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DESTINATION, DATE, AND  
AUTHORSHIP  
OF THE  
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

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BY

H. H. B. AYLES, B.D.

TYRWHITT AND CROSSE SCHOLAR AND CARUS PRIZEMAN.

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## PREFACE.

WHEN Prof. Stuart selected the Epistles to the Romans and to the Hebrews as the two on which to comment, he gave as his reasons that they “appeared to be the most difficult and in some respects the most instructive and important.”

The latter statement would probably be readily accepted, but the former at first sight appears surprising.

The Epistle to the Romans is acknowledged to be most difficult on account of the sublimity of the thoughts, the intricacy of the argument, and the terseness and occasional obscurity of the language. But when we come to the Epistle to the Hebrews the case is quite altered. The argument is plain and simple, the arrangement is careful and methodical, while the language in which the thoughts are expressed is most lucid and clear. The difficulty is not so much in the book itself as in our ignorance of the period when it was written, of the author by whom it was composed, of the church to which it was addressed, and of the errors which it was intended to meet. If agreement

could be reached on these points, the difficulties of the epistle would disappear. It is therefore fortunate that the epistle itself supplies us with so much information about the views of its author and the circumstances of its readers. This essay is an attempt to utilize these materials in solving the problem of destination, date, and authorship. The view maintained is that the epistle was written by St Barnabas about A.D. 64 to the church of Jerusalem in order to counteract certain specified dangers.

It is not expected that all the arguments employed will appear equally certain to everyone. But it seems fair to ask the reader to judge the question by such facts as he is prepared to accept. The strength of the internal evidence for the authorship of St Barnabas is not weakened by the rejection of the external testimony.

The denial of the sacerdotal character of this epistle does not affect the resemblance between its doctrinal teaching and that of St James. It is possible to give another explanation of the testimony of Jerome, and yet to admit the witness of Tertullian to the state of opinion in his church at the beginning of the third century.

The same point may be urged when we consider the claims of other writers. The originality and ability shown in the epistle must be regarded, by all who recognize these characteristics, as decisive against the authorship of Clement of Rome. Those who admit its strongly marked Jewish character must agree that this is inconsistent with its composition by St Paul or by Luke.

The destination to Jerusalem has been acknowledged to be a difficulty, if the writer were St Paul, or Apollos, or Silas, or Luke. Its Alexandrian colouring, if granted, would be unfavourable to most of the writers proposed, while the author's interest in ritual and ceremonial is difficult to explain in the case of any one but St Barnabas.

This essay has not been written with the intention of unsettling generally received opinions, but rather in the hope of substituting order for chaos. Its author considers that he is returning to the original tradition of the Church, which was abandoned at a later time in favour of the authorship of St Paul.



# THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

## INTRODUCTION.

“No part<sup>1</sup> of the New Testament has occasioned so much difference of opinion, and given rise to so much literary discussion among critics, as the Epistle to the Hebrews... At an early period of the Christian era the Eastern and the Western churches were divided in opinion respecting the author and canonical authority of the epistle. In modern times, and especially of late, every topic which its literary history could suggest has been the subject of animated discussion. It has been disputed whether it is an epistle, an essay, or a homily; whether it was written by Paul, Apollos, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, or by some other person; and whether it was originally written in Hebrew or in Greek. There has also been a difference of opinion as to the place where, and the time when, it was written.” The recipients of the epistle have been sought for in Jerusalem and in Alexandria, in Thessalonica and in Corinth, in Galatia and in Rome. By some, it is supposed that the apostle was writing to warn Hebrew Christians against relapsing into Judaism; by others, that he was urging Gentile Christians not to return to their former

<sup>1</sup> Stuart, *Introd. to the Epistle.*

heathen vices. In the case of most of the books of the New Testament the points still in dispute are of secondary importance or only concern individual passages, but in this case they are of fundamental importance for any intelligent reading of the epistle. This fact would of itself be a sufficient reason for endeavouring to determine at least some of these questions. Another and a stronger reason is the consideration that the epistle itself supplies us with such ample materials on which to base our conclusion. It is the aim of this essay to show that the facts do really enable us to come to a definite conclusion on all the most important points. The only question to which no decided answer can be given is that of the place from which the epistle was written<sup>1</sup>, but fortunately our uncertainty on this point makes little difference to us in understanding the book.

<sup>1</sup> Of the various conjectures, the most plausible is that of Hofmann (*Die heilige Schrift, N. T.* IX. 150) that the epistle was written at Brundisium, which would be a convenient stopping place between Rome and the East. Timothy also would probably pass there on his way from Rome to Jerusalem. The conjecture can neither be verified nor disproved; but appears worthy of notice.

## THE FORM OF THE BOOK.

It has been asserted by more than one critic in recent times that the so-called Epistle to the Hebrews is in reality no epistle at all, but rather a literary dissertation on some points of special importance in relation to the connection of the Old and the New Covenant and other kindred topics. If this were true the book would not be addressed to any particular community and we should lose some weighty considerations for determining its authorship. Thus it can scarcely be said<sup>1</sup>, "The whole question is but little if anything better than logomachy. Of what consequence can it be, whether the so-called epistle to the Hebrews, was... designed to be an epistle or a homily?" We may answer that in itself the question is of no consequence at all, but it becomes important because it bears on two other questions—the authorship and the destination of the epistle—which require to be answered before we can attain to the full comprehension of the book.

The arguments used to show that this writing is a dissertation rather than an epistle are the facts that it "does not exhibit, either in the beginning of it or elsewhere, any express evidence of having been addressed to any particular church, nor any designation of the author's name": and again that it "is a regular series of reasoning, a connected

<sup>1</sup> Stuart, *Epistle to the Hebrews*.

chain of discourse," after the style of a dissertation "and not after the manner of a familiar letter."

Berger<sup>1</sup>, who has discussed the matter with much thoroughness, considers that the basis of our present epistle was the address of St Paul to the church of Antioch in Pisidia, and that this was commented on by some friend or disciple and gradually expanded into the book before us. This opinion may appear to derive some support from the language of one of the greatest commentators<sup>2</sup> on the epistle but is really quite untenable.

It is true that the epistle has no superscription nor address to its readers<sup>3</sup>, but begins immediately with the subject-matter of the Divine revelation without any introduction or circumlocution. This is a peculiarity which it shares with the First Epistle of St John, and is, as we shall see later, by no means the only point of resemblance between the two writings. But if our epistle has no address at its commencement, it has certainly salutations at its close. To get rid of its epistolary form it would be necessary not only

<sup>1</sup> He is quoted *in extenso* by Stuart, p. 3 f. Ebrard (in Olshausen's *Bibl. Comm.*) adopts a modification of this view. He considers that the so-called epistle was accompanied by a short letter and is not itself an epistle in the strictest sense. In his opinion the absence of any greeting cannot be otherwise explained. But in this case the writer could also have dispensed with any salutations at the close.

<sup>2</sup> Origen, quoted in Eus. *H. E.* vi. 25, ἐγὼ δὲ ἀποφαινόμενος εἶποίμ' ἂν ὅτι τὰ μὲν νοήματα τοῦ ἀποστόλου ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ φράσις καὶ ἡ σύνθεσις ἀπομνημονεύσαντός τινος τὰ ἀποστολικά, καὶ ὡσπερὲι σχολιογραφήσαντός τινος τὰ εἰρημένα ὑπὸ τοῦ διδασκάλου.

<sup>3</sup> A list of explanations proposed is given in Strack und Zöckler, iv. 145. De Wette (p. 125) ascribes this to want of skill on the part of the writer, and takes a very unfavourable view of the general arrangement of the book. It will be shown later how far these strictures are from being justified.

to make the last four verses a later addition<sup>1</sup>, but also to deny the authenticity of the greater part of the thirteenth chapter. Such assumptions as these could only be justified by necessity, and in this case may be dismissed as being plainly insufficient to save the hypothesis. For the hortatory sections of the Epistle to the Hebrews are not collected together at the end, as they are in the Epistle to the Romans, but are scattered throughout the book, and are to be met with in almost every chapter<sup>2</sup>. Nor does the logical and argumentative form of the treatise militate against its being an epistle. It is a sufficient answer to the objection that the argument is not more sustained, nor is the reasoning closer in the Epistle to the Hebrews than it is in the Epistle to the Romans, which is acknowledged by all to be a letter addressed to a particular church. Whatever difficulties we meet with in other parts of our problem, we need not hesitate to believe that our treatise is really an epistle, and that it has come to us in the form in which it was published by its author.

<sup>1</sup> On the ground that the original treatise ended with ἀμήν in xiii. 21.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 1—3; iii. 7—12; iv. 11—13; v. 11—14; vi. 4—6, etc.

## DESTINATION.

The settlement of the destination of the epistle depends mainly on the question of the nationality of the readers for whom it was intended. But this is unfortunately one of the points on which no general agreement has yet been reached.

The title of the epistle itself states that it was addressed to Hebrew Christians; and there is no suggestion that it was ever published without any title at all, or with a different title to that which it at present bears<sup>1</sup>. And this destination is supported both by the unanimous consent of antiquity and also by the internal evidence furnished by the epistle itself<sup>2</sup>.

But in recent times the opinion has been stated and ably maintained that this writing was not addressed to readers who by birth were Jews: and still less to a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles (for there are no traces in the epistle of any conflicts between the two parties): but

<sup>1</sup> Zahn in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, Article, Hebräerbrief. Zahn's remark is however no longer true: for Weizsäcker asserts (*Apostolic Age*, II. 157), "It hardly requires proof that the inscription 'To the Hebrews' is only the unhappy conjecture of a later time."

<sup>2</sup> Westcott, *Introd. to the Ep.*, p. 41. Müller, *Barnabas Brief* (p. 13), points out that the author always warns his readers of the danger of relapsing into Judaism and never of the danger of becoming proselytes. He contrasts Gal. v. 2, 3.

rather to a church which was of Gentile origin, or where an overpowering majority had once been heathen.

The arguments by which this opinion is defended have been ably stated by Von Soden<sup>1</sup>, and are worthy of careful consideration. (a) Such phrases as ἐκουσίως ἁμαρτάνειν, σκληρύνεσθαι...ἀπάτη τῆς ἁμαρτίας, πειράζειν τὸν θεόν, μιάνεσθαι refer rather to heathen pollutions than to Judaizing practices. (b) The comparison with Israel in the Wilderness is to warn the readers lest they should imitate them in falling into idolatry. (c) The author warns them that they were in danger of forgetting the rudiments of their Christian teaching. But the elementary doctrines mentioned are precisely those common to Christianity and Judaism, and so would not be endangered by a relapse into the latter faith. To converts from heathenism, on the other hand, they would be entirely new. (d) It could scarcely be said that Judaizers were in danger of apostatizing from the living God, for the God of Jews and Christians was one and the same.

These arguments are weighty, but they are by no means decisive. It is a somewhat startling opinion that the author would not have needed to warn Jewish readers against the sin of impurity. It might rather be supposed that such warnings afford no clue to the nationality of the readers, and that the Jews seem to have needed them as well as their neighbours. The reference in the third chapter may well be aimed quite generally at the disobedience of the Israelites to God, and if so, the punishment inflicted on the generation who fell in the Wilderness would be a most suitable warning for their countrymen and descendants. The doctrines mentioned in the sixth chapter are only to a certain extent common to Judaism and Christianity, and had all of them a new force and a new meaning for those who believed in the

<sup>1</sup> *Handkommentar zum N. T.* III. 2, pp. 11—14.

Incarnation of Christ and in the Mission of the Holy Ghost. The new faith was the continuation and the completion of the old, and yet was so different from its forerunner that Judaism and Christianity are distinct religions. The two baptisms about which the readers were taught were so far from being one and the same, that he who had received the earlier and preliminary rite was yet called upon to undergo the other also. The laying on of hands was a distinctively Christian ordinance, of which all similar ceremonies were merely symbols and types. The doctrines of the resurrection of the dead and the judgement to come were subjects on which the Jews themselves were divided. The whole question of our continued existence after death was a disputed point, and only became a doctrine to be confidently taught after the Resurrection of Christ. Indeed of the six doctrines enumerated, the only one common to Judaism and Christianity was the first—the repentance from dead works. Even this has been denied, and the ἔργα νεκρὰ have been explained to be the requirements of the Levitical Law<sup>1</sup>; an explanation which would be quite satisfactory if we could conceive that the works of the Law defiled the conscience<sup>2</sup> and required to be repented of. As it is, we must admit that one and only one of the fundamental doctrines enumerated would still be accepted without hesitation by a Jew who apostatized from Christianity.

At first sight the final argument of Von Soden appears much stronger; for a Jewish apostate from Christianity would still retain his belief in the one true God. Yet the language of this epistle is no stronger than that of the First Epistle of St John<sup>3</sup>, πᾶς ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν υἱὸν οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα ἔχει. The similarity of idea constitutes another point of resemblance between the two writings, and at the

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *ad loc.*

<sup>2</sup> Heb. ix. 14.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John ii. 22.

same time prevents us from concluding that the warning in the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to Gentile Christians. In short, it would seem fair to assert that no arguments have been adduced which point decidedly to Gentile readers<sup>1</sup>, and that the reasons for supposing that the epistle was intended for Jewish Christians have never been seriously assailed.

But this conclusion only helps us a little, for the Jews at this time were scattered all over the world; and we have still to determine to what particular Jewish community the epistle was addressed. Some indeed have supposed that our epistle is really a catholic epistle, addressed to Hebrew Christians everywhere<sup>2</sup>. In this case, the salutations at the end of the epistle must be accounted a later forgery<sup>3</sup>, for in these the author not only greets his readers himself but sends salutations to them from Italian friends. He solicits their prayers; he urges them to obey their spiritual guides; he hopes to revisit them shortly. Even if we reject these concluding verses the impression still remains that the epistle was addressed to a particular church. For it is hardly conceivable that all the details of this epistle would apply to Jewish Christians everywhere; and indeed Hort asserts emphatically<sup>4</sup> that "it seems to be morally impossible that the circumstances of the Jewish Christians addressed were the circumstances of any part of the Dispersion."

Nor can we suppose that the letter was addressed to the Jewish portion of a mixed or Gentile church. Grimm<sup>5</sup> points out that every address in the epistle—whether of

<sup>1</sup> So De Wette (p. 122): "There is scarcely any reference to Gentile Christians."

<sup>2</sup> Schwegler, *Nachap. Zeitalter*, II. 304.

<sup>3</sup> *op. cit.* pp. 304, 312.

<sup>4</sup> *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 156.

<sup>5</sup> *Zeitschrift f. wissensch. Theol.*, 1870, p. 33.

instruction or of warning, whether of praise or of blame—is directed equally to all<sup>1</sup>, that the author never distinguishes between obedient and disobedient, between strong and weak, between Jews and Gentiles. There is no hint of divisions or parties in the church, no suggestion of the friction which seems always to have been an incident of a mixed community. In some respects the church seems to have been strong and in others to have been weak, but in everything it was united.

But if the epistle was addressed to a particular church composed entirely of Hebrew Christians, then this church can only be the church of Jerusalem. This destination of the epistle is supported by the unanimous consent of antiquity, for in early times no other church was even suggested. It has indeed been supposed<sup>2</sup> that our epistle is the one described in the Muratorian Fragment as ‘*Epistola ad Alexandrinos*’; but the account given of that epistle<sup>3</sup> shows clearly that the supposition is impossible. Others<sup>4</sup> again have identified the Epistle to the Hebrews with the Epistle to the Laodiceans; but the idea is late and conjectural<sup>5</sup>. There was practically no doubt as to the destination of the epistle till we come to the eighteenth century.

Such a consensus of opinion must be allowed its full weight, and it is supported by the internal evidence of the

<sup>1</sup> Ebrard disputes this conclusion. He argues from iii. 6, v. 12, that the epistle was not intended for a whole church but for a narrowly determined circle of readers.

<sup>2</sup> Credner-Volkmar, *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> “Pauli nomine ficta ad haeresem Marcionis.”

<sup>4</sup> Philastrius, *Haer.* 89: “Aiunt epistolam etiam ad Laodicenses scriptam.”

<sup>5</sup> Hofmann, however (*Die heilige Schrift, N. T.* v. 42; IX. 142, 143, 145), is inclined to believe that this is the name given to the epistle in the Muratorian Fragment.

epistle. For here we find the Temple and its ritual and its services overshadowing everything. The contrast drawn is between the Temple and the *ἐπισυναγωγή* of Christians, not between the Jewish and the Christian *συναγωγή*, as it would have been if the epistle had been addressed to a church in the Dispersion, and as is actually the case in the apocalyptic Epistle to the church of Smyrna<sup>1</sup>. Only at Jerusalem and at Leontopolis were there Jewish temples at all, and even Alexandrian Jews, when they spoke of the Temple, always meant the one at Jerusalem. Their own building could never have exercised the same influence over their own minds or possessed the same fascination for others that the older sanctuary did<sup>2</sup>. But to the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Temple represented their sacred religion and their national glory; it was alike their solace, their occupation, and their pride<sup>3</sup>. It was the building they were eager to point out to strangers. It reminded them of former victories and of ancient glory at a time when all these things had departed from them. It assured them of God's continued presence and promised protection. The early Christians of Jerusalem never for a moment dreamed of ceasing to attend the Temple services, and it must have been a constant temptation to them to desert their humble assemblies in favour of the more elaborate ritual to which they were accustomed. If we suppose that the epistle was addressed to Jerusalem it is easy to understand its occasion and object, but if we assume that it was sent to some church outside Palestine it is difficult to understand either.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> This is well and forcibly put by Lünemann, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> This is well brought out by Hug, *Einleitung in die Schriften des N. T.* pp. 454, 455.

