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"Historical Introduction
to the Textual Criticism
of the New Testament"

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. I.

A CHURCH Historian may perhaps venture to think that something of the difficulties which repel so many students from the subject of textual criticism is due to the habit of treating it too much as a matter of the criticism and classification of documents, and too little as a branch of living history. After all, the New Testament was the possession of the Christian Society, and it is the experiences of the New Testament at the hands of Christian scribes and Christian scholars that form the subject-matter of our enquiry. Something, it seems, ought to be feasible in the way of approaching the textual criticism of the New Testament from a novel point of view, and of explaining its elements—‘making the salient things really salient’—just by looking at it as a branch of Church history. In lieu, then, of the time-honoured division under the three heads of Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers—though I hope we shall have learned something about all three before we have done—we will rather note what are the aspects and events in the development of the Christian Society which bear upon the preservation, the reproduction, the translation, the corruption and restoration, of the text of the Christian sacred books. And for the purposes of our enquiry the appropriate arrangement dictates itself; the divisions into which these lectures fall must be chronological. We shall not begin by isolating the MSS from the Versions, or the Versions from the Fathers, but we shall try to follow the fortunes of the New Testament through the successive generations of the earlier Christian centuries.

GROWTH OF THE IDEA OF A CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

If, then, we are to treat the textual criticism of the New Testament historically, it will be necessary to base the enquiry

on some general foundation of the conditions and circumstances under which the New Testament Canon came into being. In the present article we will go back to the beginnings of Church History, before ever there was a New Testament at all. It is sometimes said, and an important truth lies concealed under the phrase, that the Church existed before the Bible. But a Christian of the earliest days, if you had used such words to him, would have stared at you in undisguised amazement. He would have explained to you that in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms the Christian possessed all the Scriptures he could want, for they all spoke of Christ. These were 'Holy Scriptures that could make a man wise unto salvation through the faith that is in Jesus Christ'.¹ Out of these, both before and after His Passion, the Lord had built up the faith of the disciples in Himself: 'that all the things written about Him in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms had to be fulfilled' had been the theme, He reminded them, of the words He had spoken to them while they were together²: 'beginning from Moses, through all the Prophets He interpreted to them' the Messianic meaning of all the Scriptures, and shewed how the Passion of the Christ was the condition precedent of His glory.³ On the same Scriptures He had based His appeal to his Jewish hearers: 'Ye search the Scriptures . . . but it is they that testify to Me.'⁴ It was natural, then, that the apostolic preaching, while it plants one foot on the fact of the Resurrection, of which the Apostles were the 'witnesses', rests the other on the Scriptures in which the Passion and Resurrection and Pentecostal outpouring are foretold: 'all the prophets that have spoken from Samuel onwards have announced these days.'⁵ Nor did the method of St Paul differ from that of the elder apostles. To the Jews of Pisidian Antioch he asserts that in the trial of Jesus the rulers and people of Jerusalem had fulfilled the prophecies which every sabbath day rang in their ears.⁶ At Thessalonica 'according to his practice' he visited the synagogue, and for three sabbath days discussed and explained the Scriptures, citing proofs for Messiah's Passion and Resurrection, and working up to the conclusion that in Jesus all Messianic conditions were

¹ 2 Tim. iii 15.

⁴ Jo. v 39.

² Lk. xxiv 44.

⁵ Acts iii 24.

³ Lk. xxiv 26, 27.

⁶ Acts xiii 27.

fulfilled.¹ And the historian can find no higher praise for the apostle's hearers at Beroea than that they looked up the Scriptures for themselves, to verify 'whether these things were so'.²

The Old Testament Scriptures were the one common ground of Jew and Christian, and the controversy with Judaism continued naturally to be carried on over their interpretation. The various specimens of this branch of Christian propaganda which have come down to us in literary documents³ are concerned, therefore, with the true meaning of the prophecies, and with the argument whether the events of the life of Jesus or the respective fortunes of Jews and Christians correspond with the conditions indicated in the Old Testament. And as long as the main conflict of the nascent community was with Judaism, there was no need to look further: the Old Testament Scriptures were all that the Church needed.

But the labours of St Paul and his fellow missionaries had very early carried the proclamation of the Gospel beyond the limits of Palestine, and though everywhere it was in the synagogue and to the Jews of the Dispersion that the message was first given, yet their rejection of it soon led the preachers to look to a wider horizon: 'Since ye judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, see, we turn to the Gentiles.'⁴ It can hardly have been much more than a generation after Pentecost before the vast field of labour thus opened up had begun to dwarf the Church's mission among the Jews as a very minor portion of her task. By the days of the Neronian persecution, in A.D. 64, she

¹ Acts xvii 2, 3.

² Acts xvii 11.

³ Curiously enough the Dialogue became very early, and long remained, the characteristic form in which the anti-Jewish literature of the Church clothed itself: witness the (lost) Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus; the Dialogue of Justin Martyr with Trypho; the *Dialogus Christiani cum Iudaeo de Trinitate*, by Hieronymus Graecus; the Dialogue of Gregentius of Taphar with the Jew Herbanus; the Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila, published by Mr. Conybeare; the Dialogue of the Jews Papiscus and Philo with a certain monk, published by McGiffert; or the Latin Altercations, of Simon and Theophilus edited by Bratke, and of the Church and the Synagogue in the appendix to St Augustine. I cannot help thinking that this constant literary tradition had a direct historical origin from the days when such dialogues were being customarily held, in synagogues and elsewhere, between the adherents of the new movement and its opponents: cf. Acts ix 22 (συμβιβάζων), xviii 4 (διελέγετο . . . ἐπειδὴν τε), xix 8 (διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων), xix 9 (διαλεγόμενος ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου).

⁴ Acts xiii 46.

was girding herself to the conversion, not of a single nation, but of an empire and a world to the Faith. And to the heathen any primary appeal to the Scriptures of the Jewish people would have been ineffective and out of place.

And in turn as the Christian community itself increased in numbers, and attracted new adherents from fresh strata in society and from different nationalities, the complexity of the problems which faced its daily life removed it ever further and further from the limited sphere within which the Scriptures written for a single race could remain the exclusive and authoritative standard.

Thus both in its internal and in its external relations—whether in view of its missionary enterprise to the heathen world, or of its own development as a body recruited more and more largely from non-Jewish sources—the Church could not rest content with its original attitude towards the Jewish Scriptures. The new wine must burst the old bottles.

But this great revolution was not accomplished in a moment. The Christians struggled bravely to continue under the old conditions. Even in the second half of the second century Melito of Sardis and Irenaeus of Lyons were still issuing for the Christian public works of dogmatic instruction based entirely on the Old Testament. The *Eclogae* of Melito consisted of select passages from the Jewish canonical books ‘concerning our Saviour and the whole of our faith’¹; the work of Irenaeus, newly recovered in an Armenian version, is a book of elementary *catechesis*, giving a Christian interpretation to the Old Testament prophecies.² Two considerations made it possible to prolong this exclusive or at any rate predominant employment of the Jewish Scriptures. In the first place, the argument from the fulfilment of prophecy—the correspondence of fact between the life of Christ and of the Christian Society with predictions written down long before—could be made effective, either as in Justin Martyr’s first *Apology*,³ for the controversy with intelligent pagans, or, as in Cyprian’s book of *Testimonies*, for the confirmation of converts in the faith. In the second place (and this is much more important), the allegorical method of exposition lay ready to hand as an obvious instrument of extending the application of the ancient Scriptures to modern needs.

¹ *Eus. H. E.* iv 26.

² *Ib.* v 26.

³ *Apol.* i 31–53, 61.

It was in Alexandria and at the hands of Philo, an elder contemporary of our Lord and the apostles, that the allegorical method attained its full development. Himself a Hellenized Jew, and keenly desirous to commend to Hellenic culture the Jewish religion and the Jewish Scriptures, Philo would have found alike the anthropomorphism and the legal and ceremonial detail of the Mosaic books an insuperable bar to the success of his propaganda among his Greek neighbours, if he had not been able, by a wealth of imagery and allegory, to represent the material sense of the letter as only the covering which concealed from any but a seeing eye a deeper spiritual meaning. By far the greater portion of his writings consists of an elaborate allegorical exegesis of sections of the books of Genesis and Exodus. His direct influence both on the Christian School of Alexandria and on some of the later Fathers, such as Ambrose, was very great; it is at least possible that the writers of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Fourth Gospel owed something to him: but it must not be supposed that an allegorizing exegesis of the Old Testament is confined to his direct imitators alone. St Paul himself, and in his earlier epistles, finds not only 'types' (*τύποι, τυπικῶς*) but 'allegories' (*ἀλληγορούμενα*) in the histories of the Pentateuch¹: when he wrote of the precept, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn,' 'Does God care for oxen, or is it of course on our account that He says it?'²—and again, that the Rock of which the fathers drank in the wilderness was the Christ³—he was allegorizing the Old Testament every bit as much, though he did not do it so systematically, as Philo. We have seen what binding authority a Messianic interpretation of the Old Testament had for Christians; and though the allegorical and the Messianic interpretations are by no means the same thing, the passages just quoted will shew how easily they might slide into one another. As a matter of fact we find Theodore of Mopsuestia, the great opponent of the allegorizers, restricting, and indeed reducing to a minimum, the directly Messianic application of prophecy.⁴

Thus there was every inducement, in tradition and in circum-

¹ 1 Cor. x 6, 11: Gal. iv 24.

² 1 Cor. ix 9.

³ 1 Cor. x 4.

⁴ For instance, the school of Theodore admitted only the four Psalms ii, viii, xlv[xlv], cix[cx], as properly Messianic.

stances, for the first generations of Christians to apply the Old Testament, as long and as far as they could, to contemporary and Christian purposes. The very early epistle known under the name of Barnabas represents, to a degree never equalled in patristic literature, the system of the more reckless allegorizers. Not only is the whole of Christian ethics and Christian theology to be found in the Law, but there was never really any other than the Christian meaning in it at all. It was pure misunderstanding on the part of carnally minded Jews if they thought that a literal circumcision and a literal Sabbath rest were ordained by Moses, rather than the rest from evil doing and the circumcision of the heart; while the supposed prohibition of particular animals for food was in fact the prohibition of the vices which those animals symbolized. This, however, was an extreme view: it was not necessary to deny the superficial and temporary meaning of the letter of the Scriptures in order to hold the superior validity of the underlying and remoter application: and indeed the pressure of the controversy with Gnosticism, and especially with Marcion, soon forced the Church to re-assert the truth and reality, within their own sphere, of the records of the Old Testament dispensation. Barnabas was more readily followed when he noted, for instance, that the 318 followers of Abraham—in Greek numerals ΤΙΗΨ—signified in mystery the Incarnation and Passion of the Saviour, for IH are the first letters of Ἰησοῦς, and T is itself in form a cross. In the same spirit it was possible to discover not only the life of the Lord but the life of the Church revealed, for those who looked long enough and deep enough, in the Old Testament Scriptures. Justin Martyr and Tertullian see the twelve apostles in the bells on the High Priest's robe and the jewels on his breast¹: Clement of Rome finds Christian bishops and deacons in the pages of Isaiah.²

It is very necessary to emphasize this continuance, in Christian circles, of the supreme and unique value, as a written standard, of the Jewish Scriptures. And yet it would of course be untrue to fact to conclude that Christians had no authority to depend on of a more direct and immediate nature; for in truth they

¹ Justin *Dial.* xlii *Tert. adv. Marcionem* iv 13.

² Clem. *ad Cor.* xlii (ls. lx 17).

possessed such authority from the first in a twofold form, in the tradition of the words of the Lord and in the persons of His living representatives. These authorities were not in any sense inferior to the Scriptures—the *Λόγια Κυριακά* were necessarily final—but they were on a different plane: there could be no definite comparison or commensuration of the new authorities and the old, as long as the one was only written while the others were only oral. St Paul reminds his Ephesian converts of the appeal he had made to them in his teaching that they should keep before them the words of the Lord Jesus¹: and the words that he proceeds to quote are found in no written Gospel. Nor in his letters to his converts does he shew any consciousness that there attached to his written message a greater authority than to his oral teaching; rather, the order in which he speaks of 'a revelation, a word, a letter', or again, 'my words and my letters,'² suggests if anything the contrary conclusion. His letters were in fact the substitute, imperfect but inevitable, for his presence. It is only our habitual use of the word 'epistle' which tends to obscure to us this truth; for 'epistle' has acquired something of a more formal character, and carries with it the reflection of the ecumenical authority implied by admission into the Canon. At the time of writing none of the epistles, except perhaps those addressed to Rome and Ephesus, had or were intended to have any validity apart from the immediate circle of their recipients.

Thus if the unique position of the Old Testament was from the very beginning unconsciously undermined in the Christian community, it was being undermined in a way which did not in the least suggest a collection of Christian Scriptures or New Testament. What the earliest evidence shews us—the evidence in fact contained in the writings which formed later on the New Testament of the Church—is, on the one hand, the appeal to the written Scriptures that were common to Jew and Christian, and, on the other hand, side by side with that another appeal to a body of tradition peculiar to the Christian Society, based on the teaching of the Lord, reinforced and completed by those who had received His commission and His promise to that end; and this tradition as orally conveyed assumed a definite and

¹ Acts xx 35.

² 2 Thess. ii 2; ii 15.

coherent, if still ductile, form, long before there was any idea on the part of the preacher of embodying it, or on the part of the disciple of looking for it, in written documents.

Two terms, or families of terms, are employed by St Paul to denote this body of Christian truth. Sometimes we find the term which remained fixed in later usage for the preliminary stage of instruction given to the postulant for Christian baptism: the 'catechumen' is one who is being taught the 'Word' ('let him that is being catechized in the Word share all his goods with his catechizer'¹) or 'the words' ('that thou mayest recognize the sure basis of the words in which thou wast catechized'²). But more frequently he speaks of the *παράδοσις* or *παράδοσεις*: to the conception of *παραδιδόναι* or *παρατίθεσθαι* on the part of the apostle answers a corresponding *παραλαμβάνειν* on the part of his disciples. 'Hold fast the traditions which I have taught you.'³ 'I congratulate you on your accurate memory: you keep the traditions in the shape in which I gave them you.'⁴ And with the same expression, but with a forcible metaphor added, 'you have heartily obeyed that doctrine into the mould of which you were cast.'⁵ These *παράδοσεις* are like the valuables which a man who had to make a journey, and had no banking account, deposited with his dearest and surest friend: 'O Timothy, keep the deposit safe.'⁶ But this deposit, unlike others, is one which never has to be handed back but always to be handed on.⁷ 'I gave over to you at the beginning what I in my turn had received'⁸: 'I received from the Lord what I have already handed on to you'⁹: 'that which thou hast heard from me, guaranteed by many witnesses, do thou commit to such trustworthy men as will be competent in turn to teach others.'¹⁰

What then can we learn from the New Testament as to the content of these 'traditions'? It does not seem going beyond the evidence if we answer that it was twofold. That it was, on the one hand, a simple catena of the actual words, and (so far as was necessary to interpret the words) of the accompanying

¹ Gal. vi 6.² Lk. i 4.³ 2 Thess. ii 15.⁴ 1 Cor. xi 2.⁵ Rom. vi 17.⁶ 1 Tim. vi 20.⁷ And so perhaps the thought in Jude 3, 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' represents another and rather later stage than St. Paul.⁸ 1 Cor. xv 3.⁹ 1 Cor. xi 23.¹⁰ 2 Tim. ii 2.

actions, of the Lord, seems to be implied by the *παράδοσις* of the Institution of the Eucharist in 1 Corinthians xi¹: and so St Luke's prologue speaks of Gospel narratives drawn up 'on the lines in which the story was given to us by those who were the original eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word'.² That with the great facts of the Gospel history was interwoven something of a dogmatic interpretation of them on the part of the Apostle—in other words, something of the nature of a Creed—and something also of a Messianic application of the Old Testament, follows from the *παράδοσις* of the Passion and Resurrection in 1 Corinthians xv, 'that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,' &c.³: and so the Apostle bids Timothy bear in mind the twin characteristics of his teaching, 'Jesus Christ raised from the dead, Jesus Christ of the seed of David, according to my Gospel.'⁴

As early therefore as the first Christian generation we see emerge, side by side with the written authority of the Old Testament, the equal authority of the Lord's Words and the Apostolic Traditions. Let us illustrate this by seeing how in the phraseology of the second century the two Dispensations and their representatives are brought into practical, but still at first quite irregular, parallelism. At the beginning of the century Ignatius of Antioch writes to the Philadelphians that he takes refuge 'in the Gospel as the Flesh of Jesus, and in the Apostles as the council-board of the Church, and the Prophets too we love',⁵ or again in the same letter that 'there is one Door, through which enter in Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the Prophets and the Apostles and the Church'⁶: while to the Smyrnaeans he speaks of those who were not persuaded by 'the Prophecies nor by the Law of Moses nor even now by the Gospel nor by our individual sufferings',⁷ and bids them 'take heed to the Prophets, but more particularly to the Gospel'.⁸ With the writers of

¹ 1 Cor. xi 23-25.

² Lk. i 1, 2.

³ 1 Cor. xv 3-7.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii 8.

⁵ Ign. *ad Philad.* 5.

⁶ *Ib.* 9.

⁷ *ad Smyrn.* 5.

⁸ *Ib.* 7. Note particularly the singular *εὐαγγέλιον*, as in all the earliest references: the Gospel of good news is one, even if it reaches us through several channels. The plural is a sign of later date, as in the so-called Epistle to Diognetus (xi 6), 'Then the awe of the Law is hymned, and the grace of the Prophets is

the middle of the century the parallel takes more conventional shape: in the letter known as 2 Clement we have 'the Books [i. e. the Old Testament] and the Apostles'¹: in Justin's Dialogue with Trypho 'the voice of God spoken to us by the Apostles of the Christ and proclaimed to us by the Prophets'²; and in Hegesippus 'the Law and the Prophets and the Lord'.³ And just as the embodiments of the two Dispensations are thus paralleled, so too are the Dispensations themselves. As there was a Law and a Covenant for Israel of old, there is now a new Law and a new Covenant⁴: but while the Old Covenant is preserved in writing—St Paul speaks of its being read aloud,⁵ and Melito of Sardis makes definite mention of the 'Books of the Old Covenant'⁶—the New Law and New Covenant is spiritual and is not originally conceived of as a series of documents. The Cup of the Eucharist, in St Paul's 'tradition' of the Institution, is 'the New Covenant in the blood of Christ'⁷: the Apostle himself is a minister or deacon of a New Covenant.⁸ In Barnabas we find 'the New Law of our Lord Jesus Christ',⁹ in Justin 'the New Law and the New Covenant',¹⁰ in Irenaeus 'the New Covenant and life-giving Law.'¹¹ And both the lines of parallelism we have been following out are combined in Clement of Alexandria: 'the Rule of the Church is the concord and harmony of Law and Prophets with the Covenant entrusted to our keeping when the Lord was present with us.'¹²

recognized, and the faith of the *Gospels* is established, and the tradition of the Apostles is guarded, and the grace of the Church bounds for joy.'

Even when τὰ εὐαγγέλια had come into common employment of the four written Gospels, the older usage perpetuated itself in two directions: (1) each individual Gospel was not the Gospel of, or by, Matthew or Mark, but the one only Gospel according to, in the shape given to it by, Matthew or Mark, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ κατὰ Ματθαίου: (2) the Gospel section in the Liturgy is still 'the Holy Gospel' as written in such and such a chapter of such and such an Evangelist.

¹ 2 Clem. 14.

² Justin *Dial.* 119.

³ ap. Eus. *H. E.* iv 22.

⁴ The word *διαθήκη*, which is now stereotyped in Latin and English as 'Testament' and 'Testament', in the LXX and for the most part in N. T. and early Christian writers meant 'Covenant': though of course the Greek word does properly mean not 'Covenant,' which should be *συνθήκη*, but 'Testament' in the sense of a will, and this sense is found—side by side with the other—both in Philo and in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. ix 16, 17: Philo *de mutatione nominum* 51 [ed. Cohn & Wendland, ii p. 166 l. 4]).

⁵ 2 Cor. iii 14.

⁶ ap. Eus. *H. E.* iv 26.

⁷ 1 Cor. xi 25.

⁸ 2 Cor. iii 6.

⁹ Barnabas 2.

¹⁰ Justin *Dial.* 12.

¹¹ Iren. IV xxxiv 4.

¹² Clem. *Strom.* vi 15 § 125.

It is clear, then, that the Church, at a very early stage of her history, definitely and consciously placed the New Covenant and its representatives on at least a level with the Scriptures of the Older Covenant and their authors; but it is equally clear that this did not necessarily mean in any sense or to any degree a parallelism of two collections of books. There were, in fact, at first no Christian books to collect, and those which ultimately made up the Canon of the New Testament were only being gradually written during a period of two generations. As long as the expectation of an immediate Return of the Lord was as vivid and overmastering as we see it in the earlier epistles of St Paul, there was no object in writing for any but an immediate and temporary purpose, still less in collecting what other people had written. Even apart from that special cause, it was the task of preaching which had been laid on the Apostles, and not the task of writing: their enthusiasm, as Eusebius¹ and St Chrysostom² put it almost in the same words, was not for τὸ λογογραφεῖν. Or again, if we look at things not from the standpoint of the Apostles but from that of their immediate disciples, oral or unwritten tradition has a special attractiveness of its own. It is something which a tiny society separated from the world can guard as a sacred trust more jealously than the books which may by accident fall into the hands of the profane; it is something too which brings one indefinitely nearer to those with whom it deals than do the books which, as it were, interpose a third personality between the reader and the subject. Of this preference for the unwritten over written tradition Papias has become through Eusebius the classical interpreter³: he had made it, he tells us, his special object to collect the sayings of the elders, because he conceived he would get less benefit out of books than from the living and abiding voice.

But the number of steps in the ladder which connected the Church of the second century with the lifetime of her Master was multiplying, and each step was less firmly fixed than the one which preceded it. Even at the time when Papias began to collect the traditions which he afterwards—and apparently long afterwards—set down in writing, two only of the Lord's

¹ Eus. *H. E.* iii 24.

² Chrys. *in Act. Ap., pract.*

³ ap. Eus. *H. E.* iii 39.

personal disciples, so far as we learn from him, survived, and it is not certain that he had come into personal contact with either of them¹: and even Aristion and the presbyter John may probably have been long dead when Papias published—some-where before the middle of the second century—the *Expositions of Dominical Oracles*, *Λογίων Κυριακῶν ἐξηγήσεις*. As the second century after Christ waned, the only obvious chain of oral tradition remaining was that which bound the Church of Gaul through Irenaeus to Polycarp, and through Polycarp to John of Ephesus: but invaluable as this chain is for the purposes of the historian, it needed not one chain only, but the combined strength of many, to ensure the security of Apostolic tradition. Where the personal equation may be so disturbing, it is only the consensus of independent lines of witness which can have full validity.

This truth might not have been borne in so early to the minds of churchmen of that age, if it had not been for the pressure of the Gnostic movement. Whether without or within the Church, in the person of Clement of Alexandria as well as of Basilides or Valentinus, the Gnostic claimed to be the depository of a further and higher developement of Christianity than was open to the ordinary Christian; and the authoritative nature of the truths he represented was guaranteed by the secret channels of tradition which, as he claimed, connected him with the Apostles. What follows is taken wholly from Clement; and it may be judged how much further, in the case of the Gnostics proper, the Gnostic attitude departed in this respect from catholic churchmanship. Christ, then, revealed His mysteries only to a few²: the Apostles—James, Peter, John, and the rest—were the first Gnostics,³ and they in turn handed on the tradition orally to some few⁴; and so by a sort of apostolic succession, 'son succeeding father, but few are the sons like to their fathers',

¹ The words of Papias are: 'If any one came who had been a follower of the elders. I used to sift the sayings of the elders: what Andrew or Peter had said, or Philip or Thomas or James or John or Matthew or any other of the Lord's personal disciples; and what Aristion and the elder John were saying.' Eusebius indeed understood Papias to mean that he had himself been a hearer of John and Aristion; but the words appear to mean just the contrary, and Eusebius seems conscious that his interpretation is not the obvious one, for he goes on with the participle γούρ, 'at any rate he names them often and gives traditions of theirs in his books.'

² Clem. Al. *Strom.* i 13.

³ *Ib.* vi 68.

⁴ *Ib.* vi 7, 61.

through God's Providence there survived even to Clement's time men qualified to 'deposit in congenial soil the fertile seeds of the true Apostolic tradition'.¹

It was over against these perversions of the use of oral tradition and of the appeal to the Apostles, as they were used to recommend the various forms of heretical Gnosis, that churchmen were thrown back upon their own existing belief and practice, and forced to cross-question them, to define them, to correlate them: and so came the assertion of the claim to possess in the Creed the one and only universally received summary of Apostolic doctrine, in the Episcopate the one and only authoritative succession of teachers from the Apostles, and in the Canon of the New Testament the one and only public collection of genuine Apostolic writings. But the Creed was not invented to counteract Docetism—or the Episcopate to outshine the succession of true 'gnostics'—or the New Testament to rival the apocryphal traditions of the heretics: they were there already to hand. The books which constitute the Christian Scriptures had been, with one or two insignificant exceptions, composed before the end of the first century; and during the first three quarters of the second century an instinctive and at first no doubt unconscious process had been gradually collecting, sifting, canonizing them, until the Church possessed a New Testament almost without being aware of it. As the bulb germinates beneath the ground, striking root slowly and deeply into the earth, and only then emerges above the surface and shoots up suddenly into foliage and flower, so the real and effective canonization of the Apostolic writings had been silently wrought in the inner chambers of the life of the Christian Society, before history can lay her finger upon any open proofs. But when once the evidence comes, it comes, in the last quarter of the second century, abundantly and with a rush.

There remain, however, two points of view from which we can watch indications of this gradual process, and anticipate to some extent its culmination.

1. Perhaps it had been first by means of the liturgical worship of the Church that the equation of the written documents of the two Dispensations became a familiar idea to the Christians of the second century. We know from numerous allusions in the

¹ Clem. Al. *Strom.* i 11.

New Testament that the services of the Synagogue included the reading of passages from both the Law and the Prophets. Moses was 'read aloud in the synagogues every sabbath day'¹: 'every sabbath day the words of the Prophets are read aloud'²: it was 'after the reading of the Law and the Prophets'³ in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch that St Paul was asked to speak a word of exhortation to the people. Christian worship was a continuation of Synagogue worship—of course with the 'Breaking of the Bread' for its *differentia*, and with the substitution of Sunday for the Sabbath—and therefore in Christian worship too the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures had its place: St Paul, in his injunctions to Timothy,⁴ sets the duty of public reading, ἀνάγνωσις, before even those of preaching and teaching. But in the Christian meetings, at any rate, other things might be read besides the Old Testament Scriptures. When the Apostle wrote to his converts, his letter was not sent round, like the literature of a circulating book-club, with an injunction to each Christian to pass it on, when he had done with it, to some one else: it was addressed to the Church, and it was doubtless read aloud at the Church's Sunday service. And in proportion as the letter was highly prized, would follow the desire both to hear the reading of it repeated and also to send copies of it to other neighbouring communities that they too might profit by it. So St Paul himself bids the Colossians arrange with the Laodicenes an exchange for this purpose of his letter to Colossae and his letter to Laodicea⁵: and so Dionysius of Corinth, about 170 A. D., tells Soter of Rome that the letter sent by Clement from Rome to Corinth two generations earlier continued to be read in his Church every Sunday.⁶ The public reading of the written 'traditions' of the Lord's Words—it must be remembered that some Christians at least would be unable to read them for themselves—was doubtless even more universal: in the Roman Church, at any rate, by the time of Justin Martyr, we learn that at the commencement of the weekly worship as much was read as

¹ Acts xv 21, cf. 2 Cor. iii 15. ² Acts xiii 27, cf. Lk. iv 16, 17. ³ Acts xiii 15.

⁴ 1 Tim iv 13.

⁵ Col. iv 16.

