

There is a fair amount of agreement among experts that the central figure of each group is Christ, once unbearded, the other time bearded. This is not surprising, as the two manners of representing Christ subsisted side by side in the Christian art of the Orient till the sixth century. As to the significance of the other figures there is no agreement. Eisen himself was not consistent in his interpretation. His contention that they are portrait figures has no foundation in early Christian tradition, either literary or monumental. It remains to investigate whether the manner of representing the figures and their positions belongs to the earlier Hellenistic manner or to the Oriental which succeeded it. Father de Jerphanion finds a mixture of the two modes of treatment which complicates the study still further. In summing up whatever evidence there is for dating from iconographical data, Floyd V. Filson states that "in the present state of the investigation a date at least as late as the fourth century is highly probable."¹⁹

Consequently, only on a few points can we be positive in the matter of this unique monument of Christian antiquity. Yet we must repeat the concluding paragraph of Mr. Arnason: "Through all the confusion that still exists, the importance of the chalice of Antioch is manifest. It remains one of the most significant pieces of early Christian silver in existence. The uniqueness for which it has been suspected is, it seems to me, one of the elements of its importance. When its date and provenance have been securely settled, as we hope one day they may be, it will become a key monument for the history of early Christian art in eastern Europe."²⁰

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THE PROSOPOGRAPHIA CHRISTIANA

Any *Prosopographia* will naturally suggest the monumental work inspired by Theodor Mommsen. The undertaking launched at Fordham University on January 10 of this year is frankly following the lead of the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, and in every question of procedure and method follows the system adopted by that work insofar as the different objectives of the two permit. The enormous services of the *P.I.R.* to classical studies challenged a similar effort in the field of ancient Christian history. Hence it becomes apparent that the work envisaged is not just another Dictionary of Christian Biography but a Biographical Dictionary resting exclusively on primary sources.

Over and above this, the similarity is principally one of method. For the

¹⁹Floyd V. Filson, "Who Are the Figures on the Chalice of Antioch?", *Biblical Archaeologist*, V (1942), 9.

²⁰H. Harvard Arnason, "The History of the Chalice of Antioch," *Biblical Archaeologist*, V (1942), 16.

scope and amplitude of *Prosopographia Christiana* extends both in time and in the materials handled far beyond the limits of the model. Chronologically, the new project extends from the Resurrection to the year 700, and the primary sources include every document which sheds light on the Christians who may have lived within those dates. Specifically, the documents come under the following rubrics: The New Testament, pagan Greek and Latin literature, Christian authors, Martyrologies, Epigraphy (mostly Greek and Latin), Papyri and Hymnology. Obviously there are many subdivisions to these captions, and other captions may have to be added in the light of the purpose to be achieved. Thus it is conceivable (as some collaborators have already suggested) that art monuments of the Christian past and numismatics should find a place in the list of sources. With such a complete documentation of the widely scattered and diversified record of Ancient Christianity it is hoped that all materials of importance will be placed at the disposal of the Mommsen or Pastor who can use them with thoroughness and skill. That, to repeat, is the real incentive to the undertaking, viz., to make possible a history of Ancient Christianity of the scientific competence of the *History of the Popes* or of the works on ancient civilization by Rostovtzeff.

A documentation so vast has dictated the following procedure. In the first place an inventory of all the possible sources had to be made. This inventory, i.e., bibliography, professes to give the author and title of every literary work appearing between the aforementioned dates, the *Corpora* where pertinent inscriptions are to be found, and papyri as well as the reviews where "non-incorporated" inscriptions or papyri may still lurk. In literary documents this bibliographical work also involves the mention of the latest critical text with the name of the editor and the generally accepted abbreviations—an imperative need if the citations are not to be cumbersome. At the present writing bibliographies on Christian authors, Greek Epigraphy, Papyrology, pagan Greek writers, and Martyrologies have been completed and entered on cards in the filing-case of the general office. Under Christian writers must also be included the special bibliography on Gaelic material. Finally the long list of learned reviews has been completed. Thus at a conservative estimate four-fifths of the material to be handled has been classified. It is anticipated that in the next three weeks all of it will have been completed, examined, and definitely checked.

The second stage of the undertaking presumably had to wait until the foregoing was completed. Such, however, is not the case. The actual examination of, and excerpts from, the New Testament, from Ennodius, from Suetonius and Saint Bede the Venerable are at this writing a reality. This fact bears witness to the extraordinary co-operativeness and energy of the collaborators, since the *Bulletin* issued at irregular intervals from the editorial offices carried a sample excerpt-card a mere three months ago, and excerpts could hardly be expected with only one tenth of the bibliography, at most, ready for consultation. The hopes, then, of speedy progress with the

machinery set up would seem to be well-founded. Some ninety collaborators have already offered their services, and the prospect of eventually securing the services of two hundred more, all qualified scholars, is very bright. Barring the surprises and disappointments of an emergency, the year 1942-3 should witness the complete collection of material.

On the last phase of the work, the appraisal and final disposition of the evidence, a realistic outlook dictates extreme caution. Still, the past has brought extremely consoling accomplishments, and the cause of this consolation endures. What has been done to date is almost totally the performance of a *pusillus grex*. Funds, time, experience were totally lacking at the outset. The dire financial situation of many institutions of learning all over the country was not less felt at Fordham than elsewhere. Consequently, every penny, even for the limited expenses of the initial work, had to be collected by the time-consuming efforts of one person. All of the contributors were overburdened with heavy teaching schedules. Finally, the first attempt at a task which is unique brought delays and perplexities. But the only prospect is one of alleviation of all these difficulties. Hence the future of the *Prosopographia Christiana* is, God willing, assured.

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Editor's Note.—Readers are asked to note the following corrections in the article on "The Convalidation of Non-Catholic Marriages," by William E. Donnelly, S.J., which appeared in the May issue. The author was in no wise responsible for the statements here corrected:

1) On page 198, second paragraph, the second sentence should read: "Hence, once the impediment had thus ceased, the question of convalidation referred to a marriage in which both non-Catholic parties had by that time been baptized."

2) On the same page, the third paragraph should begin: "But it seems just to go farther and to challenge, etc."

3) On page 202, third paragraph, after the first sentence, read: "The Holy Office, however, did not demand of Amalia merely an oath that after her baptism she and John had never lived together in any place where they were excused from the law of form. Yet marital cohabitation in such a place is all that would have been needed for convalidation, if the prescribed renewal of consent were reducible to the form; etc."

4) On the same page, fourth paragraph, the last sentence should read: "Accordingly, the Holy Office also required that before the woman be declared free to marry again, 'Archiepiscopus moraliter certus sit de asserta ignorantia sponsorum circa impedimentum disparitatis cultus.'"