

State to support religious orders and societies and to administer all the schools and philanthropic institutions. It seeks to do this in our country.

"We believe that this aim of any one church—or of all the churches united—to monopolize the public administration of philanthropy, education, and religion is as injurious to itself as it is to the people whom its leaders would control by claiming exclusive authority from Jesus Christ. We believe that if all the churches were united in one theocratic organization, the peril to liberty of thought and to human progress would not be diminished by such union, but would be vastly increased. History teaches us that organic union of all Christian churches for the purpose of administering the religious and philanthropic affairs of the world would result in a theocracy claiming divine authority over human affairs. We want none of it.

"The mission of the churches of Jesus Christ is to inspire all men to philanthropic, patriotic, educational service, and to persuade them, as far as possible, to do this service in love and obedience to him.

"But the unwillingness or inability of the churches to act as or to control the organizations that do these things is not an evidence of sinfulness or weakness or failure. The chief business of the church is to inspire men to serve God and to serve their fellow men through such agencies as seem to the community to be best suited to its needs."

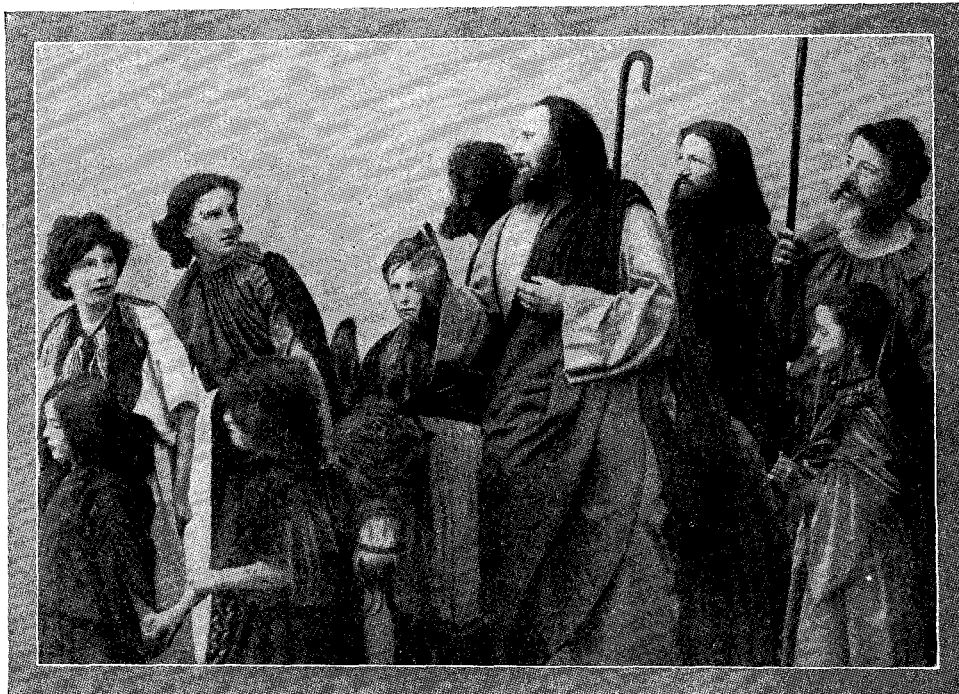
THE ACTORS OF THE "PASSION"

PEOPLE who visit Ober-Ammergau this summer are asking, "whence do these peasants know dramatic art, never having learned it?" There seems to be no answer other than in the personal dedication that is recorded of nearly all of them. "It is not our aim to shine in the art of acting," said Father Daisenberger, who revised and rewrote the play in 1870, "but it is the earnest desire of each one of us to try and represent worthily this most holy mystery." In our number for June 25 some account was given of the play itself; the various journals here and abroad are now beginning to reflect the impression that the play is producing. In *The Westminster Gazette* (London) are some interesting personal accounts of the people who this year have been chosen to enact the leading rôles. Foremost is Anton Lang, now thirty-five years old and playing the part of *Christus* for the second time. Every one who remembers him in 1900 says that in ten years he has learned much. "I seek," he explains, "to dedicate myself to the Lord that I may lose myself in my part." Certainly he has the power of making those who watch him lose themselves:

"With him they seem to tread the streets of Jerusalem once more. Time and place are temporarily obliterated. Yet he is absolutely simple and natural, and no fame or attentions have spoiled him. He moves with wonderful distinction, and yet, like Joseph Mayer of old, he seems to have become saturated with meekness, an unearthly and radiant mildness, which is impossible to forget by those who have witnessed it. Probably he is at the zenith of his power, as he is in the prime of life. In 1900 he was rather young for the great part, and in 1920 he will be a little too old, tho Joseph Mayer was much older the last time he acted. Lang is a potter by trade, and works very hard at the little shop where he may often be found.