⁶ ap. Eus. *H. E.* iv 23. Compare Tertullian *praescr.* 36 'percurrere ecclesias apostolicas... apud quas ipsae authenticæ litterae eorum recitantur, sonantes vocem et repraesentantes faciem uniuscuiusque': and Jerome *vir. illustr.* 17 'Polycarpus... scripsit ad Philippenses valde utilem epistolam quae usque hodie in Asiae conventu legitur'.

time permitted of 'the memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets'.¹

2. Not less instructive is it for our purpose to note the formulæ with which the Apostolic writings are referred to in the Christian literature of the post-apostolic age. Whereas at first the Lord's Words are introduced with the past tense, as matter of history—'the Lord commanded' 'the Lord said' 'the Lord said in His teaching'—,² with the progress of time the present tense replaces the past, and instead of εἶπεν or ἐκέλευσεν we find λέγει or φησι,³ for the documents containing the Lord's Words have themselves become an authority, and Scripture is always present with us. Quite similarly the verb γέγραπται and the noun γραφή γραφαί are at the outset strictly reserved for the Old Testament. In the New Testament writings the solitary exception to this rule is the passage in 2 Peter,⁴ where the epistles of 'our beloved brother Paul' are compared to 'the rest of the Scriptures', τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς; and though even this is not quite the same thing as calling the epistles themselves 'Scriptures', still the phrase is so unusual as to suggest the later origin of the document which contains it. In the sub-apostolic writers there are indeed several instances in which apocryphal writings are cited as Scripture⁵—in other words, a looser Alexandrine Canon was used in preference to the more rigid Palestinian—but of instances where the Apostolic writings are thus treated we have no more than one doubtful case in Polycarp, one rather more certain case in Barnabas, and one quite certain case in 2 Clement.⁶ When we come to Justin Martyr (150–160 A.D.) a process of transition is clearly at work: γέγραπται is used freely for Gospel citations—nine times, for instance, in §§ 100–107 of the *Dialogue with Trypho*—but γραφή and γραφαί are still confined to the Old Testament. The last step was, however, soon to be taken, and what Papias called the λόγια κυριακά become in Dionysius of Corinth the κυριακαὶ γραφαί.⁷

Our enquiry up to this point has shewn us the growth and maturity during the second century—or, to be more accurate,

¹ Justin *Apol.* i 67.

² *Didache*: Clem. Rom. : Polyc. ii 3, vii 2.

³ 2 Clem. iii 2, iv 2, vi 1, viii 5, xiii 4.

⁴ 2 Pet. iii 15, 16.

⁵ Clem. Rom. xvii 3?, xxiii 3, xxvi 2, xxxiv 8, xlv 2: Barnabas iv 1, vi 13, vii 4, 11?, xii 1, xvi 1: *Hermas Vis.* II iii 4.

⁶ Polyc. xii 1: Barn. iv 14: 2 Clem. ii 4.

⁷ ap. Eus. *H.E.* iv 23.

during the first three quarters of it—of the conception of a ‘Canon’ of the New Testament, of the separation of a group of Apostolic writings from the rest of Christian literature and their elevation to an equal authority with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Of what books or classes of books this New Testament consisted is a further question, and one which must be left to another article.

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

II. THE CONTENTS OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: (A) THE FOUR GOSPELS.

OF what books, then, or groups of books, was this New Testament Canon, the origin and development of which we traced in the last chapter, composed? That is the question to which the present and the next chapter are intended to give an answer, and we shall find that even problems of date and authorship are not without direct bearing on the ultimate object of our investigation, the critical reconstruction of the New Testament texts.

For instance, if the Gospel of St John had been written, as Baur used to maintain that it was written, between the years 160 and 170 A. D., we ought to have been able to restore with almost infallible certainty the *ipsissima verba* of the author, since, as the argument of these lectures will shew us, we can carry back the history of at least three lines of transmission of the Gospel text—in the West, at Edessa, and at Alexandria—to the end of the second or beginning of the third century, that is to say just about a single generation from the time of the supposed composition of the Gospel. But if on the other hand it was written seventy years earlier, in the last decade of the first century, it is obvious that we have the lapse of two more generations to take into account, in estimating the possibilities of textual degeneration, before we arrive at the point where direct and continuous textual history really begins. In other words, the earlier we put the New Testament books, the more difficult we may naturally find the restoration of their original text. The more conservative the

position we adopt as historical critics, the more radical we must be prepared to be as textual critics.

Again, the line of enquiry proposed in this and the succeeding chapter will not be unfruitful of result if it serves to convince us at the start how misleading it is, in the department of Textual Criticism, to think of the New Testament always as one single whole. Even in the Middle Ages it was relatively uncommon for the New Testament to be copied out complete within the boards of a single codex. Still more was this the case with the larger handwriting of earlier centuries: at least four-fifths of our uncial MSS of the Gospels contain the Gospels only. Even the use of the vellum codex itself does not go back as far as the time of the composition and first circulation of the New Testament books: down to the middle of the third century the papyrus roll was the universal form in which books were published, and three at least of the writings which go to make up the New Testament—the Gospels according to St Matthew and St Luke, and the Acts—attain by themselves the average length of a roll (*volumen*, *τόμος*).¹ It is hardly likely that any of the Gospels was ever written other than on its own separate roll: though of course as soon as the Four were recognized and marked off as canonical, the custom would naturally grow up of keeping them all in a common case or satchel.²

And these technical considerations only reinforce a conclusion

¹ A few vellum rolls continued to be written for liturgical purposes during the Middle Ages. I have seen (and with difficulty handled) in the library at Frankfort one of the oldest extant, written under King Hludovic and Queen Hemma—therefore before 876—and probably, since the name of St Nazarius is written in gold letters, for the great monastery of St Nazarius at Lorsch, which lay between Frankfort and Heidelberg. The roll, which is over eight feet long, contains a list in three columns of 534 names of saints, followed by a litany: but as the writing is in continuous columns down the roll, there is space for more matter than if the ancient method had been followed of writing in short columns *across* the roll. The older method was the only possible one if convenience of reading be taken into account: the roll lay along the table before the reader, who unrolled with his right hand and rolled up with his left, while on the system of the Frankfort roll the reader has to unroll it towards himself, and roll it up as best he can.

² In the Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs (A. D. 180) both Gospels and Pauline Epistles seem to be already kept together in a single case: 'Saturninus proconsul dixit: Quae sunt res in capsâ vestra? Speratus dixit. Libri et epistolae Pauli viri iusti.' An interesting illustration of one boy with a satchel, and another reading from a papyrus roll, occurs among the splendid series of Neumagen sepulchral sculptures in the museum at Trèves (Saal 4, No. 21 a).

to which we are already impelled by what we know of the diversities of origin and acceptance between the various component parts of our present New Testament Canon. Some few of the shorter books, like the Second Epistle of Peter, are of uncertain date, and seem nowhere to have arrived at canonical status before the third century. Others, whose time of writing must indisputably be placed within the limits of the first century, were received into the Canon much sooner in one part of the Church than in another: and it cannot but be of some moment textually—it must affect the grouping, and alter our estimate of the relative value, of the authorities—if we find that the Epistle to the Hebrews was refused admission to the New Testament of the Roman Church till the days of Jerome, or that the Apocalypse was unanimously rejected by the Asiatic Churches, whether Greek or Syriac, during the third and fourth centuries.

But if the textual history of each book is thus not only independent of that of the rest up to the time of its admission into the Canon, but even afterwards is largely independent at least of all groups of New Testament writings other than that to which it itself belongs, there is no need for further apology if we proceed to prefix to our investigations of the text some account of the genesis and early history of the books whose text we are going to consider.

The material already collected in the last lecture offers us some starting-points and sign-posts in the prosecution of the study of the contents of the Canon. We saw in the first place (p. 19), that Christians from the very beginning regarded the Lord's Words and the teaching of His apostles as authoritative: and though both of these were originally conveyed only in oral form, it is obvious that we have here, from the moment when written tradition began to be preferred to oral, the germs of the two groups of Gospels and Epistles. The same classification was even more distinctly adumbrated by the parallelism (p. 21) of Gospel and Apostles with Law and Prophets. As soon as the idea emerges of a written New Testament, it becomes at once natural to conceive it as twofold in the same way as the Old Testament was twofold: as the Law is the foundation of the Old Dispensation, so is the Gospel, or record of the Lord's life and words, the foundation of the New, while to the messages of the prophets of the Christ in the one Dispensation correspond

the letters of the preachers of the Christ in the other. And just as last time we noted (p. 21 n. 8) the antiquity of the terminology of Christian worship in the phrase 'the Gospel', so here again let us note how the double lection in the liturgy, Gospel and Epistle—in the older language 'Gospel' and 'Apostle'—reproduces faithfully the two groups out of which and round which the Christian Canon grew. Gospels and (Pauline) Epistles are the invariable nucleus, the essential contents, of the primitive New Testament.¹

But Gospels and Epistles, though they are the central and most important element of the Canon, are yet not the whole. We shall perhaps be able to account better for all the various constituent parts of the New Testament, if we approach it from a different point of view, namely from a consideration of the various forms in which the literary activity of the apostolic and sub-apostolic age found expression: for it was by necessity out of these classes of documents that by process of selection the Canon of New Testament writings had to be evolved. Bearing in mind, then, what was said in the last lecture (p. 23) of the relatively late development of bookwriting as such among the early Christians, we need to distinguish, before the end of the first quarter of the second century, not more than four departments of ecclesiastical literature. (1) It corresponds with what was said, in the passage just referred to, of the transitory character of the age as conceived by the first generations of Christians, that their literature was more than anything else epistolary: it was evoked by, and was intended to satisfy, the immediate needs of the moment, without any thought of a wider horizon or a more permanent meaning. Not only the epistles of St Paul, but some at least of the Catholic epistles, as well as the epistles of the three 'apostolic fathers', Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, are letters in the proper and limited sense of the word.² (2) Catechetical instruction in the 'traditions' held a foremost place, as we have seen, in the system of St Paul's provision for his converts: and as these traditions consisted of the sayings and doings of the Lord, they partook in some degree of the nature of a Gospel as we mean it. As the Christian movement spread to the Gentiles, that is to men less trained in retentiveness

¹ Compare the quotation from the Scillitan Acts, p. 152 n. 2 *supra*.

² See chapter I p. 19.

of memory than were the Jews, it was almost inevitable that attempts should be made, whether by preachers or by converts, to commit the traditions to writing. 'Many' had experimented in this direction before our third Gospel was composed: and it is not impossible that the earliest Gospels or collections of Sayings may have been written down at a date previous to even the earliest of the epistles of St Paul. (3) One of these writers of Gospels, gifted beyond the rest with literary sense and historical insight, and responding (it would seem) to the wants of a convert of the second Christian generation, to whom the early fortunes of the Church were no more matter of contemporary knowledge than the life and teaching of Christ Himself, appended to his work a sequel, in which he described the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles and the extension of the Church from the capital of Judaism to the capital of the world. Regarded as a history of the Christian Society, the book of Acts remained isolated and unique till the work of Eusebius of Caesarea at the beginning of the fourth century: regarded, however, as the story, or 'Acts', of individual Apostles, Peter or Paul, it found, like the canonical Gospels, numerous imitators, and new Gospels and Acts—books professing to be by Apostles, and books professing to be about Apostles—followed one another in quick succession all through the second century. (4) Lastly—and with this fourth class we practically exhaust all the directions in which Christian activity is known to have taken literary shape during the first century after Pentecost—there appeared sporadically in the Church, and especially in Jewish-Christian circles, specimens of that characteristic product and expression of contemporary Judaism, the Apocalyptic vision; in which the seer both depicts the sufferings of the present moment, and foretells the triumphant retribution which in the near or immediate future is to compensate for them.

Material for the Canon lay ready to hand as soon as ever the Christian consciousness demanded a New Testament: but in each department a process of selection was a necessary preliminary. There were books to reject as well as books to accept: books that could be accepted without question, and books that were only accepted after doubt and hesitation. And all these different experiences may be expected to leave their mark, in one way or another, upon the purity of the texts.

A. THE GOSPELS.

Whatever else may be obscure about the Canon of the New Testament, this much is certain, that it contained always and from the first four Gospels, neither more nor less. There is absolutely no trace anywhere, from the time that the conception of the Canon matured at all, of any inclination either to add another to the canonical Four or to omit any one of them. It might almost be said, in spite of the paradox, that the canonization of the Four Gospels was earlier than any formulation of the conception of the Canon itself: almost by the middle of the second century—so far we may argue back on the joint evidence of the old Latin and old Syriac versions, of the Alexandrine Clement, Irenaeus, and Tatian—these Four Gospels had become the official documents of the Church. To question any of them was itself an indication of heresy. We cannot, in fact, get back to a period which reveals a stage of growth of these particular Gospels in public estimation: as soon as the feeling of the need of authoritative writings grew up, Christian sentiment took to the Four as instinctively as a child to its mother's milk. This undesigned and unargued agreement as to what Gospels were the Gospels of the Church—or in later phrase 'canonical'—is surely one of the most striking things in early Christian history.

For it was not that there were no other Gospels in circulation during the second century. The *Protevangelium* of James was certainly known to Origen and possibly to Justin Martyr. The Gospel according to the Egyptians was used not only in Gnostic writings like the *Acts of Judas Thomas*, the *Excerpta* of Theodotus, or the *Exegetica* of Julius Cassianus, but by Clement of Alexandria and, half a century before him, in the so-called Second Epistle of Clement of Rome. The simple-minded church people of Rhossus were reading the Gospel according to Peter in the days of bishop Serapion of Antioch at the end of the second century: and Justin Martyr apparently made use of the same book. The Gospel of Marcion owes its existence, as its name implies, to the great Gnostic teacher, and its composition may be placed in the decade 140–150 A.D. Perhaps more primitive than any of these was the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which was employed by

Hegesippus and may well have been the literary source of some of the best known non-canonical Sayings of our Lord.

Here then are five Gospel documents, all of them presumably older than the middle of the second century, and yet we know that not one of them, whatever sporadic use may have been made of its contents, was ever a serious rival to the canonical Four. Either in date or in authorship or in character, there was something in each which distinguished it sharply enough from the Gospels of the Church. The majority of them were produced in Gnostic circles, and betrayed more or less obvious and systematic traces of their origin. Even the slender fragments of the Gospel according to the Egyptians indicate clearly its connexion with the Encratite revolt against marriage. Of two others we know quite enough to estimate with some certainty their dogmatic prepossessions. The Gospel of Marcion is described to us in considerable detail both by Tertullian and by Epiphanius, and we see it to be an arbitrary recension, from a point of view which denied both the reality of Christ's humanity and the dependence of the New Dispensation upon the Old, of that one of the canonical Gospels which seemed least unfitted for the purpose. The account of the Passion and Resurrection in the Gospel according to Peter is among the most striking of the *trouvailles* which the retentive soil of Egypt has at length yielded up to the spade of the explorer: and Serapion turns out to be amply justified in accusing it of an underlying Docetism. If we had as much left of the Gospel according to the Hebrews, we could doubtless give the reason why it too was set aside. As it is, we can only conjecture that, if it really was a genuine product of the first century, it was the absence of a name to guarantee its apostolic origin which proved fatal to its recognition by a society which was founded upon the 'apostles' doctrine and fellowship'.

Thus from whatever external aspect we treat the question, we find more and more striking evidence of the unique reception accorded to the Four, and we can only account for it as resting upon a combination, in each case, of primitive date and competent authorship. Let us conclude this section of the enquiry by looking at our Gospels for a moment at an earlier stage of their history, not as Four making a single whole accepted by the Church, but as individual documents of separate age and circumstance.

The first element of distinction within the Four is obviously that between the Synoptists and St John: and in no respect have we of the present generation so marked an advantage over our immediate predecessors as in the matter of the Synoptic problem. Critical theories about documents needed to be, and have been, simplified. The complicated webs which the fertile ingenuity of the professorial brain evolved, like the spider, out of itself, have been remorselessly brushed aside. Common sense has reasserted its rights, and has justified them by reaching a conclusion which has been truly called 'the one solid contribution of the nineteenth century towards the solution of the Synoptic problem'.¹ We no longer need 'Ur-Marcus' theories, for it was the Gospel of St Mark itself which lay before our first and third Evangelists. It goes without saying that this conclusion is of supreme importance for the historical criticism of the Gospels: it is not so self-evident that it is important also for the purposes of textual criticism, and some pages will be devoted to the elucidation of this point later on in the present chapter (p. 177).

But if this Gospel was already in the hands of Matthew and Luke, no more need be said about its antiquity: nor is there now any inclination to deny the substantial truth of the tradition of the early Christian generations, which attributed the authorship of it to Mark, and to Mark in the character of interpreter or disciple of St Peter. It is hardly likely that the Gospel should have been written down so long as the Apostle was alive to preach his 'good news' by word of mouth: we shall rather find its origin in the desire of the Apostle's converts to compensate for his removal from among them by the acquisition of a permanent record of his teaching; and as St Peter fell a victim to the early days of the Neronian persecution in A.D. 64, St Mark may have written out his Gospel in the years immediately following—probably before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. That it was published in Rome is suggested by its relation with St Peter, by the evidence of its Latinisms, and by the absence of arguments in favour of any alternative locality. It might indeed be urged that if the Gospel were brought into connexion not with Rome, but with the

¹ *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, by F. C. Burkitt (London, 1906), p. 37. Further references to this unequal but fascinating book will be found below, p. 177 seqq., and in the next chapter.

later scene of St Mark's labours at Alexandria, we could account in this way for the comparative neglect into which it fell almost from the first: for Alexandrine Christianity, during more than a century and a half after Christ, stood almost as completely aloof from the main current of Church life as it has in the centuries which followed the triumph of Mohammedanism. But while one aspect of the fortunes of this Gospel would thus be satisfactorily explained, it would be certainly less easy to account for the deference which St Matthew and St Luke independently pay to it by making it the basis of their own work, if it had been put into circulation at Alexandria, rather than at so prominent a centre of Christian intercourse as Rome.

One peculiar feature of this Gospel, as it was known to later scribes, and even (it would seem) to the first and third Evangelists, is so important for textual history that it merits notice at once. The end of the roll containing it was—accidentally, no doubt—torn off and lost either from the autograph itself or from some copy which became in fact the ancestor of all those copies which have survived. No direct trace remains of the original conclusion. Some few of our most ancient authorities represent faithfully the second stage of the text, and are content to let the Gospel break off with the words *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ*. One or two preserve what is obviously a makeshift, written merely to give an appearance of a proper termination, and containing no new facts. All the rest append twelve additional verses—the recently discovered Freer MS of the Gospels expands them into fourteen—the *provenance* of which was unknown until Mr F. C. Conybeare discovered in an Armenian MS a title separating these verses from the rest of the Gospel under the words 'Of Ariston the Elder'. Ariston, or Aristion, was, it will be remembered, one of those personal disciples of the Lord whose recollections formed the main subject-matter of Papias's book (p. 24): and there is now no reason to doubt that either he himself, or some one else out of the material left by him, filled up the missing conclusion of St Mark's Gospel at so early a date that his supplement has found its way into almost all codices that have come down to us. It may be assumed that Aristion lived in Asia Minor; and the presence of his supplement is so far an indication of Asian influence, the more valuable because certain traces of any Asian text are few and far between.

Irenaeus is the oldest certain witness to any part of the twelve verses; and Irenaeus may have brought them in his copy of the Gospels from his original home in Asia to his later home in the West.

Not only the authorship of the Second Gospel but that of the Third as well belongs to the category of ecclesiastical traditions long disputed but at length, it may almost be said, established and admitted. Until lately agreement only existed over the common authorship of the Third Gospel and the Acts, and over the genuineness of the 'We' sections of Acts as the real diary of a travelling companion of St Paul. Now, those of us who have always believed that the 'We' sections proceed from no other author than the rest of the book, and that that author was Luke the physician, see our persistence justified at the bar of critical opinion. It follows, from this view of the authorship, that both books must fall within the lifetime of one who joined St Paul as his companion and medical attendant somewhere about the year 50 A.D.: and as these conditions are satisfied only by a grown man, the limits of St Luke's literary activity can hardly be extended beyond the end of the century. Of the *terminus a quo* we know that the earlier of the two books is not only later than St Mark, but later also than the fall of Jerusalem, which seems to be unambiguously indicated in Luc. xxi 20-24. These *termini*, 70-100 A.D., would be, at least for the Acts, sensibly narrowed down if it could be shown that St Luke made use of Josephus's *Antiquities*, since that work was only published in 93 or 94. But so strong and overmastering an impression of exquisite literary skill and craftsmanship is left upon the reader of St Luke, that it is hard to believe that his writings—at any rate the Gospel, which Renan, no mean judge in such matters, called 'le plus beau livre qu'il y ait'¹—were not produced during the heyday of his maturity, and therefore not much later than A.D. 80. Where the Gospel was written is less easy to say than in the case of St Mark; there is something to be said for Rome, and something also for Antioch or the East.

St Luke's Gospel, we have already had occasion to note (p. 167), was the basis of the Gospel which Marcion, shortly before the

¹ *Les Évangiles*² p. 283

middle of the second century, set himself for his own purposes to compile. The Churchmen who refute Marcion delight to point out, section by section, his variations from his model, wherever the canonical record lay special emphasis on the reality of the human conditions of Christ's life, or teach with more than usual clearness the divine authority of the Old Testament. But some of his alterations appeared to them purely arbitrary, and no wonder; for they were not really alterations at all, they rather represented the Gospel text as Marcion inherited it. The Gospel as it lay before Marcion, and the Gospel as it lay before Tertullian or Epiphanius, were not quite the same thing, and the text of Marcion has at least the advantage of superior antiquity. Marcion's evidence, where we can disentangle it, is, in fact, almost the earliest evidence we possess: it is of primary importance to estimate its bearing on the problem of New Testament textual criticism, and some attempt to arrive at such an estimate will be made at the end of this chapter.

With regard to the First and Fourth Gospels, the divergences of criticism from tradition are more acute; but they touch rather questions of authorship than questions of date, and it is possible to arrive at sufficient certainty about the latter without formulating any rigid conclusions as to the former.

St Matthew's authorship of the First Gospel is, with some approach to consent, rejected by modern critics; nor can it be denied that that Gospel contains, as in its story of the Resurrection, what seem, by comparison with the other Gospels, to be secondary features. Papias's statement, that the Apostle composed some form of Gospel in the Aramaic tongue, will come before us at a later point, when we try to gather up and focus the *data* which concern the varieties of language in the early Church. For the present we have only to do with the Greek Gospel as we have it, and its *terminus a quo* has been already fixed in the use it makes of the Gospel according to St Mark. Allowing time for the knowledge of that Gospel to spread to the East—for we cannot, of course, place our First Gospel at Rome—we may take A. D. 70–75 as about the earliest possible date. The *terminus ad quem* must be fixed by considerations less direct than in the case of St Luke, but leading in the end to a very similar result. For the First Gospel is of all the Four *the Gospel par excellence* of the

early Church. During the slow period of growth of the New Testament Canon, it is this Gospel of which we find the most frequent and the clearest traces ; it is used to the comparative exclusion of the rest both by St Justin in the middle, and by St Ignatius¹ at the beginning, of the second century, and it is noteworthy that, in whatever order the Gospels are arranged among themselves by early authorities, St Matthew comes all but invariably first. Now this predominance of St. Matthew's Gospel is not at all what one would *a priori* have expected. (i) While the Gospels were being 'canonized', the two most influential Churches of the Christian world were unquestionably Ephesus and Rome—Rome, the birthplace of St Mark's Gospel and possibly of St Luke's also, Ephesus the birthplace of St John's ; yet it is to neither of these, but to St Matthew's, that the place of prominence in the collection is given. (ii) Or take another point of view : the two great apostles to whom Christian tradition, from Clement and Ignatius onwards, looked back as the twin foundations of the Church, were Peter and Paul ; but it is not the Gospel of St Peter's disciple, nor the Gospel of St Paul's disciple, but the Gospel of the obscure publican—of whom, apart from his call, no facts are related in any one of the evangelic narratives—which the early Christians preferred in honour. (iii) Lastly, if there is one characteristic more than another which we can predicate with confidence of the Church of the second century, it is its profoundly anti-Judaic feeling ; Justin even tells us that many of his contemporaries refused the name of Christian and the fellowship of the Church to any who observed the Law, however sound their faith in Christ—so completely were the tables turned since the days of St Paul. Yet it is the most Jewish of the Gospels of which this anti-Judaic community took first and most account.

There is only one explanation possible of these phenomena : the First Gospel, as we have it in Greek, must have been very early written, very widely known, and very universally credited with apostolic authorship. It is certain that its date must fall within the first century, and the facts of its reception cannot reasonably be reconciled with any date much later than A.D. 80.

In spite of all the dust of controversy raised over the Fourth

¹ Prof. Burkitt, *op. cit.* p. 276, is quite decided on this point.

Gospel, there is not really, for the questions which specially concern the textual critic, more uncertainty attaching to it than to the other Gospels. The evidence connecting it with Ephesus is more cogent than the evidence of place for any one of the three Synoptists. Even with regard to date, no sane criticism, of whatever school, will nowadays stray far in either direction from the decade 90-100 A.D. Once place and date are granted, it does not, for the limited purposes of textual criticism, matter very much who was the writer. It has become fashionable of late to substitute the authorship of John the Elder for that of John the son of Zebedee. As a problem of the Johannine tradition of Ephesus, the distinction has its own interest: as an element in the fundamental questions which the Fourth Gospel evokes, its importance may be easily exaggerated.¹

This rapid sketch of what seem to be the present tendencies of the saner sort of criticism of the Gospels justifies us in believing that each and all of these had been written before the end of the first century: St Mark about A.D. 65, St Matthew about A.D. 80, St Luke A.D. 80-90, St John A.D. 90-100—St Mark and possibly St Luke in Rome, St John in Ephesus, St Matthew in Palestine or Syria. Not much, if at all, later than the middle of the second century they came to be regarded as constituting a single *corpus*, a collection of the Church's authoritative records of her Founder's life on earth: and the formation of the collection must be ascribed, not so much to the initiative of a single individual or a single community—for in that case the Gospels would always have been arranged in the same order—as to the common instinct of Christians working in different quarters on parallel lines. But

¹ In what way is any of the really serious issues affected by this substitution of 'another gentleman of the same name'? If John the son of Zebedee was an eye-witness, John the Elder, according to Papias, was *μαθητὴς Κυρίου*, a personal disciple of the Lord. If John the son of Zebedee was one of three apostles singled out for special intimacy with their Master, John the Evangelist was the disciple whom Jesus loved, who lay next Him at the Supper. If John the son of Zebedee is brought, in the Acts and in the Galatian epistle, into closest connexion with Peter, Peter is in the Fourth Gospel the special friend of the beloved disciple: they hold a whispered conversation at the Supper, they follow together to the Trial, together they run excitedly to the empty tomb: Peter, on hearing his own martyrdom foretold, turns at once to ask about the future of his friend, while conversely the Evangelist misses no opportunity of emphasizing the leadership of Peter among the apostles.

between the writing of the Gospels and the date when the evidence accumulates in sufficient mass to enable us to construct thenceforward the history of the transmission of their text, a period of about a century elapses—rather more for St Mark's Gospel, rather less for St John's—and it is just during this century, of which we know so little, that the most serious divergences arose between one manuscript copy and another.

Although, however, we cannot claim to push back the commencement of the direct and continuously traceable history of the Gospel texts behind the beginning of the last quarter of the second century, the summary account of the preceding pages has indicated possibilities of penetrating, at two earlier points, a little way within the obscurity which conceals the first development of *variae lectiones* in the Gospels. The evidence of Marcion will tell us something about the form in which he was reading St Luke's Gospel before the middle of the century. More novel, and perhaps more far-reaching, are the deductions which can be drawn from recent advances in the investigation of the Synoptic problem.

The starting-point of this problem is the fact that there is a large amount of matter common to the first three Gospels. Where the three agree exactly, their agreements prove nothing as to their mutual relations. But besides these exact agreements we have also, in the matter which is common in substance to all three, a vast number of coincidences in detail between St Mark and St Matthew against St Luke, and a large number of similar coincidences between St Mark and St Luke against St Matthew. If now there were no coincidences between St Matthew and St Luke against St Mark, the conclusion would be obvious: no one would doubt, the moment that the mutual relations of the three were pointed out to him, that one of two things followed: either the First and Third Gospels lay before St Mark as he wrote—an hypothesis which on other grounds is excluded—or the Second Gospel lay before St Matthew and St Luke, writing independently of one another. In fact, however, there are coincidences, not many, but still real and tangible, between St Matthew and St Luke against St Mark: and the conclusion ordinarily drawn from this state of things by enquirers of the last generation was that a fourth document, an *Ur-Marcus*, a something like St Mark yet not St Mark, lay

behind the work of all three Synoptists. But it is a sound rule of criticism, a rule of which the value impresses itself on one more and more, that if ninety-nine per cent. of the evidence points one way and the remaining one per cent. another way, then the one per cent. must not only be severely tested to see if it admits of some alternative explanation, but may, on occasion, even if it survives all the tests that we can apply, be safely neglected—on the ground that there must be some other explanation, although we ourselves have failed to find it.

In the case before us, agreements between our First and Third Gospels against our Second may be explained, consistently with their independent use of the work of the evangelist St Mark, in any one of three ways. (1) The agreements may be accidental: Matthew and Luke may both have hit upon the same modification of their exemplar. This explanation will apply especially in the case of some stylistic peculiarities of St Mark, where the two other evangelists when writing out his material in their own words might naturally wish to avoid his turn of speech, and if they avoided it would naturally make the same substitution. 'The two most constantly recurring causes of the agreement of Matthew and Luke are two preferences of Mark,' viz. his preference (i) for the historic present instead of a past tense (especially λέγει as against εἶπεν), and (ii) for καί instead of δέ.¹ Other instances of linguistic improvements common to both Matthew and Luke are ἀνεψχθῆναι for σχίζεσθαι of the heavens opening, and κλίνη (κλινίδιον) for κράβατος, 'a bed.'² And the same consideration might account for the fact that when St Mark says that the new wine will burst the old wine skins, 'and the wine perishes (ἀπόλλυται) and the skins,' the other two both avoid the zeugma and speak of the wine being 'spilled' (ἐκχεῖσθαι) and only the skins 'perishing'.³ (2) Or again it may be the case that both St Matthew and St Luke knew St Mark's Gospel in a form which gave from time to time different readings from those which have come down to us in our copies of St Mark. The chances against accurate reproduction of Gospel texts must have been greatest in the earliest years after they were written, before professional copyists were employed, before any special

¹ See Sir John Hawkins *Horae Synopticae* pp. 113-122.