It is sometimes urged as an objection to this destination of the epistle that it is written in Greek and not in Aramaic<sup>1</sup>. In reality the objection has no particular force, for Greek would naturally be chosen as the language of the epistle, both for the convenience of the readers and also for the convenience of the writer.

It may be accepted as an established fact that in Palestine at this time Greek was understood by everyone except the most illiterate<sup>2</sup>. Many causes had contributed to bring this about. Jerusalem had been largely Hellenized by the efforts of Herod the Great<sup>3</sup>, and the Roman rule must have increased the foreign element. In addition to this many foreign Jews had taken up their residence in Jerusalem for the sake of business or religion. The result was that even in the capital itself, while most people could speak Greek, many Jewish Christians did not understand Aramaic. Outside the capital the Greek element was even stronger, for the Hebrew region was narrowly shut in by a Greek region, where Greek was the only means of communication<sup>4</sup>. To these Hellenistic Jews an Aramaic epistle would have been written in an unknown tongue, and the first reason for writing it in Greek was that all in the church might be able to read it for themselves<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Pfeiderer, *Urchristenthum*, p. 623, "An epistle which has not been translated from Hebrew but is originally Greek and is written in good idiomatic Greek, cannot have been written to the Aramaic-speaking community of Jerusalem."

<sup>2</sup> This is clearly proved by Roberts: *Greek the language of Christ and His Apostles*. See especially pp. 145 to 303.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* xv. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Schurer, *Hist. of the Jewish people in the time of Jesus Christ*, Div. 2, Vol. 3, pp. 1—29 and 51—149.

<sup>5</sup> There is no need of the further conjecture that the epistle was

This of itself would be a sufficient reason for the language of the epistle. But another reason, which must have had equal weight with the author, was that Greek was his native language, in which he read his Bible<sup>1</sup> and ordinarily wrote to his friends. It is possible that he could have written his epistle in Aramaic, and that, if it had been necessary, he would have done so: just as St John wrote the Apocalypse in Greek, although at that time Greek composition was still a great difficulty to him. But the Greek of the Apocalypse shows us that this epistle would have been very inferior to what it is now, if it had been written in Aramaic. Even if the unfamiliar language had not cramped the author's thoughts, his work would have lost all the literary charm which forms one of its great attractions. If Hebrew and Greek were equally well understood by all his readers, our author would naturally prefer the latter.

It has sometimes been brought as an objection against the destination of the epistle to Jerusalem, that there is no reference in it to the Temple or its services, but only to the "ideal representation of the Tabernacle and its worship<sup>2</sup>." If the writer were indeed merely warning his readers against the danger of allowing their minds to be so dominated by the memory of the far-distant past that they neglected their duties in the present, then those readers might well be sought in Rome or in Alexandria, in Galatia or in Greece—anywhere rather than in Jerusalem. If the reference were only to the Tabernacle, which had ceased to exist centuries before, and there were no reference of any kind to the Temple and its services, which had so long influenced the

principally intended for the Hellenistic members of the Church of Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> This point is discussed later. Here we may refer to Bleek, p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> Brückner, *Die Reihenfolge der N. T. Bücher*, p. 243.

religion of Israel, Von Soden<sup>1</sup> would be quite justified in insisting that the epistle must have been written after the Fall of Jerusalem, at a time when Tabernacle and Temple were alike things of the past.

But in reality the objection is altogether mistaken. In order to sustain it, it is necessary to maintain that the services against the fascination of which the author warns his readers were those carried on at the Tabernacle. If it is granted that the services referred to were those performed at the Temple, then Kay's conclusion follows at once: "The whole tenor of the epistle implies that the persons, to whom it was written, lived under the shadow of the Temple services." But it is scarcely possible to deny the fact that in several passages in the epistle (viii. 4 f.; ix. 6, 8, 9; x. 1 f.; xiii. 10 f.) the existing Temple system was present to the mind of the author<sup>2</sup>. It makes him a monster of ignorance to represent him as stating that the Tabernacle was still in existence and that its services were still going on.

If any difficulty is felt in the fact that in this epistle the word *σκηνη* is general enough to allow of reference both to Tabernacle and to Temple, an explanation may be sought in ix. 2—9 where in the course of a few verses the thoughts of the author pass from the one to the other. In verse 2 the reference is simply to the former Tabernacle, but it is impossible to make such an assertion with regard to verses 8, 9. This passage suggests the true explanation—which is in any case sufficiently obvious—that the author regarded the Temple and its worship rather as a continuation of the old worship carried on at the Tabernacle than as a new departure. In this way the same terms applied equally well

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. to Heb.* quoted by Brückner.

<sup>2</sup> Westcott, *Ep. to Heb.* p. 250.

to both<sup>1</sup>. He was compelled by the argument of his epistle to refer to the Tabernacle, for this was an exact pattern of the heavenly sanctuary, which the Temple was not. But the reference in the epistle is also "to the Temple service<sup>2</sup> which was still in existence and indeed was being carried on before their eyes." The earnestness of the author assures us that he is not warning his readers against indulging in useless memories but against yielding to present temptation. In the words of Hilgenfeld<sup>3</sup>: "He is not aiming his blows at the air but is attacking the priesthood (das Priesterthum) of the Temple at Jerusalem, which still existed in full power and activity." Westcott<sup>4</sup> emphasizes the same reference: "The prospect of exclusion from the privileges of the old service is the very essence of the trial of the Hebrews, and the severity of the trial is in itself a decisive proof of the influence which the Temple ritual exercised at the time." Ebrard<sup>5</sup> brings out the same point with equal clearness: "The contents of the epistle, as a whole and in detail, are directed to the one practical aim, to convince the readers that it is no misfortune and no danger to their souls' health, to be excluded from the Temple and the Temple service.... But this practical danger could only exist in this way with such Jewish Christians as lived in Jerusalem itself...Where there was no Temple the exclusion from the Temple could not have been practically appreciable. To be excluded from a local synagogue could not of itself be regarded as a mis-

<sup>1</sup> For parallel instances in the O. T. cp. Ezra vi. 22, Judith ii. 1. Accordingly Westcott on Heb. xiii. 10 uses the words "Temple" and "Tabernacle" alternately.

<sup>2</sup> De Wette on *Ep. to Heb.* p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> *Einleit. in das N. T.* p. 380.

<sup>4</sup> *Introd. to Ep.* p. xlii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ep. to Heb.* p. 411.

fortune, since the constitution of synagogues was entirely a matter of freedom.”

The force of these quotations is not diminished by any uncertainty about the exact way in which the Temple and its services exerted an influence over the minds of the Hebrew Christians addressed, or by the fact that it is extremely doubtful whether the question of excluding them had yet arisen. These are matters of detail which do not affect the question of the destination of the epistle. Whether we imagine that the readers addressed were so delighted with the Temple services that they neglected their own assemblies, or suppose that they were so grieved by exclusion that they were driven to the verge of apostasy, is of no importance in this connection. Either supposition fully recognizes the fascination which these services exercised over their minds.

Nor do most of the other objections to the commonly received address of the epistle seem of much greater weight. It is an assumption which cannot be proved that the elevated doctrine of the epistle on the nature and person of Christ shows that the author was not writing to Jerusalem<sup>1</sup> but to a “community in which higher and more speculative Christology was current than in Palestine.” The severe censure of the readers as ignorant and in need of elementary instruction is not necessarily inconsistent<sup>2</sup> with the supposition that they had been presided over for years by James, the Lord’s brother, and that their ordinary teachers were apostles. It is quite true<sup>3</sup> that few of the persons whose

<sup>1</sup> Köstlin, *Theol. Jahrb.* 1854, p. 383.

<sup>2</sup> Grimm, *Zeitschr. f. wiss. Theol.* 1870.

<sup>3</sup> De Wette, p. 123. “The weightiest objection is that a Paulinist like the author and his friend Timotheus could scarcely have stood in so friendly a relation to a Palestinian church.”

names have been proposed for the authorship of the epistle were in intimate relations with the church of Jerusalem, but this only helps to exclude their claims. The fact that the readers are spoken of as not having heard our Lord themselves but as having been taught about Him by those who had, bears rather on the date than on the destination of the epistle. If it were written between A.D. 60 and 70—and a fairly late date is probable on other grounds—this description would suit the church of Jerusalem as well as any other. It is a stronger objection that in vi. 10 the readers are spoken of as helping others, whereas the church of Jerusalem received help itself. At the same time the description would exactly suit the church of Jerusalem, for no other church has ever shown such wonderful generosity in caring for poorer members of the community (*τοῖς ἀγίοις*). If it were true that the epistle contains no reference to our Lord's life and death in the very place to which it was written, this would be one of the many reservations of the author, and would belong to the same category as the omission of any mention of the murder of Stephen and the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles. But the assertion would seem to be a mistake, for the epistle reminds its readers of our Lord's life and ministry among them<sup>1</sup>, of His shameful death outside the gate<sup>2</sup>, and of His resurrection the third day<sup>3</sup>. Our knowledge of the history of the Jews teaches us that warnings against impurity and breach of the marriage vow were as necessary and as salutary for them as for other people. If it were true that no tradition as to the author existed in Palestine and Syria, the objection would have a certain amount of force, though it would not necessarily be fatal. It would apply equally to the destination to Greece, to Rome, and—for those who do not accept the

<sup>1</sup> ii. 3.<sup>2</sup> xiii. 12.<sup>3</sup> xiii. 20.

Pauline authorship—to Alexandria also. But the assertion does not seem to be correct. There appears to have been a strong tradition in the Syrian church as to the authorship of the epistle, and some critics even assert that it originated there, and thence spread to other churches.

It has been objected<sup>1</sup> that the phrase οἱ ἡγούμενοι ὑμῶν is too indefinite to apply to the leaders of the church of Jerusalem. It is however quite uncertain to whom the government of the church was entrusted on the death of St James.

We have kept the strongest objection till last. In xii. 4, 5, it is said οὐπω μέχρις αἵματος ἀντικατέστητε πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι· καὶ ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως κ.τ.λ., and it is urged that this language does not suit the church of Jerusalem, which had sealed its testimony by the blood of Stephen, and of James, and possibly of others. We cannot ascribe this to ignorance or forgetfulness on the part of our author, for his letter shows<sup>2</sup> that he had the martyrdom of St Stephen in his mind, and that his friend's dying words were ringing in his ears when he wrote. The fact is that though the incident is not actually mentioned, it gave point to his warning and added force to his rebuke. He was writing to urge the Hebrew Christians at Jerusalem to stand firm during a persecution from their Jewish brethren, and he was naturally reminded of the former persecution, when he had seen his two early friends fall in the front of the battle. He could not believe that the very next generation would beat an inglorious retreat (ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑποστολής) when the conflict had only just begun. It was natural that the author should think of St Stephen in writing such a letter, and we may add that it was equally natural that he should not refer to his murder in so many

<sup>1</sup> Strack und Zöckler, iv. 149.

<sup>2</sup> As we shall see presently.

words. The epistle was intended for Judaizers, for men whose chief danger was their excessive fondness for the Temple, and its services, and its ritual. There is no reason to suppose that they sympathized with the cruel murder of St Stephen ; but there is equally no cause to think that they cherished any great affection for his person, or any excessive attachment to his memory. An author of the present day would probably hesitate before holding up Luther as an example to Romanists, or Colenso to orthodox Anglicans, or Pusey to rigid Evangelicals, or Laud to Protestant Dissenters. Nor was it only the fear of giving offence that might urge our author to be silent. He was writing an epistle of comfort and consolation to support and encourage the Hebrew Christians at a time when all they most valued seemed in danger of being destroyed. It was just such a crisis as that which moved Augustine to write his treatise on the City of God. Accordingly our author carefully avoided all that might disturb or annoy his readers, and not only omitted any mention of the murder of St Stephen, but even any reference to a doctrine, which was for him of primary importance—the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles.

The strength of the case in favour of assigning the destination of the epistle to the church of Jerusalem becomes still more evident, if we consider the great and indeed the insuperable difficulties which we encounter, when we advocate any other destination. If we suppose that the epistle is addressed to a neighbouring church in Palestine, many of the arguments in favour of its destination to Jerusalem are still equally applicable. But unfortunately we are forced to reject both of the names proposed on other grounds. Grimm<sup>1</sup> suggests Jamnia. He considers that it was

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschr. für wiss. Theol.* 1870.

sufficiently near Jerusalem to be dominated by the Temple and its services, and instances the way in which the Temple at Leontopolis served for the citizens of Alexandria. It is an objection to Jamnia that we have no mention of a church there till after the Fall of Jerusalem. Grimm only partly meets this by his contention that it is unlikely a town so near the capital would remain long unevangelized. It is a greater difficulty that any church founded at Jamnia would have been a mixed one, for at Jamnia there was a large and active Gentile population, who began the disturbance in the reign of Caligula by putting up a statue to the emperor.

Stuart, with apparently greater probability, decides for the church of Caesarea. This was the home of Cornelius and a place where Christianity had been accepted from the earliest times. The account in the Acts shows us that the church was strong and flourishing, and St Paul's residence there for two years must have helped it still more. Caesarea was only two days' journey from Jerusalem, and was in direct and constant communication with the capital. The Jews of Caesarea were rich and powerful, and zealous for the law of their fathers, and indeed were the first to begin the struggle with Rome. But here again we are met with the difficulty that a church at Caesarea could scarcely have been exclusively Jewish; for both the character of the town and also the fact that the first converts were Gentiles render such a supposition unlikely. Stuart himself is driven by these difficulties to conjecture<sup>1</sup> that the epistle is not addressed to the whole church of Caesarea, but only to the Jews there, who were such uncommon zealots for the Law that they had established a religious community of their own, separate from that of the Gentile Christians. There is little need to discuss at any length such a theory as this.

<sup>1</sup> Page 62.

It introduces the views of the Tübingen school at a time when they are generally being abandoned. It supposes that the epistle is addressed to a section of a church, a suggestion which at the present day is rightly regarded as impossible.

It might seem that the foregoing arguments would confine our attention to Palestine in looking for the church addressed, and would force us to accept the conclusion of Hort<sup>1</sup> that "it seems to be morally impossible that the circumstances of the Jewish Christians addressed were the circumstances of any part of the Dispersion."

If, however, we are to go outside Palestine for the church addressed, the name which would first suggest itself to us is that of Alexandria. For Alexandria was the second metropolis of Judaism, where the Jews were more numerous and more influential than in any other city, where was the only Jewish Temple outside Jerusalem, and where we find the earliest, the most intimate, the most continuous knowledge of the epistle. Finally, the epistle was evidently written by a member of the church addressed, and there is good reason for supposing that the author was an Alexandrian Jew.

But strong as these arguments are, the objections are stronger still and are indeed fatal. In spite of the able advocacy of Wieseler<sup>2</sup>, it is impossible to believe that the Temple referred to in the epistle is that of Leontopolis. It is strange that the church of Alexandria had remained exclusively Jewish and that no Gentiles had been brought in, and such a supposition becomes still more unlikely when we find a short time after that the Alexandrian church has

<sup>1</sup> *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Untersuchung über d. Hebräerbrief: sein Verfasser und seine Leser.* Part II.

become overwhelmingly Gentile. It is equally surprising that, though the Epistle to the Hebrews was known at Alexandria from the very first, no one had any idea that this was its original address. Köstlin<sup>1</sup> is driven to meet these last two difficulties by the violent assumption that the Alexandrian church was at first exclusively Jewish, that this community died out, and was succeeded in course of time by a church overwhelmingly Gentile, and that the latter church had no knowledge that our epistle had been addressed to the former. It appears to us improbable that the persecution referred to in the epistle, was not a persecution of Christians by Jews, which would not have been permitted at Alexandria, but rather the plunder<sup>2</sup> and robbery of the Jews by the Roman governor Flaccus<sup>3</sup>.

It is an equal difficulty that this epistle is addressed to a united church, whereas the Jews and Gentiles at Alexandria were on terms of bitter enmity. Finally, the error attacked in the epistle is not characteristic of Alexandrian Judaism, but is a tendency of a totally different kind.

Hofmann<sup>4</sup> realizes that this epistle is directed to an entire church and not to a section of a church. He admits that any church outside Palestine would probably be mixed and include Gentiles as well as Jews. But he considers that this difficulty is avoided by the supposition that the epistle was addressed to the church of Antioch. For at Antioch Jewish and Gentile Christians did not mingle together as they did elsewhere, but kept their agapae apart. We learn from Gal. ii. 12 that this was the practice when St Paul and St Peter met there. Nor was this an isolated

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Jahrb.* 1854.

<sup>2</sup> τὴν ἀρπαγὴν τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ἡμῶν.

<sup>3</sup> A vivid account is given by Philo, *In Flaccum*.