"Ottillie Twint is the *Mary* of this year. Ottillie at first sight is disappointing, especially to those who remember Rosa Lang;

but as the play proceeds the choice of the committee more or less justifies itself. For Ottillie is the true *Mother*, at the foot of the Cross, and in the long silent look which passes between the *Mother* and *Son* as he passes her on the way to his death. It is curious that *Mary* and *Judas* should live in the same house,



Photograph by Bruckmann, of Munich.

CHRIST'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM IN THE PASSION PLAY.

Anton Lang as Christ "moves with wonderful distinction and at the same time appears to be saturated with an unearthly and radiant mildness."

for *Mary's* father is *Judas*. Johann Twint is undoubtedly a born actor, tho he has never seen any acting. His is a most marvelous and touching performance, and he enters so completely into his part that once or twice he has only just been saved from really hanging himself. It seems as if he had tried to get into the very heart of *Judas*, and his interpretation of the character is a very interesting one, tho it is not wicked enough for some people. Twint holds that *Judas* came very near to being a saint, and only failed by yielding to his master passion of avarice. The spectators of the play find that they can not help watching the struggle which comes out in every gesture and in every mood of that lonely figure in the flame-colored robes. Johann once took the part of *St. John*, and that seems a strange preparation for the rôle of the traitor. Young Alfred Bierling is the *St. John* of 1910. He is only nineteen years old, and distinguished by an almost unearthly sweetness of countenance. But those who remember former *Johns* think that he has not the necessary depth and experience for the great mystic among the *Disciples*. However, he excels in one thing. He is full of adoring love for the *Christus*.

"It is a beautiful honor for me." These are the words of Maria Mayer, the young *Mary Magdalene*. She is very youthful and round, with a wealth of golden hair, and those who stay under her roof, and watch her making beds and cooking meals, can hardly realize the depth of devotion she will throw into her part only a few hours later. Like the other *Mary* she warms to her part, and is at her very best at the end, at the foot of the Cross, and in the Garden. Like *Judas*, she loses herself utterly and entirely, and her explanation is a very simple one: "I pray the good God always that I may help just one soul."

"Andreas Lang is *Peter*. He is a venerable and dignified figure, and, like *Judas*, has a great power of holding the audience in the great crises in which he is alone on the stage; but it is of *Judas*, not of *Peter*, that one ponders after the play. *Pilate* is the present Bürgermeister of Ober-Ammergau, Sebastian Bauer, and he played the part also ten years ago. He certainly is very much like an ancient Roman, and looks magnificent in his toga, with the golden diadem on his head. The part of the Chief Magistrate evidently comes quite naturally to him, and he is a very convincing *Pilate*, with an air of high authority and of contempt for the 'fickle people,' as he calls the Jews, which becomes him well.

"The acting of the children is most delightful, tho one mother

told a story that her little boy was not pious. Indeed, he went so far as to declare that he would rather play among the rocks than wave a palm branch in the great procession. At five years old such impiety may well be forgiven, but in the tableaux even the baby holding its little skirt to catch the manna seems to think that everything depends upon him."

The peasants of Ober-Ammergau have the gifts of dignity and simplicity as a birthright, it is said, and these gifts are seen in great perfection in the minor characters—notably in *Joseph of Arimathea* and *Nicodemus* when they leave the Sanhedrin to show that they have no part or lot in the death-sentence."

One of our professional actors noted for the realism of her method, Miss Rose Stahl, has just returned from Ober-Ammergau and expresses her disappointment with the actors. She declares, according to the *Washington Herald*, "that she found the peasant actors very bad, wholly unnatural, and their attempts at imitating modern acting painful to her." This journal utters its disagreement with her in these words:

"What most of our actors—imbued with the traditions that Miss Stahl misses at Ober-Ammergau—need is not so much lessons in how to act as lessons in how not to act. Judged by the canons which we accept—not as true, but simply as the best we can get—of American acting, Miss Rose Stahl occupies a worthy position and gives as pleasant performances as might be expected. But in exercising her functions as a dramatic critic we are not inclined to trust Miss Stahl's judgment. We are quite sure she means well enough, but she is wedded to false idols."

NEWLY FOUND ODES OF SOLOMON

NEW MANUSCRIPTS that threaten to have revolutionary effect upon religious thought are unearthed from time to time in the dim East. One about which no such claim is made has lately been unearthed in the neighborhood of the Tigris, and by Mr. J. Rendel Harris, the distinguished Birmingham scholar, it has been identified as "The Odes and Psalms of Solomon." This is "a discovery of first-class value," says Prof. James A. Montgomery in *The Biblical World* (August). Indeed, nothing so valuable has been discovered since the finding of the "Teaching of the Apostles." We read these further details:

"As a document belonging probably to the first century of our era and to the Judaism or Christianity of that critical age in the religious history of the world, it must at once excite our interest for its possibilities of information on the period for which most of all we desire fresh light. And apart from its historical importance, it is withal a document of unique religious value, as it contains mystical compositions of a very high order which are bound to merit a place in the world's religious literature. Moreover, it actually opens up to the critical student some unknown fields which promise to be of extraordinary value in the history of the connecting links between the old and new dispensations."