² *Op. cit.* p. 106.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 174.

sanctity attached to the records, and while personal recollection and oral tradition were still disturbing influences. Just the fifteen or twenty years which separate St Mark's Gospel from St Matthew's and St Luke's will have been more critical years than any that followed, since the chief elements of danger to the texts tended to disappear with time. It is the opinion of one who has long presided over these studies among us that St Matthew's text of St Mark was a more corrupt one than our own. Now if St Matthew had what was in a certain degree a retouched copy of St Mark, it is not impossible that some of its alterations may have been present in St Luke's copy as well. Thus, in the instance given above, the insertion of ἐκχέισθαι may perhaps have been derived by both Matthew and Luke from a text of St Mark in which the correction had already been made, though it is not (fortunately) the text of St Mark which has come down to us. (3) Lastly, and here we approach the point which immediately interests us as textual critics, the supposed agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark may not be real agreements at all, but may be due to later assimilation by scribes of the text of the First Gospel to that of the Third, or *vice versa*. St Jerome, whose critical insight was only exceeded by his robust common sense, long ago pointed out in the preface to his revision of the Latin Gospels that the cause from which more than any other the purity of the Gospel texts had suffered was the desire to supplement one Gospel from the parallel passage of another, and to alter the language of the less familiar into conformity with that which was better known. And since there can be no doubt that St Mark's Gospel was the least read of the three, it follows that the other two were very likely to be contaminated from one another, but not so likely to be contaminated from him. If we took as our standard the unrevised texts that St Jerome found in the Old Latin or that we ourselves have at hand in the *Textus Receptus* of the Greek Testament, we should certainly find a much longer list of agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark than Sir John Hawkins has drawn up:¹ for many of the false assimilations between the First and Third Gospels have already been displaced from the critical editions,

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 174, 175.

and it is on Westcott and Hort's text that his calculations are based. And we have now to see—following on the lines of Prof. Burkitt's book¹—whether some of the remaining agreements against Mark will not disappear, if we carry the process of textual revision to a further stage than even Westcott and Hort have reached. As a matter of fact, we shall find that several of them vanish if we allow more weight than has hitherto been given to the Old Latin and Old Syriac evidence: 'multarum gentium linguis scriptura ante translata doceat falsa esse quae addita sunt.'

- a. Marc. iv 11 ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ
 = Matt. xiii 11 ὑμῖν δέδοται γνῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν
 = Luc. viii 10 ὑμῖν δέδοται γνῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ.

Here we have two agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark: the insertion of *γνῶναι*, and the plural *μυστήρια* instead of the singular *μυστήριον*. In the first case scribes have done their best to confuse the evidence, for they assimilated the text of Mark to that of the other two Synoptists, and credited him also with *γνῶναι*: but the critical editions rightly omit it with half a dozen of the great uncials and a few cursives, and these are now reinforced by the Sinai Syriac and by St Jerome's Vulgate.² Here it is easy to suppose that St Matthew and St Luke made independently the same obvious simplification of a rugged phrase. In the other case the editions, earlier and later alike, are wrong. That St Mark wrote *μυστήριον* and St Luke *μυστήρια* is indeed certain: in the original conception the 'mystery' is single, as the 'Gospel' was single; and just as τὸ εὐαγγέλιον became τὰ εὐαγγέλια, so, though much earlier, τὸ μυστήριον became τὰ μυστήρια. And if St Matthew too wrote *μυστήρια*, as all the Greek MSS witness, we should have again to account for the agreement of Matthew and Luke against Mark as the accidental coincidence of independent correctors. But many Old Latin MSS including *k*, the most important of them, and among Fathers Irenaeus and the Alexandrine Clement, have the singular in St Matthew³: and their evidence must be accepted, for assimilation of an original singular to St Luke's plural is much more likely than assimilation of an original plural to St Mark's singular.

¹ *Gospel History and its Transmission* pp. 42-58.

² The St Gall fragments (Sangall, 1395) give 'datum est mysterium', and the other MSS are divided between 'scire', 'nosse', 'cognoscere'.

³ I do not add the Old Syriac, since it has the singular in all three Gospels.

β. Marc. v 27 ἦψατο τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ
 = Matt. ix 20, Luc. viii 44, ἦψατο τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου
 αὐτοῦ.

But neither in Matthew nor in Luke are the words τοῦ κρασπέδου above suspicion: in the former they are omitted by ξ , in the latter by the Greek of the codex Bezae and the three best Old Latin MSS here extant. The enlarged phrase may even be genuine in one Gospel and an assimilation in the other: or its ultimate source in both may be the parallel language in Matt. xiv 36 (= Marc. vi 56) ἵνα μόνον ἄψωνται τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ.

γ. Marc. x 30 ἑκατονταπλασίονα, 'a hundredfold'

= Matt. xix 29, Luc. xviii 30, πολλαπλασίονα, 'manifold.'

In Matthew all authorities except B L, the Sahidic, and Origen, give 'a hundredfold' with Mark: in Luke D and the Old Latin (including *c* Cyprian) give 'sevenfold', and the Old Syriac again 'a hundredfold'. It would seem then either that Matthew and Mark wrote 'a hundredfold', and Luke 'manifold'—in which case 'manifold' in Matthew is an Alexandrine assimilation to Luke, and 'sevenfold' in Luke is an arbitrary 'Western' attempt at precision: or that each evangelist used a different term, Mark 'a hundredfold', Matthew 'manifold', and Luke 'sevenfold'—in which case the desire to increase the number is the dominant factor, and the scribes of Luke advanced one step to the 'manifold' of Matthew, while the scribes of Matthew advanced in turn another step to the 'hundredfold' of Mark.

δ. Marc. xii 28 καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς τῶν γραμματέων . . . ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτόν

= Matt. xxii 35 καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν εἰς ἐξ αὐτῶν νομικὸς πειράζων αὐτόν

= Luc. x 25 καὶ ἰδοὺ νομικὸς τις ἀνέστη ἐκπειράζων αὐτὸν λέγων.

In the critical texts of this passage there are two agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark, νομικός and πειράζων (ἐκπειράζων) αὐτόν. In the *Textus Receptus* there were three, for the words καὶ λέγων stood in Matthew after πειράζων αὐτόν. But the addition καὶ λέγων was absent from the texts of \aleph B L 33, the best Old Latin MSS and the Vulgate, the Sahidic and Origen, and even its reappearance in the Sinai Syriac cannot rehabilitate it. And the critical texts of the future will, it may be prophesied with confidence, remove one more agreement: for νομικός, though given by all the Greek uncials of Matthew, is otherwise an exclusively and characteristically Lucan word, and it is omitted in the first Gospel by the Sinai Syriac, the African Latin, and the translator of Origen, as well as by the important Greek cursive τ and its family. There remains a third agreement, πειράζων αὐτόν: it is too striking to be accidental, but the evidence at our disposal does not enable us to say which of the explanations open

to us should be adopted. It is possible that the phrase comes from the second common source of Matthew and Luke, now cited as Q.

ε. Marc. xiv 72 καὶ ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαιεν

= Matt. xxvi 75, Luc. xxii 62, καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἔξω ἔκλαυσεν πικρῶς.

But the whole verse is omitted in St Luke by six of the best Old Latin MSS here extant, and should no doubt be regarded as an assimilation to Matthew. Even Westcott and Hort place the words within (single) brackets.

It will be part of the argument of these lectures that the chief modification which modern criticism has to make in the principles on which Hort constructed his text is that the versions not infrequently enable us to restore the true reading against the consensus of the leading Greek uncials, and sometimes even against all Greek MSS: and it is significant therefore to note, at this early stage of our enquiry, that cases such as those which we have just examined do indicate that the best recent work on the internal problems of the Gospels tallies with the conclusions which will be found to recommend themselves on quite other grounds of textual history.

These preliminary investigations into the transmission of the Gospel texts before 175 A.D. will be fittingly concluded with some discussion of the evidence of Marcion. In citing Marcion's testimony to *variae lectiones* in the Gospel of St Luke, only such instances are adduced as find him in the company of other witnesses, so that there is good reason to believe in all the cases—with perhaps one exception—that he inherited the reading rather than invented it.¹

1. Luc. v 14 'ut sit vobis in testimonium' Marcion-Tert. (*ἵνα ᾗ μαρτύριον τοῦτο ὑμῖν* Marcion-Epiph.): with D and some Old Latin MSS. The Sinai Syriac and the African Latin MS *e* give the same reading, save that instead of 'to you' they read 'to them': conversely another good Old Latin MS *l* has 'vobis' with Marcion, but not 'ut sit'. The ordinary reading, found in all Greek MSS except D, is *εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς*, words which recur without variant in the parallels Marc. i 44, Matt. viii 4. There can hardly be any doubt that the Greek MSS of Luke have suffered from assimilation to the other two Gospels,

¹ The cases adduced are selected from the somewhat longer list given in Dr Sanda's *Gospels in the Second Century* pp. 231, 232. A text of the whole of Marcion's Gospel and Apostolicon has been as far as possible restored by Dr Theodor Zahn *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* ii 455 seqq.

certainly in the omission of *ἵνα ἦ*, probably also in the substitution of *αὐτοῖς* for *ὑμῖν*.

2. Luc. xi 2: Marcion read the Lord's Prayer with some special petition for the Holy Spirit in connexion with, or in place of, 'Hallowed be Thy Name': traces of a similar but not identical mention of the Holy Spirit survive in two Greek Fathers, Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus Confessor. Further, Marcion apparently omitted the petition 'Thy Will be done on earth as in heaven' with B L 1 and Origen among the Greeks, ff and the Vulgate among the Latins, as well as the Old Syriac. Here Marcion is clearly right, but the Old Latin evidence is for the most part on the other side.

3. Luc. xii 14 *τίς με κατέστησεν κριτὴν (οἱ δικαστὴν) ἐφ' ὑμᾶς*; so Marcion-Tert. with D 33, one or two MSS of the Old Latin (but not the African Latin), and the Old Syriac. All other authorities have two nouns as alternatives with *ἦ*: *κριτὴν ἢ μεριστὴν* a smaller group headed by *ℵ B*; *δικαστὴν ἢ μεριστὴν* the main body of Greek MSS with *A*; *κριτὴν ἢ δικαστὴν* a single cursive. The variation is very complicated: but it is impossible not to believe that, if not St Luke himself, at any rate some of the scribes who copied out his Gospel, had in mind the words of Exod. ii 14 (cf. Acts vii 27) *τίς σε κατέστησεν ἄρχοντα καὶ δικαστὴν ἐφ' ἡμῶν*; and the variation will therefore fall to be discussed in a later lecture, when the disturbing influence of the LXX on the text of the New Testament comes up for consideration. Meanwhile it may be well to point out that, as between variant readings, a certain suspicion will attach to any reading introduced with *ἦ*, since it may suggest a correction originally placed in the margin and subsequently incorporated as an alternative with the reading of the text.

4. Luc. xii 38: the 'evening watch', *ἑσπερινὴ φυλακή*, is substituted for 'the second and third watch' by Marcion-Epiph. in agreement with the Old Latin MS *b*. It is perhaps more likely that Epiphanius has blundered, and that Marcion with D 1, the best Old Latin MSS and Irenaeus, the Curetonian (but not the Sinai) Syriac with the Acts of Thomas, really had both the 'first' or 'evening' watch and the 'second and third' watch: at any rate this latter reading would seem to be older than that which simply substitutes the 'evening' watch for the others. It is attractive to think that the fullest reading is original, and that omission by *homoeoteleuton* may account for the disappearance from the ordinary texts of the clause relating to the *ἑσπερινὴ φυλακή*: but the last word about it has not yet been said.

5. Luc. xvi 12 *εἰ ἐν τῷ ἄλλοτρίῳ πιστοὶ οὐκ ἐγένεσθε, τὸ ἐμὸν τίς δώσει ὑμῖν*; is the reading of Marcion-Tert. supported by three of the best Old Latin MSS *e i l*. *τὸ ἡμέτερον* Westcott and Hort with

B L Origen. τὸ ὑμέτερον **N** and all other authorities, including Cyprian and the Old Syriac. The reading τὸ ἡμέτερον would best explain the genesis of the other two: but it is certainly also the most difficult reading of the three.

6. Luc. xvii 1, 2 οὐαὶ δι' οὗ ἔρχεται λυσιτελεῖ αὐτῷ εἰ λίθος μυλικὸς περικείται περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ κτλ.: Marcion-Tert. adds (after λυσιτελεῖ αὐτῷ) 'si natus non fuisset aut' with all the best Old Latin MSS save the African *e*. The insertion is clearly an erroneous assimilation to Matt. xxvi 24 = Marc. xiv 21, and it serves to shew how soon processes of conflation between the Gospels began to affect the texts, even in passages that are not really parallel.

7. Luc. xxi 18 καὶ θριξὶ ἐκ τῆς κεφαλῆς ὑμῶν οὐ μὴ ἀπόληται. The whole verse is omitted (with Matthew and Mark) by Marcion and the Curetonian (but not the Sinai) Syriac. Assimilation to the other Gospels will hardly account for excision: it is more likely that Marcion was moved by the dogmatic motive of omitting a verse that might be misunderstood as a falsified prophecy of Christ.

8. Luc. xxi 27: μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης is the reading of Marcion-Tert. and substantially of D, of the Old Latin and Vulgate, and of the Old Syriac. It is certain that a reading in St Luke which agrees with St Mark (xiii 26) is to be preferred to one which agrees with St Matthew (xxiv 30): for assimilation to St Matthew is infinitely more probable than assimilation to St Mark.

9. Luc. xxiii 2: Marcion-Epiph. adds (after διαστρέφοντα τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν) καταλύοντα τὸν νόμον καὶ τοὺς προφῆτας with the best Old Latin MSS, except apparently *a*; and (after κωλύοντα φόρους Καίσαρι διδόναι) ἀναστρέφοντα τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τὰ τέκνα, which words appear with other new matter in two only, but those the best, Old Latin MSS in verse 5. It would be difficult to suppose that any of our Old Latin MSS had been influenced by Marcion's Gospel; nor indeed have we elsewhere any reason that I know of for convicting Marcion of additions to his Gospel exemplar as well as excisions from it. The readings must be pre-Marcionite: they are not in the Old Syriac, and perhaps are real specimens of what we used to call the licence of interpolation in the (strictly and geographically) Western text.

In all these readings Marcion is found in company with Western and especially with Latin witnesses. He is generally supported by Old Latin MSS,¹ not infrequently by the Old Syriac, against the great Greek uncials: he is never on the side of the

¹ But it is noteworthy that he is often nearer to the other Old Latin MSS than to the African Latin of *e*: unfortunately *k*, our best representative of the African Latin, is not extant for St Luke.

uncials against both the versions. If Hort is right, Marcion in all these cases is wrong: the separate examination of each instance has led us to the conclusion that Marcion is both sometimes right (nos. 1, 3, and 8), and sometimes wrong (nos. 6 and 7; but the latter is perhaps a reading introduced by Marcion himself), while sometimes the verdict must be held in suspense. From the faults of his text we learn that erroneous readings were established, in Rome if not in Asia Minor also, before his time, and we see how early the process of degeneration had begun and how deeply it had penetrated. From its better elements we are adding to the material, and helping further to establish the accumulating presumptions, which, in opposition to the hitherto accepted theories of the best known textual critics, suggest that the true text of the Gospels will never be restored by the help of our Greek MSS alone.

C. H. TURNER.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

III. THE CONTENTS OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTA- MENT: (B) THE (PAULINE) EPISTLES.

'LEGEM et Prophetas cum Evangelicis et Apostolicis litteris miscet' is Tertullian's summary definition of the Church's procedure in regard to her sacred books, whether of the Jewish or of the Christian covenant¹: and we have noted in the course of the preceding articles² that this bipartite arrangement of the contents of both Old and New Testament is very characteristic of the earliest period, and is indeed apparently earlier than any juxtaposition of the two Testaments as two single wholes. The last article was devoted to the consideration of the 'Evangelicae litterae', the four-fold Gospel: we have now to ask what is meant by the other class of writings in the Christian Canon, the 'litterae Apostolicae'. We might naturally have supposed that, as the Apostles correspond to the Prophets, so the 'Apostolic literature' would be the letters of several Apostles, or at least of more than one—something, in fact, like the whole body of Catholic and Pauline epistles as we have it now. But in the original tradition of the Christian Church, though the 'epistles' are plural, the 'Apostle' is singular: the one Apostle is related to the several letters much as the one Gospel to the several Gospels. And that one Apostle is of course St Paul.

To this original singularity of St Paul in the tradition of the first generations a constant witness is borne, down to much later times, both by the persistent custom in Greek Christian writers of citing St Paul under the title *ὁ ἀπόστολος*, and by the technical use of the same term for the Epistle in the liturgies. Even at this day the regular series of Epistles in the Byzantine rite is

¹ Tertullian, *praescriptio adv. haereticos* § 36.

² *J. T. S.* October 1908, pp. 21, 22; January 1909, pp. 163, 164.

drawn (apart from Acts at Easter-tide) exclusively from St Paul. And lest it should be thought doubtful whether these usages may not rather represent later developments than a continuous practice from the beginning, it may be well to set down one or two illustrative examples from the second century itself. 'If Eusebius (*H. E.* v 27) tells us that Heraclitus (about A.D. 200) wrote *εἰς τὸν Ἀπόστολον*, the form of the title may perhaps be the historian's and not the commentator's: but in two other places (*H. E.* v 17, 18) the phrase occurs in actual quotations from anti-Montanist writers of the same period: *δεῖν γὰρ εἶναι τὸ προφητικὸν χάρισμα ἐν πάσῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ μέχρι τῆς τελείας παρουσίας ὁ Ἀπόστολος ἀξιοῖ* (Anonymus), and *Θεμίσιων . . . μιμούμενος τὸν Ἀπόστολον καθολικὴν τινα συνταξάμενος ἐπιστολήν* (Apollonius). So Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* vii 14, *τό τε Εὐαγγέλιον καὶ ὁ Ἀπόστολος*. So too the Latin Irenaeus, *Haer.* IV xxvii 4, "Domino quidem dicente [Luc. xviii 7] . . . et Apostolo in ea quae est ad Thessalonicenses epistola ista praedicante", and often elsewhere, especially in Book V: in two cases the Greek also is extant—V ix 3, where it too has *Ἀπόστολος*, and V ii 3, where the *Sacra Parallela* give *ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος* for "beatus Apostolus": but there can be no question that in such cases the Latin is our best guide. Doubtless the use of the phrase goes back further still into the second century.'¹

The unique honour thus paid to St Paul, in the usage of Greek Christianity, as the one letter writer of the Canon, receives striking confirmation from the most primitive documents alike of the Latin-speaking and of the Syriac-speaking churches. In the far East the 'Doctrine of Addai' (or Thaddaeus) represents the third century tradition of the form in which the church of Edessa was believed to have been given its Bible: 'The Law and the Prophets, and the Gospel in which ye daily read before the people, and the letters of Paul which Simon Cephas sent us from Rome, and the Acts of the Twelve Apostles which John the son of Zebedee sent us from Ephesus.' In the far West the earliest extant monument of Latin Christianity, the Passion of the Scillitan Martyrs in A.D. 180, records the answer of the martyrs to the question, 'What effects have you in your satchel?' in these

¹ I repeat what I have already printed in an article 'Greek Patristic Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles' in *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible* (v 484 b).

terms 'The Books' [that is, as I suppose, the Gospels] 'and the letters of one Paul, a righteous man'.¹

It is clear, then, that there was a period in the history of all the Churches, Greek, Latin, and Syriac alike, when the epistles of St Paul alone were reckoned as canonical. In contrast with the lesser Catholic epistles—2 and 3 John, James, Jude, 2 Peter—this would be universally admitted: for they belong to the class of books which Eusebius, in his well-known analysis of the New Testament Canon (*H. E.* iii 25), labels ἀντιλεγόμενα or 'disputed', and only attained their full recognition at a comparatively late date. But even the first epistle of St John and first epistle of St Peter, which Eusebius places among the ὁμολογούμενα or 'admitted' books, though they certainly anticipated the rest of the Catholic epistles and were probably everywhere recognized as canonical by the middle or end of the third century, must, on the evidence before us, be regarded as having accrued to the New Testament Canon at a definitely later moment than the collection of the epistles of St Paul.² And this original difference, in the order of admission to the Canon, of the Catholic and the Pauline epistles respectively is reflected in the arrangement of the earlier MSS: the Catholic epistles form a group not with the Pauline epistles at all, but with the Acts and sometimes the Apocalypse. I do not think any ancient MS is extant which contains the epistles, Catholic and Pauline, and nothing else: whereas on the other hand there are MSS, and those among our oldest, both of St Paul alone, and of the Catholic epistles with other parts of the New Testament than the Pauline epistles. To take four examples, all of them perhaps of the sixth century: of St Paul alone we have D₂, the Claromontane Graeco-Latin

¹ Quoted already in the last article, p. 162 n. 2.

² 1 Peter is not mentioned in the Muratorian Canon: and St Cyprian's Latin bible, though it indubitably included both 1 Peter and 1 John, seems to me to betray a difference of hand between the translation of 1 Peter and that of the rest of the New Testament. In an article published in the *Church Quarterly Review* for April 1890 (p. 157), I took occasion to point out the following inconsistencies in the rendering of characteristic Greek words between 1 Peter and the rest of the New Testament: δόξα δοξάζειν, 'maiestas' 'magnifico' 'honoro' rather than 'claritas' 'clarifico': ἔθνη, 'gentiles' rather than 'nationes' or 'gentes': διασώζειν, 'salvum facere (fieri)' rather than 'salvare' 'liberare' 'eliberare' 'servare': εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, 'praedicare' rather than 'adnuntiare'. ἀγαπητοί, 'carissimi' rather than 'dilectissimi': μακάριος, 'beatus' rather than 'felix'.

codex (Paris gr. 107), and H₂, the fragments of a Mount Athos MS that reproduces the fourth century edition of Evagrius Ponticus: of the Catholic Epistles with Gospels and Acts we have the Graeco-Latin codex Bezae, and of the Catholic Epistles with Acts and Apocalypse the Fleury fragments of the Old Latin known as *h* (Paris lat. 6400 G).

It appears, then, that the original element of Epistles in the New Testament Canon was represented solely and exclusively by St Paul: but how far are we justified in taking back this original nucleus, the Pauline collection itself?

A collection that was canonical by the close of the second century in Edessa on the one hand and in a remote Numidian town on the other cannot have been of quite recent origin. That we have no definite reference to the collection in the extant literature of the generation preceding A.D. 180, is hardly matter for surprise when we consider that the literature in question is almost wholly apologetic: neither the controversy with pagans nor the controversy with Jews leaves us much opening to look for any appeal to the authority or even the evidence of St Paul. One thing, however, we do know; namely, that when Marcion, perhaps a little before the middle of the century, published a Gospel of his own, he published an 'Apostolicon' as well. And this 'Apostolicon' of Marcion's bears to our collection of Pauline epistles—exception being made of the Pastoral Epistles—just the same sort of relation which his Gospel bears to our Gospel of St Luke. That the Church's Third Gospel is prior to Marcion's recension, and that Marcion produced his own Gospel out of the ecclesiastical Gospel by a series of arbitrary excisions, is not a matter of doubt. Parity of reasoning suggests that the 'Apostolicon' of the Gnostic teacher is a similar *réchauffé* of an existing Pauline collection in the Church: certainly Tertullian is able to use, in the fifth book *adversus Marcionem*, an identical method of description and argument with regard to the Epistles with that which he had used in the fourth book with regard to the Gospel, and to confute his opponent by the same demonstration that the parts retained imply in a thousand indirect details that very belief in the God of the Old Testament which the parts excised had more directly inculcated. If we examine for ourselves the passages of our own Pauline text that we know to have

been absent from Marcion's text, we shall find that their absence can be explained by the same dominant motive that prevailed in his treatment of St Luke. The Galatian and Roman epistles are, beyond the rest, those in which St Paul unfolds his great argument against the ultimate validity of the Jewish Law; and so far they would naturally stand high in Marcion's favour. In both, however, the Apostle repeatedly draws lessons from the character and history of the patriarchs, and especially of Abraham the father of the faithful¹: but to recognize in the personages of the Old Testament the servants of the good God, or types of His Son, or examples for Christian people, was just what Marcion on his principles could not do. Carefully therefore and systematically 'heretical industry erased all mention of Abraham'.²

Obvious and almost necessary as this conclusion on critical grounds appears to be, considerations of a more general and doctrinal character are, it has recently been urged, fatal to it. Not in the Church writers but in Marcion do we find the true inheritance of the mantle and spirit of St Paul: it must have been Marcion therefore, and not the Churchmen of his own or a previous day, who first collected, circulated, and canonized the Pauline epistles. We should never, we are told, have guessed, from the extant remains of the ante-Nicene fathers, that the letters of Paul occupied a quarter of the whole official Canon of the New Testament: and it can hardly have been among men who paid such scant attention to his theology that the movement for preserving his letters and emphasizing their position in the Canon took its rise.³

Now it may be quite true that Marcion laid more exclusive stress on the sole authority of the *Doctor gentium* than Catholic Christians, who found the security of the Apostolic tradition just in the substantial and independent coincidence of the teaching of a Paul, a Peter, and a John, could afford to do. And it may be quite true also that the Church writers of the second century were not always making occasions to repeat the Pauline language of 'antithesis between Law and Grace', of 'Justification by Faith', of 'the Church as the Body of Christ'.⁴ But no man gave by his example less encouragement to the sort of parrot-like *βαπτολογία* of Pauline watchwords that seems to be missed in the second century theologians than St Paul himself, who, as one controversy succeeded another, used different arguments and developed his theology in

¹ Gal. iii 6-9, 14-18, 29: iv 22, 28: Rom. iv 1-17, ix 7-13, xi 1.

² Tert. *adv. Marc.* v 3 'ostenditur quid supra haeretica industria eraserit, mentionem scilicet Abrahæ'.

³ Burkitt *Gospel History and its Transmission* pp. 316-319.

⁴ *ib.* p. 323.

new directions: if the Christian society was still a living and organic body, was really what St Paul called it, the Body of Christ, it could not be expected to meet the attacks of Pagans or Gnostics with the same answers that had been effective against Jews and Judaizers—though surely Irenaeus, at any rate, has faithfully assimilated and effectively reproduced some of the most fruitful of St Paul's ideas. And nothing in the world would have been further from St Paul's own wishes than that his teaching should be set up as an authority against the teaching of Christ: for that, and nothing else, is the real gist of the complaint that the ante-Nicenes do not cite St Paul as often as the bulk of his contributions to the New Testament Canon would justify us in expecting. It is not the Acts or the Catholic Epistles or the Apocalypse which are oftener quoted than the Epistles of St Paul: it is the Gospels only, and those who regard it as not the least of the debts which the England of to-day owes to the Tractarian movement that it recalled attention from the Epistles to the Gospels, from the work of Christ to His life and example, will hardly think it strange that to the eyes of Christians in the second and third centuries the holy Gospels loomed larger than the proportion of pages they occupy in the official Canon would have strictly warranted.¹

The case for Marcion, then, as the real author of the collection of Pauline epistles cannot be successfully maintained on the side of dogma: on the side of criticism there is perhaps even less to be said on its behalf. Between the time when Marcion, in opposition to the Church, first published the collection, and the time when we find its position securely established inside the Church—accepted unhesitatingly by Irenaeus and Clement and Tertullian—a period of less than fifty years has elapsed. That a Church so little interested, *ex hypothesi*, in Pauline theology should so soon have been converted to the regular employment of the collection of Pauline documents would be remarkable enough in itself: but that is not all. We have to make room

¹ Cf. R. W. Church *The Oxford Movement 1833-1845* p. 167: 'Its ethical tendency was shown in two things, which were characteristic of it. One was the increased care for the Gospels, and study of them, compared with other parts of the Bible. Evangelical theology had dwelt upon the work of Christ, and laid comparatively little stress on His example, or the picture left us of His Personality and Life. It regarded the Epistles of St Paul as the last word of the Gospel message . . . while the Gospel narrative was imperfectly studied and was felt to be much less interesting. The movement made a great change. The great Name stood no longer for an abstract symbol of doctrine, but for a living Master, who could teach as well as save. And not forgetting whither He had gone and what He was, the readers of Scripture now sought Him eagerly in those sacred records, where we can almost see and hear His going in and out among men. It was a change in the look and use of Scripture, which some can still look back to as an epoch in their religious history.'

within the same half-century for the work of the fertile and ingenious opponent of Marcion, who not only supplemented the Marcionite collection with three new Epistles but re-wrote the Galatian and Roman letters in such wise as to shift the centre of gravity of the Apostle's teaching by introducing the conceptions of the righteousness of Abraham and of the function of the Law as a preparatory discipline for Christ: for this 'second revised and enlarged' edition (the words are Prof. Burkitt's) so completely ousted the genuine text of Marcion that barely a trace of the latter has survived in any known witness.¹ The merest suspicion of the superior originality of Marcion's text would have been for the Gnostics a controversial asset of the highest value: and yet the theologians of the Church use no argument against them more regularly and more confidently than that the 'Apostolic Scriptures' are the notorious and unquestioned inheritance of the Church, and of the Church alone.