<sup>4</sup> *Die heilige Schrift, N. T.* IX. 167 f.

instance. The custom was continued and at a later date we find the Nazarenes of this district still holding their assemblies by themselves. Accordingly we are told that the apostles, in Acts xv. 23, addressed the Gentile community only, while in this epistle St Paul<sup>1</sup> refers exclusively to the Jewish section of the church. The liberality which the Christians of Antioch<sup>2</sup> practised towards the poor saints of Jerusalem<sup>3</sup> is mentioned in this epistle to them. A more decisive argument is the fact that in no other church, except that of Jerusalem, is such an isolation of Jewish Christians conceivable.

This account of the destination of the epistle is very ingenious, but it can only be accepted by those who believe that such a complete separation of Jewish and Gentile Christians was a distinguishing feature of the church of Antioch. If this were not the case, then Hofmann's arguments are conclusive against his own theory.

Theories of destination which are based mainly on the resemblances between this epistle and the epistles of St Paul to Thessalonica, to Corinth, and to Galatia, or to the First Epistle of St Peter, do not require to be discussed at any length<sup>4</sup>. To a great extent, the resemblances help to establish unity of authorship rather than unity of destination, and the remaining arguments rather tend to cancel one another. Nor must the argument from unlikeness be overlooked. It would require some proof that the composition and the circumstances of the churches of Corinth and of Thessalonica, of Galatia and of Asia were those described in our epistle. It appears to us inconceivable that the

<sup>1</sup> Hofmann accepts the Pauline authorship of the epistle.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xi. 29, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. vi. 10.

<sup>4</sup> The point is carefully investigated by Stuart.

Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle to the Galatians were written at the same time by the same man to different sections of the same church.

We should pass over with equal brevity the view which supposes that the epistle was addressed to the church of Rome, but for the fact that this is at present the popular theory. If the letter were intended for heathen readers, Rome would be of all places the most suitable destination. Even if it is addressed to Jews, it is quite conceivable that St Paul might wish to conciliate them before beginning his western tour. The salutation from friends in Italy may fairly be taken to show some connection between the readers and Rome, and the mention of *φιλοξενία* would be most suitable for the church in the world's capital. Nor can the existence of a strong Jewish element in the Roman church be rightly denied. In Rom. ii. 17, the readers are directly addressed as Jews, and the same fact is tacitly assumed in the following chapter<sup>1</sup>. In iv. 1, Abraham is spoken of as "our father according to the flesh," and chapter vii. is evidently addressed to those who had once been subject to the Jewish law. The "weak" party in the church were almost certainly Jews, and the discussion in chapters ix.—xi. leads to conclusions of the greatest improbability, if we suppose that it is addressed to Gentiles. Indeed Holsten<sup>2</sup> has shown that the connection of thought in the Epistle to the Romans can only be properly understood if we consider that there is a constant underlying reference to Jewish feelings and prejudices.

So far there has been no difficulty in supposing that the readers of the Epistle to the Hebrews are to be sought in Rome. But the next fact that meets us is that the Gentile element in the Roman church is no less strongly marked

<sup>1</sup> iii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Der Gedankengang des Römerbriefs.*

than the Jewish. St Paul distinctly bases his apostolic connection with his readers on the ground that they were Gentiles, and indeed in consideration of St Paul's limitation of his office, we do not see how otherwise he could have exercised authority over them at all. In chapter xi. he distinctly addresses them as Gentiles, and throughout these Jewish chapters he connects the Jews with himself and not with his readers. It may be possible to explain the later Gentile composition of the Roman church as due to the apostle's personal ministry and influence<sup>1</sup>, but even at the time when the epistle was written the names of those saluted are largely Gentile. The difficulty as to the nationality of the readers of the two epistles might be met, if we supposed that those addressed in the Epistle to the Hebrews were Gentiles with Jewish tendencies<sup>2</sup>, while the Roman church was composed of proselytes<sup>3</sup> to Judaism. But neither supposition is probable. If the so-called Epistle to the Hebrews were really written to Gentiles, an author of Pauline tendencies would scarcely have limited the effects of the Incarnation so far as to connect it with the *σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ*, or have carefully avoided all mention of the extension of the gospel to the whole world. In the case of the Epistle to the Romans, Mangold points out that there is no hint in it from one end to the other that the readers had once been proselytes. It would besides be surprising to find a church composed entirely of that one class, and the difficulty is scarcely removed by Beyschlag's ingenious theory that all Jewish Christians had been banished by Claudius and not permitted to return, so that the Gentile proselytes alone remained.

<sup>1</sup> Mangold, *Römerbrief*.

<sup>2</sup> Schürer, *Stud. und Krit.* 1866, p. 766.

<sup>3</sup> Beyschlag, *Das geschichtliche Problem des Römerbriefs*.

We are therefore forced to conclude that while the Epistle to the Hebrews deals with a homogeneous church, the Christian community at Rome was composed of two distinct sections—Jews and Gentiles. In accordance with this, we find St Paul constantly turning from one to the other and keeping both in his mind all the way through.

If chapter i. is principally addressed to Gentiles, chapter ii. is directly addressed to Jews. If in the first verse of the fourth chapter, Abraham is claimed as the father of the Jews, in the tenth verse it is shown that he is the father of the Gentiles also. If chapters ix. and x. are principally devoted to Jewish feelings and prejudices, chapter xi. is devoted to the hopes and aims of the Gentiles.

In such a mixed community as this, a certain amount of friction might be expected and was indeed unavoidable. It was one aim of St Paul's letter to remove this as far as possible and to promote peace and harmony between the two parties. When it is stated that this formed one aim and object of St Paul, of course it is not meant that it was the only or even the principal aim. "A man<sup>1</sup> of St Paul's ability, sitting down to write a letter on matters of weight, would be likely to have several influences present to his mind at once, and his language would be moulded now by one and now by another." There were doubtless other reasons why St Paul wrote to the Roman church, but certainly this was one. "His object<sup>2</sup> was on the one hand to check the free-thinking Gentiles from self-exaltation in relation to their weaker Jewish brethren in the faith; and on the other hand to remind the Jewish Christians that the admission of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God was no

<sup>1</sup> Sanday and Headlam, *Ep. to Romans*, p. xl.  
Neander, *Planting of Christianity*, I. 280.

infringement of the rights of the Jewish people, that it was in unison with the predictions of the Old Testament." In accordance with this, we must understand the universalistic passages of the epistle, which insist on God's design to include all—Jews and Gentiles alike—the statements that Abraham is the father of all who believe, that the way of salvation is the same for all, and that in the sight of God there is no distinction between Gentile and Jew. "The expression<sup>1</sup> προσλαμβάνεσθε ἀλλήλους (xv. 7)...points to a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles, in which it was the apostle's aim to conciliate the discordant elements," just as the severe warning against those who cause dissensions shows that there were other influences at work in a different direction. The irenic tendency of the Epistle to the Romans is so strong that it is admitted even by Baur and is in marked contrast to the Epistle to the Hebrews, who required no such teaching.

In this the Hebrew church possessed a marked superiority over the Roman, but on another point the advantage lay with the latter. For while the former is severely rebuked for stupidity and ignorance, and warned of the danger of utter apostasy from the Christian religion, St Paul praises the faith of the Roman church and nowhere gives any hint of any serious errors in doctrine.

Finally, if there were any tendency to Judaism in the Roman church, it was to Judaism of a quite different kind to that attacked in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It was connected rather with the questions which principally concerned the Jews of the Dispersion : with such points as the advantage of circumcision, of the universal obligation of the Mosaic Law, of the distinction of clean and unclean meats, of the observance of the Sabbath and other Jewish festivals :

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot, *Biblical Essays*, p. 297.

and not at all with the Temple, and its ritual, and its services.

There is a large amount of resemblance between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle to the Romans ; but it consists in language and vocabulary rather than in subject matter. No two churches could be more unlike in composition, in doctrinal tendencies, in weakness and in strength, than these were, and the theory that they were really one and the same must certainly be rejected, in spite of the great names by which it is supported.

We conclude therefore in favour of the destination of the epistle to the church of Jerusalem, partly from the fact that the circumstances of this church were the circumstances of the readers addressed, and partly from the fact that every other church hitherto proposed has been shown to be unsuitable.

## DATE.

As the destination of the epistle has been claimed for the most widely-separated churches, situated in each of the then-known continents, so the date has been assigned to the most varied periods. It has been supposed by some that it was written between A.D. 60 and 70; by others not later than A.D. 80, and possibly even earlier; by others about A.D. 90. The circumstances which occasioned it have been sought for in the persecution of Domitian, in the position of the Jews in the reign of Trajan, in the rebellion of Bar-Cochba. Such various dates might seem to threaten a difficult problem: but in reality the facts are few and easy of explanation. The two principal arguments<sup>1</sup> on which critics rely for the theory that the epistle was written after the Fall of Jerusalem are the acquaintance shown by the author with New Testament literature, and the fact that in ix. 1, he refers to the old worship and the former sanctuary as things of the past. Holtzmann<sup>2</sup> thinks that our author was acquainted with the writings of St Paul, with the works of St Luke, with the epistles of St James and St Peter, and with the Apocalypse of St John. It is certain that these assertions, if proved, would exclude an early date, but no

<sup>1</sup> The argument drawn from the mistaken idea that the writer only refers to the Tabernacle and not to the Temple does not require any further discussion.

<sup>2</sup> *Zeitschr. f. wiss. Theol.* 1867.

proof has been given. We had noticed ourselves the resemblance between the ideas of the Epistle to the Hebrews and those of St James, and St Peter, and St John<sup>1</sup> before we read Holtzmann's article; but the evidence does not seem to point to the dependence of one book on the other<sup>2</sup>. The fact that our author was acquainted with the earlier epistles of St Paul is undoubted<sup>3</sup>, but does not necessarily point to a later date than 63—66 A.D. The interdependence of our epistle and the writings of St Luke is equally clear<sup>4</sup>, but is most naturally explained by the supposition that St Luke was acquainted with the Epistle to the Hebrews as well as with the epistles of St Paul<sup>5</sup>.

The fact that the writer of this epistle on one occasion (ix. 1) speaks of the old worship and the former sanctuary as things of the past is a stronger argument. This particular phrase may however be most naturally explained as a consequence of his peculiar position. For all practical purposes the type ceased to exist when the perfect antitype had come. In any case, this solitary use of the past tense serves to render more noticeable the fact that in every other instance we get the present, and that everywhere else we find the Temple represented as still standing and its services<sup>6</sup> represented as still going on.

If we suppose that the epistle is later than the Fall of Jerusalem, there are strong arguments for assigning it to the

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann's attempted proof is feeble.

<sup>2</sup> This will be discussed later.

<sup>3</sup> The resemblance of Hebrews to 1 Cor. is well brought out by Holtzmann.

<sup>4</sup> It is conveniently stated by Lünemann on Hebrews.

<sup>5</sup> This solution is accepted by Von Soden in his recent commentary.

<sup>6</sup> This argument of course does not hold for those who consider that the services referred to in the epistle were those carried on at the Tabernacle.

rebellion of Bar-Cochba. It was not till then that the Jews finally recognized that Judaism had failed and was ἐγγὺς ἀφανισμοῦ, and equally it was not till then that they regained their power to persecute.

Hausrath<sup>1</sup> connects the epistle with the reign of Trajan and the attempts of the Jews to rebuild the Temple. One main characteristic of the book is the influence exercised on the minds both of author and readers by the Temple and its services. This is usually supposed to show that the Temple was still standing and its services still going on, but it could be equally well understood if the Jews were at this time hoping to get their Temple rebuilt and their services restored. Another argument in favour of this date is the similarity between the conduct of the Hebrews addressed and that of the Christians mentioned in the letter of Pliny to Trajan. In both cases there was a general tendency to purchase protection at the cost of apostasy, and in the case of Hebrew Christians, apostasy would probably mean return to Judaism rather than going over to heathenism.

The first of these arguments is certainly weighty, and if we are compelled to select a date after the Fall of Jerusalem, the most likely would be that suggested by Hausrath, were it not for the evidence furnished by the Epistle of Clement. At any rate the arguments in favour of the supposition that it was the persecution of Domitian which occasioned the epistle appear to be less weighty though they require to be stated. If the former persecution referred to is the Neronian—a conclusion which is supported by the detailed account of it in xi. 35—37 and by the reference in xiii. 7 to the death of St Paul—then the present persecution would be that of Domitian. Holtzmann also thinks that this latter persecution would exactly suit the references in the epistle,

<sup>1</sup> *N. T. Zeit-gesch.* III. 401.

inasmuch as it was sudden and unexpected, and rather a series of violent blows than a settled and continuous policy.

There is however one objection to all these theories which appears to be fatal. The resemblance between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the first Epistle of Clement is so close that it appears impossible that the books should be independent of one another. In this case the priority must certainly be given to the New Testament Epistle, and late dates are excluded.

Recognizing this, others have dated the epistle about A.D. 90, about A.D. 80, or even earlier, which would allow time both for the author to become acquainted with New Testament literature and for Clement to have read and studied the earlier epistle.

It would seem that the only argument for placing the Epistle to the Hebrews after the Fall of Jerusalem is its dependence on other New Testament writings, and that, if it has been shown that this is no proof of a date later than A.D. 63 to 66, the arguments in favour of an earlier date may fairly determine the question. The vividness of the picture drawn in the epistle seems to show that the Temple was still in existence and its services were still continued<sup>1</sup>. Nor could the author have used such expressions as those in viii. 4, ix. 9, if the Levitical worship had been already a thing of the past. The great danger against which he emphatically warns his readers would have disappeared, if the Temple had been destroyed and its services had ceased. It would be equally surprising that he should pass over such a convincing proof of the correctness of his argument, and be content to say that the Levitical ritual was *ἐγγὺς ἀφανισμοῦ*, when as a matter of fact it had already disappeared. Again the relation of Christians to Jews rather points to a period

<sup>1</sup> This is strikingly put by Farrar, p. xxiv.

before than to a time after the Fall of Jerusalem. On the one hand, the epistle seems to refer to trouble suffered at the hand of Jewish brethren, and the Fall of Jerusalem broke the power of the Jews until the time of Bar-Cochba. On the other hand, it presupposes that there had as yet been no formal breach between Christians and Jews and no excommunication of one by the other<sup>1</sup>. The fact assumed is that the readers had the freest access to the Temple services, and were so charmed and satisfied with them that they neglected their own. These intimate relations between Jews and Christians were greatly changed by the war of independence, which embittered the relations between the two parties; and by the destruction of the Temple, which did away with a great bond of union. One great difference between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of St John is the attitude of their authors towards the Jews: and this difference is much more naturally explained by the theory that the epistle was written before and the gospel after the war with the Romans, than by the supposition that one writer was more favourably disposed to the Jews than the other.

Finally, the strong expectation of our Lord's speedy return, which characterizes the epistle<sup>2</sup>, helps to prove that this book was either written before the Fall of Jerusalem or

<sup>1</sup> This view contradicts the assertions of some scholars whose opinions carry great weight. But the supposition that the Christians were excluded from all share in the Temple services introduces great difficulties into the explanation of several passages in the epistle. Nor is it easy to imagine that exclusion from the Temple services would have caused the Hebrew Christians to neglect their own assemblies.

<sup>2</sup> Schmiedel (on 1 Thess. iv.) disputes this and says that where (as in Heb. xii. 22 f., 27, xi. 16, or John xii. 32, xiv. 2 f., xvii. 24) the blessed "Endreich" is placed in heaven, the idea of the Parousia has been given up.

not till a much later period. The idea that our Lord would return in that very generation is to be found in most of the earlier books of the New Testament<sup>1</sup>, and in the Synoptic Gospels the Parousia is closely connected with the Fall of Jerusalem. When however this event occurred and our Lord did not come, the feeling for a short time changed to one of bitter disappointment, and even the Gospel of St John, though not written till the end of the century, has quite abandoned any idea of a speedy establishment of the Messianic kingdom<sup>2</sup>.

It may therefore be regarded as certain that the epistle was written before the Fall of Jerusalem. Nor are materials wanting for defining its date more closely still. It is inconceivable that it was sent to the church of Jerusalem, while St James was still bishop. If this had been the case, the form of the epistle would certainly have been different, the indefinite term *ἡγούμενοι* would scarcely have been used, and some recognition of the authority of St James might reasonably have been expected. It is equally inconceivable that an epistle written to the church of Jerusalem, while the struggle for supremacy between Israel and Rome was being fought out on the soil of Palestine, should contain no allusion to that event. We are therefore able with some confidence to fix the date of the epistle between the death of St James in A.D. 63 and the outbreak of the Jewish war in A.D. 66. Whether it was written at the beginning or towards the close of this period is much less certain and is of comparatively small importance. Hilgenfeld<sup>3</sup> says that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 51; Jas. v. 3; 1 Pet. iv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> If we accepted Ramsay's theory that the First Epistle of Peter was occasioned by a persecution started by Vespasian not long after the Fall of Jerusalem, this book would be a startling exception.

<sup>3</sup> *Zeitschr. für wiss. Theol.* 1858, p. 103.

“we can assign it with certainty to A.D. 64—66,” and we consider that the earlier in this period we date the epistle, the more help we get in explaining the circumstances under which it originated. The sudden and violent removal of James from the head of affairs would account for the dangers mentioned in the letter, and in addition to this the new leaders might at first have experienced some difficulty in making their authority felt. For they would not have the prestige attaching to St James, who (our Lord’s brother) had long presided over the church of Jerusalem, and was respected by all Jewish Christians. Such a critical position of his beloved church would naturally induce so influential a person as the author of this epistle to visit them or to write to them; whether the *ἡγούμενοι* turned to him for help in their difficulties, or the request was made by some other person, or he wrote of his own accord.