He describes the character of these poems in the following words:

"Some of these odes resemble closely the canonical Psalms in their expressions of trust and assurance against enemies; indeed, the latter are distinctly the models for many of them. In so far, then, we have an interesting manifestation of the survival of Jewish hymnology down into the Christian Church, something which was suspected from the charming canticles in the opening chapters of St. Luke and from the snatches of hymns scattered through the New Testament. But now we possess in these odes a very considerable collection of this desiderated material.

"However, these compositions move in spiritual fields which are distinctly different from the atmosphere of the Psalter. They possess a terminology and betray a cast of thought which make us instinctively associate them with the New-Testament literature. A score of phrases and words can illustrate this point: such terms as faith, hope, love; grace, joy, peace, sal-

vation; knowledge, the Word (never the law); life, light, immortality, Paradise. Several of the odes are of apocalyptic character; the singer experiences 'the ascent of the soul'; . . . this is an idea with which we first come in contact in Enoch, and which became characteristic of the Jewish apocalyptic literature. The poet is led by the truth and given to see the things of heaven and hell, altho all is conceived in a gentle, beautiful spirit, quite the reverse of the fierce and Pharisaically righteous eschatologists of Judaism. Indeed, it is gentler than the like passages in the New Testament. But only a reading of the odes themselves can bring out the full force of this comparison with the New-Testament literature."

In discussing the date of their composition he remarks:

"Are there any internal marks which will serve to date the odes, and so enable us to relate them historically with that literature? One ode fortunately gives us a clue of time; the fourth begins thus: 'No man, O my God, changeth Thy holy place; for Thy sanctuary Thou hadst designed before Thou didst make other places' (with reference to the Rabbinic notion of the ideal preexistence of Jerusalem from eternity). The Temple must still have been standing then when that ode was written, and so the *terminus ad quem* for the collection as a whole is 70 A.D. These odes then belong to the very age of the composition of the New-Testament books, and that they are Christian seems to be settled by definite theological references to the faith of the Christian Church. Some of the more patent references are as follows: the formula of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (19 and 23); 'I am named the Light, the Son of God' (36); the birth from the Virgin along with the curious tradition that she needed no midwife (19); the sufferings of Christ in humility (31); the sign of the Cross by the outstretched arms of the worshiper (27 and 42); the descent into hell to redeem the shades who demand life of the Lord (42), one of the most important and popular articles of faith in the primitive Church, enshrined for us in a little-understood article of the Apostles' Creed. The work appears then to be Christian."

Their character, symbolism, and phraseology recall the Fourth Gospel, of whose author Professor Montgomery writes:

"Probably John, or whoever was the writer of the Fourth Gospel, was brought up in such a circle as that which produced these odes; and when he became a Christian, Christ incarnated, crystallized for him all that yearning mysticism of love and deathlessness. These odes would not explain what Christ was to St. John, but they would show us the molds of thought into which the evangelist ran all that he had found and experienced, 'what he had heard and seen and handled concerning the Word of Life.' This corollary agrees with the present position of New-Testament criticism which demands that we look for a large preparation in ideas and language for the definite forms which Christianity so promptly assumes. And the corollary pleases Harnack, for it fits in with his view of the early composition of the New-Testament books and his acceptance of much of the Church's tradition concerning their authorship; for now with these odes it is not necessary to go down into the second century to explain the origin of the Johannine literature. Here, then, an outlook of wide and fruitful promise is presented for the history of the origins of Christianity."

Some specimen lines of the newly found work are here given:

Thou hast given thy heart, O Lord, to Thy believers; never wilt Thou fail, nor be without fruits. For one hour of Thy Faith is more precious than all days and hours. . . . Thou hast given us Thy fellowship; it was not that Thou wast in need of us, but that we are in need of Thee (Ode 4).

In His simplicity His sweetness has made small His greatness (Ode 7).
The dwelling-place of the Word is man, and its truth is Love (Ode 13).
No way is hard, where the heart is simple. Nor is there any wound where the thoughts are upright. Nor is there any storm in the depth of illuminated thought (Ode 34).

Several of the odes, says the writer, are introduced with charming analogies, reminding us of the Songs of Ascent in the Psalter, e.g., Ps. cxxiii., cxxxi. Thus:

As the hand moves over the harp, and the strings speak, so speaks in my members the Spirit of the Lord, and I speak in His love (Ode 6).

As the impulse of passion toward evil, so is the impulse of joy toward the lovely (Ode 7).

As the eyes of a son to his father, so are my eyes, O Lord, at all times toward Thee (Ode 14).

As the sun is the joy to those that seek for its day, so is my joy the Lord: because He is my Sun, and His rays have lifted me up, and His light has dispelled all darkness from my face (Ode 15).