It is as certain, then, that Marcion, not later than the middle of the second century, worked over an existing collection of St Paul's epistles as that he worked over an existing Gospel of St Luke. Have we any means of following the collection higher still up the stream of history?

There is one group of indications which, without amounting to demonstrative proof, suggest strongly that the collection was in existence at least five and twenty years before Marcion's time.

It was in Trajan's reign, therefore before A.D. 118, but perhaps towards the end of the reign, that Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was carried a prisoner through Asia Minor and Macedonia under sentence to suffer martyrdom at Rome. On his journey he wrote four letters from Smyrna, three from Troas, and these seven form the collection of the genuine Ignatian documents, the only monument of the one great theologian of the sub-apostolic age. Like St Paul, Ignatius passed from Asia into Europe by way of Troas and Philippi. He charged the Christians of Philippi to write a letter of encouragement to the widowed church of Antioch: and when the letter written in compliance with this request was despatched to Polycarp of Smyrna for forwarding on to Syria, the writers begged from Polycarp in return copies of the letter which Ignatius had directed to him as well as of any others

¹ On the other hand, if we are to accept, as I think we must, the conclusions of Dom de Bruyne (*Revue Benedictine*, Jan. 1907, pp. 1-16), Marcionite prologues to seven (nine) epistles have come down to us in many Latin MSS.

that were in his hands. The packet that Polycarp addressed them, with a covering letter of his own, was perhaps the origin of the collection of the Ignatian epistles as we possess it to-day.

Now of the three churches whose representatives thus meet for a moment on the stage of history, the bishop of Antioch certainly possessed some collection of Pauline letters, for he writes to the Ephesians that they were mentioned 'in all' of them.¹ The bishop of Smyrna too possessed such a collection, for in his brief letter to Philippi are crowded indubitable echoes of the language of at least eight of them.² And it is legitimate to suppose that, if the Philippians shewed such anxiety to gather the letters of Ignatius into a collection, they would have devoted equal or greater care to the formation of a *corpus* of the letters of St Paul. They were a community that had been founded by the Apostle, that had received a letter from him, and that had been attached to him by no ordinary bond of affection: every reason that could prompt them to an Ignatian collection would operate with still greater effect in favour of a Pauline collection. If the one did not immediately suggest to them the other, it can only have been because the Pauline collection was already in existence. Indeed it seems to me not unlikely that it was exactly their familiarity with the collected letters of St Paul which led them to desire a parallel collection of the letters of St Ignatius: but on the opposite alternative, I am sure that the handling of a roll containing the six or seven letters of Ignatius would have given an immediate impetus to a similar achievement in regard to all that they could lay their hands on of St Paul.

In or about the year 115, then, the churches of Antioch and Smyrna possessed—and the church of Philippi, as it seems, must have made, if it did not already possess—a *corpus* of epistles of St Paul: and though we cannot say how far back behind 115 the first beginnings of the collection may go, it is possible enough

¹ Ign. *ad Eph.* § 12. Lightfoot *ad loc.* refers (apart from the Epistle to the Ephesians) to 'Romans (xvi 5), 1 Corinthians (xv 32, xvi 8, 19), 2 Corinthians (i 8 sq.), and the two Epistles to Timothy'.

² Ephesians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 1 Timothy, 1 Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, 2 Timothy: the chapters extant only in Latin suggest that 1 and 2 Thessalonians should be added to the list. Note particularly that Polycarp speaks of St Paul in the present tense § 11 'de vobis etenim gloriatur in omnibus ecclesiis': we are here approaching the use of *φησι* and *λέγει*, a use which implies the permanently present authority of Scripture.

that, whatever its date, we ought not to look for its origin far outside the district where the first evidence thus comes to light. If we are to look to a single locality as centre for the movement, none is more suggestive than the confines of Asia and Europe—on one side of the Aegean Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, on the other Ephesus, Colossae, and the Galatian churches: all the Apostle's extant letters to churches, apart from the circular letter known to us as the epistle to the Romans, would be here represented.

No doubt the very earliest collections, whenever and wherever made, need not have assumed at the start the definite form of the collection of the thirteen epistles as we know it from the last quarter of the second century onwards. Just as Marcion only accepted ten epistles, so also the Philippians or the Antiochenes may have had in their hands similar, possibly even smaller, collections. But what can truly be said is that on each occasion in the sub-apostolic age when reference to St Paul's correspondence with any particular church is natural, such reference is always made.

In concluding the last chapter we were fortunate enough to have at our disposal two sets of *variae lectiones* which rendered possible some insight into the early history and transmission of the Gospel texts: the one, where recent investigation into the Synoptic problem has focussed attention on instances of apparent agreement between Matthew and Luke against Mark: the other, where Marcion's text of the Third Gospel is supported against our ordinary texts by some few ancient witnesses. If the former branch of enquiry fails us for St Paul, the latter is still at command: and before passing from the Epistles, it may here too be worth while to illustrate some aspects of their text from the evidence of Marcion's 'Apostolicon' and its relation to our other authorities. But as these chapters will not deal much with the detailed criticism of other parts of the New Testament than the Gospels, our instances will be selected from the ground where problems of text march with problems of history.

1. The order of the Pauline Epistles in Marcion's 'Apostolicon' has been happily preserved to us by both Tertullian and Epiphanius: and, save that Epiphanius, perhaps rightly, inverts the last two, they agree in the following order—Galatians, 1 and 2

Corinthians, Romans, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Laodiceans, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon. This is not the order of our Bibles, whether Greek, Latin, or English; nor yet the order shared by the two early Latin commentators, Ambrosiaster and Pelagius¹: for in all of these Romans comes first. The evidence for the order of St. Cyprian's Bible is conflicting: but there is some reason to conjecture that Romans was placed quite low down among the Epistles, as is also the case in the Muratorian fragment² and probably in Tertullian.³ In individual cases these variations may no doubt represent only the arbitrary rearrangement of an editor, a translator, or a scribe: but taken in the mass they may reasonably be interpreted to mean that the movement for creating a *corpus* of Pauline Epistles had been going on independently in various places during the sub-apostolic age, and, if that be so, we shall have better, because less homogeneous testimony, for the text as a whole, but we shall also expect to find more divergences and difficulties in detail. If a collection made, say, at Ephesus about the year A.D. 100 were the original source of all the authorities in which the Epistles have come down to us, the text of this collection might indeed be relatively easy to establish, but when established it would only take us back to the time and place of the particular collector; while a text that represented a consensus of independent collections, if more difficult to establish, would at the same time bring us into much nearer contact with the Apostle himself.

2. It will have been noticed that the list just given of the Epistles according to Marcion's order has no Epistle to the Ephesians, but, instead, an Epistle to the Laodiceans: and a forged epistle under the latter name is found in many MSS. But the forged epistle, unlike Marcion's, is in addition to, and not in substitution for, the Ephesian epistle: and while the forged epistle is nothing but a clumsy attempt to fill up the *lacuna* suggested by Col. iv 16, 'See that you get from Laodicea my letter to them and have it read aloud', Marcion's epistle

¹ Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy, Philemon.

² Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians, Romans.

³ Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Ephesians, Romans. See Zahn *Geschichte des ntl. Kanons* II i, p. 344.

to the Laodiceans is nothing else than our Epistle to the Ephesians.¹ Even in the *minutiae* of titles, says Tertullian scornfully, Marcion was 'diligentissimus explorator', and changed the 'ad Ephesios' of the Church into an 'ad Laodiceanos' of his own—as though it mattered a bit to whom it was written, seeing that the Apostle wrote to all what he wrote to any.² But if Tertullian was not interested in these details, we are: the more so, when we find that, though Marcion remains the only witness for the form of the title *Πρὸς Λαοδικέας*, he is supported, in the absence of any express mention of Ephesus in the first verse of the epistle, by Origen, by the 'ancient copies' known to Basil, by B, by the first hand of N, and by the second corrector of the cursive MS known as Paul 67.³ All these read, not *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, but *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*—'to the saints that are also faithful in Christ Jesus', or else, as Origen explains it *ad loc.*, 'to the living saints and believers in Christ Jesus'. With the disappearance of *ἐν Ἐφέσῳ* in i 1, all trace of the destination of the epistle is lost, other than the heading *Πρὸς Ἐφεσίουσ*: but as this heading is retained by all our witnesses apart from Marcion, it is hardly likely that Marcion really found either *ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ* in the text or *Πρὸς Λαοδικέας* in the title. It is more probable that, with the authorities cited above, he found no place-name at all in i 1, that he therefore rejected the *Πρὸς Ἐφεσίουσ* as a heading not justified by the text of the letter which followed, and by a brilliant combination with Col. iv 16 identified the now anonymous letter which so closely resembled the letter to Colossae with the letter which the Colossian Church was exhorted to borrow from Laodicea in exchange for its own.

Modern criticism has done justice both to the sagacity of Marcion and to the tradition of the Church. The letter in question

¹ Doctored, of course, like the other Epistles of his 'Apostolicon', to suit his views: and this may be the reason that the Muratorian fragment can speak of it, together with 'alia ad Alexandrinos', as 'fictae ad heresim Marcionis'. But I rather suspect that the author of the Fragment was unaware of its relationship to the Ephesian Epistle.

² *adv. Marcionem* v 17 'nihil de titulis interest, cum ad omnes apostolus scripserit dum ad quosdam'.

³ It was in Westcott and Hort's edition that attention was first called to the importance of this late witness, 67**.

The MS itself (Act. 66 = Paul 67 = Apoc. 34) is Vienna gr. theol. 302 saec. xi.

- was sent to the Ephesians, and to them primarily, but not to them alone. It was a circular letter, free from all personal reference and detail, no names at all being mentioned in it save those of the writer, Paul, and of the bearer, Tychicus. Laodicea—as its position in the Apocalypse shews us—was one of the more prominent cities of pro-consular Asia: and Laodicea would receive its own copy of the circular letter, which would be lent from it afterwards to its less distinguished neighbours such as Colossae.

Note that Marcion is found on this occasion in other company than that which he kept in his Gospel text: for instead of agreeing with Western authorities he ranges himself with a small group of early and exclusively Eastern witnesses. In view of what was inculcated in the last chapter about the separate transmission of the various parts of the New Testament (pp. 162, 163), there would be nothing to cause surprise, if it turned out that Marcion's text of St. Luke and his text of St. Paul represented different lines of textual history: it would even be possible that he used for St. Paul a text that he had brought from Asia Minor, and for St. Luke a text that he acquired in Rome. But it must be remembered that the evidence of the ancient versions for the epistles is enormously less, in bulk and in value, than it is for the Gospels—we have no MS of the epistles either from the African Latin or from the Old Syriac—and we cannot therefore tell whether earlier and better Latin MSS, if we had them, would not shew the same marked affinities that we found in the Gospels to be true of the Epistles as well.

3. Certainly, in the third and last point with which I propose to deal—Marcion's text of the Roman Epistle and especially of its last two chapters—he appears undoubtedly to return to his original company: though it seems possible (and it is just this possibility which is so full of interest) that a common element may be established between this case and the preceding one by the appearance in both cases of Origen among the supporters of Marcion. The new problem is a complicated one, and only the fringe of it can here be touched: but the impressions and the experience that can be gained from it are so germane to our task that I need make no apology for sketching rapidly the ground that has been fought over, and the positions that were taken up, by

two such redoubtable, albeit friendly, antagonists as Lightfoot and Hort.¹

Tertullian, when he arrived at this epistle—it stood fourth, we remember, in Marcion's 'Apostolicon'—professes that he is tired of proving the same thing over and over again, and, in fact, devotes to the Romans less space than he had done to the much shorter epistle to the Galatians. We cannot, therefore, reconstruct the whole of Marcion's text, even in outline, by means of his description: but we do learn (a) in general, that Marcion's excisions were more serious in this epistle than in the rest²; (b) in particular, that the phrase 'tribunal of Christ' (Rom. xiv 10) occurred 'in clausula' 'towards the close'. Origen is more explicit than Tertullian about Marcion's omissions at this point. In his *Commentary on Romans*, as rendered into Latin by Rufinus, he tells us not only that Marcion cut out the final doxology of chapter xvi, but also that from xiv 23 onwards 'usque ad finem cuncta dissecuit'³—which is naturally taken to mean, in connexion with Tertullian's phrase 'in clausula', that the whole of chapters xv and xvi were absent from the Marcionite recension. But there is no doubt that so serious an excision (it extends to sixty verses) would require some explanation: for even if individual phrases, like xv 4, 'all that was written aforetime was written for our instruction', or xv 8, Christ 'a minister of the circumcision', might be abhorrent to Marcion, these could have been easily enough pruned away from the text on his ordinary method without any necessity for recourse to heroic measures.

Is it then possible that we have here once more to do with a case, not of the text as Marcion re-handled it, but of the text as he received it? This was the view which commended itself to Lightfoot, for it brought Marcion's evidence into relation with three other classes of facts all pointing in the same direction:—

(a) Extraordinary confusion in our authorities with regard to the position of various benedictions and doxologies towards the

¹ Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, 1893, where Dr Lightfoot's two papers from the *Journal of Philology* for 1869 and 1871 are reprinted, together with the paper in which Dr Hort criticized his view: to these authorities should be added Dom de Bruyne *Revue Bénédictine*, Oct. 1908, pp. 423-430.

² *adv. Marcionem* v 13 'quantas autem foveas in ista vel maxime epistula Marcion fecerit, auferendo quae voluit, de nostri instrumenti integritate parebit'.

³ *Comm. in Rom.* x 43 (Delarue iv 687).

end of the epistle: in particular, many authorities append the great doxology not to chapter xvi but to chapter xiv, while some have it in both places.

(b) Apparently clear traces of an Old Latin system of 51 chapter divisions for the epistle, of which the 50th begins at xiv 15, and the 51st corresponds to the doxology of xvi 25-27: together with entire absence of citations from chapters xv and xvi in Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian.

(c) Clear though slight traces of a reading in i 7 according to which the words ἐν Ῥώμῃ were omitted: the direct evidence is that of a single MS only, the Graeco-Latin G₂, but it is reinforced by the indirect evidence of a marginal note in a Bodleian cursive of the eleventh century,¹ τὸ ἐν Ῥώμῃ οὔτε ἐν τῇ ἐξηγήσει οὔτε ἐν τῷ ῥητῶ μνημονεύει, 'the phrase "in Rome" he mentions neither in the exposition nor in the text'—where the suppressed nominative appeared to Lightfoot to refer to some commentator, τὸ ῥητόν being the *lemma* or passage of Scripture text prefixed to each section of a commentary, ἡ ἐξήγησις the commentary itself.

On these premisses Lightfoot built up the theory that, besides the ordinary and original form of the Roman epistle, a second edition was in circulation in quite early times, in which by the omission of all personal and local matter the epistle had been adapted, probably by the Apostle himself, for universal use.

Hort recognized the simplicity and broad probability of Lightfoot's view: but the textual evidence seemed to him to offer difficulties as soon as it came to be examined at close quarters, for 'every authority which supports or may be thought to support some part of this combination contradicts some other part.' Moreover, he challenged Lightfoot's interpretation of the evidence of more than one of the witnesses. He did not believe that Origen really meant to say that Marcion cut out the last two chapters, but only that he did not retain the doxology either at the end of chapter xiv or of chapter xvi: nor did he admit that the marginal note of the Bodleian MS meant more than that the words ἐν Ῥώμῃ were absent from the text and marginal commentary of, say, some late uncial MS of the eighth century.

¹ Bodl. Roe 16, brought by Sir Thomas Roe from the East early in the seventeenth century—probably from the monastery on the island of Chalcis. In Gregory's notation the MS is Paul 47.

Of the points at issue between the two great Cambridge scholars, the small problem of this marginal note has received from subsequent research a decisive solution: and it turns out that Lightfoot only erred by understating his case. It was, after all, a commentator who omitted *ἐν Πρώμῃ* 'both in his text and in his exposition', and that commentator was none other than Origen himself.¹

Of course this discovery does not close the whole question, or prove that Lightfoot's main thesis was correct. It does not even prove that in any single detail Origen and Marcion shared the same text; but it does so far make it possible that each preserved independently of the other some trace of the de-localized text of Romans, the existence of which Lightfoot sought to establish. But the problem has been selected for treatment here, partly because where Lightfoot and Hort have disputed in print both processes and results must needs be full of instruction for us, but also because it is a rare opportunity which is offered us when evidence which takes us back as far as Marcion's does can be brought into any sort of contact with the evidence of the great scholar and commentator whose work will form the subject of a subsequent chapter.

(C) THE ACTS.

[The textual criticism of the Acts is more difficult than that of any other important book of the New Testament. I am not wholly satisfied with what I had said about it, and prefer to postpone this section for the present.—C.H.T.]

(D) THE APOCALYPSE.

There is no part of the New Testament, no group of books, of which we can be sure that all its component members were received or circulated from the first on an equal footing with one another: for our knowledge is insufficient to warrant any general statement of the sort. But we can say with perfect truth that as soon as the idea of a Canon of the New Testament takes shape at all, that is, from the last quarter of the second century onwards—and in the case of the Gospels we might go somewhat higher still—the four Gospels with the Acts and the thirteen Epistles of St Paul were always and everywhere accounted as belonging to it. All these books, whether in the texts of Antioch, or Ephesus,

¹ An account of the Athos MS of the text of the Pauline epistles according to Origen, to which we owe this discovery, is reserved for a later chapter on Origen.

or Rome, or Carthage, or Alexandria, start level: they were all accepted in one Church as much as in another, and their textual history from that date onwards is *mutatis mutandis* the same. But the reception of the remaining books was, on the extant evidence, earlier or more complete in one quarter of the Christian Church than another, and a quite new set of conditions has to be allowed for in their textual history: nor will these new conditions be the same for the Hebrews as for the Apocalypse, nor for the minor Catholic Epistles as for the Hebrews.

Let us illustrate this branch of our enquiry in more detail by the case of the most considerable of these books—which also introduces us to the fourth and last class of books represented in the New Testament Canon—the Apocalypse.

On behalf of the general principle of admitting books of this last class to the Canon of Scripture, there was much that might be said. In the first place, they in some way corresponded to and carried on the prophetic literature of the Old Testament: they could not indeed, like the older prophets, point to a fulfilment in the Christ, but if the Church, unlike the prophets, looked backward to the first coming of her Lord, she was still looking forward to a moment of His return—‘il viendra, il est venu, il reviendra’. The inspiration which had revealed to Daniel and St Paul something of the conditions which should precede and accompany the great consummation of all things was not, it might be urged, to be conceived of as extinct: ‘the Prophetic charisma must subsist in the whole Church till the perfect Parousia’ says the second century writer quoted above (p. 355). But then further, if there still were to be prophets animated by the Divine Spirit, and if, as experience shewed, the stress of present persecution was sure, from time to time, to evoke ‘Revelations’ which aimed at drawing away the thoughts of Christians from the gloom of the present to the hopes of the future, then must not all these Revelations—such of them, at any rate, as were committed to writing—have the same permanent authority in the Church as the older inspirations of Jewish prophet and Christian apostle? According to the logical development of this view, the Canon was susceptible of indefinite expansion as the Spirit might dictate new revelations, and would cease in any real sense to be a Canon of apostolic writings.

But the problem was in fact worked out, as we should expect, as much over concrete cases as over abstract principles. Three books came into practical consideration as candidates for admission under this head to the Christian Canon, the Apocalypse of John, the Apocalypse of Peter, and the *Shepherd* of Hermas. All three find a place in the list of canonical books appended to the Graeco-Latin codex Claromontanus of St Paul (D₂): and as this list is accompanied by a 'stichometry' or estimate of the number of 'verses' contained in each work,¹ we learn that the Apocalypse of Peter was a short book of no more than 270 stichī, and thus the piece of it recovered with the piece of the Gospel of Peter must be no inconsiderable fraction, perhaps as much as half, of the whole work. If what is still lost was not more edifying than what has been found, we need not greatly regret its imperfection. The *Shepherd* of the Roman Christian Hermas is a sort of allegory in three parts, Visions, Commandments, and Parables, under cover of which the writer conveys to his fellow Christians at Rome the exhortation to repent and return to their first works, and the promise, for this once, of complete remission of all, even post-baptismal, sins. It is ignorant and prolix, its theology is slipshod, but for all that there is something in its childlike naïve sincerity and in its moral appeal which recalls the atmosphere of the Galilean Ministry, and which no doubt contributed, together with its claim to be a Divine revelation, to give it the popularity and importance which it enjoyed in early times. It is not only cited as Scripture by Irenaeus, and apparently by Clement of Alexandria and Origen, but it is part—incomplete only because of the incompleteness of the MS as we have it—of the Bible as contained in Codex N.

Meanwhile the pressure of two controversies, in the second half of the second century, was forcing Christian thinkers to try and clear their ideas upon these matters. Against the Gnostic the churchman appealed to the public Canon of apostolic writings: nothing therefore which was not in some sense or another connected with the apostles could belong to the New Testament.

¹ The *στίχος* is the hexameter line, which as reckoned at sixteen syllables could be applied as a standard of length even to prose books. One object at least of a stichometry was to enable purchasers to know how much they were paying for, and thus to check the charges of the booksellers.

Against the Montanist the churchman argued that the Christian Revelation was final, and that the Gift of the Spirit had not been reserved for Montanus or his prophetesses but had already been bestowed in its fullness on the Apostles: that the apostolic writings in which this revelation was enshrined were not merely inspired items, but formed together an inspired and organically coherent whole. So if Origen, no doubt in accordance with Alexandrine tradition, accounted the *Shepherd* part of Scripture, he also made the author if not 'apostolus' yet at least 'apostolicus', by identifying him with the Hermas mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans.¹ But already before Origen the judgement of the Christian churches had been maturing unfavourably to the book. Tertullian himself of course rejected the 'apocryphal Shepherd of adulterers', because his Montanist principles were shocked at the idea of any reconciliation after post-baptismal mortal sin: it is more to our purpose that he can appeal also to the rejection of the book by many assemblies of bishops within the Church.² Definite reason for rejection is given in the so-called Muratorian Canon. The author of this earliest catalogue of New Testament books, writing about A.D. 200 and probably in Rome,³ had access to better information than Origen about the date and personality of Hermas. Hermas was a Roman Christian certainly, but of the second century, not of the first: and his book was written while his brother Pius was occupying the episcopal chair of the Roman Church—that is to say, about A.D. 140–150. So recent a work could have no claim to be ranked either among the Prophets or

¹ *Comm. in Rom.* x 31 (Delarue iv 683) 'Puto tamen quod Hermas iste [Rom. xvi 14] sit scriptor libelli eius qui Pastor appellatur, quae scriptura valde mihi utilis videtur et ut puto divinitus inspirata'.

² *de pudicitia* § 10 'sed cederem tibi si scriptura Pastoris. . . divino instrumento meruisset incidi, si non ab omni concilio ecclesiarum etiam vestrarum inter apocrypha et falsa iudicaretur': and cf. § 20. This is almost the earliest mention of councils in Christian literature.

³ The use of Urbs for Rome is quite indecisive, as that would suit many parts of the West: St Cyprian habitually employs the phrase without further definition. On the other hand, I cannot believe that Clement was the author, for it is hardly likely that the Alexandrines, with their laxer Canon both of Old and New Testament Scriptures, would have been the first (as far as we know) to draw so rigid a line between the canonical and the uncanonical: but I should not be disinclined to interpret any points of contact between the Muratorian Canon and Clement as indicating that Hippolytus (or whoever was the author of the Canon) had made use of the *Hypotyposes*.

among the Apostles, to belong either to the Old Testament or to the New. 'The Apocalypse of John we receive—and also that of Peter, though some will not have this read in church—but the *Shepherd* is a writing of our own times, as modern as the episcopate of Pius, and therefore, though it may be read privately for edification, it cannot be regarded as possessing any public authority.' The Canon was complete and closed.

It is easy to see that the Apocalypse of John stands on a very different footing from either the Apocalypse of Peter, a forgery pretending to be apostolic, or the *Shepherd* of Hermas, which, though no forgery, makes no claim to be apostolic or even primitive. But the distinction which the (ultimately unanimous) wisdom of the later Church drew between it and them only came very gradually into view. The general considerations which were brought into account in testing the claim of the two other books reacted upon the third, and explain to some extent the unique history of its reception. For St John's Apocalypse stands alone among the books of our Canon in having, as it seems, attained in early times more nearly unanimous recognition than was accorded to it a little later: though it is true that we cannot speak quite positively about its position in the second and early third century, seeing that our extant evidence is mainly Western and Egyptian, and in the West and Egypt the history of its reception is unbroken. But in the course of the third century the reaction in the East against the book was in full swing. The rise of Greek Christian scholarship during the 'long peace' after Severus (A. D. 211–249) made men more conscious of the critical difficulties of common authorship of Apocalypse and Gospel. The slackening of persecution set free the natural recoil of the Hellenic spirit against the apparent materialism with which the rewards of the blessed and the glories of the heavenly Jerusalem are portrayed. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria *circa* A. D. 247–265, to whom we owe the first expression of these feelings and difficulties, adopts for his own part the compromise which accepts the book on a sort of lower grade, as canonical but not apostolic. But what he with his Alexandrine traditions was prevented from doing—that is to say, rejecting the book outright—some, as he tells us, before him, and many, as we

know, after him, did do. The Greek churches of the fourth and fifth centuries, in the spheres of influence of Antioch and Constantinople, manifested a steady if silent hostility. There are scarcely any traces of its use in Basil or the Gregories: it is not cited by St Chrysostom: it found no place even in the Peshitta or Vulgate of the Syriac Church.

The textual meaning of this distribution of the evidence needs no commentary to make it clear. The Antiochene revision of Lucian, which is for the New Testament generally the foundation of the 'received text', can hardly have included the book. The Codex Vaticanus (B) is imperfect—it breaks off at Heb. ix 14—and we cannot tell whether or no the Apocalypse formed part of its unmutilated text. Our three other great MSS of the New Testament, \aleph A C, all contain it (and this is so far an argument for attributing all three to an Egyptian or Caesarean *provenance*), but their relative importance is here reversed, and both A and C give a superior text in this book to \aleph . The Latin authorities rise in value proportionately to the number of other witnesses who fail us: we are moreover fortunate in possessing a practically complete text of it in the commentary of Primasius of Hadrumetum,¹ which, though not itself earlier than the sixth century, represents on the whole the original African text undiluted and unrevised—for processes of revision and retranslation concentrated themselves on the Gospels, and often spared the less important books.

Yet even under these conditions, with B absent and \aleph of inferior value, Hort will not permit us to suppose that the true reading, if found only in a Western and Latin witness against the evidence of the Greek MSS, can have arrived there by propagation from ancestral texts rather than by successful conjecture. In the inscriptions of three of the letters to the seven Churches, he finds authority in Greek for the form τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῷ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ [Σμύρνη, Θυατείροις] ἐκκλησίας, Apoc. ii 1, 8, 18, and prints it without hesitation: in the other four there is no corresponding Greek authority, and he is reduced to printing τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐν Περγάμῳ [Σάρδεσιν, Φιλαδελφία, Λαοδικία] ἐκκλησίας, Apoc. ii 12, iii 1, 7, 14, marking τῆς as corrupt. Yet Primasius

¹ Edited by Haussleiter as part iv of Zahn's *Forschungen zur Geschichte des ntl. Kanons* (1891).

gives us the authority we want for the masculine in two of these four cases, 'angelo ecclesiae qui est Sardis', 'angelo ecclesiae qui est Filadelpthiae'.

Only a word need be said in conclusion about the few remaining books of the New Testament which we have not yet had occasion to discuss. The Epistle to the Hebrews was used by Clement of Rome, but in view of the long continued reluctance of the Roman Church to incorporate it in the Canon we can hardly suppose (and there is no reason why we should) that he regarded it as Pauline or even as apostolic: its position in the Canon is wholly a matter of much later date, and the history of its transmission will have been for nearly a century after Clement independent of the transmission of the genuine letters of St Paul. Of the minor Catholic Epistles, Jude and 2 John alone have second century attestation (Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and the Muratorian Canon): the five ultimately accepted were not the only claimants for recognition, and it is clear that, while the Pauline collection was undisputed, there was a fringe of debatable ground, where some of the epistles ultimately received were mixed up with some others, like the epistles of Barnabas and the Roman Clement, that were ultimately excluded, and with others again that were neither the work of apostles nor of apostolic fathers but were inventions of heretics. These last it was comparatively a speedy matter to detect and expose: but the process of sifting the orthodox 'Antilegomena' was not finally complete for several centuries. The two great uncial MSS whose New Testament books can be fixed, \aleph and A, both contain matter foreign to our present Canon— \aleph has the epistle of Barnabas and (as already mentioned) the *Shepherd* of Hermas, A has both the genuine and the spurious epistle of Clement of Rome: Epistles, Acts, Apocalypses, long admitted of some doubtful members: the group of Gospels was the only one of which the constituent parts were quite invariable.