The alternative suggested by Ebrard, that it was the outbreak of the Neronian persecution which suggested to the Jews that they could persecute the Christians with impunity, is certainly possible<sup>1</sup> but appears to us less probable; though it might be supported by Heb. xiii. 23.

If we could regard it as proved that the First Epistle of Peter is dependent on this epistle, we could use the fact (as Brückner does) to determine the date of the earlier writing. In this case the Epistle to the Hebrews could not be much later than A.D. 63. But though we ourselves regard the priority of this epistle as quite certain, the point is still so disputed, that it appears safer to lay no stress on it.

Accordingly we date the epistle between the years 64 and 66, with a strong preference for A.D. 64.

<sup>1</sup> The supposition does not affect the date. Ramsay also appears to consider that the epistle was occasioned by the Neronian persecution.

## THE AUTHOR.

At the present day the authorship of the epistle is as keenly disputed as its aim, and destination, and date. At different times no fewer than seven names have been proposed and supported with more or less earnestness and ability. These names are those of St Paul, St Barnabas, and St Peter among the apostles ; of Luke, Silas, and Apollos among the followers of the apostles ; of Clemens Romanus among the apostolic fathers. The number of the names and the different character and position of the persons who bore them suggest that here also we have a difficult problem before us. Accordingly many have abandoned the attempt to discover the author, and declare that he is, and must for ever continue, unknown. We believe that in the case of the authorship, diversity of opinion no more prevents us from arriving at the truth than it prevented us in the question of the date. At any rate, the materials on which we have to base our conclusion are singularly varied and ample. In the remainder of the essay these materials will be examined, and an attempt will be made to show that internal and external evidence combine to support the claims of St Barnabas. The reasons why the strength of the case in his favour has not been more generally recognized would seem to be two : that a spurious epistle has often been assigned to him : and that the arguments in his favour have

never been fully stated. On the whole, the case for him is best put by Wieseler in his two works, "Untersuchung über den Hebräerbrief, seinen Verfasser und seine Leser," and "Chronologie des apostolischen Zeitalters."

As in the question of the destination of the epistle, so in the case of the authorship, it will be necessary to consider shortly the other names proposed, and to mention the reasons for rejecting them. For the most part, the arguments in their favour have been so well and so clearly stated, that it will only be necessary to examine them, because no fresh arguments require to be considered.

The two earliest named, with the possible exception of St Barnabas, are St Paul and Clemens Romanus. St Paul is mentioned as the author of the epistle by Pantænus of Alexandria, and his name gradually superseded all others, so that from the fifth century till the Reformation he was almost without a rival. His claims to the authorship have never lacked support, and in recent times have been well stated by Kay in the "Speaker's Commentary."

Jerome states that an early tradition in the Eastern Church handed down the name of Clemens Romanus as the writer of the epistle, although he was not considered to be the independent author. But Bisping<sup>1</sup>, who has perhaps stated the arguments more fully than anyone else, considers the connection of St Paul with the epistle to be only slight.

The name of St Luke was suggested by Clement of Alexandria, and in recent times his claims have found an able advocate in Delitzsch.

These were the only names proposed till the era of the Reformation, but since then three more have been added.

A hint thrown out by Luther has led to the conjecture that the author may have been Apollos. "Apollos is to us

<sup>1</sup> *Exeget. Handb. zu den Briefen des Ap. Paulus.*

little more than a name<sup>1</sup>," and it is correspondingly difficult to prove his unsuitability. Still his claims have been supported by so many in recent times that they will have to be carefully considered. They have been conveniently and concisely stated by Alford.

The arguments in favour of Silas are much stronger than those in favour of Apollos, and have been stated with great ability by Böhme.

The resemblances between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the First Epistle of St Peter have led Mr Welch<sup>2</sup> to maintain that they are both by the same author. For the most part, Mr Welch has been content to state his position without considering its difficulties. It will be pointed out later what these difficulties really are.

The number of the names proposed and the conflict or absence of tradition in the Alexandrian Church led Origen as early as the third century to abandon the attempt to determine the authorship. Since that time, the opinion of Origen has been quoted with approval again and again, and is definitely accepted by Bp Westcott in his commentary on the epistle. If in this essay an attempt is made to reach some more definite determination, it is because a merely negative conclusion is of little value in itself, and in this case introduces unnecessary difficulties into several passages of the epistle.

<sup>1</sup> Wright, *Some N. T. Problems*, p. 333.

<sup>2</sup> *The authorship of the Ep. to the Heb.*

## THE AUTHORSHIP. INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

1. In attempting to ascertain the authorship of this epistle, the first thing certain is that the author, whoever he was, belonged to the circle of St Paul, and for the most part held his views. We find this fact already clearly stated by Origen<sup>1</sup>, the earliest critic of the epistle : ἐγὼ δὲ ἀποφαινόμενος εἶποίμ' ἂν ὅτι τὰ μὲν νοήματα τοῦ ἀποστόλου ἐστίν·... εἴ τις οὖν ἐκκλησία ἔχει ταύτην τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ὡς Παύλου, αὕτη εὐδοκιμείτω καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ : and this opinion has been accepted and handed down from that time to the present. Nor is this merely a question of external authority. It is supported by the internal evidence of the epistle itself. There is no need to prove in detail a statement, which is elaborately argued in every commentary that maintains the Pauline authorship, and which is apparent to the most careless reader. Indeed no other writer in the New Testament is so like St Paul except the Pauline Luke<sup>2</sup>. It is more to the point to notice that in some respects the author goes beyond St Paul and is more Pauline than that apostle himself. For St Paul, although he maintained that the Gentiles ought not to be forced to become Jewish proselytes or compelled to conform to Jewish observances, yet was himself careful to conform, and evidently considered that the Mosaic law in

<sup>1</sup> Eus. *H. E.* vi. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald (*Das Sendschr. an die Heb.* p. 1): "Of all the N. T. epistles the Epistle to the Hebrews is most like those written by Paul."

its entirety was still binding on all Christians who were also Jews. He circumcised Timothy, because he was the son of a Jewess: he shaved his head at Cenchrea because he had a vow: he paid for the sacrifices of the four Nazarites at Jerusalem: he maintained at his trial that he was still a Pharisee. But the author of this epistle maintains that even a Jew must choose between Judaism and Christianity<sup>1</sup>. Now that the perfect pattern had come, the imperfect copy must be given up. It was just as impossible then as in the times of the Old Testament for a man to share in two altars, the earthly and the heavenly: he must choose the one or the other. ἔχομεν θυσιαστήριον, ἐξ οὗ φαγεῖν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν οἱ τῇ σκηνῇ λατρεύοντες<sup>2</sup>.

The fact that the author must belong to the circle of St Paul and be a man of similar views enables us to limit the possible number, and to exclude such theories as those of Hase<sup>3</sup>, that the author was an Ebionite, or of Rendall, that he was a disciple of St Peter, who had never come under the influence of St Paul.

The fact, however, makes no difference to any of the names mentioned at the beginning of this section; for they all belong to the circle of St Paul. Still, it may be worth while to point out that St Barnabas shared the views of St Paul on the great questions of Gentile missions and Gentile liberty. The separation of the two apostles was not caused by any question of doctrine<sup>4</sup> but simply by a personal question, the retention of St Mark. Nor did the

<sup>1</sup> Bleek I. 304.

<sup>2</sup> The construction of τῇ σκηνῇ makes no difference to the argument but it is certainly either the local dative or the dative of attending circumstance and λατρεύω is to be taken absolutely. For λατρεία is always paid to God: and worshipping the Tabernacle is a very strange idea.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Köstlin.

<sup>4</sup> As is conjectured by Ewald, *History of Israel*, VII. 363.

separation in any way diminish the zeal of St Barnabas for work among the Gentiles. Directly he left St Paul he took up his old work, and in the First Epistle to the Corinthians he is represented as still carrying it on. In the next century, the account in the Clementine Homilies tells us that he laboured among the Gentiles in Alexandria, and a later tradition makes him evangelize Italy also.

2. The next point to notice is that the author must have been a man of great ability, a fact which has been accepted by writers of the most different schools of thought and which is clearly proved by the internal evidence of the epistle itself.

Origen<sup>1</sup> emphatically expresses his admiration: *τὰ νοήματα τῆς ἐπιστολῆς θαυμάσιά ἐστιν.*

Luther<sup>2</sup>, though he disliked much of its teaching, yet declared that it was "a strong, mighty, and high epistle."

Conybeare and Howson<sup>3</sup>, the able historians of the life of St Paul, acknowledge that "there is no portion of the New Testament, the inspiration of which is more indisputable."

Westcott<sup>4</sup>, the penetrating exponent of the writings of St John, is even more emphatic: "No work in which I have ever been allowed to spend many years of continuous labour has had for me the same intense human interest as the study of the Epistle to the Hebrews."

The author must have been a man of great versatility of mind, and able to appreciate and assimilate ideas derived from the most opposite sources. We can trace in this epistle ideas derived from St Stephen and St Peter, from St Paul and St James; but they are used with the greatest

<sup>1</sup> Eus. *H. E.* vi. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *II.* 600.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Alford, *IV.* 35.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. to Heb.* p. ix.

freedom, and in no way detract from the independence and originality of the writer. Indeed—though it may seem a paradox—his book is distinguished among the writings of the New Testament by its marked and startling originality of thought. Reuss<sup>1</sup> considers that “the method of the book is peculiar to the author, if not entirely discovered by him.” Baur says, with wonderful analytic power, that this epistle is “a thoroughly original attempt to establish the main results of Paul’s teaching upon new presuppositions and in an entirely independent way.” Nor is this all. The ideas contained in this epistle in reference to the Mosaic law, the heavenly sanctuary, and the priesthood of Christ are peculiar to it, though they relate to subjects of the greatest importance. Indeed among the writings of the New Testament, three works stand out above the rest (as Isaiah stands out among the prophets of the Old), like towering peaks in a mountain range: these three are our present epistle, the Epistle to the Romans, and the Gospel of St John. They are quite independent works, the object, and aim, and character of no two are alike; but each represents the highest effort of the human mind. It is very improbable that such a book was written by an unknown author, who has disappeared without leaving any trace. Godet<sup>2</sup> can be quoted for the opinion that “this very fact only serves to reveal to us the abundance and excellence of the spiritual gifts possessed by men who occupied only the second rank in the apostolic church;” but such a view is not likely to commend itself to many. Indeed a comparison of this book with the work of St Clement, who actually answers to this description, is usually considered sufficient to disprove his claims to the authorship. It is not necessary to prove that the author

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch. d. heil. Schriften*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> *Expositor*, Vol. 7, p. 265.

must have stood in the very front rank : it is rather requisite to show that St Barnabas possessed the necessary qualifications for composing such a work.

Of the general ability of St Barnabas, there seems to have been no doubt in his own times, whatever there may be in the nineteenth century. He seems to have been regarded as capable and reliable, and to have been looked up to and respected, wherever he was known. His influence at Jerusalem, alike with the apostles and with the ordinary members of the church, comes out in the earlier chapters of the Acts. The church of Antioch placed him and St Paul in the highest position they had to offer, as being their two most capable men. It seems to have been his influence in his native country, which caused Cyprus to be fixed on as the most likely place for missionary work. A century later the author of the Clementine Homilies pays him the greatest compliment in his power by joining him with St Peter.

His special qualifications for his task will be brought out in detail in the course of this essay. Here it is enough to point out that in Acts xiii. 1 he is spoken of as *διδάσκαλος* equally with St Paul; that his connection with Cyprus would give him control of the Greek language; that his gift of persuasive eloquence, whether it was in writing<sup>1</sup> or in speaking, gained for him, as for St Chrysostom, a title which has completely superseded his own name<sup>2</sup>; and finally that his priestly position would account for his knowledge of, and his delight in, the Levitical ritual.

3. We have already seen that the author of this epistle must be sought among the friends and associates of St Paul, but he must be a friend of St Paul who had such markedly

<sup>1</sup> It has been conjectured from Acts xiv. 12 that the skill of St Barnabas lay chiefly in writing, but the argument is uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> Acts iv. 36.

Jewish tendencies that Hase<sup>1</sup> could take him for an Ebionite or Nazarene. Schwegler notices<sup>2</sup> that "our Epistle takes its standpoint far more within Judaism than St Paul ever does," and Schulz puts the case even more strongly: "The whole contents of the Epistle sound Jewish."

Westcott<sup>3</sup> notices the same characteristic, and rightly classes our author with the three: "This general connection indicates the true position of the epistle, which is that of a final development of the teaching of the three and not of a special application of the teaching of St Paul. It is so to speak most truly intelligible as the last voice of the apostles of the circumcision and not as a peculiar utterance of the apostle of the Gentiles. The apostles of the circumcision regarded Judaism naturally with sympathy and affection, for it was that through which they had been led little by little to see the meaning of the Gospel. The apostle of the Gentiles, with all his love for his countrymen and all his reverence for the work wrought through the Old Covenant, no less naturally regarded Judaism as it was, as a system which had made him a persecutor of the Faith....For the one, it is a crushing burden; for the other, it is a welcome if imperfect source of consolation."

Messner puts the matter more concisely: "So long as one starts from Paulinism for a full comprehension of the teaching of the epistle, one cannot thoroughly account for its peculiarities."

Indeed, though in many respects our author closely resembles both St Peter and St John in his sympathy with Judaism, he goes beyond either of them, and can only be compared with the pre-eminently Jewish apostle, St James.

<sup>1</sup> Referred to above.

<sup>2</sup> *Nachap. Zeitalter*, II. 315.

<sup>3</sup> *Hebrews*, p. 41.

One of the most marked features of the Gospel of St John is its universalism and the absence of any national or local restrictions. Throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews we get no hint that the Gospel was ever intended for any but Jews.

Even Weiss does not go far enough in his account of the matter: "This view is explained only...by this consideration that he regards the people of the Old Covenant as in principle the proper subjects of the kingdom of God. We stand here quite on the ground of the old apostolic view, according to which the people of Israel are regarded as in the first place the proper receivers of the Messianic salvation." This would exactly represent the facts, if the words "in the first place" were entirely omitted, for throughout the epistle, the λαὸς τοῦ θεοῦ are simply the people of Israel in the strictest sense of the word (ii. 17, iv. 9, v. 3, vii. 5, 11, 27, viii. 10, ix. 7, 19). Nor can the narrowness of the limitation be got rid of by any spiritual interpretation. "The people<sup>1</sup> which Christ has sanctified by His blood (ii. 17, vii. 27, xiii. 12) and brought into the rest of God (iv. 9) is not thought of in the metaphorical sense in which Paul designates Christian believers, without distinction of race, as the true people of Israel, but the author intends thereby the same people to whom the typical Levitical cultus belonged."

The restricted view of the Incarnation given in the epistle—that Christ σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ ἐπιλαμβάνεται<sup>2</sup>—becomes yet more marked when we read Theodoret's instinctive comment ὑπὲρ ἀπάσης τῆς κτίσεως, and compare St John's description of our Lord as the Saviour of the

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Entsteh. der altkath. Kirche*, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Bleek points out that the contrast with ἀγγέλων shows clearly that it is entirely a question of physical descent and not of spiritual similarity.

world. It is quite in accordance with this that we find our author more favourably disposed to his fellow-countrymen than St Stephen, or St Paul, or even than St John<sup>1</sup>.

St John's attitude towards those whom he calls "the Jews" must always occasion a little surprise, even though familiarity has weakened our first impression. The case is as usual strikingly put by Baur<sup>2</sup>: "He places Judaism as a religion of law so far below Christianity as the absolute religion that the one has scarcely anything at all to do with the other. It is very significant how the evangelist speaks of the Mosaic law as something which only concerned the Jews and which they alone could call theirs: (St John vii. 19, viii. 17, x. 34, xv. 25). The most important legal feasts are only designated 'feasts of the Jews'; e.g. the Passover is represented with this expression as an exclusively Jewish feast: ii. 13, vi. 4, xi. 55. To the same cause belongs the peculiarity that the standing name by which in the Gospel of St John the opponents of Jesus are designated...is the name Jews. How far removed must the author of the Gospel be from original Christianity if he could so greatly disparage Judaism, and how little can we think of him in any national relation to it?"

Now we think that the difference between our author and St John is mainly a question of date, and that this kindly feeling towards the Jews simply shows that the epistle was written before the Fall of Jerusalem. It would be difficult to believe that our author was much more

<sup>1</sup> If the First Epistle of St Peter were written to Jewish Christians, St Peter would be a more striking contrast even than St John. But the point is disputed. Prof. Hort considers that the majority of the readers addressed were Gentiles, with a strong nucleus of Jews—an explanation which ought to please everyone.

<sup>2</sup> *Neutest. Theologie*, p. 390.

Jewish than St John and yet at the same time that his teaching was an advance on the position of St Paul. But however we explain it, the fact remains that our author's attitude towards the Jews is very sympathetic and his attachment to Judaism is very sincere. He knows that the old has had its day and must pass away, but still he views its disappearance with a certain amount of regret<sup>1</sup>. The new is very much better, but still the old was good. His readers must abandon the shadow in order to grasp the substance: but he can understand their hesitation and their anxiety, for he has felt the same himself: οὐδεὶς πινὼν παλαιὸν θέλει νέον· λέγει γὰρ· ὁ παλαιὸς χρηστός ἐστίν<sup>2</sup>.

