty should be known. As Daniel says, "Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting." There are therefore some souls empty, some half-full, some full, some over-full. Those are empty which carry with them no good works. These Michael weighs, and, finding them empty, says, 'Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting.' Therefore he can say to such as it is said in the Apocalypse. 'Thou art wretched and miserable, poor and blind and naked.' For such are naked, being stripped of good works; blind, because darkened by ignorance; poor, because destitute of the suffrages of all the saints; and miserable, because deprived of the divine vision; wretched, because sent to the fires of Gehenna. Of such, in the person of Christ, Michael says (St. Matthew xxii), 'Being bound hands and feet send them into outer darkness." This passage shows us the close connection of the theoretical principles and the painter's interpretation, and is rendered more pertinent by allusion to the latter. In that very curious collection of sermons, entitled *Dormi Secure*, under that of St. Michael, is the following story, which still further illustrates the theology of the subject. "A certain young man entering

into religion (monastery), and having for some years lived in it honestly and devoutly, fell seriously ill. Lying upon his bed he spoke not, but thought that he would immediately die. When his brethren assembled together and recommended his soul, he suddenly began to speak and uttered three phrases. The first was, 'I wish I had never been born.' The second, 'Weigh equally.' The third, 'It suffices me.' Now when he was convalescent the brethren asked him wherefore he spake those words. He answering said, "That as he was on the point of death, many demons stood nigh accusing him of many grave sins, so that for any of them he was worthy of eternal death.' Then, desperate of salvation, I uttered these words, 'I wish I had never been born.' Then stood by the Angel of God, having the balance in his hands that he might weigh my good and evil deeds. Seeing this, I uttered the second, 'Weigh equally.' But when indeed my bad deeds in somewise outweighed, I said to them that they should bring something. Then they brought a drop of the blood of Christ, by which the good preponderated; which seeing, the demons departed confused. Then I, much consoled, with great joy and security said the third, 'It suffices me.'"

It is not difficult to see that the spirit of the painting is precisely in accord with the old "Exemplum," which is but one of many of like character. Between the written theology and the painted theology there is complete harmony, and it is by bringing the two together we see how one explains the other, and shows us the popular religious teaching of our ancestors. The angel driving out the condemned souls, who, "bound hand and foot," are being carried off by a demon to the flames of Gehenna, is also in accord with a previous quotation.

But it is impossible to leave this subject without some allusion to the very reverend antiquity of the latter teaching, and to the wide extent of the earth's surface on which it has been taught: not only in our own religious system, but in all that have left their marks upon the

world's history. I have already quoted the well-known passage in the Prophet Daniel, but there is another in the Bible of antecedent antiquity, viz., in the Book of Job, wherein we find "Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know my integrity." Nor are the references I make to the papyri, which may be seen on the staircase of the Egyptian Room in the British Museum, the earliest examples in date, for the beautiful sarcophagus in Sir John Soane's Museum, attributed to Sethos I, takes us back to 1388 B.C., according to Lepsius, very near to the supposed era of the Exodus, and here is a fine example of "soul-weighing," and, perhaps, the most ancient. But we cannot, I think, assume that its origin is found in Egyptian mythology, and thence the evangel was sent over the eastern world. In the religion of the Zenda-vesta there is Mithra and Rashnè-rast, who weigh the actions of men on the Bridge Tchinevad, *i.e.*, the narrow bridge which separates earth and heaven. In the system of Brama, Yama is the King of Justice, before whom souls are weighed and good and evil spirits produce their good and evil deeds. In Buddhism it is Shinje, Lord of the Dead, in Sanscrit called Dharma-rajah, King of the Law. In Mahometanism St. Gabriel is "soul-weigher." Of the extent of the surface of the ancient world over which this teaching is found it is sufficient to say that it is shown by a line drawn from Thibet to this Ultima Thule of the Greeks and Romans. How early it became adopted in Christianity one cannot tell, but the Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great (A.D. 604) are as explicit in the doctrine as any of the later writers to whom I have referred. It is, indeed, quoted in the same sermon on St. Michael which I have noted. It is as follows:—

"On the point of separation of the soul from the body, the good and bad angels come, and the merits and demerits of the man are weighed. The good angel alleges and recites the man's good works, the bad angel calling to memory all the evil ones. And if indeed the bad preponderate over the good, so that he departed in mortal sin, immediately the soul is delivered to the torturers, who thrust the man or his soul down to the prison of Hell to eternal punishment. But if he deceased in charity, without mortal sin, yet in some that may be

purgeable, the good angels conduct him into Purgatory, from which, after being purged, they lead him into Paradise. But if indeed, he departed in so much charity, that all the rust of sin was consumed, so that nothing purgeable remained, immediately the holy angels received him and carried him to the Kingdom of Heaven."