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

IV. THE LANGUAGES OF THE EARLY CHURCH: (A) GREEK AND THE GREEK BIBLE.

THE whole history and development of the Canon of the New Testament, as we have so far seen it unroll itself before our eyes moves within the confines of a single language. From the 'traditions' handed on by St Paul to his converts down to the Gospel and Apostolicon of Marcion everything is Greek. But before we pass beyond the rough chronological limit which has bounded our horizon in the preceding chapters, and follow the Gospel in its process of transference into the vernacular of the Latin-speaking and Syriac-speaking peoples, we must once more, in the present chapter, travel over the same century and a half of the Christian *origines* and study them anew from the linguistic standpoint. We must satisfy ourselves to what extent the dominance of the Greek tongue in the Christian society goes back to the very beginning, to the Jewish surroundings which cradled the infant Church: and we shall find that the experiences of the journey will not have been without direct profit to our equipment as textual critics of the New Testament.

Three languages shared the field and divided the interests of the Judaism of the first century: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Hebrew was the ancestral language of the Jews. Aramaic was now, and had long been, the vernacular of the Jews in Palestine, acquired gradually by them from their neighbours round about. Greek, at the time of the Christian era, was the only language familiar to most Jews outside the Holy Land, and as the common medium of intercourse between the peoples of the Eastern

Mediterranean was known to many even of the Aramaic-speaking Jews of Palestine.

HEBREW had wholly ceased to be a spoken language: the 'Εβραϊστί of the title on the Cross, the 'Εβραϊς διάλεκτος of St Paul's speech on the steps of the *Parembole*, mean Aramaic, not Hebrew¹: but it was the language of the sacred books which counted for so much in the life of Judaism, and in view both of the high standard of education among the Jews and of the near affinity of the Hebrew and Aramaic tongues, it is probable that there were still many Jews who could understand it. In the synagogues of Palestine the Scriptures were always read in the Hebrew original: no translation into Aramaic was ever made, but the time came when for the benefit of Aramaic-speaking congregations a Targum or running paraphrase in Aramaic of the Hebrew text was allowed a subordinate position in the synagogue services, much in the same way as after the official Latin Gospel in the Mass a rendering into the vernacular often follows in French churches to-day. The earliest of these Targums that are extant, the Targum of Onkelos on the Pentateuch and the Targum of Jonathan on the Prophets, may go back in substance to the first and second centuries A.D.: and no doubt the beginnings of the system are to be sought for earlier still.

ARAMAIC—a name which, though properly speaking it is interchangeable with Syriac and applies equally to all its dialects, is now used conventionally by historians of Christianity to distinguish the dialect of Palestine or southern Syria from the related but not identical dialect of northern Syria or Edessa—was doubtless the familiar language of our Lord and His apostles. All the fragments of His speech which our Greek Gospels have preserved untranslated are in the Aramaic idiom²: and there have been few

¹ It is a curious point of contact between the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse that in both books the writer is fond of introducing names, in the Gospel Aramaic, in Apoc. Hebrew, under the title 'Εβραϊστί (the word does not occur in any other New Testament book)—Jo. v 2 Βηθ(σα)ά or Βηθσαιῶδα or Βηθσεδά, xix 13 Γαββαθά, xix 17 Γολγοθά (and cf. xi 16 'Ραββουσί): Apoc. ix 11 'Αβαδδών, xvi 16 'Αρ Μαγεδών. The Greek and Gentile Luke apologizes for the vernacular 'Ακελδαμάχ, with perhaps a touch of polite disdain, τῇ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν, Acts i 19.

² Marc. v 41 Ταλιθά κούμ, vii 11 Κορβάν, vii 34 'Εφθαθά, xv 34 'Ελαί έλαί λαμῶ σαβαχθανεί, and cf. iii 17 Βοανηγοίς. In all these cases translations are given side by side with the original. That our Lord would be expected to speak in Aramaic is further clear from Acts xxvi 14 ήκουσα φωνήν λέγουσαν πρὸς με τῇ 'Εβραϊῶ διαλέκτῳ. [Compare too the words 'Ραββεί, 'Ραββουσί, 'Ωσαννά.]

more interesting contributions within our own generation to the better understanding of the Gospels than the attempt to get behind the Greek form in which our Lord's teaching, as it has come down to us, is clothed, and to penetrate, in the case at least of the simpler ideas and expressions, to the underlying Aramaic kernel. It is possible too that the local church of Jerusalem, and its lineal representative after the flight of the Christians at the time of the great siege, the church of Pella, were bilingual and still understood, perhaps still employed for worship, the language used by Christ. Even outside Palestine some few of the first disciples found their missionary field among Semitic-speaking peoples. Early tradition connected St Bartholomew with the church of Ethiopia, St Thomas and St Thaddaeus with the church of Edessa. And though all the books of the New Testament, as we have them, are in Greek, the possibility must not be excluded that our Greek books may in some cases be reproductions of an Aramaic original or at least expansions of an Aramaic nucleus.

Yet examination of the evidence does not, save in a single instance, lend any real colour to such suppositions. Jerome explained the difference between the styles of 1 and 2 Peter by suggesting that the apostle employed different interpreters in the composition of the Greek of the two epistles¹: but Jerome probably underrated the extent to which Greek must have become a familiar language even to an apostle who had started life as a fisherman in Galilee, and we must look on other lines for the solution of the problem of the *secunda Petri*. Papias, too, long before Jerome, had called Mark the interpreter of Peter, and Irenaeus had followed Papias²: but if it were certain that they meant by *ἐρμηνευτής* an interpreter from one language into another, would it not be more likely that the interpretation was from Greek into Latin for Latin-speaking hearers at Rome, rather than from Aramaic into Greek? Clement of Alexandria accounts for the difference of Greek style between the epistle to the Hebrews and the (other) Pauline epistles by the conjecture that St Paul wrote to the Hebrews in Hebrew, and that the Greek text is a rendering

Ep. ad Hebraeos 120 *Quaest.* xi (Vallarsi, i 838) 'Denique et duae epistolae quae feruntur Petri stilo inter se et caractere discrepant structuraque verborum. ex quo intellegimus, pro necessitate rerum diversis eum usum interpretibus'.

Eus. *H. E.* iii 39: Iren. *adv. Haer.* III i 1 (Greek in Eus. v 8): and cf. Jerome in the passage just quoted, 'Habebat . . . interpretem . . . beatus Petrus Marcum, cuius evangelium Petro narrante et illo scribente compositum est'.

by St Luke.¹ Modern critics have suggested the addition of the epistle of St James to the list of books with Aramaic originals²: but their reasons are as purely *a priori* as are Jerome's for the epistles of St Peter.

In fact, there is one and only one tangible piece of evidence for an Aramaic original of any New Testament book: and that is of course Papias's categorical statement that 'Matthew composed the *Logia* in the Hebraic dialect, and every one interpreted them as best he could'. Scholars are agreed in accepting on this testimony St Matthew's authorship of Aramaic *Logia*, but they differ widely as to what these *Logia* were. Prof. Burkitt suggests that they were a collection of Old Testament prophecies³: and nothing would in itself be more probable than that at some very early date *Testimonia* were brought together out of the Old Testament for the purposes of the controversy with Judaism. But what need in that case of individual and separate effort at translation, when the Greek Bible was in all hands to supply an authorized rendering? And why should Eusebius, whose interest was concentrated on the genesis of the canonical Gospels, have inserted unexplained this quotation from Papias, if the *Logia* had nothing more to do with the Gospel as Eusebius knew it than the provision of its references to the Old Testament? Even if we may not, with Lightfoot, translate *Logia* by 'Gospel' pure and simple, it is impossible to account for the ancient and unanimous ascription of our First Gospel to St Matthew's authorship, if there does not lie very near behind it some document at least of 'Sayings' for which the apostle was directly and immediately responsible.⁴ It is interesting to note that Jerome, at the end of the fourth century, found in use among the Nazarene sect in Palestine a Hebrew—that is, an Aramaic—'Gospel according to the Hebrews', which the sectaries themselves appear to have claimed as the original of the Greek Gospel of St Matthew. While it kept on the whole fairly close to the canonical Gospel, its variations, omissions and additions were yet considerable enough to induce Jerome to translate it for the benefit of his contemporaries into both Greek and

¹ ap. Eus. *H. E.* vi 14.

² See Mayor's edition, pp. ccv sqq.: Mayor himself rejects the view.

³ *Gospel History* pp. 126-128.

⁴ See above, *J. T. S.* Jan. 1909, pp. 171, 172.

Latin.¹ Not a fragment has survived either of these translations or of the text from which they were made: our knowledge of this 'Hebrew' Gospel is confined to some dozen citations made from it in other writings of St Jerome.²

But the real Gospel 'according to the Hebrews', just like the Epistle 'to the Hebrews', was written not in Hebrew or Aramaic, but in Greek. So too, as we have just seen, were the Epistle which James the Lord's brother, the head of the Christian community at Jerusalem, addressed 'to the Twelve Tribes that are in the Dispersion', and also the Epistle of St Peter to the 'sojourners of the Dispersion' in Asia Minor. The *Didache* is a Jewish-Christian document and modelled on Jewish exemplars: but the *Didache* again is in Greek. The literature of the Christian controversy with Judaism, the Dialogue of Jason with Papisclus, and the Dialogue of Justin Martyr with Trypho, was embodied from the first in the same language.

That GREEK was the language of the primitive Church is thus a general statement which needs only very slight reservations. And early Christianity was Greek, because contemporary Judaism was in the main Greek also.

The Jewish Dispersion was one of the most marked results of the great movement of Hellenic expansion which accompanied and followed the conquests of Alexander the Great. Cities were the distinctive feature of Greek as opposed to 'barbarian' life: and the planting of new cities was the principal expedient by which Alexander and the successors who partitioned his dominions after him set themselves to Hellenize the Eastern world. But the native Greek population must have soon proved insuf-

¹ *Viv. III. § 2* 'Evangelium quoque quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos et a me nuper in Graecum Latinumque sermonem translatum est, quo et Origenes saepe utitur': *in Matt.* xii 13 'in evangelio quo utuntur Nazaraei et Ebionitae, quod nuper in Graecum de Hebraeo sermone transtulimus, et quod vocatur a plerisque Matthaei authenticum': *adv. Pelag.* iii 2 'in evangelio iuxta Hebraeos quod Chaldaico quidem Syroque sermone sed Hebraicis litteris scriptum est; quo utuntur usque hodie Nazaraei secundum Apostolos sive, ut plerique autumant, iuxta Matthaeum; quod et in Caesariensi habetur bibliotheca': *in Mic.* vii 6 'evangelio, quod secundum Hebraeos editum nuper transtulimus' (*Vallarsi*, ii 817; vii 77; ii 768; vi 520).

² Collected in *Westcott Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* Appendix D: but no. 12 of the list there given should perhaps be omitted, for in that passage (*Comm. in Matt.* ii 5) the words 'in ipso Hebraico' may mean 'in the original Hebrew [of the Old Testament]'

ficient for the huge drain on their numbers which this policy implied: and accident or statesmanship discovered in the Jewish race an effective supplement. For centuries past the Jews had been struggling, now with more and now with less success, against absorption by the surrounding peoples, and they were animated therefore by no inconvenient loyalties to the dispossessed governments: a prolific population was willing enough to discharge its surplus into colonies, and genius for trade achieved its fitting outlet in the new city-foundations of the Macedonian conquerors. Asia Minor and the Aegean, Syria, Mesopotamia, but above all Alexandria, were soon full of Jewish emigrants, who lived in their own quarter of each city, under their own laws and their own magistrates, and in the free exercise of their own religion. The one necessary concession which the Jew made to his neighbours was in the matter of language. Greek was now the universal medium, not only of literature and education and polite society, but of trade and business, throughout the whole Levant: and just as the Jews of Palestine had learnt to talk Aramaic instead of their ancestral Hebrew, so the Jews of the Dispersion (as the new colonies were collectively called) learnt to talk Greek and forgot their native Aramaic. In especial, under the fostering protection of the Ptolemies, the Greek Jews of Egypt and Alexandria acquired something almost like a distinctive nationality of their own.

Meanwhile, even the Jews of Palestine, at any rate those of the towns, had perforce to employ Greek for the purpose of communication with their Gentile rulers, and of intercourse with the Gentile settlers whom their native princes had encouraged to come and live among them. Caesarea Stratonis, for instance, the favourite foundation of Herod the Great and afterwards the civil capital of the Roman province of Judaea, was from the first a Greek-speaking city. Thus when the Jews of the Dispersion gathered in Jerusalem for the annual feasts, the common ground between visitors and residents was not Aramaic, but Greek: and it necessarily followed that the preaching of the Christ to the 'strangers and proselytes' must almost from the first have been carried on by the apostles, not in a native Aramaic, but in an acquired Greek, or at least through Greek-speaking interpreters.

If such was the case at Jerusalem, much more was the same thing true of the preaching in the Dispersion. St Paul, as we

learn from the Acts and the Roman epistle, had in the course of his three missionary journeys preached the Gospel 'from Jerusalem right round as far as Illyricum'¹ through Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece. Everywhere he kept to the towns, everywhere he started work in the synagogue: everywhere, as far as we can tell, he preached and was understood in the Greek tongue. If the people of Lystra fell back, in a moment of excitement, on their native language—the historian records the fact just because it was so exceptional²—we need not doubt that their ordinary intercourse with the apostle was conducted in Greek on both sides. Nor is there any reason to think that it was otherwise at Rome. The epistle to that Church had been addressed to it in Greek: and from the distinctively Greek character of the Roman Church throughout the succeeding century we can safely argue back to its *origines*, and assume that the first generation of Roman Christians were evangelized, were instructed, and worshipped, through the medium of the same language.³

St Peter's missionary labours are not known to us in the same detail as St Paul's. The canonical Acts do not follow him outside Palestine, unless we read some such hidden meaning into Acts xii 17: 'he departed to another place'. From the Galatian epistle we learn of his presence at Antioch; and tradition, which there is at least *prima facie* reason to respect, makes him the founder of the Antiochene line of bishops. His own epistle is addressed to the Christians of the five provinces which made up at that time the Asia Minor of Roman rule, though he nowhere expressly implies in it that he had preached to them in person. It is dated from Babylon: but there is every reason to suppose that Babylon is not the literal Babylon of the Euphrates, but the mystic Babylon of the Seven Hills. An unambiguous allusion appears to be made in the Fourth Gospel to St Peter's martyrdom as a familiar fact: and no rival tradition claims for it any other scene than Rome. St Peter, like St Paul, lived and died a missionary to Greek-speaking peoples.

¹ Rom. xv 19 ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ κύκλῳ μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ. On 'Illyricum' see appended note at the end of this article.

² Acts xiv 11 ἐπήσαν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν Λυκαονιστί. Cf. Ramsay *Church in the Roman Empire* p. 58.

³ Of St Paul's preaching in Spain more will be said in a later chapter in connexion with Latin Christianity.

What Rome was as a focus of apostolic traditions in the West, that the East possessed in Ephesus and in the province of Proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital. Here were gathered, as it would seem, about the time of the Jewish War and the destruction of Jerusalem, most of the survivors of the original disciples, and especially those who had hitherto remained in closest contact with Palestine. The Fourth Gospel gives special prominence (apart from Peter and John) to Andrew, Philip, and Thomas: and the two former of these are further connected with Asia Minor by independent traditions recorded in documents of the end of the second century.¹ Papias of Hierapolis had conversed with those who had listened to Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John, and Matthew²: and though we are not to conclude that all the apostles named had themselves preached in the neighbourhood, we may not unreasonably see, in the prominence of the most purely Hellenic district of Asia Minor as a centre of Christian memories, yet another proof of the almost exclusive hold of the Greek language over the apostolic and sub-apostolic Church.

But if the language of the early Church was Greek, its Bible was Greek too. We moderns are so accustomed to think of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament as two sharply contrasted wholes, that we forget that no idea of any linguistic barrier between the two Testaments was for a moment present to the mind of any Greek-speaking Christian. If the New Testament of the Church was in Greek, the Old Testament was in Greek also: and it was in Greek, not because the Church had provided a new vernacular rendering of the unfamiliar Hebrew, but because she inherited an existing one from the Jewish Dispersion. The Septuagint was already the Bible of the vast majority of Jews. They had no need to change their old Scriptures for new ones, when they accepted the teaching of Jesus as Messiah.

About the actual conditions under which the Hebrew Scriptures were rendered into Greek by the Seventy translators, legend was busy at a very remote period. The story of the miraculous accompaniments which guaranteed the divine inspiration of the new

¹ 'Eadem nocte revelatum Andreae ex apostolis ut recognoscentibus cunctis Iohannes suo nomine cuncta describeret', Canon Muratorianus: *Φίλιππον τῶν δίδεκα ἀποστόλων, ὃς κατοίμηται ἐν Τεραπόλει*, Polycrates ap. Eus. *H. E.* iii 31, v 24.

² ap. Eus. *H. E.* iii 39.

version may be read in Epiphanius.¹ Even the belief, general among early Christian writers, that the translation of the whole Hebrew Canon was carried through at Alexandria at one and the same time has been disproved by the researches of criticism: it is now clear that the translations of different books or groups of books were made at different times, possibly even in different places. But whatever breaches may have been made in the outworks of tradition, the inner kernel remains: the books of the Law were translated at Alexandria 250 years or more before Christ, and the whole Hebrew Canon was represented in a more or less official Greek form in time for the Christian Church to adopt and assimilate it before its final separation from Judaism.

But the complete Greek Bible of the Dispersion differed in one very obvious way from the Hebrew Bible of Palestine. Its contents were not the same as the contents of the Hebrew Bible, for it included in addition those books which we call 'deutero-canonical' or 'apocrypha'. It was this larger Canon which, outside Palestine and outside the influence of the few scholars who knew the Hebrew language and the Hebrew Canon, was the recognized Bible or Old Testament of the Christian Church: Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus were accepted on the same level as Proverbs, Tobit as Esther, and the books of the Maccabees enjoyed equal authority with the books of Chronicles. The witness of the Western Church before Jerome is practically unanimous in this sense. The great Greek Bibles of the fourth or fifth century, \aleph A B C, if they differ from one another in the exact contents of their Old Testament, as we have seen that they do in regard to their New Testament, yet agree on a Greek as against a Hebrew Canon.² If Melito of

¹ *de mens. et pond.* §§ 3, 6. Epiphanius appears to be alone in the statement that the 72 translators worked in pairs, (ὄγγ) (ὄγγ) κατὰ ὀκτάκωσ, each pair taking a single book; 'thus, for instance, Genesis was allotted to one pair, Exodus to the next pair, Leviticus to the next, and so on all through.' This story so far presents a remarkable parallel to the latest researches of Septuagint scholars, who have called attention to the existence of minute differences in the style of the first and second halves respectively of all the longer books: see Mr Thackeray's proofs in *J. T. S.* iv 245, 398, ix 88.

² Cod. C has no more than 64 O.T. leaves, but these contain parts of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus: of the others \aleph has Tobit, Judith, 1 and 4 Maccabees, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus: A has Baruch, Tobit, Judith, 1, 2, 3, 4 Maccabees, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus: B has Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, Baruch. The order too differs in all three: but all agree in sandwiching the deutero-canonical in among the rest without any distinction.

Sardis in the second century gives the 'number and order of the ancient books' as he found it recognized in Palestine, the Hebrew colour of the list explains itself: and the same Palestinian influence will account for the arguments of Africanus in the third century, and for the Canon of Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth. Origen's list is introduced in so many words as the 'twenty-two books according to the Hebrews' καθ' Ἑβραίων: his own usage is based on the fuller canon, but his list had an independent influence, and the only truncated list in the West before Jerome is copied direct from it—that, namely, of St Hilary of Poitiers.¹ When Jerome set himself to oust the Septuagint text from its position in the Latin Church and replace it by a new translation from the Hebrew, he naturally adopted the Hebrew Canon with the Hebrew text: the additional books of the Alexandrine Canon form no true part of the Vulgate Bible. If the Sixth of the Thirty-nine Articles cites St Jerome as saying that these 'other books the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine',² we must make it quite clear to ourselves that this distinction between canonical and deuterocanonical books was in the main a new one of Jerome's own making, and does not represent the inherited tradition of the Church of earlier days. Something like it had been employed by Eusebius in the classification of the books of the New Testament³; but the principal additions which mark off the Septuagint Canon from the Hebrew, the books, say, of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and Tobit, had (outside the local and non-Christian influences already named) a wider circulation and a firmer footing in the first four centuries of the Church than the Catholic Epistles or the Hebrews or the Apocalypse. In any case the attempt to reckon degrees of canonicity implies a work

¹ Melito ap. Eus. *H. E.* iv 26: Origen ap. Eus. *H. E.* vi 25: Cyril Hier. *Catech.* iv 35: Hilary *Prolog. in librum Psalmorum* § 15.

² *Prolog. in libros Salomonis* (Vallarsi, ix 1295) 'sicut ergo Iudith et Tobit et Macchabaeorum libros legit quidem ecclesia, sed inter canonicas scripturas non recipit: sic et haec duo volumina' [sc. Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus] 'legat ad aedificationem plebis, non ad auctoritatem ecclesiasticorum dogmatum confirmandam. si cui sane LXX interpretum magis editio placet, habet eam a nobis olim emendatam. neque enim sic nova cudimus ut vetera destruamus.'

³ Eus. *H. E.* iii 25. Athanasius's thirty-ninth Festal Epistle, A. D. 367, offers the nearest parallel; it distinguishes the Canonical Books as the Scriptures of the baptized Christian from the Apocrypha as the Scriptures of the catechumen.

of investigation and reflexion : it is, as regards the Old Testament, a device employed by scholars or theologians to bring under one formula older and contradictory conceptions. And of these warring conceptions one is characteristic of the Hebrews and the Hebrew-Christian Church of Palestine, the other of the Jewish Dispersion and of the Christian Churches among the Gentiles.

As with the number of the books, so with their text. The Septuagint translation—if we put aside the difficult question of the versions of the book of Daniel—was current in the Churches, and in a relatively unadulterated form, till its purity first, and next its supremacy, were disturbed by the labours of the two great scholars whose Hebrew acquirements so profoundly affected the future history of the Old Testament texts in the Greek and Latin Churches respectively. Between the work of Origen and the work of Jerome there was indeed a difference of scope and method, which corresponded to a difference in the characters of the two men. Origen accepted *ex animo* the enlarged Greek Canon of the Old Testament as one of the characteristic marks which distinguished the Christian Church : but in the case of the books translated from the Hebrew he found many serious divergences between the Greek of the LXX and the Hebrew text of his day, and his great critical undertaking, the Hexapla, aimed at facilitating the correction of the LXX to the standard of the Hebrew by the aid of the later Greek versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. The transpositions and additions—these latter were supplied from the version of Theodotion—which this procedure rendered necessary were, in Origen's own edition, marked off from the LXX proper by an elaborate mechanical apparatus of asterisks, obeli, and so forth. But while the text thus doctored soon ousted its genuine rival and became the ordinary Old Testament text of the Greek Church,¹ the signs by which the verity of the original LXX had in the Hexapla been safeguarded proved too complicated for the majority of copyists, and were silently

¹ Compare Jerome's ironical remarks, addressed to St Augustine as an adherent of the LXX (ep. cxiii 19 : Vallarsi, i 746) ' miror quomodo Septuaginta interpretum libros legas, non puros ut ab eis editi sunt, sed ab Origene emendatos sive corruptos per obelos et asteriscos. . . vis amator esse verus Septuaginta interpretum ! non legas ea quae sub asteriscis sunt, immo rade de voluminibus, ut veterum te fautorem probes. quod si feceris, omnes ecclesiarum bibliothecas damnare cogeris : vix enim unus aut alter invenietur liber qui ista non habeat '.

dropped. Not even the oldest of our uncial MSS lacks the large increments from Theodotion which bring the Greek Job of the LXX up to the proportions of the Hebrew text; yet neither \aleph , for instance, nor B reveals by any sort of indication that their LXX text has borrowed numerous passages which are simply Theodotion, and not really LXX at all.

In Origen's system the LXX at least provided the groundwork: Jerome was a better Hebrew scholar than Origen, and was little trammelled either by self-distrust or by respect for ecclesiastical custom. The Vulgate Old Testament was not produced by revision of the Old Latin, but was undertaken in direct and exclusive dependence on the Hebrew.

For the true text of the LXX, then, we have to appeal in the first place to Greek evidence unaffected by the work of Origen, and to Latin evidence unaffected by the work of Jerome: and criticism has made it quite clear that the true text of the LXX is far from being a *quantité négligeable*. The LXX would always indeed have had an imperishable claim on our interest as the Old Testament of the primitive Church: but we know now as well that it is an indispensable aid to the restoration of the Hebrew original, seeing that the tradition of the Massoretic text is as certainly posterior to the Christian era as the LXX is certainly prior. Just as for the New Testament the versions have hitherto been unduly neglected in comparison with the extant Greek evidence, so for the Old Testament the LXX has a value in comparison to any available Hebrew evidence enormously greater than either Origen or Jerome or the scholars of the Protestant Reformation suspected to be the case. On this ground alone we should be rightly proud of the prescience with which Oxford led the way in the eighteenth century by the edition of J. E. Grabe (1707-1720), and followed up Grabe's work with that splendid monument of zeal and erudition, the LXX of Holmes and Parsons (1789-1827): nor shall we be less proud of the determination of Cambridge, under the guidance of Dr Hort and Dr Swete, to supersede the edition of Holmes and Parsons by a still better and completer one.¹

¹ Of the larger Cambridge edition, edited with admirable care by Mr Brooke and Mr McLean, only Genesis (1906) and Exodus-Leviticus (1909) have as yet appeared: but for the purposes of most of us the beautiful manual edition by Dr Swete, with the same writer's *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, will be amply sufficient.

In emphasizing the fact that the Greek translation of the Seventy was the Bible alike of the Jewish Dispersion and of the early Church, we are bringing it into near relation with our own immediate purpose. When the Christian Church first came to possess the complete Bible of the two Testaments, it was by grafting the collection of Greek scriptures of the New Testament on to the existing collection of Greek scriptures of the Old Testament. On this existing collection of 'sacred' and 'inspired' books, 'profitable for teaching, for convicting and convincing, for instruction in righteousness,'¹ most of the writers of the New Testament had been nurtured whether as Jews or proselytes or converts to the Christ: they were steeped in its thoughts, they expressed themselves in its language. Books like the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Hebrews are full of such reminiscences from end to end, and even where the character of the book as a whole does not lend itself to the same usage a particular chapter may occur, as the speech of St Stephen in the Acts, where the necessary conditions hold good: nor is it the least of the merits of Westcott and Hort's edition that by its use of uncial type it keeps this feature prominently before the eyes of every reader.² Perhaps critics have not always borne sufficiently in mind the assistance which constant reference to the LXX may supply to the student of the New Testament even in his textual difficulties.³ Our first and most natural presumption will be that, given the familiarity of the sacred writers with the LXX, that one of two various readings is most likely to be correct which agrees with the LXX text. But then we have to remember, on the other hand, that the scribes who copied out our New Testament books were also familiar with the LXX,

¹ 2 Tim. iii 15, 16: I think that the contrasted words *ἀλεγεινὴ ἐπαγόρευσις* at least include the idea of the refutation of the Jewish, and building up of the Christian, interpretation of the Messianic Scriptures.

² The caution must, however, be added that the editors have rightly included in their uncial type all words or phrases which correspond in sense to any passage of the Old Testament books, whether or no they echo the actual language of the LXX.

³ I should like in this connexion to name (though they were not intended for textual purposes) the nearly forgotten books of the Rev. E. W. Grinfield, *Novum Testamentum Graecum Editio Hellenistica* (2 vols., Pickering, London, 1843) and *Scholion Hellenistica in Novum Testamentum* (2 vols. 1848). Mr Grinfield is probably best known now as founder of the Septuagint lecture at Oxford—a lecture which is only rarely devoted to its proper and primary purpose.

nay, during the first Christian generations—and we must never lose sight of the truth that it was during those first generations that the most serious variations of text came into being—were often more familiar with the Old Testament, the Bible of their childhood, than with the New. We ourselves find it impossible to escape from similar processes of unconscious assimilation, only with us it is the language of the Old Testament, as the less familiar, which would be in danger of accommodation to the language of the New: with ancient scribes the temptation was strong to assimilate all derived language to its source, to raise the standard of exactness all round, to make a reminiscence into a quotation, and a loose quotation into a precise one.