The same characteristic of the author comes out in his account of the Tabernacle. It is striking when compared even with that of such Jews as Philo and Josephus<sup>3</sup>; of whom the former does away with the real meaning of the Tabernacle and tries to spiritualise it; while the latter apologizes for it and tries to rationalize it.

It is still more striking, when compared with the attitude of St Stephen. It will be shown in the next section that the main ideas in St Stephen's speech are also main ideas in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But while St Stephen used them to attack Judaism and the Jews, our author uses them to show the excellence of the system which must vanish away. He dwells on the heavenly origin of the Tabernacle and shows that it was an exact pattern and copy of the heavenly sanctuary. It is true that this fact

<sup>1</sup> ἐπεὶ κατέβαλεν αὐτὴν τῇ πρὸς τὴν νέαν παραθέσει ἵνα μὴ τις εἴπῃ ὅτι οὐκοῦν αἰεὶ ἀπόβλητος ἦν, προλαβὼν φησὶν ὅτι εἶχεν κάκεινη δικαιώματα λατρείας, νόμους, καὶ τάξιν, καὶ ἀκολουθίαν ἐμπρέπουσαν λατρεῖα θεοῦ. Oecumenius.

<sup>2</sup> Luke v. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Westcott, pp. 238, 239.

also meant that the heavenly was the perfect and eternal Temple, but none the less it was impossible to part with the earthly without regret. He dwells upon its beauty<sup>1</sup>, he lingers over its memory, he recalls its sacred associations, while at the same time he realizes that it is the duty of faith in every age to relinquish the seen for the unseen. It must have been evident to every Jew who read the epistle that Judaism was ingrained in the very nature of the writer, and that nothing would ever be able quite to get it out.

Finally the same fact comes out in the way in which he combats the special temptation of his readers, when we compare this epistle with an epistle of St Paul, to which it has many points of resemblance—the Epistle to the Galatians. The position in the two cases is very similar: the relation of the two men to their churches is equally close: the danger is the same, only it has become greater and more deadly in the church of Jerusalem. In Galatia the danger was that Gentile Christians would surrender the liberty of the Gospel, but in Jerusalem that Hebrew Christians would abandon Christianity altogether.

Now notice the difference between the two men.

St Paul met the Hebrew Christians, who had come from the church of Jerusalem to Galatia, with the most uncompromising opposition. He made a remark which they would no doubt apply to their highly valued circumcision, and which was very strong indeed<sup>2</sup>. We can imagine that they would return to Jerusalem with feelings of bitter hatred to St Paul and would spread abroad all sorts of reports about him<sup>3</sup>. Equally would they be tempted to assert

<sup>1</sup> Notice the word "golden" three times in a single verse (ix. 4).

<sup>2</sup> See Gal. v. 12 and Lightfoot's note.

<sup>3</sup> We can understand what sort of reports they would carry back to Jerusalem, when we read the account of St Paul's language given in all

some years later that St Paul's remarks in Gal. v. 21—23 were intended to apply to all Hebrew Christians, so that St James's anxiety about his fellow-apostle's reception by the church of Jerusalem becomes easy to understand.

The errors combatted in the Epistle to the Hebrews are more fundamental and destructive of Christianity than those attacked in the Epistle to the Galatians. But while St Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, regarded those who held such views as enemies to be driven out<sup>1</sup>, this writer reckons them members of his flock; he looks on them as followers to be won over. The danger was pressing and his attitude was quite decided. The position of St Paul no longer met the case; and so our author went beyond it, as St Paul himself would have done. Indeed, the advance from the position of St Paul to that of the Epistle to the Hebrews is like the gradual advance of St Paul himself from Romans to Colossians, and from Colossians to the Pastoral Epistles. But while the doctrinal standpoint is Pauline, the tone and manner has quite changed. Our author tells the Judaizers that he himself delights in observance and ritual, and fully understands the fascination of Judaism. He can enter into their feelings, and sympathize with their difficulties, and understand their temptations. But there are temptations which have to be overcome, or they will separate from Christ. No doubt the abandonment of things, which they had all their lifetime regarded with reverence and affection, would be a sacrifice. But every religion requires sacrifices, and in the case of the Hebrews, whom the apostle addressed, there was the additional argument that if they

sober earnest by Pfeleiderer: *The influence of the apostle Paul on the development of Christianity*, pp. 130—132.

<sup>1</sup> At the same time, it must be noticed that in one case the Hebrew Christians were in their own church, while in the other they were not.

were called upon to suffer for Christ, He had already suffered for them.

We may believe that such an appeal would be listened to with attention and replied to with respect, while stern denunciation would harden and repel. In a word, in the Epistle to the Galatians we have an apostle of the Gentiles driving out the Judaizing Christians as wolves who would trouble his flock; but in the Epistle to the Hebrews we have an apostle of the Jews regarding these Judaizing Christians as the sheep whom it was his special duty to shepherd and to tend.

It would seem to result from all this that the Jewish tendencies of the writer of this epistle are no less strongly marked than the Pauline. Yet this does not at all mean that the book is an attempt to reconcile Paulinism and Judaism, as the Tübingen critics suppose. Throughout the epistle there is no sign or hint of any irenical tendency, but only polemic against error. Köstlin<sup>1</sup> points out that there is no sign of any readiness to give up Paulinism to suit Judaizers, or Judaism to suit Paulinists<sup>2</sup>. The main ideas in the epistle are derived from St Stephen and are stated with great clearness and force. The agreement of the writer with St Paul is no less certain, though not quite so evident at first sight. "No one<sup>3</sup> who considers the freedom with which the writer speaks of Levitical institutions as weak, useless, doomed to pass away, can imagine him having any difficulty about recognizing Gentile Christians

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Jahrb.* of Baur and Zeller, 1854, p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> We may contrast with this the standpoint of the author of the Acts, who brings out all that is Pauline in the conduct of the Three and all that is Judaic in the conduct of St Paul, and who carefully avoids all that is extreme.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce in *Expositor*, Vol. VII. p. 342.

without requiring them to submit to circumcision." But these very facts only serve to bring out more clearly the Jewish position of the writer. His conclusions are exactly the same as those of St Stephen: but while the speech of the one was calculated to excite all the angry passions of his audience<sup>1</sup>, the way in which the matter was put by the other would tend to conciliate the most fanatical Jew. Our author's own statements in ii. 9, v. 9 show that he was quite on a line with St Paul as regards the inclusion of the Gentiles, but the point is made so little prominent that Ritschl<sup>2</sup> maintains that "he can, if he were a missionary, only have worked among Jews." Indeed, this intimate acquaintance with Jewish feelings and prejudices, and this careful avoidance of anything likely to offend them, is a marked sign of the Jewish position of the author of this epistle. Robertson Smith<sup>3</sup> notices one point: "Nowhere does he touch on the burning questions that divided the Pharisaic Christians of Jerusalem from the converts of St Paul," but fails to see its connection with the character and position of the writer. Schwegler<sup>4</sup> notices another: "There is no word of the heathen and of their share in the kingdom of God," and gives the right answer, "One can well explain it from the desire of the author to avoid anything which might offend his Judaizing readers."

It is true that we must not lay too much stress on this silence of the writer, for any mention of the inclusion of the Gentiles was quite foreign to his subject, and there was no

<sup>1</sup> Of course St Stephen considered only the success of his cause and not his personal safety, and regarded from that point of view his speech was a complete success. Otherwise it is by no means advisable for a prisoner to "corner" his judges.

<sup>2</sup> *Entsteh. der altkath. Kirche*, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *Enc. Brit.*, article Ep. to Heb.

<sup>4</sup> *Nachap. Zeitalter*, 11. p. 322.

reason why he should needlessly offend his readers by introducing an irritating topic. His object was to comfort and console them, and it would have been a strange method of doing so, to point out that their privileges had been taken from them and given to strangers. Still we may doubt with Neander<sup>1</sup> if St Paul would have been able to write an epistle of this length without introducing the question. His position when he spoke to the Jews at Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> was just as critical, but he brought the matter up at once. The contrast would seem to be in the men themselves rather than in their position at the time, and would appear to show that our author was more instinctively in touch with the feelings of the Jews than his great contemporary St Paul.

But the more indisputable the Jewish character of the epistle, the more difficult it becomes to suppose that it was written by an associate or a follower of St Paul. Indeed the increasing recognition of its Jewish colouring has been joined with a growing tendency to dissociate it from St Paul altogether. It therefore becomes all the more necessary to show that St Barnabas possessed the same Jewish tendencies as the author of this epistle, was equally accustomed to work among Jews or among Gentiles, and had a like disposition to defer to the prejudices of his Jewish brethren.

The original position of St Barnabas as a Levite would tend to make him more lenient to those who attached great and even excessive importance to the ceremonies and traditions of the Jewish church than an average Jewish layman would have been. It is of course conceivable that his conversion to Christianity would alter this and cause

<sup>1</sup> *Planting of Christianity*, II. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xxii. 21.

him to regard the things, to which he formerly attached great importance, as misleading and mischievous. But the supposition is unlikely.

The way in which St Barnabas came over to Christianity would be likely to make him regard Judaism favourably as a valuable help and assistance towards what was more perfect and spiritual. Neander cannot be accused of manufacturing evidence for St Barnabas, and yet his account<sup>1</sup> of the author of the epistle might be a description of that apostle: "Lastly, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews appears to have made the transition from Judaism to Christianity, not like Paul by a violent crisis, but by a more quiet development, in which the higher spirit concealed under the forms of Judaism revealed itself to him."

Again, the position of this writer, who regards the Jews as the natural recipients of the gospel and Judaism as the easiest preparation for Christianity, was the original position both of Barnabas and of Paul. But St Paul, working exclusively among Gentiles, gradually became as a Gentile and ceased to look at things from the exclusive standpoint of a Jew.

St Barnabas as a Levite and as continually in touch with Judaism by training and profession would be in a different position. Nor would the fact that the Jews had ceased to form the kingdom of God be so painfully evident to one who resided in the great and exclusively Jewish church of Jerusalem.

The trust reposed in St Barnabas by Hebrew Christians and their confidence that he would not allow any breach of the customs which Moses delivered is strikingly shown by the fact that he was the delegate specially chosen to visit

<sup>1</sup> *Planting of Christianity*, Book vi. chap. 2.

the church of Antioch<sup>1</sup> and to inquire into any irregularities.

No less exactly does the account given in the Epistle to the Galatians of St Barnabas suit the author of this epistle. Without enlarging on the dispute at Antioch, it may be said at once that the situation was this : which were to be considered, the feelings of the Hebrew Christians of Jerusalem or of the Gentile Christians of Antioch?

St Paul did not hesitate a moment. He was ready to resist anyone in defence of his beloved Gentile converts. He withstood St Peter to the face, and would have attacked St James himself with equal promptitude.

It is easy to understand St Peter's attitude in the matter, however mistaken, for he was the apostle of the circumcision and not of the Gentiles. But when we read of the choice of St Barnabas, we are surprised, for the popular theory makes him the apostle of the Gentiles only, and it looks as if he were estranging himself from his own followers in order to keep on good terms with people who were outside his allotted sphere of labour. In reality the scene at Antioch shows us that, when St Barnabas began his work among the Gentiles, he had no intention of breaking off his work among the Jews. Such work was rendered easy and almost necessary for him by the fact that his home was in the Hebrew church of Jerusalem. If a choice between the two spheres of work had been rendered necessary, we are quite sure which St Paul would have selected, but we are by no means so certain about St Barnabas.

The strength of the Jewish leanings of St Barnabas may perhaps be a surprise, but this side of his character comes out equally in this epistle. Indeed in this case also the account given of St Barnabas is identical with that of the

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi. 22.

author of this epistle. Schwegler points out that our author was determined not to say or do anything that would vex and annoy the Jews, and kept the call of the Gentiles altogether out of sight from consideration for their feelings. Hort's account of St Barnabas<sup>1</sup> brings out the same fact: "More important to keep our Jerusalem friends in good humour than to avoid every possible risk of estranging your new Gentile converts: no need to reject them or to tell them to be circumcised, but no need either for us Jews to be publicly fraternizing with them, now that we know what offence it will give at Jerusalem: better wait awhile and see if things do not come right of themselves if only we are not in too great a hurry." It will be noticed that this estimate lays very great stress on the Jewish side of St Barnabas, perhaps greater stress than all would be prepared to accept, but it is the deliberate judgment of a man who has made the subject his special study.

Finally, the account given of St Barnabas in every book of the New Testament which tells us about him<sup>2</sup> is supported by the later tradition preserved in the Clementine Homilies. For our purpose, the historical credibility of this last-mentioned work is of no importance at all. We are only concerned with the fact that it represents the views of Judaizing Christians in the middle of the second century. In this book, St Paul is attacked under the name of Simon Magus and is hunted by St Peter from place to place. But St Barnabas is definitely counted a Jewish apostle, and is put on a level with St Peter himself. It is he and not St Peter who converts Clement, the hero of the tale. St Peter is represented as praising Clement for coming to

<sup>1</sup> *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> The allusion in 1 Cor. is too slight to require notice in this connection.

the rescue of so eminent a man. Finally St Peter is made to give his emphatic sanction to the teaching of St Barnabas and to assure Clement that anything he has been taught by such a man will certainly be the truth. Accordingly St Peter declines to go over the ground again and begins where St Barnabas left off. It is quite possible that there was an object in this exaltation of St Barnabas, and that it was the intention of the writer to show how differently he regarded the character of the two comrades. In this case, the Homilies would help to point out the two-fold position of St Barnabas. In any case there can have been no doubt in the minds of Jewish Christians of the second century as to the Judaism of this apostle. Indeed he would appear to have ranked higher with the Jews than even with the Gentiles, for while the former ranked him with St Peter, the latter have often been inclined to class him as one of the followers of St Paul. In short the attitude and position of the historical Barnabas is the attitude and position of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but is not at all that of the Barnabas of the commentators or of the Barnabas whom we are accustomed to picture to ourselves.

4. When we turn from the Paulinism and Judaism of the writer of this epistle to estimate the influence exercised upon him by other Christian writers and to determine the position of his work in New Testament literature, we at once enter on a region of dispute, and difficulty, and doubt. The inter-connection of two writings which appears certain to one man is altogether denied by another, and when the inter-connection of the two is admitted, it is disputed which has borrowed from the other<sup>1</sup>. In the case of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the resemblance to the First Epistle of

<sup>1</sup> An interesting parallel in the O.T. is the relation of the book of Deuteronomy to the prophets Amos, Hosea and Micah.

St Peter, which appears to some less striking than the similarity to other books, has been made by others of more account than the dependence of this epistle on the epistles of St Paul. It is possible that the influence exercised on the writer by St Stephen and St James, which appears to us of primary importance, may be denied altogether by others. One part of this section will be admitted by one and another part by another. Still, as there are resemblances more or less close between this writer and almost every other<sup>1</sup> in the New Testament, the subject has too important a bearing on date, and destination, and authorship to be passed over without careful consideration.

(a) The first and most obvious resemblance of this book is to the epistles of the great apostle, St Paul. In this case it is not disputed that the priority rests with St Paul, nor is there any doubt that our author must have been acquainted not only with the apostle but also with his writings<sup>2</sup>. For the Epistle to the Hebrews does not equally resemble all the writings of St Paul, but most closely the epistles of the third missionary journey, less certainly those to the Thessalonians, while the connection with the other epistles may fairly be disputed. The resemblance would be sufficiently close to establish unity of authorship, if it were not counterbalanced by important differences. As it is, the resemblance between our author and St Paul is easily explained by the same supposition by which we explain the resemblance between St Paul and St Luke, and serves to prove that our author belonged to the circle of St Paul. It

<sup>1</sup> Indeed only St Matthew, St Mark and St Jude can be left altogether out of account.

<sup>2</sup> The resemblances are too numerous to be given in detail. A convenient list is given by Kay in the *Speaker's Commentary*.

is of no use at all to us in distinguishing between the various members of that group.

(*b*) Nor is the resemblance between this epistle and the writings of St Luke of any greater service. It is so great as to render untenable the view that the writings are entirely independent<sup>1</sup>. If it does not point to St Luke as the author of this epistle, then it is most naturally explained by the supposition that St Luke was acquainted with the Epistle to the Hebrews just as he was with the writings of St Paul.

(*c*) The influence of St Stephen on our epistle is clearly marked and is well stated by Ritschl<sup>2</sup>: "He has therein gone back to the tendency of Stephen, who is to be regarded more as his forerunner than as the forerunner of Paul." This influence extends not merely to details but to the main idea of the epistle, which is derived neither from St Paul nor from St James, but direct from St Stephen. It is well known (i) that the charges against St Stephen were that he taught that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the Temple and change the customs which Moses delivered; and (ii) that in his defence he laid stress on the fact that the true sanctuary of God is in heaven and not on earth. It is this line of argument which our author has developed into the Epistle to the Hebrews; only adding the account of the priestly work of Christ, which is peculiar to himself in the New Testament; and warnings against apostasy, which arise directly from the circumstances of his readers. It is true that in this epistle the idea has received a wider application, and the argument is employed with fresh force and added power, and the language used has been freed from all that is harsh and menacing. But the idea remains

<sup>1</sup> Here again it is impossible to give a full list. The reader is referred to the commentaries of Delitzsch or Lünemann.