I cannot help thinking that we have in this myth a fragment of a very primitive faith whose history is too remote for any known record. The acceptance by every great religious system, not only those of remote antiquity, but those which still hold sway over the minds of a large portion of the globe, is a remarkable witness to the power of popular religion. Between the teaching of Buddhism or of the Zenda-vesta or of that of Pope Gregory the Great, there is really no difference, nor from the principles taught in the earliest monuments of the Egyptian mythology.

It has been suggested that these paintings may have been executed by one William the Florentine, so called in a document of 44 Henry III. 1259, cited by Horace Walpole, in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, chap. i. He is known to have been employed, about the above date, in amending the pictures of the great hall at Guildford (doubtless in the castle), and was directed to paint "on the white wall in our great chamber at the head of our bed a certain pall (quoddam pallium), as also pictures (tabulas), and the frontel of the altar of our chapel." There is nothing to be said against this theory, for it agrees with the style and execution of the work, which belongs to about the middle of the thirteenth century.[1] But at this period there could have been no distinctive feature in Italian ecclesiastical art, which must have followed the same conventions common to the rest of Europe. As monasteries were the only schools, the art taught therein was kept in its peculiar province. So, indeed, we see here only what we are familiar with, in many examples, the common conventional work. Cimabue, who was the startpoint of a great future, was, at the date last mentioned, only

[1] Some observers have placed the date in the twelfth century, but the style quite forbids this.

sixteen years of age, and though he had probably even then begun his study under Greek artists, newly brought to Florence, it was only a beginning; and there is no record of any previous influence, which would have made the ecclesiastical art of Italy superior in its principles to that of France or England, or the more advanced of German states.

It is well, however, to note, that there are features in the general arrangement, the mode of decorating the apse with the arch in front, that reminds us of that of the apsides of several of the early churches in Rome and elsewhere, where are mosaics of the eighth to the thirteenth centuries. This may be but accidental in its analogy, but it is worth a mention. It is also to be noted, that the treatment observed in the medallions is remarkable for the manner in which the several elements are condensed, suggesting rather than representing. There can be no doubt that St. John in the vat of boiling oil is intended in the medallion described. It can be no other; yet the introduction of the figure of Christ in the act of benediction is an idea hitherto unknown to that subject. It is a symbol, and the reclining figure by his side, having no part in the subject going on, symbolizes again another phase of St. John's history, *i.e.*, the vision at Patmos subsequent to the action at the Porta Latina. Similarly also St. John is twice introduced where he is drinking from the chalice. The scene with the font is of the same description; and it is remarkable that no nimbus is given to any one but our Lord. All these points are to be well considered, as to whether some special influence is not here manifested. But we have proof that William the Florentine was only of ordinary merit, judging from the payments made to him. Horace Walpole falls into an error when he considered that another William, a monk of Westminster, who is styled the "King's painter," was identical with him. But Mr. John Gage Rokewode very clearly set this question at rest by comparing the payments of the two. It thus appears, that whilst the monk of Westminster received as much as

two shillings per diem, William the Florentine was paid but six pence.[1] The latter could, therefore, have been only of the usual stamp. His presence at Guildford gives a probability to the suggestion that he may have executed these paintings; and, if there be any foreign influence at all, it may probably be found in the facts I have alluded to. It must, however, always be remembered that there was always a *director* who guided the artist, unless he belonged to some ecclesiastical order.

Certain it is that, in every way, we have here a series of the greatest possible interest; and, it is a matter to be regretted, that, hitherto, they have not been accurately or completely rendered. They ought to have tracings taken of them before any further decay makes that process more difficult and of less value. Something ought also to be done for their preservation, as the series is unique, and time is working its way with its usual ruthless hand.

[1] *Vetusta Monumenta*, Vol. VI.—*Account of the Painted Chamber*, by John Gage Rokewode, F.R.S., Dir. S.A., p. 25.