We must first admit that there are cases where it is the New Testament writer who follows the LXX text and the New Testament scribes (or some of them) who diverge from it. Such cases are rare, and probably occur only where the phrase echoed from the Old Testament is not well enough known to be familiar and at the same time unusual enough to encourage alteration. A good illustration will be Luc. iv 26, where the reading *Σάρεπτα τῆς Σιδωνίας* 'Sarepta of the Sidonian country' is given by \aleph A B C D 1, the Ferrar group, and both Old Latin and Vulgate, in exact accordance with 3 Reg. xvii 9: while the later Greek MSS and the Syriac versions substitute for the unusual adjective *Σιδωνίας* the well-known place-name *Σιδωνος*. The external evidence is decisive: and we deduce from it that the chance that an unexpected phrase will be turned into an ordinary one may be greater than that the scribes would in so small a matter have either known or verified the exact wording of the LXX.

But far more numerous are the passages where scribes have, consciously or unconsciously, brought the text of the New Testament writers into closer agreement with their source or supposed source in the Old Testament.¹ Of the various forms

¹ Attention may be called in passing to an instance where, as Prof. Burkitt points out (*Gospel History and its Transmission* p. 49), independent reminiscence of a LXX phrase by St Matthew and St Luke will account for one of the rare agreements between them in Marcan matter against St Mark. In both Matt. xvii 17 and Luc. ix 41 the reading *ὁ γινεθὲ ἀριστος καὶ δευτερογράμμη* appears to be certain (although Marcion's Gospel text, and therefore perhaps his copy of St Luke, did

which their misguided energy took in this direction, the simplest is that where a definite quotation is expanded to the full measure of the LXX, without any actual alteration of what evangelist or apostle had written. Thus the quotation in Luc. iv 18, 19 is introduced by reference to the 'roll of the prophet Isaiah', and is in fact found in Is. lxi 1, 2. But whereas in the original the central words ran ἀπέσταλκέν με ἰσασθαι τοὺς συντετριμένους τὴν καρδίαν (or τῇ καρδίᾳ), κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεισιν κτλ., St Luke's text, according to the witness of **N B D L Z** 33, the Ferrar group, the Latin versions, the Old Syriac, Origen, Eusebius, and Athanasius, gave an abbreviated version ἀπέσταλκέν με κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεισιν κτλ. Now when we find A and the later Greek MSS, the Peshitta, and Irenaeus, inserting the omitted words, we do not for a moment doubt that they have been supplied to the text of St Luke from the text of Isaiah.

Or again, in Matt. ii 18 we have a quotation from Jer. xxxi [xxxviii] 15 introduced 'as that which was spoken through Jeremy the prophet', and most of our authorities give the second clause θρήνος καὶ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὄδυρμος πολὺς in accordance with the Old Testament text, θρήνον καὶ κλαυθμοῦ καὶ ὄδυρμου. But **N B Z** 1 22 and the Latin and Egyptian versions omit θρήνος καί: and the words are to be regarded here too as a scribal assimilation to the LXX.

In these two Gospel passages it has been easy to come to the same conclusion as the critical editors of the New Testament. The problems of the book of Acts are less simple to resolve: but it may be doubted whether, for instance, the canon that agreement with the LXX text is, in the case of *variae lectiones*, a ground for suspicion should not modify the texts of our editions of Acts ii 17-20. In the opening clause of this quotation from Joel, St Peter is made to use the phrase ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, whereas the LXX has μετὰ ταῦτα, and B follows the LXX. Here all editors, including Westcott and Hort, desert B: but if we

omit the word): but in Marc. ix 19, their common source, it is no less certain that the true reading is ὁ γένεθ ἀπιστος without addition. A solution of the difficulty may be found in the LXX of Deut. xxxii 5—in so familiar a chapter as the Song of Moses—γένεθ σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη. But I should like to add here that I am now somewhat tempted to think that an explanation of this and similar passages may be found in the use of the First Gospel—no doubt as quite a subordinate authority—by St Luke.

rightly read *ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις* in verse 17, it is tempting to omit *ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις*, with D and the *de Rebaptismate* (a tract contemporary with St Cyprian), in verse 18. Still more suggestive is the agreement of $\aleph D$ (followed by Tischendorf) in omitting Joel's *καὶ ἐπιφανῆ* after *ἡμέραν Κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην* in verse 20.

But the influence of familiar LXX phrases will be felt even where the words are not expressly introduced as a quotation. Thus in Acts vii 30, $\aleph ABC$ and the Vulgate present the text *ἔφθη αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τοῦ ὄρους Σινὰ ἄγγελος ἐν φλογὶ πυρὸς βάτου*. But in the LXX of Exod. iii 2 we read *ἔφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ἄγγελος Κυρίου ἐν πυρὶ φλογὸς (v. l. ἐν φλογὶ πυρὸς) ἐκ τοῦ βάτου*: and consequently Codex Bezae and Codex Laudianus, with the mass of MSS and the Peshitta, write *ἄγγελος Κυρίου* instead of *ἄγγελος* in the text of Acts. A more complicated variation on the same lines is Luc. xvii 29. *ἔβρεξεν πῦρ καὶ θείον ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ* is the reading of $\aleph BL$, the mass of Greek MSS with the Sinai Syriac and the Vulgate, followed by the editors: *ἔβρεξεν θείον καὶ πῦρ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ*, AD and a few others: *ἔβρεξεν πῦρ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ*, the Old Latin MSS (*abeffilg*), the Curetonian Syriac, Irenaeus and Eusebius. Of these three readings the second corresponds with the LXX of Gen. xix 24, and may be rejected at once on that ground. But the first also is a familiar Old Testament tag, as familiar as is 'fire and brimstone' to ourselves: compare Ps. x (xi) 6, Ezech. xxxviii 22, and so the Apocalypse *passim*. Against the Greek evidence and the editors, we will therefore conclude without much hesitation for the originality of the last of the three alternatives, *ἔβρεξεν πῦρ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ*.

Somewhat similar, at least in the sense that the scribal change is by way of addition only, and has left the genuine words unaltered, are the cases where an allusion is worked up into a direct historical reference, and the i's are dotted and the t's crossed for the benefit of the careless reader. So in Luc. ix 54 James and John ask the Lord *Κύριε, θέλεις εἰπώμεν πῦρ καταβῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἀναλῶσαι αὐτούς*; The allusion to 4 Reg. i 10, 12 is unmistakable: and it was perhaps first only as a marginal gloss that the words *ὡς καὶ Ἡλείας ἐποίησεν* made their appearance in the Gospel. But they now find place in the text of ACD and the mass of Greek MSS, in most MSS of

the Old Latin, in the Peshitta, and in numerous Fathers from the fourth century onwards. The true reading is preserved in **NBL** **Z** and two cursives, in two of the best Old Latin MSS *e l*, in the Old Syriac, and in St Cyril.

In all these instances it is the shorter of two readings which is right: and except in the case of omissions by *homoeoteleuton* or other definitely assignable cause, it may be taken as a sound general rule that a shorter reading is so far more likely to be right than a longer one. 'Colligite quae superaverunt fragmenta ne pereant' was not only a natural but a sound instinct of scribes, and especially of biblical scribes: as between a shorter and a longer text, the responsibility of omitting for good what might be genuine was obviously more serious than that of retaining for the time what might be spurious.

There remain the cases where, under the influence of the Old Testament, the very words of the New Testament writers have been modified, and brought into closer agreement with their sources. It might have been expected that reluctance would have been felt in thus altering the actual language of the sacred record: yet so strong was the impulse, that even the last words of the Lord from the Cross were not exempt from the harmonizing process. Luc. xxiii 46 appears in all the early uncials, in the Latin and Syriac versions, and in many Fathers, in the form Πάτερ, εἰς χεῖράς σου παρατίθεμαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου: but because Ps. xxx (xxxix) 6 runs εἰς χεῖράς σου παραθήσομαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου, the future is substituted for the present in the Gospel by L and some of the later uncials with the great mass of cursives.

Corrections like this last almost look like the result of a definite and not very early recension of which assimilation to the LXX text was one of the guiding principles: and of course wherever the variation appears to be only a relatively late one, external evidence alone would make the decision easy. But there are other and more difficult cases in which variation clearly commenced at a much remoter period, and there we welcome the help of the test of probability arising out of agreement or disagreement with the Septuagint. Reference was made in an earlier chapter¹ to Luc. xii 14, where **NBL** **I** and the editors give τίς με κατέστησεν κριτὴν ἢ μεριστὴν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς; For

¹ *J. T. S.* (Jan. 1909) p. 180.

κριτήν ἢ μεριστήν A and the mass of MSS have δικαστήν ἢ μεριστήν : while Marcion-Tert D 33, the Old Syriac, and one good MS of the Old Latin *c*, give a single noun only, which on the authority of the two Greek MSS, D 33, we shall without difficulty identify as κριτήν. In this verse Westcott and Hort do not print anything in uncial type: but at least it cannot be questioned that the form of the saying suggested to scribes a parallel in Exod. ii 14 (cited in Acts vii 27, 35 and in Clem. Rom. 4) τίς σε κατέστησεν ἄρχοντα καὶ δικαστήν ἐφ' ἡμῶν; That parallel will account for the appearance of δικαστήν in A and the *Textus Receptus*, and we are left to decide between the two variants κριτήν and κριτήν ἢ μεριστήν. Individual critics will estimate differently the weight of the probabilities: some may think that *homoeoteleuton* will account for the loss of the two words ἢ μεριστήν: for myself I suspect that the shorter reading is once more right, and that the influence of the double noun in the Exodus passage suggested a double noun in the Gospel. κριτήν ἢ δικαστήν, which is found in Clement of Rome, is mere tautology, due to the influence of the Lucan κριτήν on the text of Exodus: the happier effort of κριτήν ἢ μεριστήν would have been, on this hypothesis, suggested by the μερίσασθαι of verse 13. A prudent editor might perhaps print the verse in the shape τίς με κατέστησεν κριτήν [ἢ μεριστήν] ἐφ' ὑμῶν;

The last and most complicated series of various readings which concern us in this chapter are those where an Old Testament source and its citation elsewhere in the New Testament may both have influenced the tradition of the text. Sometimes indeed the complication is so far simplified that the source and the parallel give the same reading. A simple case, where the sense is not affected, would be Acts iv 11, where 'the stone that has been set at nought ἐφ' ὑμῶν τῶν οἰκοδόμων' is the reading of **NABD**, Origen and Didymus. But the Psalm (cxvii [cxviii] 22), and its citations in the Gospel, have ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, and the *Textus Receptus*, representing the mass of MSS, puts τῶν οἰκοδομούντων into the Acts in place of τῶν οἰκοδόμων. Again, in Luc. xxiii 34 ἐβαλον κλήρον 'they cast the lot', which Westcott and Hort adopt with **NBCDL** and the mass of MSS, is the reading both of the parallels in the other two Synoptists and of the common source in Ps. xxi (xxii) 19:

ἐβαλον κλήρους, the reading of Tischendorf with A 1 33, some of the Old Latin MSS (*a eff* against *b c*), the Vulgate, and St Augustine,¹ has all the appearance of being a stylistic correction by St Luke himself, which scribes have attempted to harmonize away into agreement with the other biblical documents. So in another echo of the same Psalm in the Passion, according to St Matthew and according to all printed texts of St Mark the Aramaic verb *σαβαχθαυέλ* (Matt. xxvii 46, Marc. xv 34) is interpreted, in accordance with the LXX of Ps. xxi 2, by the Greek *ἐγκατέλιπες*. But D in St Mark reads *ὠνείδισας*, and two Old Latin MSS, *c* and *i*, give respectively 'exprobrasti' and 'in opprobrium dedisti': and not only so, but *k*, our best Old Latin MS, which had been reported as having 'dereliquisti' over an erasure, has been shewn by Prof. Burkitt to have originally given 'maledixisti'.² It is hardly conceivable that this reading is a wanton freak of scribes: and, in view of the overpowering temptation to harmonize with the dual authority of St Matthew and the Psalter, I should be prepared to accept the testimony of D and its three Old Latin allies.

The summary of the Commandments (Marc. x 19 = Matt. xix 18, 19 = Luc. xviii 20: cf. Exod. xx 12-16) presents curious difficulties in the text of St Mark. St Matthew and St Luke follow Exodus closely, diverging from one another only in the order of the Commandments. St Mark agrees with them according to a few, but those some of our best, authorities—B* 1 (the Ferrar group??) and the Old Syriac. All other authorities add the command *μὴ ἀποστερήσης*, and, in view of the impossibility of otherwise accounting for it, the addition must be considered genuine: B and the Old Syriac are therefore, it seems, not above the temptation to harmonize.³ But further, an important group D Γ *k* substitute *μὴ πορνεύσης* for *μὴ φονεύσης*,

¹ The Old Syriac appears to have the plural in all three Gospels, and cannot therefore be cited.

² *J. T. S.* i 278. No less than six of our Old Latin Gospel MSS are, as Prof. Burkitt points out, defective at this part: the reason of course is that St Mark comes last of the four Gospels in the ordinary Western order, and the first and last pages of a book are always the most liable to loss.

³ The Latin for *μὴ ἀποστερήσης* is in *k* 'ne abnegaveris', in *a c* 'non abnegabis'. Have we not then in this passage of St Mark the key to the summary of the Christian *sacramentum* given in Pliny's letter to Trajan 'ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent'?

c has both, and *i* omits both. It is possible that accident may account for this variation: if *φορεύσης* were miswritten *πορεύσης*, the neighbourhood of *μοιχεύσης* would do the rest. But the combined testimony of *D k* can never be quite lightly treated.¹

As a final example of a textual problem, difficult and at first sight insoluble on account of the action and interaction of the different Gospel and Old Testament sources, let us look at Ps. cxvii (cxviii) 26, *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου*, and its apparent echoes in the Gospels. As used by our Lord in the lament over Jerusalem, there is no variation to record: St Luke (xiii 35), equally with St Matthew (xxiii 39), gives it in strict agreement with the Psalter. But as employed by the crowd in the triumphal entry each one of the four evangelists gives a different turn to the phrase, and in St Mark, St Luke, and St John it is not easy to arrive at the true reading. I begin by setting out Westcott and Hort's text in each case:—

Matt. xxi 9 Ὁσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυεὶδ' εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.

Marc. xi 9, 10 Ὁσαννά· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου· εὐλογημένη ἢ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυεὶδ· ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.

Luc. xix 38 Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ βασιλεὺς,² ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου ἐν οὐρανῷ εἰρήνη καὶ δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις.

Jo. xii 13 Ὁσαννά· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου, καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.

(1) In St Matthew the text is without variation, and the LXX of Ps. cxvii is strictly followed. The other evangelists diverge in more or less degree from the Psalm, and in proportion as they do so variations multiply. (2) Of these in St Mark there is none that need be cited, save that *k* gives the abbreviated form 'benedictus qui venit in regnum patris nostri David'. It is true that accidental omission of the words *ὀνόματι . . . ἐρχομένη* at any point in the ancestry, Latin or Greek, of *k* would account for this reading: but it gives such an admirable sense, *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν βασιλείᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυεὶδ*, and the ordinary

¹ It is worth noting, as a contribution to the criticism of the Codex Bezae, that in the two variations last discussed, Marc. xv 34 and x 19, it is the Greek only of *D* which goes with *k*: the Latin has the ordinary reading.

² With marginal alternatives *ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς* or simply *ὁ βασιλεὺς*.

reading could so easily have grown out of it, once the inevitable addition of *ὀνόματι Κυρίου* was made after *ἐν*,¹ that the more I study it the more I gain impression of its superior originality.

(3) In St Luke there are no less than five variant readings:—

- (a) *εὐλογημένος ὁ βασιλεύς* *e* I*
 (b) *εὐλογημένος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου* N* H 69 Origen
 (c) *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου* N° A L most Greek MSS
 (d) *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ βασιλεύς, ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου* B
 (e) *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου, εὐλογημένος ὁ βασιλεύς* D most Old Latin MSS

The Vulgate and Syriac versions support (c) or (d): Tischendorf adopts (b), Westcott and Hort (d). I confess to a suspicion that once more the shortest reading is not improbably also the most original. *e* is, where *k* fails us, the best representative of the African Latin: *l* is a MS which comes from the same neighbourhood as *e*—*e* was found at Trent, *l* is connected with Aquileia—but it is more unequal than *e*, its value being almost entirely confined to the third and fourth Gospels.² If we assume (a) as the original reading, the rest can all be deduced from it as different combinations with the text of the Psalm.³ (4) In St John the variations are less serious, but a new complication is caused by the fact that the two Old Latin authorities whose text approved itself in St Luke again shew omissions but differ from one another in the words which they omit: *e* omits *ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου*, *l* omits *ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*. Besides this the *καί* is omitted by the Latin and Syriac witnesses and most of the Greek. Again the claims of a shorter reading seem preferable, and I would suggest tentatively *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος [ὁ] βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*.

The readings here recommended are, it will be noted, the

¹ The reader must be reminded that the iota adscript or subscript does not appear in early MSS: *βασιλεία* and *βασιλείῃ* would not be distinguished from one another.

² My knowledge of both the value and the limitations of *l* I owe to Prof. Burkitt: but I cannot lay my hand upon the reference.

³ The concluding words of St Luke as given in the editions, *ἐν οὐρανῷ εἰρήνη καὶ δόξα ἐν ἁγίοις*, hardly give a tolerable sense.

readings of the 'African' Latin—of *k* in St Mark, of *e l* in St Luke, of *e* in St John—unsupported by any other authorities: and if they are right, no more eloquent testimony could be rendered to the value of this version. But are they right? I should like to submit two considerations which seem to me to reinforce the textual evidence on which in the preceding paragraph the hypothesis of their correctness has been based.

In the first place the circumstances of the Triumphal Entry must almost inevitably have brought to recollection the prophecy of Zechariah (ix 9: quoted in Matt. and Jo.) *ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεὺς σου ἔρχεται σοι δίκαιος καὶ σώζων, αὐτοὺς πραῖς καὶ ἐπιβεβηκὼς ἐπὶ ὑπόζυγιον καὶ πῶλον νέον.* And the presence of the title *ὁ βασιλεὺς* in three out of the four reports of the scene—and though St Matthew has not got the word, he has replaced it by an equivalent reference to the Davidic Sonship—seems at least to imply that Psalm cxvii cannot account for the whole of the thought that was in the minds of the spectators.¹ In the second place these revised and abbreviated readings, by concentrating the cry of the multitude, as represented in the last three evangelists, upon the kingship, give us surely a much more intelligible background to the charge brought against our Lord by the chief priests at the judgement-seat of Pilate: all four accounts (Matt. xxvii 11=Marc. xv 2=Luc. xxiii 3=Jo. xviii 33) reproduce Pilate's opening interrogatory in identical words *Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων;*

The dominating note of our treatment of these parallel passages has been the assumption that comparison of a well-known verse in the Psalms and in St Matthew would exercise upon early scribes of the other Gospels an irresistible force in the direction of harmonizing uniformity. The result may appear, at first sight, startling: but if the assumption has in any way justified itself, the moral of the importance of the LXX to the student of the text of the New Testament needs no further words to point it.

¹ The seventeenth of the Psalms of Solomon is well worth comparing here.

NOTE ON ROMANS XV 19 μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ.

THE following note has been put together out of the materials collected in Marquardt *Römische Staatsverwaltung* iv 141 sqq. (in the French translation ix 171 sqq.), and Mommsen *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* III i pp. 279, 280. It may be found useful in supplementing the information given in the commentaries on St Paul *ad loc.*

Illyricum was a general name for the districts inhabited by Illyrians or people of Illyrian race; even when the first skeleton organization was given to it by the Romans in 167 B.C., it is called Illyricum, not Illyria (Liv. xlii 26). Whether or no it originally covered as wide a ground, at any rate by the time of the Christian era the term was applicable to the whole country from the Alps eastwards to the mouth of the Danube and southwards to the Adriatic.

Augustus divided Illyricum, which had hitherto formed one unit of government, into three separate provinces (and this triple division remained unaltered throughout the first century):—

(1) The eastern and south-eastern parts were made into the province Moesia not later than A.D. 6.

(2) Northern or Lower Illyricum became the province Pannonia in A.D. 10.

(3) The original nucleus which was now all that was left of the old Illyricum was technically 'Upper Illyricum', *superior provincia Illyricum*. But the awkwardness of this name, and the liability to confusion with the larger sense of Illyricum, soon brought about in practice the use of a separate name—parallel to Moesia and Pannonia—namely Dalmatia. Tacitus and Josephus use Dalmatia: Dio Cassius uses Illyria down to the time of Augustus, Dalmatia after Augustus. St Paul uses the same name, and doubtless in the same sense for the province of Upper Illyricum, in the Pastoral Epistles: 2 Tim. iv 10 Τίτος εἰς Δαλματίαν.

But though these three names of Moesia, Pannonia, Dalmatia, now stood for separately organized provinces, there remained more than one link which bound them still officially together: and between the dates when the single province of Illyricum was divided up by Augustus, and the date when Diocletian or his successors grouped various provinces into the diocese of Illyricum and various dioceses into the Prefecture of Illyricum, the phrase had a continuous political history as applied to the three provinces as a whole. Tacitus writes that news came 'ex Illyrico iurasse Dalmatiae ac Pannoniae et Moesiae legiones' (*Hist.* i 76), and even employs the phrases 'Illyrici exercitus', 'Illyrici legiones'. Similarly in inscriptions we find 'in Illyrico' used in a sense that covers any one of the three provinces. In finance especially the union of the

provinces was a close one: the 'vectigal Illyricum', τὸ Ἰλλυρικὸν τέλος, had its own organization and officers, whose sphere extended over Dalmatia, Pannonia, Moesia, and after Trajan's time Dacia as well.

If we assume St Paul to be keeping close, here as elsewhere, to the political sense of geographical terms, he will mean by τὸ Ἰλλυρικὸν the whole extent of the three provinces: and there will then be no reason at all why we should not bring his own language 'to the confines of Illyricum' into harmony with the record of his European preaching as contained in the Acts. From Philippi or Thessalonica to the Moesian border was no great distance: the apostle may even have made, on one or other of his journeys along the coast, brief excursions inland.

I do not think, therefore, that St Paul, during the whole period of his activity as recorded in the Acts, ever found himself outside the range of currency of the Greek language.

C. H. TURNER.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

V. THE LANGUAGES OF THE EARLY CHURCH: (B) SYRIAC AND THE FIRST SYRIAC GOSPELS.

HOW predominantly Greek was Christianity, during the first century of its history, we learnt in the earlier pages of the last chapter. The Aramaic of Palestine, we there saw, if it was the most serious rival of Greek, yet made singularly little show even in the most primitive Christian literature: outside Palestine it had apparently no history, and was not even the direct ancestor of the great Syriac-speaking church, which was developed, almost as entirely as Latin Christianity, out of Greek, and derived its New Testament, just as did Latin Christendom, by translation from the Greek original.¹

But the case can be put more strongly still. Although the proclamation of the Gospel may have reached the Syriac-speaking peoples of Mesopotamia and the Latin-speaking peoples of the West early in the second century, it is hardly before the beginning of the third that we come upon definite traces of versions even of the Gospels in the vernacular languages. It would seem that something of the reluctance which the Jewish Church had experienced in the face of any interference with the prerogative of its Hebrew Scriptures, made itself felt within the Christian Church in regard to its Greek Bible. Greek seems

¹ There is, on the other hand, every reason to think that the Old Testament of the Peshitta is not only the original Old Testament of the Syriac Church but is actually earlier than the Syriac Church itself. The former conclusion is indicated by the agreement of all Old Testament citations in Syriac writings, however early their date, with the Peshitta; the latter by the Hebrew and even Jewish colouring of the Peshitta of the Old Testament. Apart from some traces in the Prophets of what may be later Christian revision from the Greek, the Peshitta is a translation not of the LXX but of the Hebrew, and of the Hebrew as understood and interpreted by Jews. See Burkitt *Early Eastern Christianity* (1904) pp. 70-73.

in fact to have remained the organ of worship, and therefore of the public and official reading of the Scriptures, even in communities where the majority of the members must have carried on their daily mutual intercourse in other tongues. Greek was the ancestral language of the Christian propaganda, the language in which Rome in the West and Edessa in the East had received the faith from Syria or Asia Minor: and the conservatism with which men naturally cherish their religious inheritance would defer as long as possible the change which ultimately was seen to be inevitable, when the liturgy came to be offered, and the sacred books to be read, no longer in Greek but in the vernacular Latin or Syriac. And if we want any further specific explanation of what is after all a very natural feature in the Christian life of the second century, we may find another and probably not less potent cause for the continued adherence of the outlying churches to the Greek language, in the consideration that Greek alone provided the means of common intercourse between all the families of the Christian Society. At no period perhaps of Christian history has sustained interchange of counsel and experience been more strongly felt as a theoretical need, and more fully worked out as a practical policy, than in the second half of the second century. When Polycarp of Smyrna visited Anicetus of Rome, to confer with him about the Easter difficulty which divided the Roman and the Asian churches; when Hegesippus the Palestinian made it his business to 'mix with numerous bishops' and communities—among them are specially named those of Rome and Corinth—and found the same scriptural teaching 'in every episcopal succession and in every city'; when Abercius of Hieropolis in Phrygia travelled as far as Rome in the West and as far as Nisibis in the East, and was everywhere accompanied by the same faith, the same sacraments, and the same scriptures; when Melito of Sardis 'went up to the East and reached the scene where our religion was wrought and taught'¹: it was through a common use, on the part of both hosts and guests, of the mother tongue of Christendom, that such conferences could be held or their results recorded. Similarly if a Christian writer

¹ Polycarp in Iren. *Ep. ad Vict. Rom.* ap. Eus. *H. E.* v 24: Hegesippus and Melito in Eus. *H. E.* iv 22 and 26: for Abercius see Lightfoot's *Ignatius* i 476-485.

of the same period, wherever his own home or whatever his native language, wished to address himself to the theological public at large, it was only through a Greek medium that he could reach them: the educated Christian understood Greek everywhere, and Irenaeus and Hippolytus composed their treatises for his benefit. Even the creator of Latin Christian literature, Tertullian himself, was practised Greek scholar enough to write on occasion in that language: the *de Baptismo* and *de Spectaculis* were published in Greek as well as in Latin, the lost books *de Ecstasi* in Greek only. On the other hand the uneducated Christian, was probably as a rule unable to read at all, and his needs for [a generation or two may well have been satisfied by an oral interpretation into the vernacular, such as the Jewish Church of Palestine had provided for its Aramaic-speaking population in the time of Christ.

With this conception of the facts it entirely agrees that the first Syriac Gospel should have been not official and perhaps not even orthodox: Tatian's *Diatessaron* or 'Harmony of the Four' was, as we shall see (p. 199), earlier than any version of the separate Gospels.

But if the rendering of the New Testament into even the primary non-Greek languages of the ancient world, Latin and Syriac, was effected so reluctantly and so late, it seems at first sight to follow that the value of Greek evidence for the text of the New Testament is proportionately enhanced in value and the evidence of the versions proportionately depreciated.

And in fact the most eminent editors of the Greek Testament, from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth, have practically built their text on Greek evidence alone. At first indeed it could hardly have been otherwise: what the scholars of the Renaissance recovered for Western Europe was naturally the Greek New Testament as found in Greek MSS and kept in living use by the Greek Church. No editor before Bishop Fell (1675) mentioned the versions on his title-page: no scholar before Richard Simon (1690) devoted to them a separate and special enquiry.¹ Bentley (1720), among

¹ Fell '*Accesserunt . . . variantes lectiones ex plus 100 MSS codicibus et antiquis versionibus collectas*': Simon *Histoire critique des versions du Nouveau Testament*. For fuller details I may refer to my article 'New Testament, Text of,' in Murray's *Concise Bible Dictionary* pp. 589 ff.

older critics, was the one to set most store on the evidence of a version: for he claimed that it was possible to restore the original text by a comparison of the Greek of Origen and the Latin of St Jerome, and that between these two the agreement would be found to be so close that 'there will scarce be two hundred places' where they would differ, and where therefore the true reading could be in doubt. Bentley's plan of a parallel Greek and Latin text—the Latin being still that of St Jerome's Vulgate—was carried into effect by Lachmann (1842–1850), though Lachmann no longer claimed that the result was the original text of the apostles, but only the earliest ascertainable text, that of the fourth century. Since Lachmann, however, editors have been dazzled by the glamour of the discovery of the two great Greek MSS, and have been in consequence too much occupied in debating the relative merits of the earlier and later Greek evidence to pay much real attention to the versions. \aleph was first known, B was first accurately known, in the sixties of the last century. Tischendorf¹ was specially concerned to maintain the superior merits of \aleph , his own discovery: Hort (1881) was the prophet of codex B.² Of von Soden's great undertaking only volume I (Prolegomena pp. 1–1648) has yet appeared: but the fundamental principles on which in effect he sets aside the earliest versions are already sketched.³

Of the first of these three great critics not much need here be said. Tischendorf's text is, in my own opinion, right in many places where the text of Hort is wrong: but it is right, as it were, rather because a sort of divining instinct, the result of his long acquaintance with his material, led him to the truth, than because he had really, at least in the sense that Hort and von Soden have done, argued out his principles.