<sup>2</sup> *Entstehung der altkath. Kirche*, p. 169.

the same. It is merely the language in which it is expressed which has been altered and improved.

This influence of St Stephen on the epistle would be easy to understand, if it were written by St Paul, and if there were anything in the circumstances under which he wrote it to remind him of the death of the first martyr. It is equally easy to understand if it was written by St Barnabas under similar circumstances. For St Barnabas was as much interested in carrying out the views of St Stephen as was St Paul; and if Chrysostom on that account speaks of St Stephen as ὁ διδάσκαλος Παύλου, he might equally well have called him "the teacher of Barnabas" also. Perhaps at the present day we scarcely realize all that this relationship meant. We are so accustomed to accept the views of St Stephen as correct that we forget that, when they were first expressed, they were a startling novelty. The Old Testament had clearly declared that the Gentiles would in future times be admitted to equal privileges with the Jews<sup>1</sup>. But it appeared to be stated with equal clearness that they would become members of the Jewish Church<sup>2</sup>, and would share the same burdens and responsibilities<sup>3</sup>. Nor had our Lord given any intimation to the contrary; either because He did not think His followers sufficiently advanced to receive this further revelation; or because He considered it a matter which they might be left to discover for themselves under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. When we are told in the Acts<sup>4</sup> that: "Certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved"; there is no need to suppose that they asserted anything

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxxvii. 4; Isai. xix. 24, 25, lvi. 7; Zeph. iii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxxvii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Zech. xiv. 16; Mal. i. 11.

<sup>4</sup> xv. 1.

but what they believed themselves. The vehemence of St Paul's attack on his Judaizing opponents must not blind us to the fact that they were probably as fully persuaded in their own minds as was the apostle himself. We confess that we should adopt the same position ourselves if we had only the Old Testament to guide us. St Stephen was the first man to perceive that if Christianity were to be a world-wide religion, it must be free from all national and local conditions. But naturally such views excited opposition and persecution, and ultimately cost him his life. It might have seemed that St Stephen was merely one of many instances of men, who were in advance of their age. It would have been so but for the fact that his views were accepted and carried out by two men of equal ability and equal influence to that of St Stephen himself. The fact that St Barnabas and St Paul were agreed in maintaining and proclaiming one main idea of St Stephen, makes it as natural to find a kindred idea reproduced in an epistle of St Barnabas as it would be to meet with it in an epistle of St Paul.

When we realize the influence which St Stephen has exercised on the whole plan of the epistle, resemblance in details becomes much less important. But at the same time we must not forget to notice that the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews is like the speech of St Stephen and like nothing else in the Bible. The *object* of the two is quite different, and accordingly the later writer omits the repeated instances of disobedience on which so much stress is laid by the former. But in other respects the resemblance between the two is much too close to allow of the supposition that it is entirely accidental.

In this section, read Hebrews first and notice how the ideas come from St Stephen. The resemblance is not in the

least due to the use of the LXX., and would be equally close if the passage were quoted from the A.V.

Heb. xi. 8 begins to quote from  
St Stephen :

8. Ἄβραάμ ὑπήκουσεν  
ἐξελθεῖν  
εἰς τόπον οὗ ἡμελλεν λαμβάνειν εἰς  
κληρονομίαν  
καὶ ἐξῆλθεν μὴ ἐπιστάμενος ποῦ  
ἔρχεται.

9. παρώκησεν  
εἰς γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας  
ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν  
μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν  
συγκληρονόμων τῆς ἐπαγγελίας  
τῆς αὐτῆς.

10 is Alexandrian idea of author.

13. Κατὰ πίστιν ἀπέθανον...μὴ  
κομισάμενοι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας.

14—16 Alexandrian ideas of author.

22. Ἰωσήφ τελευτῶν...περὶ τῶν  
ὀστέων αὐτοῦ ἐνετείλατο.

23. πίστει Μωυσῆς γεννηθεὶς  
ἐκρύβη τρίμηνον  
ὑπὸ τῶν πατέρων αὐτοῦ  
διότι εἶδον ἀστείον τὸ παιδίον.

24. πίστει Μωυσῆς μέγας  
γενόμενος ἠρνήσατο λέγεσθαι  
νιὸς θυγατρὸς Φαραῶ.

25, 26 Alexandrian ideas of author.

27. πίστει κατέλιπεν Αἴγυπτον  
μὴ φοβηθεὶς τὸν θυμὸν τοῦ βασιλέως.

28. Hebrews chooses an inci-  
dent in accordance with  
priestly character of book  
but idea same as in Acts.

29. πίστει διέβησαν τὴν ἐρυθρὰν  
θάλασσαν ὡς διὰ ξηρᾶς γῆς.

Acts vii. 2, 3. ὁ θεὸς...εἶπεν  
πρὸς αὐτόν

Ἐξελθε...τότε ἐξελθῶν.  
5. καὶ ἐπηγγέλιτο δοῦναι.

3. δεῦρο εἰς τὴν γῆν ἣν ἂν σοι  
δείξω.

6. πάροικον.

5. καὶ ἐπηγγέλιτο δοῦναι.

8. ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰσαὰκ...καὶ  
Ἰσαὰκ τὸν Ἰακώβ.  
5. αὐτῷ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ.

5. καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ  
κληρονομίαν ἐν αὐτῇ.

16 can only refer to Joseph : and  
cf. Josh. xxiv. 32.

20. ἐν ᾧ καιρῷ ἐγεννήθη Μωυσῆς  
ὃς ἀνετράφη μῆνας τρεῖς  
ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ πατρὸς.  
καὶ ἦν ἀστείος τῷ θεῷ.

21. ἡ θυγάτηρ Φαραῶ ἀνεθρέψατο  
αὐτὸν ἐαυτῇ εἰς υἱόν.

29. ἔφυγεν δὲ Μωυσῆς.

24 is the incident referred to in  
Hebrews.

28. Same events but a different  
incident.

36. ποιήσας σημεῖα...ἐν ἐρυθρᾷ  
θαλάσῃ.

St Stephen stops.

(d) The influence of St James on the epistle is only less marked than that of St Stephen and St Paul.

Luther came very near recognizing it when he described the Epistle to the Hebrews as containing not only "gold, silver, precious stones," but also "wood, straw, and hay." For the former would represent the ideas of St Paul: the latter the ideas of St James, the author of a "right strawy epistle."

The resemblance between the two is entirely in doctrine and position, and not at all in language or style. The attitude of our author towards Judaism is the same. This is recognized by the Tübingen school themselves and clearly stated by Schwegler<sup>1</sup>: "He touches the standpoint of James." Indeed, in the New Testament there is no one but St James with whom his views on this point are in complete accord. The attitude of St John to the Jews is distinctly hostile, and seems to reflect a later age of estrangement and antagonism. St Peter either wrote to Gentile Christians<sup>2</sup>, or else his position coincides with that of St John<sup>3</sup>. But the attitude of our author towards Judaism is as favourable as that of the great Hebrew bishop himself. Again, there is the idea of faith in this epistle. On this doctrine, as on others, the teaching of St James is clearly defined, and differs in some respects from that of St John or St Paul. Faith according to St James is the conviction of the existence of God, and of the reality of His rewards and punishments<sup>4</sup>. Now this is just the idea of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as is brought out clearly in the whole of chap. xi.: ἔστιν δὲ πίστις ἐλπιζομένων ὑπόστασις, πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων<sup>5</sup>. It is our conviction of the reality of unseen things.

<sup>1</sup> *Nachap. Zeitalter*, II. 321.

<sup>2</sup> Either alternative suits us equally well.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. i. 14, 18, ii. 9, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Jas. ii. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. xi. 1.

Or again, to take another great doctrine: the way in which we work out our own salvation. It is a commonplace that on this point there is an apparent contradiction between St James and St Paul<sup>1</sup>. But here, again, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews deserts St Paul and simply follows St James. The idea of Heb. xi. is taken from St Stephen, but the object and aim is quite different. The examples quoted are no longer intended to show the persistent disobedience of the Jews, but rather to illustrate the teaching of St James<sup>2</sup>: "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness."

But while there is this remarkable similarity between the ideas of the two men, there is very little resemblance in language and style between the two epistles, and a careful comparison will yield but little result. There is the interesting phrase ἐγγίξειν τῷ θεῷ, and there is the remarkable instance of Rahab; but there is nothing else. It would seem then that the similarity between the ideas of our author and those of St James does not arise from the dependence of the one epistle on the other, but from the long and intimate association of the two men.

This influence would be very difficult to explain if either St Paul or St Luke were the author of the book, for we find no trace of anything of the kind in their acknowledged writings. The association with St James would be difficult to account for, if the epistle were the work of Apollos, the Alexandrian Jew, for St James seems rarely to have quitted Jerusalem. But if the epistle were written by St Barnabas, everything becomes easy. For St Barnabas resided for

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 28 and Jas. ii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Jas. ii. 22, 23.

years in Jerusalem, and was thus brought into constant connection with St James, and naturally influenced by his decided and resolute mind. We see what this influence was from the Epistle to the Galatians<sup>1</sup>, where we are told that St Barnabas altered his whole conduct because of τινὲς who came from James, and who doubtless supported their advice by an appeal to his authority.

(e) The resemblance between this epistle and the First Epistle of St Peter is sufficiently marked and has been often noticed<sup>2</sup>. It led Bengel to suppose that our epistle was written to the Hebrew Christians of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia at about the same time as the Petrine epistle. It led Böhme to conjecture that this epistle was written by some one who was a disciple both of Peter and of Paul. It led the Tübingen school to what is substantially the same theory, only expressed from their point of view, that our epistle is an irenicon between the schools of Paul on the one hand and of James and Peter on the other<sup>3</sup>. More recently it has caused Mr Welch to maintain that both epistles are by the same author.

Among the points of contact between the two epistles Brückner draws especial attention to the fact that, in connection with the sacrificial death of Christ, both lay great stress (alles Gewicht) on His "precious blood"<sup>4</sup>.

Another noticeable feature is the intimate way in which faith is connected with hope and directed to the future rather than to the present<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> The resemblances are conveniently given in Rendall, *Theology of Hebrew Christians*, pp. 42—45, or W. Brückner, *Die chronol. Reihenfolge der N. T. Briefe*, pp. 36—41.

<sup>3</sup> Schwegler, *Nachapost. Zeitalter*, II. 22, 305.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. ix. 11—28 and 1 Pet. i. 2, 19, ii. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. xi. 1 and 1 Pet. i. 21, iii. 15.

There are also a large number of verbal resemblances which require to be noticed.

Thus we get :

ἀντίτυπος, 1 P. iii. 21 and Heb. ix. 24.

ἀγνοοῦντες καὶ πλανώμενοι, 1 P. i. 14, ii. 15, 25, and Heb. v. 2, ix. 7.

οἶκος (as figure of the Christian community), 1 P. ii. 5; Heb. iii. 6.

ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοι, 1 P. i. 1, ii. 11; Heb. xi. 13.

ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ...ζῶν, 1 P. i. 23; Heb. iv. 12.

τελείως ἐλπίζειν and τετελειωμένοι, 1 P. i. 13, and Heb. xii. 23.

γέεσθαι, 1 P. ii. 3, and Heb. vi. 5.

κληρονομεῖν τὴν εὐλογίαν, 1 P. iii. 9; Heb. xii. 17.

φιλαδελφία and φιλοξενία, 1 P. i. 22, iv. 9; Heb. xiii. 1—2.

εἰρήνην διώκειν, 1 P. iii. 11; Heb. xii. 14.

ἀναφέρειν θυσίαν τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1 P. ii. 5; Heb. xiii. 15.

ὁ θεὸς καταρτίσαι, 1 P. v. 10; Heb. xiii. 21.

In relation to Christ's work :

φανεροῦσθαι (to mark His appearance on earth): 1 P. i. 20; Heb. ix. 26.

ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων, ἡμερῶν (to designate the period), 1 P. i. 20; Heb. i. 1.

ποιμήν<sup>1</sup> (to designate Himself), 1 P. ii. 25; Heb. xiii. 20.

ἀμίαντος<sup>2</sup> (to denote His character), 1 P. i. 4; Heb. vii. 26, xiii. 4.

σῶμα Χριστοῦ (as the means of redemption), 1 P. ii. 24; Heb. x. 10.

<sup>1</sup> The use of this figure in St John would probably be regarded as derived.

<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps more likely that St Peter has borrowed this word from St James.

αἷμα ἁμωμον (with same idea), 1 P. i. 19; Heb. ix. 14.

Death of Christ, as having occurred "once for all," 1 P. iii. 18, and Heb. vii. 27, ix. 7, 26 f.

ἀναφέρειν ἁμαρτίαν (to describe its aim), 1 P. ii. 24; Heb. ix. 28.

ῥαντισμός and λύτρωσις (to describe its operation), 1 P. i. 2; Heb. xii. 24; 1 P. i. 18; Heb. ix. 12.

Finally the idea of Heb. ix. 26, ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, is found also in 1 P. i. 20; and we meet with the expression ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ both in Heb. xii. 2 and in 1 P. iii. 22.

This marked similarity between the two epistles may be explained in several ways. Mr Welch thinks it shows that the two were written by the same author, and this is certainly the most obvious explanation. There are however strong reasons for rejecting it, and at present we shall leave it out of sight. In this case the resemblance merely establishes connection and leaves it uncertain on which side the priority lies. Böhme, Rendall, and Farrar decide without hesitation that our author has copied St Peter: Hilgenfeld, Hausrath, Von Soden, and Brückner with much greater probability adopt the other alternative. Many ideas common to Hebrews and Peter (*e.g.* 1 P. i. 2, ii. 24) are in no way characteristic of the latter; and St Peter may well have got them from a friend, just as he has extensively borrowed from St Paul and St James<sup>1</sup>. But these ideas *are* characteristic of our author, and serve to distinguish him from every other writer in the New Testament.

The question however is not one which we are obliged to investigate any farther, for it is merely of literary interest and has no bearing on the authorship of the epistle. Either

<sup>1</sup> It is characteristic of the uncertainty attaching to this section that Weiss maintains that James has borrowed from Peter and denies that there are any Pauline ideas in 1 Peter.

supposition is equally consistent with the theory that St Barnabas was its author. If we conclude that our author depends on St Peter, we may compare the influence exercised on St Barnabas by the example of St Peter at Antioch, where the altered behaviour of the latter was one of the causes which led St Barnabas to alter also<sup>1</sup>. If we assign the priority to the Epistle to the Hebrews, we may remember that St Peter was always disposed to pay attention to the views of others, and that he was as likely to borrow ideas as to the priestly work of Christ from St Barnabas as from anyone else.

The resemblances between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Second Epistle of St Peter<sup>2</sup> are less striking, but they are sufficiently numerous and sufficiently close to form a strong argument that the author of one epistle was acquainted with the work of the other<sup>3</sup>.

We cannot lay any stress on the exhortation to *φιλαδελφία* in 2 Pet. i. 7, for the idea in that passage may conceivably be taken from the First Epistle.

The phrase *καθαρισμὸς τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν*<sup>4</sup> is a much more remarkable coincidence, for we only meet with it elsewhere in Heb. i. 3, and the idea is characteristic of that epistle.

The exhortation to make their calling sure<sup>5</sup> is very similar to that in Heb. iii. 14, and contains the same word (*βέβαιος*).

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 11—13. It is not intended to dispute the fact that the conduct of the other Jews also helped to bring about this result, but St Peter is evidently regarded as the most influential person.

<sup>2</sup> The best list is given by Von Soden on 2 Peter.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting for other reasons to notice that these resemblances with one exception come from the sections of the epistle peculiar to St Peter, and that the Ep. of Jude shows no trace of any connection with the Ep. to the Hebrews.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. i. 9.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. i. 10.

The statement in 2 P. i. 11, οὕτως γὰρ πλουσίως ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται ὑμῖν ἡ εἴσοδος εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον βασιλείαν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν would appear to recall Heb. x. 19.

The statement that our Lord<sup>1</sup> "received from God the Father honour and glory" is more like Heb. ii. 7 than any other passage in the New Testament.

If in 2 P. i. 19 we are told ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον, we read in Heb. ii. 2 that ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος ἐγένετο βέβαιος.

The idea in 2 P. ii. 20 is the same as in the equally striking and impressive passage Heb. vi. 4—6.

Finally the implied contrast in 2 P. iii. 2 between the prophets and their master reminds us of a more strongly worded contrast in the opening verses of the greater epistle.

(f) The only great writer in the New Testament who remains to be noticed is St John. The resemblance between his writings and the Epistle to the Hebrews is not so close that it cannot be disputed, but still there are several points of contact which are worthy of attention. In this case, if connection be established, it can only be due to the personal association of the two men, for any direct dependence of the writings of the one on those of the other is out of the question. The early date of the Epistle to the Hebrews renders it impossible that its author can have seen the Gospel of St John. The internal evidence of the Gospel shows clearly that any resemblances are not due to conscious or unconscious imitation of any other writing.

Under these circumstances, we must look for similarity between Hebrews and St John (if similarity there be) rather in thought and idea than in language and style.