Hort was the last and perhaps the ablest of a long line of editors of the Greek Testament, commencing in the eighteenth century, who very tentatively at first, but quite ruthlessly in the

¹ *Novum Testamentum Graece ad antiquissimos testes denuo recensuit, apparatus criticum omni studio perfectum apposuit, commentationem isagogicam praetexuit* Constantinus Tischendorf: editio octava critica maior, 1864–1872 (prolegomena by Gregory 1884–1894).

² *The New Testament in the original Greek: the text revised* by B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort (vol. i text, vol. ii [by Hort] introduction and appendix), 1881.

³ See below p. 186.

end, threw over the later in favour of the earlier Greek MSS: and that issue will never have to be tried again. In Hort's hands this preference for the earlier MSS was pushed to its most extreme form, and came to mean an almost exclusive reliance on the two earliest of all, B and \aleph . Where internal evidence was clear, the results were almost uniformly favourable (so he argued) to \aleph B, and, if these differed from one another, to B: the presumption drawn from these clearer cases might then be legitimately extended to those perhaps more numerous instances where internal evidence, taken alone, spoke with an uncertain sound. Once more it is not likely that posterity will disown either the method on which Hort worked or up to a certain point his conclusions: B, as it is the oldest, so it is also the most valuable of our Greek MSS. But while we follow Hort so far, we cannot help feeling that his attack and defence is primarily concerned—so strong was still the *praeiudicium* in favour of the Received Text—with the issue as between B and the *Receptus*, and not with the further issue as between B and the so-called 'Western' authorities, Greek, Latin, and Syriac. This is the real problem before the textual critics of our generation: thirty years ago it was hardly yet mature. Even the material was not so full then as it is to-day: the Sinai Syriac Gospels, for instance, were still unknown.¹ Nevertheless, we owe to the insight of Hort some most important preliminary steps, which have cleared the ground in relation to the 'Western' text and made further advance possible. In the classification of documents he identified, by means of the evidence of St Cyprian, the first stratum of the Old Latin version in the 'African' MSS *k* and *e*. In the construction of the text he went beyond any previous editor by following, in certain striking cases, the sole authority of 'Western' witnesses. It is true that these cases are limited to the last three chapters of St Luke, that in all of them the 'Western' text gives a shorter reading than the rest, and that the omitted words, though their genuineness is given up, are still retained within

¹ Prof. Burkitt has pointed out (*Encyclopaedia Biblica* iv 499 n. 3) that Hort's most decisive instance of the excellence of 'subsingular' readings of B, the various references to the cock-crowing in St Mark's account of Peter's denials (xiv 30, 68, 72: *Introduction* § 323), now turns out to be exactly reproduced in the Sinai Syriac.

double brackets in Westcott and Hort's printed text.¹ It is true also that one Greek MS, the codex Bezae, is found among the authorities which omit; and perhaps Hort would not have deferred even in these instances to Western authority, if the Latin MSS had not found some Greek support, for we have already seen that he would rather postulate a primitive corruption than admit that the true text of Apoc. iii 1, 7 had been preserved in a Latin father alone.² To Hort in fact D ranks as a primary witness; the Old Latin and the Old Syriac do not, but are called in only to bear testimony to one or other of two variants in the Greek. But D, however valuable in company with other witnesses, has far too large a personal equation to be a safe guide by itself: and if Hort regarded D as the most representative (because the chief Greek) Western witness, it is perhaps hardly wonderful that he concluded 'bold licence of treatment' 'paraphrase' and 'readiness to adopt extraneous matter' to be the characteristics of the Western text. Yet the reader may be reminded that in the last preceding article of this series we had occasion to discuss five *variae lectiones* in the Gospels where the Western witnesses gave what was apparently the truest but in any case the shortest reading.³

Those who view, as we have been trying to do, the problem of the New Testament text from a historical and chronological standpoint, cannot fail to be conscious of the gap between the end of the second century—behind which date we have admitted that the evidence of the versions does not carry us—and the beginning of the fourth, the earliest date assigned to the MS on which Hort's text is based: and of course Hort himself admits, and it was even then undeniable, that 'the most widely spread text of Ante-Nicene times' was the Western. The discovery, since Hort wrote, of a papyrus leaf containing most of the first

¹ These 'Western Non-Interpolations'—to adopt the rather cumbersome phrase by which Hort means to indicate that all other texts are interpolated and that the Western alone is free from interpolation—are the following: Luc. xxii 19 b 20; xxiv 3 b; 6 a; 12; 36 b; 40; 51 b; 52 b: the authorities which omit are D and the five Old Latin MSS *a b e f l* (besides *i* in the only one of the eight passages where it is extant), supported sometimes by the Old Syriac and once (xxiv 51 b) by the first hand of *N*.

² *J. T. S.* x (April 1909) pp. 373, 374.

³ Luc. xii 14, xvii 29, xix 38: Marc. xi 9, 10: Jo. xii 13. Only in Luc. xii 14 did D give the short reading.

chapter of St Matthew in a text closely agreeing, even in spelling of proper names, with the text of B,¹ may be fairly held to carry back the whole B text of the Gospels into the third century. But against this must be set the defection of the two earliest witnesses—the only version, in fact, and the only father, earlier than Origen—whose support he claimed. The version of Lower or Northern Egypt, called Memphitic or Coptic or Bohairic in the nomenclature of different scholars, is the version that ‘can be pronounced’ most ‘extensively non-Western’ (§ 177): and the greater part of it ‘cannot well be later than the second century’ (§ 120). Recent research, however, tends to bring this version down to the time of Cyril of Alexandria (with whose text it rather closely agrees), if not indeed later still.² Again, Clement of Alexandria is the only writer earlier than Origen to whom Hort can appeal to shew that ‘many non-Western readings . . . were in existence by the end of the second century’ (§ 160). But the careful examination of Clement’s Biblical text by Mr Barnard, together with the illuminating summary of results prefixed to it by Prof. Burkitt, has taught us that Clement’s ‘many non-Western readings’ are a vanishing quantity, and that his real affinities are rather with the Old Latin and the Old Syriac.³

It is tolerably clear then that if the exclusive credit of the Greek MSS is to be saved, and the older versions and fathers are to be still refused rank as primary witnesses to the text, some further explanation of obvious *prima facie* difficulties must be given: and this is exactly what Freiherr von Soden⁴ has attempted to do. Von Soden rules out the unsupported testimony of the Old Latin and Old Syriac as remorselessly as Hort himself: he approaches his subject from the side of the Greek MSS more

¹ Grenfell and Hunt *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* i [1898] p. 4.

² See especially the article by the Italian scholar, Prof. Guidi, in the *Göttingen Nachrichten der K. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, 1889.

³ *The Biblical Text of Clement of Alexandria in the Four Gospels and the Acts*, by P. M. Barnard, with Introduction by F. C. Burkitt: Cambridge ‘Texts and Studies’ v 5, 1899.

⁴ *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt, hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte* von Dr Theol. Hermann Freiherr von Soden. Berlin: I i (1902), ii (1906), iii (1907). In describing von Soden’s position I have derived much assistance from Mr Valentine-Richards’s brief but clear sketch, *Cambridge Biblical Essays* (1909) pp. 535-539.

exclusively than even Hort, or Tischendorf, or any other of the nineteenth-century editors: but he sees that the inconvenient evidence of the versions has to be explained somehow, and, unsatisfactory as his explanation is, it at least recognizes the existence of the difficulty.

In von Soden's terminology the 'Western' text disappears entirely. Following out the scanty indications contained in St Jerome, he first looks for the recensions carried out by Hesychius at Alexandria and by Lucian at Antioch. The latter he finds in the 'Syrian revision' of Hort; and as this became ultimately the Received Text, he labels it K for *Κοινή*. So far he agrees with previous editors: and though from this point he separates himself from Hort's notation, it is possible that he will find some support for his further view that our specially Egyptian witnesses, from the end of the third century onwards, B and \aleph included, represent the otherwise unknown recension of Hesychius (H for *Ἡσύχιος*). But Jerome also speaks of the 'codices Adamantii', MSS preserving the New Testament text of Origen, as those which he himself elected to follow; and it can scarcely be doubted that it was in the library of Caesarea, where the traditions of Origen were maintained by Pamphilus and Eusebius, that he saw and used the *codices* in question. A third form of text therefore emerges in Palestine (I for *Ἱεροσόλυμα*); and though we have no such direct evidence for it in our extant Greek MSS as we have for the other two, we have a number of clues to its character in the repeated agreements of the Old Latin and Old Syriac, the bilingual codex Bezae, and the two Greek families headed respectively by the cursives Γ and Λ (the Ferrar Group). So far this text would appear to be our old friend the 'Western' text under another name: but as it is an essential part of the theory that the I-text owes its existence to the labours of Origen and his followers, and is therefore posterior to the Old Latin and probably to the Old Syriac, it follows that readings to which only these versions testify can have had no place in it.

I and H and K are therefore three independent editions of the text, all made by about the year 300 A.D.: I-H-K, on the other hand, is the fundamental text, which, by comparison of these three editions, can be restored as the original basis of all

of them ; and this common basis cannot of course be later than the third century and may well be earlier.

But the evidence of the most ancient versions is not always in agreement with this resultant I-H-K text: and it might be natural therefore to suppose that by comparison of I-H-K with the Old Latin and Old Syriac we could mount to a still higher stage in an I-H-K-L-S text. Only that would mean the admission of non-Greek evidence, and this von Soden is as determined as Hort to exclude from final consideration. His escape from the dilemma is ingenious: but on this side at least of the Channel he has found few to follow him, and the evidence of history, broadly considered, appears to be fatal to his theory. Tatian is the name by which he conjures away all opposing forces: the influence of the Diatessaron, according to him, accounts for practically every reading in the Gospels where versions or fathers older than Origen venture to differ from the I-H-K text. But the Diatessaron is known to us in history through its connexion with the Syriac Church: and it is of the origin and early progress of Syriac Christianity that we have in this chapter to speak.

The conquests of Alexander had reached eastwards as far as the Indus, and a veneer of Hellenism was thereby spread over the whole of Western and West-Central Asia. But beyond the Euphrates Greek influences were not given time to penetrate very deep below the surface: as early as the middle of the third century B. C. the conterminous kingdoms of the Seleucidae—whose dominions had included Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Persia—and of the Bactrians—who represented Greek civilization in Afghanistan, Turkestan, and the Punjab—began to be pushed apart from one another by the successful revolt of the Parthians. Before the Christian era, the Parthian empire had acquired the whole ground from the Euphrates to the Hindu Kush, and had confronted on equal terms the advancing empire of the Romans. Mesopotamia (the country, that is, between the Euphrates on the west and the Tigris on the east), and the mountainous kingdom of Armenia to the north of it, formed during several centuries the debateable ground between the two empires, and belonged to the sphere of influence now of the one, now of the other. In the

second century A. D. the Romans gradually obtained a definite footing beyond the Euphrates, where that river makes an immense half-circle as it first approaches, and then recedes from, Antioch and the Mediterranean. Within this arc were situated Carrhae, the scene of Crassus's defeat by the Parthians in 53 B. C., Edessa, the capital of the first Christian State, and Nisibis, the great frontier fortress which marked the limit of the eastern travels of Abercius of Hieropolis.¹ The substitution of Persian for Parthian rule in A. D. 226 seemed for some time to make little difference in the situation; and indeed the results of the conquests of Diocletian and Galerius at the end of the third century represent the high-water mark of Roman advance. But in the fourth century the Persian State gradually re-asserted its power, and began to press the Roman boundaries steadily backwards till in 363 Mesopotamia was divided between the two empires, Nisibis becoming Persian while Edessa remained Roman.

The dominating movement of early Christianity had been towards the West: Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, these were the successive head-quarters of the Apostles and centres of evangelization. St Paul would not have admitted a racial or geographical any more than a social limit to the preaching of Christianity: slaves equally with freemen, barbarian and Scythian as well as Jew and Greek, were to share of right in the good news of the Gospel.² But in his own practice the ideal which he set himself to translate into fact was rather the proclamation of the Gospel message from one end of the Roman dominions to the other, from Jerusalem to Spain: and the direction which the Apostle of the Gentiles thus gave to the first Christian missions anticipated, if it did not rather itself go far to fix, the course of Christian history. Yet Jewries of no less importance lay on other sides of Palestine. Alexandria did indeed enter, though at a relatively late moment, into the main current of Church life. But beyond the eastern limits of the empire, Josephus tells us that across the Euphrates there had been since the Captivity and were still in his own day 'countless myriads' of Jews, 'exceeding all reckoning'.³ Of especial importance would be the settlements in the great towns of Babylon on the lower Euphrates, and

¹ See above p. 181.

² Col. iii 11.

³ Josephus *Antiquitates* XI v 2.

Seleucia-Ctesiphon on the lower Tigris. That some of the Apostles of the Circumcision should have turned their steps thitherwards was almost inevitable: and tradition connects the names of Thomas, Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, with India, Parthia, or Mesopotamia. The Greek legends indeed of the preaching of Simon among the Parthians and at Babylon are too vague or too late to secure credit: but the Syriac *Acts of Judas Thomas*, which place the labours and martyrdom of the apostle in India, and the Syriac *Teaching of Addai* which connects the same Judas Thomas, as well as Thaddaeus, with the church of Edessa, are both of them documents of the third century. For St Thomas in Parthia there is also Greek authority in Eusebius (*H. E.* iii 1), and it is probable that the authority is not merely that of the historian, but that the quotation from Origen extends back over the whole enumeration of the missionary spheres of the chief apostles.¹

It will be noted that the further east we go, the weaker the testimony. For India we have only the Acts of Thomas: and though these have at least one point of contact with real history in the name of king Gundaphorus, they are highly coloured by Encratite Gnosticism. But Syriac Gnosticism of the school, for instance, of Bardesanes of Edessa was in close touch with oriental influences, and it is possible that the Indian setting of the story was borrowed wholesale from a Buddhist model.² For Parthia the evidence is somewhat stronger: yet, whatever degree of truth may underlie the 'tradition' cited by Origen (or Eusebius), it is certain that we cannot point to any known evidence of the continuous existence of a Christian Church under the Parthians: and indeed, a century of Persian domination elapses before the first traces emerge of Christian organization or Christian literature. At the council of Nicaea, one bishop, 'John of Persia', was present from those regions: the *Homilies* of Aphraates, 'the

¹ Θωμᾶς μὲν, ὡς ἡ παράδοσις περιέχει, τὴν Παρθίαν εἰληχεν [then follows information about Andrew, John, Peter, and Paul]. ταῦτα ἠρξίγινει κατὰ λέξιν ἐν τρίτῳ τόμῳ τῶν εἰς τὴν γένεσιν ἐξηγητικῶν εἰρηται. The Latin of Rufinus inserts 'Matthaeus Aethiopian, Bartholomaeus Indiam citeriorem'. [Add for St Thomas in Parthia the *Clementine Recognitions* ix 29, and Cotelier's note *ad loc.*]

² So von Gutschmid *Die Königsnamen in den apocryphen Apostelgeschichten*, Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, N. F. xix 161; followed by Lipsius 'Acts of Apostles (Apocryphal)' in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* i 23.

Persian sage', are dated A. D. 337-345: and the great persecution under Sapor belongs to the years immediately following.

It is rather to a tiny kingdom situate between Roman and Parthian territory, and under Roman rather than Parthian protection, that we must look for the first origin and development of a native Syrian Church: Edessa is, in fact, far nearer to Antioch than to either Babylon on the south-east or Jerusalem on the south-west. The *Teaching of Addai* recounts how the Abgar of that day—the title was borne by most of the successive kinglys of Edessa—wrote to Jesus 'the Good Saviour' at Jerusalem to beg Him to come and exercise His powers of healing on himself. Our Lord in answer promised that after His Ascension one of the disciples should be sent: and in due course Judas Thomas charged Addai [i. e. Thaddaeus] the Apostle, one of the Seventy, with the mission. By the cures and preaching of Thaddaeus the king and his subjects were converted to the faith. The story was translated in part for the *Church History* of Eusebius: but of the story as first current the extant Syriac appears to be an expanded form, just as also the Spanish lady-pilgrim Eucheria when she visited Edessa at a later date received there a copy of the Acts on a more circumstantial scale than what she had been familiar with at home.¹

The conversion of the Edessene State is of course antedated in the tradition, perhaps by as much as a century and a half: but soon after A. D. 200, at any rate, the Abgar was Christian, and the commencements of evangelization must therefore go some way back into the preceding century. A basis of fact is all the more likely to underlie the statement of the *Teaching* that Palut, third bishop of Edessa, sought for consecration at the hands of Serapion of Antioch, because it is irreconcilable as it stands with the legend of apostolic foundation: if the bishop consecrated about A. D. 200 was only the third, the first cannot be brought into direct relation with the apostles. Serapion in turn, we are told, had been ordained by Zephyrinus of Rome, while the

¹ Eus. *H. E.* i 13 *ad fin.* ἐκ τῆς Σύρων μεταβληθέντα φωνῆς: *S. Silviae Peregrinatio* in Geyer's *Itinera Hierosolymitana* (Vienna *Corpus S. E. L.* xxxix p. 64) 'et licet in patria exemplaria ipsarum haberem, tamen gratius mihi visum est ut et ibi eas de ipso acciperem, ne quid forsitan minus ad nos in patria pervenisset: nam vere amplius est quod hic accepi'. But the date of this pilgrimage is probably not so early as has been supposed.

consecrator of Zephyrinus was the apostle Peter. The Christian Abgar visited Rome, and was given a brilliant reception by the emperor Septimius Severus, about 206 (ten years later Edessene independence, such as it was, came to an end, when the kingdom was finally incorporated in the Roman empire), and in the references to Zephyrinus and St Peter we may perhaps see a conscious Romanization of the traditions of the local church. Historical in the strict sense they certainly are not: for even if we interpret the second of the two statements to mean no more than the descent by succession of Zephyrinus from St Peter,¹ the first of them is disproved by the single consideration that Serapion was bishop of Antioch some ten years earlier than Zephyrinus became bishop of Rome. Nevertheless, all goes to suggest that the connexions of Edessa, ecclesiastical as well as secular, were during the third century with the Roman empire rather than with the East: and there is nothing to suggest that the contrary was the case at any earlier period of its history. It may even be conjectured that the campaign of Marcus Aurelius, which in the year 164 brought Edessa finally under Roman suzerainty, opened at the same time 'a great door and effectual' to the Christian mission from the West. At Nisibis, some way further east than Edessa and not far from the Tigris, Abercius found, it is true, an orthodox Catholic community: but Nisibis too was in northern Mesopotamia, and received a Roman garrison at the beginning of Severus's reign, A.D. 194, if not earlier. Of Christianity in the Parthian dominions proper, at Babylon or Seleucia, we hear at this period nothing.

To the church of Edessa then we shall naturally look as the centre from which the first New Testament in the Syriac vernacular would be likely to have spread. And here again the *Teaching of Addai* records for us, in words partly quoted at an earlier point,² the Edessene traditions of the origin of the Syriac

¹ So Burkitt *Early Eastern Christianity* (1904) p. 26: R. Duval, however, *Anciennes Littératures chrétiennes: La Littérature syriaque* (1899) p. 115, interprets literally. It is interesting to note that the *Teaching of Addai* already knows the chronology of St Peter's episcopate: 'Peter had been designated by our Lord, and was bishop of Rome during twenty-five years in the time of the Caesar who reigned thirteen years.' Clearly Claudius (A.D. 41-54) is meant: it is also clear, I think, that the *Teaching* used a chronicle which synchronized popes and emperors.

² *J. T. S.* x (April 1909) 355.

Bible: 'the Law and the Prophets, and the Gospel in which ye read daily before the people, and the letters of Paul which Simon Cephas sent from the city of Rome, and the Acts of the Twelve Apostles which John, the son of Zebedee, sent from Ephesus: of these writings should ye read in the churches of Christ, and with them ye should read nought else.' What exactly is meant by the word 'Gospel' in the singular, another passage from the same *Teaching* makes clear: 'and much people gathered together daily, and came to the Divine Service, and to the Old Testament, and to the New of the Diatessaron.'

A generation ago it would have been necessary to enter here into a long examination of the probable meaning of the word 'Diatessaron', and of the objects and method of Tatian its author, such as for instance Lightfoot carried out in the last of his famous papers upon the book called *Supernatural Religion*.¹ Even now no fragments of it, other than quotations, have been recovered either in Greek or in Syriac: but two translations of the Diatessaron itself, and one of a commentary on it, have come to light in Latin, Arabic and Armenian respectively, and between them we get a good general idea of its contents and arrangement. An Armenian version of the commentary upon the Diatessaron by the first of the great Syriac fathers, Ephraim of Edessa († A. D. 373), was published in 1836, and forty years later was republished in a Latin translation from the Armenian. When this at last attracted the notice of scholars, it was realized that we had all along had in our hands an ancient Latin rendering in the Gospel Harmony of the codex Fuldensis,² written for Victor, bishop of Capua, in A. D. 546: the preface tells us that Victor had come across a Harmony of the Gospels, which, after examining the accounts of early harmonies, he decided must be Tatian's, and his adaptation of this Harmony to the Vulgate text takes the place of the separate Gospels in the MS. And lastly an Arabic version, made no doubt from the Syriac and preserved in two fourteenth-century MSS, was

¹ *Contemporary Review*, May 1877: chapter ix (pp. 272-287) of the collected edition.

² The codex Fuldensis has been at Fulda probably ever since the time of St Boniface. I agree with Dom Chapman, *Early History of the Vulgate Gospels* p. 157, in thinking it likely that Boniface received the book from Northumbria, and that Benedict Biscop or Ceolfrid had brought it to England from Italy.

published at Rome in 1888. By the convergence of these three lines of evidence we can see that the Diatessaron was a Harmony in which the Four Gospels were woven, not unskilfully, into one continuous story, and we can for the most part restore in detail the order of its material. But that is not the same thing as restoring the text: the Arabic version is assimilated to the Peshitta, the Latin to the Vulgate, while Ephraim is not only liable, in his Armenian dress, to contamination from the Armenian Bible, but often passes over the text of several successive verses. To some extent we can fill up the gap from patristic citations: for although not a single word of it can be recovered from Greek authors, the Christian Syriac writers of the third and fourth centuries bear out for the most part the indications of the *Teaching of Addai*, and continue to quote the Gospel mainly through the medium of the Diatessaron. If this is true of Aphraates, it is truer still of Ephraim, who not only expounded the text of the Diatessaron in the Gospel commentary, but habitually quoted from it in his other works. In fact there is perhaps no Syriac writing earlier than A. D. 400, with the single exception of the Acts of Judas Thomas, which does not shew acquaintance with the Diatessaron; and it is certain that it must have been, down to that date, the popular if not also the official Gospel of the Syriac-speaking Church.¹

When, where, and why, did Tatian compose this Harmony, and what was the secret of its success in Syriac circles and its failure at the same time elsewhere? For answer to this and all questions about Tatian we turn first to the *Church History* of Eusebius.²

The theological history of Tatian Eusebius describes out of St Irenaeus's great work *Against Heresies*: Tatian was a pupil of Justin Martyr's, and as long as his master lived did not give vent to unorthodox views; but after Justin's martyrdom [A. D. 163], when he succeeded to the teaching chair, he advertised his independence by seceding from the Church and setting up a school

¹ See Burkitt *S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel*, 'Texts and Studies' vii 2 (Cambridge, 1901), and *Evangelion da-Mepharreske* (Cambridge, 1904) ii 101-160, 180-186. [I take this opportunity of putting on record the special obligations under which I stand, in many paragraphs of this chapter, to Professor Burkitt's writings: though I have done my best to reinterpret his material for myself.]

² *Eus. H. E.* iv 28, 29; v 13.

of his own on the lines of a modified Gnosticism. From Valentinus he borrowed the Aeons; from Marcion the rejection of marriage and meats, whence he acquired the name of 'Encratite': while his own special contribution to heretical thought, was the tenet that Adam the first man, ὁ πρωτόπλαστος, was outside the pale of salvation. To Irenaeus's sketch of Tatian's theology Eusebius adds an account of his literary output. His work on the New Testament is very unfavourably depicted. 'He put together a sort of hotch-potch of the Gospels, which he named Τὸ Διὰ τεσσάρων: and this is still current in some quarters. Of the Pauline Epistles it is said that he published (save the mark!) a revised and improved edition. A better known and indeed quite creditable effort was his apologetic work addressed *To the Greeks*, in which he proved the superior antiquity of Moses and the Prophets to all the favourite heroes of the Greeks.' And to these at a later point Eusebius adds (on the authority of Rhodon, himself a pupil of Tatian's at Rome) another book of *Problems*, in which he professed to shew the uncertainty and obscurity of the Divine Scriptures.

The language of Irenaeus—'Ιουστίνου ἀκροατῆς γεγονώς, and ἐφ' ὅσον συνῆν ἐκείνῳ—seems to indicate that Justin presided over a sort of School¹ of Christian philosophy in Rome (something like the Catechetical School of Alexandria, though no doubt less relatively important), and that Tatian was first his pupil and then perhaps his colleague. The language of Rhodon—μαθητευθεὶς ἐπὶ Ῥώμης, ὡς αὐτὸς ἱστορεῖ, Τατιανῷ—suggests that Tatian succeeded Justin in his teaching chair, and that Rhodon attended his lectures. When then Tatian, about A.D. 165–170 (for the words of Irenaeus do not allow of much interval between Justin's martyrdom and Tatian's secession), had developed his Gnostic leanings, his School naturally ceased to be recognized by the Catholics, and one would rather gather that Rhodon succeeded him as the philosopher, so to say, of the Roman Church. But the lecture-

¹ I suspect that the enigmatic answer given by Justin at his trial to the question of the prefect Rusticus refers not, as has been generally assumed, to his meeting-place for worship but to his σχολή or lecture-room: 'Ρουστικὸς ἑπαρχὸς εἶπεν· Εἰσεί, ποῦ συνέρχεσθε, ἢ εἰς ποῖον τόπον ἀθροίζεις τοὺς μαθητάς σου; Ἰουστίνος εἶπεν· Ἐγὼ ἐπάνω μένω τινὸς Μαρτίνου τοῦ Τιμοθίου βαλανείου . . . καὶ εἰ τις ἐβούλετο ἀφαινεῖσθαι παρ' ἡμῶν ἐκοιτώνουν αὐτῷ τῶν τῆς ἀληθείας λόγων, *Acta Martyrum Selecta*, ed. O. von Gebhardt, 1902, p. 19.

room was presumably private and not Church property: and again the language of Irenaeus—*ἴδιον χαρακτήρα διδασκαλείου συνέστησατο*—implies a further period during which Tatian remained on in Rome, and continued to expound his doctrines from a professorial chair. There St Irenaeus leaves him: and history has no more to tell. But it does not seem likely that Tatian can have left Rome much before A.D. 175.

If, or when, he did leave Rome, where did he go? We have no direct evidence: but we do happen to know from whence he came to Rome. He was born, he tells us in the extant *Address to Greeks*,¹ in the land of Assyria—he is consequently identified by most scholars with the 'Assyrian' whom Clement of Alexandria names among his teachers²—and it would therefore be natural that when, in later life, his position in Rome became untenable, his thoughts and his steps should turn towards his early home. There, among a simpler and ruder people, the Christian mission was still in its infancy, and the theological differences which parted him from the Catholics of the greater churches may have been but half understood. The tide which, twenty or thirty years before, had risen high enough to threaten the very strongholds of apostolic Christianity, was on the ebb: where Justin had been outclassed by Valentinus and Marcion, already Irenaeus and Clement were beginning, what Tertullian and Origen completed, the recovery for the Church of her lost ground. Within the empire Gnosticism was played out, and the sign of its defeat was the organization of its adherents into separate sects: but it had come from the East, and it was just in places like Edessa that the retreating movement still held its ground within the Christian community. The one name that is historical in the early annals of Edessene Christianity, outside the episcopal list, is that of Bardesanes (A.D. 154–222), and of Bardesanes half our authorities tell us that he was a Catholic before he was a Gnostic, and the other half that he was a Gnostic first and a Catholic afterwards: the truth being, as I suppose, that he occupied the same anomalous position as the great Gnostics at Rome a generation or two earlier, or many of the Arians a century and a half later—a position which the fourth-century narrators of Edessene traditions, when Gnosticism in all its forms was a *res iudicata* of the past, were

¹ *Ad Graecos* 42.

² *Strom.* i 11.

naturally unable to realize. If Bardesanes could maintain himself among Syriac-speaking Christians at the beginning of the third century, Tatian could have done the same thing twenty-five years earlier: and if the newly-founded Church of Mesopotamia had as yet no vernacular version of the Gospels, it would the more readily welcome a rendering of the Gospel Harmony which the returning philosopher brought back with him to his native country. Whether or no Tatian uses 'Assyria' in the sense of Trajan's short-lived province of that name beyond the Tigris, he was doubtless familiar with the Syriac language from his youth.

That this Syriac Diatessaron was a translation, and not the original, is not really doubtful. It is true that the evidence of Theodoret may be, and perhaps should be, interpreted of the Syriac Diatessaron rather than the Greek: in the eight hundred parishes of his diocese he had found, he says,¹ two hundred copies of the Diatessaron, all of which he replaced by copies of the separate Gospels. He does not say whether they were Greek or Syriac, and Cyrrhus, his see-town, is about equidistant from Antioch in one direction and from the Euphrates in the other: it is, however, natural to connect this extensive use of the Diatessaron just west of the river with what we know of its popularity just east of the river at Edessa, and to conclude that the villagers round Cyrrhus spoke Syriac rather than Greek. On the other hand Eusebius, though he had apparently never seen the Diatessaron,² assumes without hesitation that it was a Greek work: and it can hardly have been in any other language that Victor of Capua made acquaintance with it. There is no trace of its existence in Latin: and Victor was an accomplished Greek scholar, whose Scholia on Genesis include material from (pseudo-)Polycarp, Origen, Basil, Diodore of Tarsus, Severian of Gabala, and certain 'Ρήματα Γερόντων.³ Doubtless it is strange to find even a Greek Diatessaron in Italy in the sixth century: and, partly on this account, I am somewhat tempted to identify

¹ *Haer. Fab.* i 20.

² It is interesting to note that the Syriac translator of the *Church History* inserts here the vernacular name by which the Diatessaron was known in contrast with the Separate Gospels, 'now this is the Gospel of the Mixed, *Evangelion da-Mehallate*': Burkitt *op. cit.* ii 175.

³ *Pitra Spicilegium Solesmense* i 265-277: compare Chapman's *Vulgate Gospels* p. 80.

Victor, the bishop and scholiast of Capua, with Victor the shadowy presbyter of Antioch, to whom we owe the Greek catena on St Mark.

The external evidence of Eusebius and Victor for a Greek origin agrees with internal evidence of the Diatessaron itself which points to a Roman origin. Prof. Burkitt catalogues a number of instances where the underlying Greek text of the Diatessaron differs from our other Syriac evidence and agrees with the evidence of the Old Latin¹: in other words it is 'Western' in the geographical sense as well as in the wider sense in which the term is used by Hort and his school. But it drawn up at Rome, it remains so far an open question whether it was by Tatian the Catholic or Tatian the heretic: and the answer to the question is not without some bearing on the extent of the influence it is likely to have exerted within the Church.

Theodoret had no doubt that the Diatessaron revealed on enquiry indications of a heretical purpose: Tatian, he alleges, removed from his Harmony the genealogies, with all other passages which shew Christ as born according to the flesh from the seed of David. But Theodoret wanted to make the worst of a work which he had set himself systematically to replace. Victor of Capua, on the other hand, looked upon the work as of great value for the understanding of the Gospels, and conjectured that it might have been written under Justin's influence: even if that was not so and Tatian was a heresiarch already when he composed it, the words are still the words of Christ, 'verba Domini mei cognoscens libenter amplector'.

Modern scholars are as divided upon this subject as Theodoret and Victor. Hort will tell us (on Matt. xxvii 49) that 'there is no evidence that this obscure work [the Diatessaron] was known out of Syria, where Tatian founded his sect; and the evil repute attached to his name renders the adoption of a startling reading from such a source highly improbable'. It was the independence of the great Greek uncials, which have inserted Jo. xix 34 into the Passion according to St Matthew, that Hort was here concerned to maintain against the suggestion of corruption from the Diatessaron: but it is more generally by the opponents of the 'Western' text that Tatian is summoned as the *deus ex machina*,

¹ Burkitt *op. cit.* ii. 191-201.

and in their conception the influence of the Diatessaron is as greatly exaggerated as in Hort's it is minimized. By Dr Rendel Harris Tatian is held responsible for all the 'Western' element in the Syriac versions, while Tatian himself and all other Western-minded texts, the Sahidic version of Southern Egypt included, are derived from the Latin column of a primitive bilingual (graeco-latin) codex.¹ In von Soden's scheme, as we have seen, Tatian is made to play an even larger part, and the Diatessaron becomes the one all-sufficing explanation for serious transpositions of the Gospel text. All idiosyncrasies of the Old Latin and the Old Syriac, all errors of the copies used by Irenaeus and Clement, are due to the same pernicious influence of the work of Tatian.

The problems here raised involve obviously a comparison of the text of the Diatessaron with other forms of the Gospel in Syriac and Latin, for which we have not as yet completed the necessary collection of material. Our next chapter will be devoted to the Old Latin version: for the remainder of the present chapter we address ourselves to the subject of the earliest Syriac version of the separate Gospels.

Much has been written on the question whether the Syriac Diatessaron is earlier or later than the Syriac Gospels. But the answer has really been given by the accumulation of evidence for the extensive and almost exclusive use of the Diatessaron by Syriac writers between A.D. 200 and 400. It is quite inconceivable that if the Four Gospels had once rooted themselves in popular knowledge and affection, they could ever have been superseded by a Harmony: even an oral interpretation of the Greek Gospels into Syriac, if it had had time to become familiar, could hardly have been so completely ousted: the Diatessaron must therefore have been the first form in which the Edessene church possessed a Gospel in the vernacular at all. Hence it seems that we can scarcely date the introduction of the Diatessaron at Edessa later than about A.D. 180. For more than two centuries it maintained its sway: it was probably not till the fifth century that the Peshitta version was officially substituted for it. But long before that an attempt had been made to acclimatize in the Syriac tongue the 'Separate' Gospels in place

¹ *A Study of Codex Bezae* ('Texts and Studies' II i, 1891) p. 177.

of the 'Mixed': and unsuccessful as the attempt was, the recovery of the manuscripts which represent it has provided us with some of our earliest testimony to the text of the Four Gospels.

Among the splendid collection of ancient Syriac MSS which the British Museum acquired in the middle of last century, from the monastery of St Mary in the Nitrian desert south-west of Alexandria, was a fragmentary MS of an unknown version of the Gospels, which from its first editor, Canon Cureton,¹ has received the name Curetonian. The MS, which dates from about the beginning of the fifth century, arranges the Gospels in the unusual order Matthew, Mark, John, Luke: and as it has further experienced the unusual fate that the beginning and end have suffered less loss than the central portion, it results that the first three-fourths of St Matthew and the last three-fourths of St Luke are for the most part extant, while there is little left of St John, and of St Mark nothing but the last four verses of the Longer Conclusion.² The total of the eighty-six leaves amounts to about half the whole Gospels.

To the more extreme conservative school it had become almost an article of faith that the Syriac Vulgate or Peshitta was as old as the second century; and therefore any other version of the Gospels in Syriac must naturally be posterior to it. On the other hand critics like Griesbach and Hug a hundred years ago had already concluded on internal evidence that the Peshitta New Testament, exactly like the Latin Vulgate, was a revision, by the help of Greek MSS, of an earlier version in the vernacular. Cureton's MS in the main fulfilled the required conditions as a representative of this lost original, and Westcott and Hort labelled it without hesitation Old Syriac, 'syr-vt', though they admitted that 'many readings suggest that, like the Latin version, it degenerated by transcription and perhaps also by

¹ *Remains of a very ancient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac hitherto unknown in Europe: discovered edited and translated by William Cureton, D.D., F.R.S.* London, 1858. To the British Museum leaves have to be added three leaves at Berlin (in MS Orient. Quart. 528), edited by Roediger in the Proceedings of the Berlin Academy of Sciences for July, 1872.

² In detail, Matt. i 1-viii 22, x 32-xxiii 25: Marc. xvi 17-20: Jo. i 1-42, iii 5-viii 19, and fragments of xiv: Luc. ii 48-iii 16, vii 33-xxiv 44.

irregular revision . . . a single MS cannot be expected to tell us more of the Old Syriac generally than we should learn from any one average Old Latin MS respecting Old Latin texts generally' (§ 118).

By far the most valuable accession of material to the New Testament critic, since Westcott and Hort published their edition in 1881, is the discovery—at the same monastery of St Catharine on Mount Sinai which a generation earlier disclosed the Codex Sinaiticus of the Greek Bible, N—of a second, less fragmentary and less degenerate, representative of the Old Syriac Gospels. This Sinai Syriac is a palimpsest, and therefore not always legible with certainty: but out of 159 pages which the Gospels originally covered only seventeen are missing, so that when all allowances are made the text is a far completer one than Cureton's. The later writing is dated A. D. 778: the original scribe may have written at the end of the fourth century. The order of the Gospels is the normal order, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. The *editio princeps* of the new discovery appeared in 1894, under the joint care of Rendel Harris, Burkitt, and the late Prof. Bensly: Mrs Lewis, to whom is due the credit of first calling attention to the MS, on a third visit transcribed or verified what had been imperfectly deciphered, and published the result in *Some pages of the Four Gospels retranscribed from the Sinaitic palimpsest*, 1896: but both these and Cureton's edition of the other MS are for practical purposes superseded by Prof. Burkitt's *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, 1904, in which for the first time the two MSS are combined, though it was unfortunate that the plan of the work demanded that the place of honour in the text should be given to the inferior MS.

Although the two MSS S and C differ on many important points—each shews marks of assimilation to the Diatessaron not shared by the other, and C has also in its ancestry some strain of an alien Greek text—they embody what is fundamentally the same recension: and this recension bears all the marks of freedom and idiomatic vernacular rendering which everywhere (and nowhere more clearly than in Syriac) distinguish earlier translations from later. And the same impression of antiquity is given by their underlying Greek text: the witnesses with whom they are most often found in company

are early witnesses, and the readings, whether they are right or wrong, are early readings. Nor is external evidence on the same side quite wanting: in spite of the all but universal predominance of the Diatessaron, one document which cannot be dated later than the end of the third century, the Acts of Judas Thomas, does use, not the Diatessaron, not the Peshitta, but the Gospel text of S and C.¹ It is probable too that occasional quotations even in Aphraates and Ephraim shew what may be called a scholar's acquaintance with the same version.

Comparison of the Diatessaron and the Old Syriac Gospels—as we are now entitled to call the text of S and C—is not a very easy matter, since of the Old Syriac our knowledge is knowledge of its text and not of its history, while conversely we know a good deal about the history and use of the Diatessaron but comparatively little about its text. Still some preliminary results emerge clearly enough. In the first place the Diatessaron and the Old Syriac are not independent of one another: there are too many points of contact between them, in what is known of their Syriac text, to be accidental. But then next, as we have seen that the Harmony must be the older and the Separate Gospels the more recent form, it follows that the Old Syriac was a fresh translation from the Separate Gospels of the Greek, influenced, not in its Greek readings but in its Syriac renderings, by the *familiar language of the Diatessaron*.

Now a third-century Syriac translator to whom Greek MSS were accessible can hardly be placed elsewhere than at Edessa. Can we point to any episode in the history of the Edessene Church which would fit in with the introduction of the new version?

It will be remembered that two names only are historically known to us in the earlier days of the Edessene community, Tatian and Bardesanes, both of them, at least in Greek or Latin estimation, reasonably suspected of heterodox leanings. It will be remembered further that the *Teaching of Addai* sends bishop Palut of Edessa a little later to obtain consecration within Roman territory from Serapion of Antioch. Add to this that St Ephraim complained (so we learn from Jacob of Edessa, a distinguished scholar of the seventh century) that the orthodox

¹ Burkitt *op. cit.* ii 101–106.

of Edessa were called in his day Palutians, disciples of bishop Palut,¹ thereby implying both that there were other Christians who were not Palutians, and that Palut was credited by them with the introduction of at least a different *nuance* of Christianity from that of the original Edessene Church. By combination of these *data* a good case seems to be made out for supposing that the consecration of Palut synchronized with a movement at Edessa in the direction of assimilation to the theology of the great churches of the empire and of a corresponding reaction against the influence of Bardesanes and Tatian. Probably this Catholic movement would not be unconnected with the visit of the Christian Abgar at the beginning of the third century to Rome, where he may well have entered into relations with pope Zephyrinus; and nothing would be more natural than that the pope should have recommended him to regularize his relations with the organized Catholic Church of the empire by obtaining consecration for the new bishop of Edessa at Antioch, the metropolis of the East.

So far the reconstruction of the picture has followed the lines of actual historical record. An element of conjecture comes in when it is suggested that it may have been part of the mission entrusted to Palut at Antioch, to supersede the Gospel of the Diatessaron by the Four Gospels of the Church.

Of Serapion, bishop of Antioch from about A. D. 190 to 210 and consecrator of Palut, almost the only fact which history has recorded is his suppression of another uncanonical Gospel, the Gospel of Peter, which he had found in use at the church of Rhodus. What more natural on the one hand, than that he should make a similar attempt to supersede the irregular scriptures in use at Edessa by the provision of a Greek MS of the Four Gospels for translation into Syriac? and what more natural on the other hand, than that the Christians of Edessa, however willing they were to accept the nearer ties which henceforward bound them to the churches of the empire, should stand out for the retention of the Gospel in the only form in which they had hitherto known it? All experience tells us how difficult it is to introduce a 'Revised Version': and if the non-success of the Old Syriac, in face of the Diatessaron, were the only objection

¹ Burkitt *Early Eastern Christianity* p. 28.

to the theory that connects its introduction with the name of Palut, it would hardly by itself be a serious one.

But there is another set of phenomena in the Old Syriac Gospels which appears to point not so much to Antioch as to Palestine. Not only are the Greek forms of Jewish proper names restored to their exact Semitic spelling—this might be due to minute knowledge of the Syriac Old Testament, which was not translated from the Greek but direct from the Hebrew—but the Greek forms of the place-names of Palestine are reconstructed on their correct Aramaic basis: while on the other hand in at least two cases, 'Bethabara' for 'Bethany' beyond Jordan in Jo. i 28, and 'Girgashites' for 'Gerasenes' in Marc. v 1, the Old Syriac agrees with Origen in readings which are the direct reflexion, through pious researches or local patriotisms, of the growing cult for the Holy Places of Palestine.¹ If it had only been a matter of the correct rendering of Greek transliterations into the underlying Aramaic, we might have been content to attribute the work to some capable scholar at Edessa: or if it had only been a case of agreement with Origen in novel identifications of sacred sites, it might have been a reasonable conjecture that the Old Syriac version was posterior to, and dependent on, Origen. But the combination of the two features for which we have to account seems to square with no other hypothesis than that the translator was personally familiar with Palestine, its language, its place-names, its local traditions.²

It cannot be proved that all this is untrue of Palut; but neither can it be shewn that it is true of him: and perhaps the most prudent conclusion is that the Old Syriac version of the Gospels came to Edessa from some part of Syria, whether northern or southern, not earlier than the early years of the third century A. D., while, if we drop Burkitt's identification of the translator with bishop Palut, any date in the first half of the century would sufficiently suit the known conditions of the problem.

The first stages, then, of the history of the Syriac New Testament are represented for us by a Gospel Harmony, constructed

¹ I reserve details on this subject for the chapter on Origen.

² See an article of Prof. Burkitt's 'Gergesa—a Reply', in the *American Journal of Biblical Literature* for 1908 (XXXVII ii pp. 128-133).

out of a Roman Greek MS of the Gospels in the third quarter of the second century, and by a subsequent edition of the separate Gospels, translated from a Syrian (Antiochene or Palestinian) text of the first half, perhaps even the first decade, of the third century. Of the Acts and Pauline Epistles, which together with the 'Gospel' made up the Canon of the *Teaching of Addai*, we have before the Peshitta no continuous text: but Aphraates' rather numerous quotations from St Paul, and Ephraim's commentary on the Pauline Epistles (though, like his Gospel commentary, it is extant only in Armenian), justify the certain conclusion that the Syriac Church in the fourth century read St Paul, as it read the Gospels, in a text which is related to the Peshitta as the original to the revision. But in Syriac, just as in Latin, it is the Gospels only which have survived from the earliest translations.

In appending to this, as to previous chapters, some discussion of readings, I have selected two as illustrating opposite poles of value: one where the true text (or what I take to be such) of the Gospel has been, in part at least, preserved in no other authority than the Old Syriac: the other, where our two MSS of the Old Syriac give different readings and both of them wrong ones.

1. Matt. i 16 (24, 25).

Nothing in the newly-discovered MS excited as much interest, at the time of its publication, as its unique reading in Matt. i 16 'Joseph . . . begat Jesus'. There were not wanting on the one side orthodox writers who pointed to it as a convincing illustration of the perils which lay in wait for those who strayed from the safe path of the traditional text, nor on the other critics who hailed the new text as a conclusive proof that primitive Christianity knew nothing of the Virgin Birth. As a matter of fact doctrinal considerations may be safely put aside. Prof. Burkitt has shewn that not only the narrative of the Nativity, Matt. i 18-25, but also the genealogy that precedes it are alike the composition of the Evangelist himself: and since the Virgin Birth is obviously of the essence of the narrative, it follows that the language of the genealogy—and therefore the phrase 'Joseph . . . begat Jesus', if it is genuine—must be interpreted in accordance with it. In other words, the descent of Christ from David through Joseph would be meant to establish a legal, rather than a natural, descent and heirship.¹

¹ Every word of Prof. Burkitt's exhaustive note, pp. 258-260, on the 'historical and dogmatic considerations' I could, with the exception of the second paragraph on p. 258, make my own.

Prof. Burkitt does not himself believe that the text of S in these words is the text of the Evangelist: but my own view is that an essential part of the true reading of the verse is preserved in S alone of all extant witnesses, and it will therefore be necessary to state the terms of the problem in some detail.

The text of Westcott and Hort in Matt. i 16, i 24 b, 25, is as follows:—*Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ ἧς ἐγενήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός . . . καὶ παρέλαβεν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτὴν ἕως [οὗ] ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν.*

Now in the first place, while it is quite certain that the Evangelist (I myself would add, his contemporaries as well) accepted absolutely the Virgin Birth, it is not at all unlikely that the simpler phraseology of the primitive age might seem to the more sensitive orthodoxy of later generations inadequate, at one point or another, to exclude misunderstanding. Indeed it is only necessary to enumerate the various readings in these verses, in order to make it quite clear that we have a *vera causa* in the meticulous desire of scribes to fence round the original narrative with explanations.

Thus in verse 24 S *k*—our best Old Syriac and best Old Latin MS—read simply ‘and he took his wife and she bare a son’. The preceding verses place the meaning of the Evangelist beyond doubt: but the Curetonian Syriac MS hesitated at ‘wife’ and substituted ‘Mary’, while *NB* and the Diatessaron, followed by the mass of MSS, Greek and Latin, disliked the near juxtaposition of *παρέλαβεν* and *ἔτεκεν*, and inserted between them the gloss *οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτὴν ἕως οὗ*.

Only we must not assume that this desire to dot the i’s and cross the t’s of orthodoxy was more prevalent in one quarter than another—in Rome and Alexandria more than in Carthage and Edessa. The same motives were operative everywhere: but they come to the surface at different points. The very authorities which left unmodified the *παρέλαβεν . . . καὶ ἔτεκεν* of verse 24, stumbled in verse 16 over the phrase *τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας*, for which the Old Syriac and Old Latin (in all its branches) with the Ferrar group, substitute something like *ᾧ μνηστευθεῖσα ἦν παρθένος Μαρίας*.

Nor is this quite all. Offence was further taken in some quarters at the apparent implications of the epithet in the phrase *ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός*. ‘He that is called Messiah’ might be a natural phrase in the mouth of Pilate (Matt. xxvii 17, 22) or of the Samaritan woman (Jo. iv 25)—just as to the man born blind He is ‘He that is named Jesus’ (Jo. ix 11)—but was barely tolerable to those for whom He ‘was’ Messiah: once the process of text-modification was at work, it became an easy matter to drop the suspect word, and the best Old

Latin MSS, *k* and *d* (D is defective), with the Curetonian Syriac, represent a text from which *λεγόμενος* was omitted.

Now having by this time acquired a very strong and clear presumption that the dominating factor of the variations experienced and likely to be experienced in this passage is the desire to guard Christian teaching against all conceivable ambiguity of statement, let us approach the remaining problem of the text of verse 16*b*, and see whether a similar difficulty may not again be solved by a similar explanation. The *data* are as follows:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς | NB, the mass of Greek MSS, the Peshitta, Ter- tullian |
| (b) Ἰακώβ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ, φ̄ Iacob genuit Iosef cui μηστειθέισα παρθένος Μαριάμ desponsata uirgo Maria ἐγέννησεν Ἰησοῦν genuit Iesum. | The Ferrar group. <i>a k (d)</i> |
| (c) Jacob begat Joseph, him to whom Iacob genuit Ioseph, cui was betrothed Mary the Virgin, desponsata erat uirgo Maria she who bare Jesus. Maria autem genuit Iesum. | Curetonian Syriac. <i>b (c)</i> |
| (d) Jacob begat Joseph, Joseph to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin begat Jesus. | Sinai Syriac. |

Here it will be noticed that the last three variations all combine against the first in giving an active verb in the second limb of the sentence, *ἐγέννησεν Ἰησοῦν*: and this agrees so much better than the passive construction, *ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς*, with the whole form of the genealogy that it is difficult not to believe in its superior originality. But if that is so, and if we accept *τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας*, as we have seen good reason for doing, we are really reduced to two alternatives only:—

- (1) Ἰακώβ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας
Μαρία δὲ [οὐ ἦτις] ἐγέννησεν Ἰησοῦν τὸν λεγόμενον Χριστόν,
and (2) Ἰακώβ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας
Ἰωσήφ δὲ ἐγέννησεν Ἰησοῦν τὸν λεγόμενον Χριστόν.

The most conclusive test that we can apply in a case like this, where

the variations are complicated, is that the readings rejected should be satisfactorily explained as alterations or corruptions of the reading accepted as original. But if (1) was original, there was really no sufficient reason for the endless vagaries of the scribes. If on the other hand (2) was original, it is surely easy to see how general the desire would soon be—as soon at any rate as the Gospel began to be copied by those to whom the Jewish law of descent was unfamiliar—to make a change at one point or another of the text. The first stumbling-block lay (as we have seen) in the words τὸν ἄνδρα: and a very early change, so early as to underlie both the earliest Syriac and the earliest Latin version, substituted for the marital term the more exact mention of betrothal and virginity. But obviously the most difficult statement of all, if literally interpreted, was the Ἰωσήφ ἐγέννησεν: and the Sinai Syriac stands alone among extant witnesses in retaining it. Possibly the translator of the Old Syriac version, a Semite himself, was less ignorant of Jewish ideas of heirship than contemporary Greeks or Latins: anyhow in all other authorities the offending phrase is modified. Ἰωσήφ as the nominative to ἐγέννησεν disappears, and the construction is mended in one of two ways. Those who had already written ‘to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin’ had only to make ‘betrothed’ a participle, and Μαρία became without further difficulty the nominative to ἐγέννησεν: the rest, who had accepted τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, might no doubt have proceeded with ἦτις ἐγέννησεν, but when change was being made at all it probably seemed more natural to avoid using the same mood of γεννάω for father and mother, and so we arrive at the ordinary reading (NB Tert., &c.) ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Χριστός.

If this reconstruction of the text and its history is correct, no one of our witnesses has preserved the original unaltered: the first part of the verse is correctly reproduced in NB and the Greek MSS, the second part in the Sinai Syriac, while in the Old Latin both parts have undergone modification. Conversely, in verse 24 the Sinai Syriac and the African Latin (S^k) are right against all the rest.

2. Luc. xiv 5 τίνος ὑμῶν υἱὸς ἢ βοῦς εἰς φρέαρ πεσεῖται, καὶ οὐκ εὐθέως ἀνασπᾶσει αὐτὸν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σαββάτου;

υἱὸς ἢ βοῦς is the reading of A B, most Greek MSS, the African and Italian families of the Old Latin (efq), the Sahidic, and St Cyril.

ὄνος ἢ βοῦς is the reading of NL 1 33, &c., the European Old Latin and the Vulgate, the Memphitic.

πρόβατον ἢ βοῦς is the reading of D, and can be dismissed at once as an assimilation to Matt. xii 11 τίς ἔσται ἐξ ὑμῶν ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐξεί πρόβατον ἐν, καὶ ἐὰν ἐμπέσῃ τοῦτο τοῖς σάββασι εἰς βόθυνον, οὐχὶ κρατῆσει

αὐτὸ καὶ ἐγερεῖ; But as it is fairly clear that *υἱός* was more likely to be altered than *ὄνος* in this connexion, the reading which lies behind D is presumably not *ὄνος* but *υἱός*, and the evidence of D really goes with the group first enumerated.

As between *υἱός* and *ὄνος* the weight of external evidence inclines to the side of *υἱός*, even without the addition of D: the combination of B and the African Latin is not easily overborne. But the interest of the variation is that 'transcriptional' and 'intrinsic' probabilities—to use Hort's convenient terms—speak when cross-questioned with so certain a voice, and prove to demonstration at least the priority of the reading *υἱός* to the reading *ὄνος*.

The argument from 'transcriptional' probability is very simple. If *ὄνος* was original, we cannot conceive any reason why scribes should have altered it into *υἱός*. If on the other hand *υἱός* was original, a reader might well be startled by the oddness of the collocation 'son or ox', and just as the scribe of D (or of its archetype) borrowed *πρόβατον* from St Matthew, so other scribes would borrow *ὄνος* from still nearer parallels, such as Luc. xiii 15 *ἕκαστος ὑμῶν τῷ σαββάτῳ οὐ λύει τὸν βοῦν αὐτοῦ ἢ τὸν ὄνον ἀπὸ τῆς φάτνης καὶ ἀπάγων ποτίζει*; or Exod. xxi 33 *ἐὰν δέ τις ἀνοίξῃ λάκκον ἢ λατομήσῃ, καὶ μὴ καλύψῃ αὐτόν, καὶ ἐμπέσῃ ἐκεῖ μῶσχος ἢ ὄνος κτλ.*

Again, as between the two alternatives, 'intrinsic' probability will also teach us that *ὄνος ἢ βοῦς* is not likely in itself to have been the author's phrase. For the order 'ass or ox' is impossible: St Luke must have written *βοῦς ἢ ὄνος*, in accordance with universal habit, with his own custom (xiii 15), and with a catena of passages in the Old Testament.¹

But to prove that St Luke did not write *ὄνος ἢ βοῦς* is not quite the same thing, of course, as proving that he did write *υἱός ἢ βοῦς*: and it may be asked whether, if the phrase *υἱός ἢ βοῦς* is so strange that scribes would naturally alter it, is not that almost the same thing as saying that St Luke would not naturally have written it? And it is quite true that we have to face here a standing difficulty of the textual critic: 'transcriptional' and 'intrinsic' probability have a way of pointing, at first sight, in opposite directions. Yet we are on safer ground in saying what are the likely vagaries of scribes than in saying what are the possible vagaries of authors. The scribe's business is

¹ Among some twenty enumerations of *ὄνοι* with other animals in O. T., there is only one instance of asses coming first, Is. xxx 6 *ἐπ' ὄνον καὶ καμήλαν*. *Μῶσχοι* are placed after *ὄνοι* once only (1 Chron. xii 40 *ἐπὶ τῶν καμήλων καὶ τῶν ὄνων καὶ τῶν ἡμίονων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μῶσχαν*), *βόες* never: *βόες* . . . *ὄνοι* Gen. xxxii 5, xxxiv 28, xlvii 17; Num. xxxi 30, 34; Tobit x 10 (R text: B omits); Is. xxxli 20. In the passage where 'ox and ass' is most familiar to ourselves, in the Tenth Commandment, the LXX of Exod. xx 17 has *βοῦς* . . . *ὑποζύγιον*.

a humbler and more mechanical one than the author's, and, while authors have each their own individuality to be reckoned with, scribes are much more of a homogeneous class and the same foibles reappear with considerable regularity. In other words, we have more right to be sure that scribes would be tempted to alter *υἱὸς ἡ βοῦς*, than we have to be sure that St Luke would not have written it.¹

The reading 'son or ox' is prior then on internal evidence to the reading 'ass or ox', and it is better supported on external evidence. But of our two Syriac MSS, the Curetonian has 'son or ox or ass', the Sinaitic 'ox or ass'. Clearly the Curetonian is a conflation: either 'ass' has been added after an original 'son or ox', or 'son' has been prefixed to an original 'ox or ass'. In the absence of any knowledge of the reading of the Diatessaron, it is natural to suppose that the alternative which has the support of the Sinaitic MS represents the Old Syriac version. If that is so, we have to do with a case where that version is two degrees removed from the earliest text: *υἱὸς ἡ βοῦς* becomes *ὄνος ἡ βοῦς*, and *ὄνος ἡ βοῦς*—perhaps in the process of translation—is turned round into the more natural order of 'ox or ass'.

C. H. TURNER.

¹ If the abbreviation of *υἱὸς* into *υῖ* was early enough in use, and if the Jews had been in the habit of keeping the domestic pig, another conjecture might be hazarded as to what the Evangelist really wrote.

[NOTE.—In support of what has been said above—cf. pp. 180, 181, 202—of the Greek relations of the Edessene church, it is worth noting that Eusebius, *H. E.* iv 30, tells us that Bardesanes, 'a man of very great ability and a most accomplished Syriac writer', published Dialogues in his own language, 'which his numerous friends translated from Syriac into Greek'.]