The first thing that attracts our attention in reading the two books is the similarity of their introductions.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 17.

Dionysius<sup>1</sup> notices the same thing in connection with the Gospel and the First Epistle, and presses it to prove that they are by the same author: *συνάδουσι μὲν γὰρ ἀλλήλοις τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καὶ ἡ ἐπιστολή, ὁμοίως τε ἄρχονται.* The resemblance between the introduction to the Gospel and that to our epistle is equally close, and would seem to suggest some connection between the authors.

HEBREWS.

Object of Introduction is comparison of Christ with the prophets. Time is the same: *δι' οὗ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας.*

*πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως κ.τ.λ.*

*ἐν νιζ̄*

*κληρονόμον* is idea got from St Paul

*δι' οὗ<sup>3</sup>*

*καὶ ἐποίησεν*

*τοὺς αἰῶνας*

*ὡς ὧν*

*ἀπαύγασμα...καὶ χαρακτήρ*

*ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ*

*φέρων τε τὰ πάντα* is Pauline

ST JOHN.

Object of Introduction is comparison of Christ with a prophet. Time is the same: *ἐν ἀρχῇ<sup>2</sup>.*

Same contrast between Λόγος of God and partial knowledge of the Baptist.

*μονογενῆς*

*δι' αὐτοῦ*

*ἐγένετο*

*τὰ πάντα...ὁ κόσμος*

*ἦν*

*ὁ Λόγος<sup>4</sup>*

*ἔθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ*

<sup>1</sup> Eus. *H. E.* VII. 25.

<sup>2</sup> It may perhaps be necessary to point out that the time here indicated is the same as in Hebrews. The *ἐν ἀρχῇ* of St John is based on the *b'reshith bara* of Gen. i. 1, and *b'reshith* is not absolute but is in construction before *bara*, which is the reason why it has no article. A more exact translation would be: "When God began to fashion," referring to the same period as Heb. i. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Notice how both authors employ an intermediate agent between God and creation.

<sup>4</sup> St John has combined the whole teaching of Heb. i. 1 in a single word. Our author has the same idea, but has to use two words to express it.

καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος<sup>1</sup>  
τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν

ὁ αἵρων  
τὴν ἁμαρτίαν  
τοῦ κόσμου<sup>2</sup>

ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα κ.τ.λ.  
ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεός.

μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός.  
θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

It will be seen that the amount of resemblance is not sufficiently great to point to any knowledge by the one of the writings of the other, but that there are many points of contact between the two, which seem to deserve more attention than they have yet received.

Again, the Christology<sup>3</sup> of the two writers is markedly similar. It is a misleading method of statement to say that the Christology of this epistle is intermediate between that of St Paul and that of St John. It would be more accurate to say that our author has many Pauline ideas here as elsewhere, and also many ideas peculiar to himself, but that in many respects (however we explain it) he agrees exactly with St John.

It is true that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Λόγος is not yet personal, and that the author seems to be feeling about for a single word to express his idea. The simplest explanation of this is that it is a question of date, and that this epistle was written before the circle of St John had discovered the right word. We must remember that the

<sup>1</sup> This priestly and ritualistic view of Christ's death is a peculiarity of our author.

<sup>2</sup> These two words mark a characteristic difference between our author and St John.

<sup>3</sup> It is not wished to lay undue stress on this. The similarity may possibly be due either to the familiarity of Jewish Christians with these ideas or to the acquaintance of St John with Alexandrian thought. See Stevens, *Johannic Theology*, pp. 86, 87; or more fully Holtzmann on John, pp. 34—36.

ambiguity of the term λόγος, which made it so useful to Philo in concealing his difficulties, rendered it unsuitable to those who wished to convey definite teaching. It would only have introduced confusion to have employed the word before its meaning was perfectly understood<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, when our author uses it he is as vague and hesitating as Philo himself. Even St John was not quite certain on the point, for while the Λόγος is personal in the Gospel, it is impersonal in the First Epistle. Still we do not on that account say that the Christology of the one book is different to the Christology of the other, and similarly in the case of this epistle we must remember that it is a question not of words but of ideas. If in St John we have the Incarnation of the Λόγος, in Hebrews we have the Incarnation of the Ἀπαύγασμα. In both we have the eternal pre-existence: partly immanent in the Godhead, partly external and independent<sup>2</sup>. In both the pre-existing Being is born, lives, suffers, dies, rises again, and returns to His original abode in glory.

Again, the writings of St John and the Epistle to the Hebrews are distinguished among the books of the New Testament by the fact that they lay equal stress on the pre-existence and Divinity of Christ and on His full and perfect humanity. In other writers this balance of emphasis is usually much less evident. Baur points out how alien it was from St Paul's frame of mind to dwell much on Christ *κατὰ σάρκα*. But with St John the case is different. In his Gospel we read of our Lord's sufferings, of His hunger, thirst, and weariness, of His joy and sorrow, of His perfect human spirit. The First Epistle was mainly written to

<sup>1</sup> Brückner thinks the author of the Ep. to the Heb. purposely avoided using the term Λόγος of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> This is clearly pointed out by Chrysostom and Severianus (on Heb. i. 2, quoted in Cramer's *Catenæ*).

prove that our Lord had really come in the flesh against those who denied it. In the same way, our author in this epistle<sup>1</sup> insists on the humanity of Christ, often in language of startling boldness. Our Lord was made perfect by sufferings; He suffered when He was tempted; and that temptation was in all respects like our own. He made His petition to God, who was able to save Him from death, made it with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that He feared. Nay more, He learned obedience from His sufferings and was faithful, like Moses, to Him that appointed Him.

On the whole, it will probably be felt that the connection between this epistle and the writings of St John is not sufficiently definite to warrant any conclusion as to its authorship, though they seemed too suggestive to be passed over without notice.

The position of the epistle in the New Testament points to an author much more liable to be influenced by the views of others than St Paul appears to have been. It is also unfavourable for other reasons to the authorship of Apollos or of Luke. It is readily explained by the authorship of St Peter, or of St Barnabas, and possibly by that of Silas. For the account of St Barnabas given in the New Testament shows that he was almost as readily influenced by others as St Peter, while his early residence in Jerusalem made him acquainted with St Stephen and St James, with St Peter and St Paul.

5. The relation of the author of this epistle to Timothy<sup>2</sup> is often referred to in support of its Pauline authorship. The two are evidently on terms of the greatest friendship and affection, and yet it is asserted that our author does not

<sup>1</sup> ii. 10, 18; iv. 15; v. 7, 8; xii. 2; xiii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xiii. 23.

speak of Timothy as an equal, but rather as subordinate to himself. His language has "a tinge of authority about it" which would hardly suit Silas or Luke. He speaks as if the disposal of Timothy's movements lay in his own power, and seems to think that his friend will accompany him to Jerusalem if he so wishes it. The only uncertainty was in the date of Timothy's arrival.

But these arguments, even if we accept them, support the authorship of St Barnabas equally with that of St Paul. It is probable that both apostles were equally instrumental in the conversion of Timothy, and that it was true of Barnabas also that Timothy was to him *γνήσιον τέκνον ἐν πίστει*. In any case, the attitude of St Barnabas to his younger friend would naturally be tinged with the authority conferred by superior age and superior position—the same causes which gave authority to St Paul. It might be quite reasonable to urge against the authorship of St Luke that both Luke and Timothy were followers of St Paul, and that one would not give orders to the other, but St Barnabas was in every way St Paul's equal. In reality, the idea that the author thinks he has the right of directing Timothy's movements seems to be read into this passage. In this case the mention of Timothy has no bearing on the authorship of the epistle, for any member of St Paul's circle would probably be on friendly terms with Timothy.

6. The interest which the author of this epistle manifests in ritual and ceremonial, and the space devoted to this subject is easily explained, if the author is the Levite Barnabas, but would be surprising if he were St Paul, or St Luke, or the Alexandrian Apollos. We have the writings of the two former, and the difference in this respect between them and the Epistle to the Hebrews is very much the difference between the books of Kings and Chronicles in the Old Testament.

Nor is there a smaller contrast with the Epistle of St James, though that is the work of a man deeply interested in Judaism. In this respect our epistle is in striking contrast even to the Prophets and Psalms, and has no book in the Bible like it except the so-called priestly legislation in the Pentateuch<sup>1</sup> and the Book of Chronicles. It is generally accepted that these books were written either by a priest or under priestly influence, and the same inference would point to St Barnabas as the most likely of the seven names generally proposed for the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We have stated this argument first in a form in which it will probably be accepted by all because it is valid in this form even if we press it no farther. But in reality it would seem to be one of many indications that the author was himself a priest or Levite.

The whole structure of the epistle would seem to point to the same conclusion. We have already noticed that we have the same truths stated in the opening verses of this epistle which also form the teaching of the introduction to the Gospel of St John. But while St John uses them to prove that our Lord was both the long-expected Messiah and also the eternal Son of God, our author, starting from the same premises, draws the conclusion that our Lord is the royal priest. It is the great object and aim of the epistle to show that Christ was in every way qualified to be a priest, and the fact is the more noticeable because little stress was laid by the Jews themselves on this aspect of King Messiah's position.

Again, as the only priestly writer in the New Testament,

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth recognizes this when he says that the best preparation for a profitable study of the Epistle to the Hebrews is a careful perusal of the Book of Leviticus with the aid of his commentary.

our author's view of the Law is essentially different to that of everyone else. The rest as laymen regard the Law as a series of commands which they are rewarded for obeying and punished for disregarding. The Law is essentially moral rather than ritual, and is absolutely perfect as far as it goes, but it is external to us and thus it is possible to neglect it altogether. There is no important difference as regards their view of the Law between our Lord and His followers, or between St Stephen and St Paul on the one hand and the three on the other.

Our Lord, while on earth, was from a Jewish standpoint a layman<sup>1</sup> and thus regards the Law from that position. He regards it as a code, binding on all His followers, and regulating their conduct and behaviour. He lays down the great general principle in St Matt. v. 19, gives special applications in verses 21, 27, 33, and indeed throughout the Sermon on the Mount, and clenches the matter in the parable with which He concludes.

St Stephen and St Paul differ widely from the three in their views on many points: but they are at one as to their view of the Law.

The aim of St Stephen's speech was principally to show that the Jews received the Law *εἰς διαταγὰς ἀγγέλων* and yet did not keep it<sup>2</sup>.

It was the teaching of St Paul<sup>3</sup> that the Law is holy and the commandment holy, and just and good, but because it is commandment, there arises in us a desire to disregard and disobey it.

With St James<sup>4</sup> it is a perfect law, a law of liberty, a royal law, but it has to be kept in its entirety, and if we

<sup>1</sup> This is clearly brought out in Heb. viii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vii. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. ii. 13, 25—27; vii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> James i. 25; ii. 10.

break one commandment, we are guilty of all. The view of St John<sup>1</sup> is precisely similar.

The idea of our author is quite different to that of all of these. With him the Law means the ritual worship carried on at the Tabernacle and Temple. If that ceased, or the Temple were destroyed, or the Levitical priesthood were changed, the Law also came to an end<sup>2</sup>. Such a view even puts him in apparent contradiction to other parts of the New Testament, for while our Lord regards the Law as moral and declares that it is eternal<sup>3</sup>, the Epistle to the Hebrews regards it as ritual and declares that it is already repealed<sup>4</sup>.

Again, not only does the author of this epistle regard our Lord as a priest, but his whole idea of the Messianic salvation is a sacerdotal one. We have already noticed that the key-note is struck in the opening verses of the epistle: *καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος*<sup>5</sup>. The author then proceeds to show that our Lord was qualified to discharge this work, before he describes the work in detail. Directly this has been done he takes up the subject at once (ii. 17). Turned aside for a moment, he resumes at iv. 14 and henceforward the *ἱερατεία* of our Lord is the main object of the epistle, while His *βασιλεία*, though suggested by the text<sup>6</sup> on which our author based his sermon, is kept quite in the background<sup>7</sup>.

In accordance with this dominant idea, the object of the Incarnation was to qualify the future priest for His office, by making Him like His brethren. His life on earth is regarded as a necessary training and discipline, and its object and

<sup>1</sup> John vii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> vii. 12; ix. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 17, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. vii. 12.

<sup>5</sup> i. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. cx. 4.

<sup>7</sup> This is in striking contrast with Gospels, Acts, and Pauline Epistles.

aim was to prepare Him for His future work in heaven<sup>1</sup>. In regard to our Lord's death, there is not so much room for difference, for all the writers in the New Testament regard that death as the great atoning sacrifice. Still even here, the view taken in this epistle is in some respects unique, for the ritual of the Day of Atonement reminds our author that one of the two reasons for the death of the covenant victim was to supply the blood which alone rendered possible the entrance into the Most Holy Place<sup>2</sup>.

In other books the Resurrection is the fundamental fact of the Gospel, but in this epistle it is regarded as comparatively unimportant, is only mentioned incidentally in passing, and might easily have been omitted altogether. On the other hand, our Lord's Ascension becomes the greatest event in history, an event which divides the history of the world into two ages, for from it dates the beginning of the *ἰερατεία* of Christ. There is yet one more fact to notice in this connection. In other books the importance of our Lord's return to heaven consists in the fact that it enabled Him to send the Holy Ghost<sup>3</sup>. In this epistle that object is not so much as mentioned, and Christ's return is rendered necessary by the fact that on earth the existence of a divinely appointed order of

<sup>1</sup> Weiss sees one part of this and expresses that part clearly: "According to v. 1, 2 it is essential and necessary that the high priest be taken from among men and be partaker of human infirmity that he may discharge his office with an impassionate, and towards sinners, a mercifully disposed temper for their good. But this can be done by the Son of God whose name characterizes him, as a superhuman, divine Being, exalted above the angels, if only for a short time he be made lower than the angels and become weak and a mere son of man. The earthly human life of the Son of God appears therefore as a humiliation laid upon him by God with a view to his.....calling."

<sup>2</sup> Heb. ix. 12.

<sup>3</sup> John xvi. 7.

priests prevented him from discharging His priestly office<sup>1</sup>. Again, our author's view of heaven is exactly that of a Jewish priest, and unlike that of any other writer in the New Testament. He regards it as a beautiful Temple, complete in all its parts, where a full and perfect ritual is now being carried on, and where the worshippers share in joy and festivity, of which the annual assemblies and sacrificial feasts under the Law were a shadow and type<sup>2</sup>. There is, first of all, the outer sanctuary, the Holy Place, which is described as οἱ οὐρανοί, τὰ ἐπουράνια<sup>3</sup>, and through which our great high priest had to pass in order to enter the Most Holy Place. It is a striking consequence of the sacerdotal position of the writer that he regards the heavenly sanctuary, equally with its earthly counterpart, as becoming defiled with human sin and thus needing due ritual purification<sup>4</sup>. As a result, these Levitical purifications are as carefully carried out in heaven as on earth, but the heavenly are far superior to their earthly copies<sup>4</sup>. Passing through the Holy Place, we come to the veil which shuts off the heavenly Holy of Holies from the approach of men. At this point some little difficulty has been made of our author's meaning but it is quite simple. Our Lord's flesh corresponded to the Temple veil<sup>5</sup> because it prevented Him from entering into the Most Holy Place to execute His office, and shut off all approach from His followers. So long as our Lord's flesh still existed His sacerdotal ministry was still in the future. But as soon as He had put off the flesh, His priestly work began, and He was able to introduce us into the very presence of God. The means by which Christ enters the inner sanctuary is His own blood<sup>6</sup>, which He

<sup>1</sup> Heb. viii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 2, 5; xii. 22, 23; xiii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> iv. 14; ix. 23.

<sup>4</sup> ix. 23.

<sup>5</sup> x. 20.

<sup>6</sup> ix. 12.

has obtained by his own death, and which secures free access for all into the Most Holy Place<sup>1</sup>.

Passing through the veil, we enter the Holy of Holies<sup>2</sup>, where Christ is seated in the very presence of God.

Inside the sanctuary we find the heavenly altar on which sacrifice is even now being offered<sup>3</sup>. This is the reason why in ix. 14 our author connects the altar with the Most Holy Place. For the earthly and the heavenly Tabernacle must exactly correspond (*ποιήσεις πάντα κατὰ τὸν τύπον κ.τ.λ.*). But the heavenly altar is evidently in the Most Holy Place, for our Lord is in no outer sanctuary but seated at the right hand of God, and thus our author was forced to connect the earthly altar also with the Holy of Holies. Such a statement has frequently caused him to be accused of the grossest ignorance, but in reality his language is carefully guarded and is amply justified. He does not say that the altar was *in* the Most Holy Place, but only that it belonged to it: *χρυσοῦν ἔχουσα θυμιατήριον*. Its position outside the veil in the earthly Tabernacle was merely a sign of the imperfection of the type, for in reality it belonged to the sanctuary, but could not be placed there as the Levitical priests were not allowed to enter when discharging their duties. Still the fact of the connection between the altar and the sanctuary is recognised even in the Old Testament. Our author's statement is a literal

<sup>1</sup> x. 22.

<sup>2</sup> ix. 24.

<sup>3</sup> This can neither be the cross nor the Lord's table, for they are on earth, and thus we should get two altars, which our author declares to be impossible. So far as the symbolism is concerned, the altar might be our Lord Himself but such a supposition introduces difficulty and confusion, where without it all is straightforward and clear. De Wette is driven by the difficulties attaching to the explanations usually accepted to conjecture that the author connected no definite idea with the word. This in spite of the emphasis with which he uses it.

translation of the Hebrew of 1 Kings vi. 22 (hammizbeach asher ladd'vir), and in the vision of Isaiah<sup>1</sup>, it was expressly revealed to the prophet that the heavenly altar was in the immediate presence of God.

With the idea of the altar is connected that of the great high priest now acting on our behalf, and also that of the sacrifice which he still offers<sup>2</sup>. This last idea has occasioned much difficulty, for we can neither explain away our author's statement, as it is an important point in the doctrine of the epistle and is asserted with marked emphasis, nor can we so interpret it as to contradict his equally emphatic assertion that the great atoning sacrifice was offered once for all<sup>3</sup>. Here we are only concerned to notice that the heavenly Temple also has its proper priesthood, and its ordered sacrifices. Lastly, when the sacrifice has been offered, there follows the sacrificial meal, which the worshippers enjoy from that heavenly altar<sup>4</sup>. Nowhere in the Bible do we get such a priestly view of heaven as this, and it would seem to suggest that the author of it was himself an attendant at the earthly altar.

The stress laid in this epistle on the dignity and the necessity of the priesthood would seem to point to the same conclusion. The Levitical priesthood was instituted and ordained by God, and therefore no one can take the honour to himself unless he is called by God as was Aaron<sup>5</sup>. Our author even considers that the old priesthood can

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah vi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 3. De Wette, who refers it to Christ's past offering, acknowledges that thus understood it interrupts the connection of thought.

<sup>3</sup> For an attempt to surmount this difficulty, see Weiss, II. 205, 206.

<sup>4</sup> xiii. 10. Kay finely quotes from the Communion Service "Sursum corda."

<sup>5</sup> v. 4.

never be set aside in this world for any other and that no second is allowed to exist together with it.

Our author's view of the Law as ritual and ceremonial, naturally led him to regard it as dependent on the Levitical priesthood. "The priesthood<sup>1</sup> is for him the principal thing from which the whole consideration sets out; and the Law is a secondary thing, and the latter must be regulated in accordance with the former." In consequence, if for any reason the priesthood was changed<sup>2</sup>, the whole Law of God was changed as well<sup>3</sup>. This conception of the relation between the priesthood and the Law renders the more striking the fact that in the opinion of our author any blame of failure under the old system attaches not to the priests but to the Law under which they served<sup>4</sup>.

It is quite in accordance with the position of our author that he knows nothing of any then existing Christian priesthood<sup>5</sup> except the heavenly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is true that some have endeavoured to draw an opposite conclusion from individual passages but the meaning is rather read into the verses than fairly derived from them. A verse which is often quoted in this connection is x. 22, but there our author simply declares that a Christian layman is no longer excluded from the heavenly Temple as the Jewish layman was from the earthly<sup>6</sup>. A consideration of the preceding verse should have excluded all possibility of mistake, for there we find the one true priest, through whose mediation alone we draw near.

But if in this, our author is consistent with himself throughout, he is in striking contrast to the lay-writers in

<sup>1</sup> Baur, *Das Christenthum*, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Our author carefully explains how this is possible.

<sup>3</sup> vii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> vii. 18, 19.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. viii 4.

<sup>6</sup> McCaul has a learned and convincing note on this passage.

the New Testament: St Peter, St John, and St Paul<sup>1</sup>. Thus we find St Peter<sup>2</sup> telling his readers that they are a "royal priesthood"; St John<sup>3</sup> reminding us that Christ has "made us to our God kings and priests"; and St Paul<sup>4</sup> urging believers at Rome to "present their bodies a living sacrifice." The difference in this respect between our author and other writers is illustrated in Farrar's note on Heb. x. 22, where he easily proves the priesthood of the laity by quotations from every part of the New Testament. It may be well to add in conclusion that the technical and accurate language of our author is most valuable on a subject, where there is much misuse of language and confusion of idea. In the strictest sense there is but one priest, and one altar, and one atoning sacrifice<sup>5</sup>.

Thus far an endeavour has been made to show that the sacerdotal and ritual tone of this epistle would reasonably suit St Barnabas, but would be difficult to account for in the case of St Paul, or St Luke, of Apollos, or of Clement. There has been nothing to determine the question whether the author of the epistle was a priest or only a Levite, for a Levite would have regarded such matters from much the same standpoint as a priest<sup>6</sup>. Both orders were divided into courses, and shared in the ministry at the Temple, and took the same interest in ritual and ceremonial, and looked at things from the same professional point of view. If the position of the Levites was lower than that of the priests, they had a greater pecuniary interest in the due observance

<sup>1</sup> St James does not come in here, for no reference to sacrifice occurs in his epistle.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. v. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. xii. 1.

<sup>5</sup> This is clearly and accurately stated by Theodoret on Heb. viii. 4, *ἀλλὰ δῆλον τοῖς τὰ θεῖα πεπαιδευμένοις ὡς οὐκ ἄλλην τινὰ θυσίαν προσφέρομεν ἀλλὰ τῆς μᾶς ἐκείνης καὶ σωτηρίου τὴν μνήμην ἐπιτελοῦμεν.*

<sup>6</sup> See on all this Schürer, Div. II., Vol. I., 207—299.

of the legal ceremonial and the punctual payment of tithes and offerings, because they received a larger share than their ecclesiastical superiors did. Probably there was little to choose between the two orders, when it was a question of zeal for the Temple, or of interest in its ritual, or of sympathy for Judaism as it was understood at that time. The attempt to assign the authorship of the epistle to one class rather than to the other is thus rendered correspondingly difficult and will perhaps be dismissed by some as fanciful<sup>1</sup>. Still the stress laid by our author on the position and importance of the tribe of Levi would seem to suit the Levite Barnabas rather than a lineal descendant of Aaron, for it is in no case necessary to his argument and sometimes weakens the force of his comparison. He might just as well have said that the sons of Aaron receive the office of priest as that the sons of Levi receive it. It would have been just as simple to point out that "Aaron was still in the loins of his father" as to notice that Levi was. There was no more point in comparing our Lord's genealogy with the whole tribe of Levi than with the single family of Aaron. But while our author has gained nothing in either of these instances, he has greatly weakened the force of his argument and interfered with the accuracy of his comparison.

Our author's object is to bring out the priestly position of Christ in the narrowest sense, as qualifying Him to offer the great atoning sacrifice. Occasionally he draws the circle even narrower, and regards our Lord as the high priest who alone is allowed free access into the very presence of God. The fact that our Lord is occupied about holy things has no bearing on the argument of the epistle. The contrast is

<sup>1</sup> It is therefore advisable to point out that the rejection of the following suggestion does not in the least affect the validity of the preceding argument.

between our Lord and the sons of Aaron: between the priests who offer gifts and sacrifices on earth and the priest who offers gifts and sacrifices in heaven. The introduction of the idea of the Levites only distracts the attention from the main fact and weakens the argument. We see this clearly if we develop the idea a little: "Our Lord was not a Levite, because He belonged to the tribe of Judah." "The Levites are inferior to the order of Melchizedek, because Levi in the person of Abraham was blessed by Melchizedek." It is all quite true, but does not establish our author's argument, for our Lord's position might be superior to that of the Levites, without being superior to that of the priests.

Again, the introduction of Levi interferes with the force of the comparison. The contrast is really between Aaron and Melchizedek, and not between Levi and Melchizedek at all. We can see at a glance, how much better the argument would run in vii. 5—11 if Aaron were put instead of Levi all through. Aaron was still in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him, and therefore Aaron may be regarded as having been blessed by, and as having paid tithes to, Melchizedek. It is inferred from this that the priesthood of Melchizedek is higher than the priesthood of Aaron. So stated everything is clear, whereas the argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews is only intelligible to us because, though we read Levi in the text, we substitute Aaron in our minds. In the same way, some commentators<sup>1</sup>, though they do not seem to perceive any difficulty, yet instinctively in their notes on the passage change the word Levi and put Aaron instead. When we find so careful a writer as the author of this epistle weakening his argument and spoiling his comparison by employing the wrong word, we may be sure there is some reason. In some writers, it might possibly

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Wordsworth.

be less noticeable, but our author has written with the greatest care, and is quite as anxious about the words in which he clothes his ideas as about the ideas themselves. The question is one which requires an answer, and the simplest answer that can be given is that the author was himself a Levite. A Jewish layman in the time of the apostles would not have spoken of the tribe of Levi when the whole stress of his argument and the whole force of his comparison suggested the restriction to the sons of Aaron. Still less would such an idea have occurred to a priest. But the case of a Levite would be different. He must have been accustomed from childhood to think of himself as belonging to the priestly tribe. He had actually been engaged in service at the Temple. He would often have heard the comparison between the rival distinctions of the two great tribes of Judah and Levi. It was as natural for him to think of Messiah as priest as for a member of the other tribe to think of Messiah as king. In an epistle written by a Levite, we might naturally expect that something of this would appear. It is not that our author wished to encroach on the exclusive rights of the priesthood. Twice in his epistle (v. 4, vii. 11), when the idea was suggested to him, he brings out the distinctive position of Aaron. But he always writes of the priesthood of the Levites, because he always thought of the priesthood of the Levites, for after all a man writes as he thinks. The reason that we can often tell a writer's profession is not usually because he wishes to write from a professional standpoint, but because his ideas have got into a groove, and he does so involuntarily. If there is any truth in the suggestion that the author of this epistle lays especial and uncalled-for stress on the priestly character of the tribe of Levi, then it is an additional argument, so far as it goes, in favour of the authorship of the Levite Barnabas.

✓ 7. Again, the epistle, not only in isolated passages but in its whole character and contents, seems to show that its author was an old and influential member of the church which he addressed<sup>1</sup>.

The epistle seems to assume that the writer was intimately acquainted with the position and character, with the dangers and temptations of his readers, and that they on their side were equally well acquainted with him. He speaks as one who had known them from the beginning, appealing to the former days which both writer and readers remember<sup>2</sup>, and reminding them of their liberality and generosity in the past<sup>3</sup>. He speaks to them as an old teacher, expressing his astonishment at their slow progress, declaring his opinion that they have gone back and are not so intelligent as they were<sup>4</sup>, and complaining that much of the elementary work will have to be done over again<sup>5</sup>.

Such a long and intimate connection would in many cases produce a feeling of mutual affection and sympathy, and this would seem to have been the case here. The loving and affectionate attitude of the writer has been noticed already and was apparently reciprocated by his readers. The phrase *ἵνα τάχιον ἀποκατασταθῶ ὑμῖν*<sup>6</sup> not only indicates the desire of the writer to rejoin his readers, but also implies their longing to get him back again. He tells us that the separation was a grief and a loss to both sides<sup>7</sup>; and that both were eager for the separation to be ended. Indeed, the opinions of the writer were in many respects precisely

<sup>1</sup> The argument in this section depends on the acceptance of the arguments in favour of the destination of the epistle to the church of Jerusalem. For those who regard its destination as uncertain, the relationship between the writer and his readers has no bearing on the authorship of the epistle.

<sup>2</sup> x. 32—34.

<sup>3</sup> vi. 10, 11.

<sup>4</sup> v. 11, 12.

<sup>5</sup> v. 12.

<sup>6</sup> xiii. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Compare the use of the word in Mark iii. 5, Acts i. 6, Philem. 22.

those which would most endear him to those whom he was addressing. His pride in the Temple and his delight in its ritual would commend him to Jews of Jerusalem, subjected to the hated rule of Rome, and clinging to the Temple as the only relic of their national greatness. His sympathy with Judaism and his instinctive comprehension of the feelings and prejudices of his readers would help to bring about the same result. The very fact that he wrote such an epistle as this seems to show that he was assured of his popularity in the church which he addressed. It is alike improbable that any church would listen to such stern rebuke from anyone whom they disliked, and that anyone, who knew himself to be regarded with suspicion and ill-will, would have ventured to write such an epistle as this and have failed to see the folly and uselessness of the attempt.

This last consideration takes us even farther, for it indicates that the author of this epistle must have been a man of high rank and position in the church of Jerusalem. There is an assured tone of authority about it which has led Delitzsch to assert that its author can only be St Paul, on the ground that it must be by an apostle and that St Paul is the only apostle who could have written it. The assured tone reminds us of the apostles in their circular letter<sup>1</sup>, or of St Paul in his epistles, or of St John in his short letter to Gaius<sup>2</sup>, but is in striking contrast to the attitude of St Luke<sup>3</sup>. This argument would deserve consideration, whatever church was addressed, but it becomes much stronger when we remember that the church was that of Jerusalem. For that church had always been accustomed to look to apostles for guidance and direction, and to enjoy their personal supervision to an extent which no other church ever equalled, and thus would not be

<sup>1</sup> Acts xv. 24, 28, 29.

<sup>2</sup> 3 John 10, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Luke i. 1, 3.

inclined to submit to dictation from any one of humble position. Nor is that all. The tone of the epistle is not only authoritative but very severe. We are astonished, when we look into it, to find how large a part of it is taken up with warning or rebuke (ii. 1—4, iii. 17—iv. 1, v. 11, 12, vi. 4—8, x. 26—31, xii. 4, 5, 15—17, 25, 26). Indeed, the Epistle to the Hebrews reminds us of the Epistle to the Galatians, or perhaps in its mixture of affection and severity, and its calm assumption of authority, it approaches most closely to the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In either case, its tone closely resembles that of epistles written by St Paul to churches where his apostolic authority ought to have been acknowledged without dispute, churches which he himself had founded, and where no one had any right to interfere between himself and his converts. It is quite in accordance with this that our author always seems to support the governing body, to class himself with them<sup>1</sup>, and to look at things from their point of view.

But if the relation between the writer and his readers is indeed that indicated above, this section is nearly as fatal to the claims of most of the names proposed as the preceding section was. It is inconceivable that either Luke or Apollos<sup>2</sup> occupied such a position in the church of Jerusalem as was held by our author. The position of St Paul was high enough to entitle him to write such a letter to any Gentile church, but it would seem that he possessed little or no authority in the church of Jerusalem, and further was regarded with suspicion as unsound on the very subjects discussed in this epistle. On the other hand, St Barnabas here, as elsewhere, exactly answers to the requirements of the problem. He was one of the oldest members of the

<sup>1</sup> Notice in this connection, xiii. 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> See De Wette on *Ep. to Heb.* p. 126.

church of Jerusalem, and had been connected with it for about thirty years, when the epistle was written. The earliest notice we have of him in the beginning of the Acts<sup>1</sup> makes him resident in Jerusalem, and later on, at the time of Paul's conversion, we find him still there<sup>2</sup>. Later still we are told that he was sent from Jerusalem to Antioch, to inquire into the new development of church life that had originated in the latter place, and though we lose sight of him in Chapter xv., there is no reason to doubt that he continued to make Jerusalem his headquarters afterwards as he had done before. In any case, he was one of the oldest members of the church he was addressing, and would certainly know what his readers were at the beginning, and be able to tell them what they ought to be now.

Again, all the evidence we have before us tends to prove that St Barnabas was as popular in Jerusalem as St Paul was the reverse. The poor would not soon forget such an act of generosity<sup>3</sup> as that with which St Barnabas inaugurated his work among them, and he had kept them reminded of it by similar acts of kindness on two later occasions<sup>4</sup>. The feeling of gratitude would be increased when they saw that he had impoverished himself to help them and was now compelled to work for his own living<sup>5</sup>. Nor had his conduct in other respects done anything to diminish the popularity he had gained. His zeal in making proselytes would of itself only be to his credit, for all parties were agreed as to the desirability of this. His affection for Judaism would be of great assistance to him in such a city as Jerusalem, and his affection for Jewish Christians would do even more. We may be sure that the deputation from Jerusalem, who brought back such damaging reports

<sup>1</sup> iv. 37.

<sup>2</sup> ix. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Acts iv. 36, 37.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xi. 30; Gal. ii. 10.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 6.

about Paul, would vie with one another in praising the conduct of Barnabas. Finally the Clementine Homilies, after the interval of a century, take up the same tale and tell us that Hebrew Christians still cherished the memory of St Barnabas with affection and respect.

From all this, it follows that the tone of authority in this epistle would be quite natural if St Barnabas were the author. From the very beginning his birth, and education, and independent means would make him a man of mark in a poor and humble society. His position as a Levite would cause him to be respected in a city like Jerusalem, where the Temple and its services formed the chief glory, and where the ministers of the Temple must have been regarded with special consideration. Subsequently his influence had been increased by his marked ability and his noble conduct. Afterwards the authority conferred by personal character and general esteem had been confirmed by public recognition, for St Barnabas had been raised to the highest rank in the church, and now spoke with the authority of an apostle. In any case, he would have spoken with authority to members of the church of Jerusalem, but on the particular subject discussed in this epistle, his views were especially entitled to respect. He wrote to them with special knowledge of the point in dispute. The temptation which they had to resist must have been greater for him than for any of his readers. The sacrifice which he called upon them to make was as nothing compared with the sacrifice of wealth, and position, and ease which he had made already. He was entitled to speak to them with authority, not only because of age, and character, not only because of his double position as a Jewish Levite and a Christian apostle, but also because he had already done more than they were now required to do and because he

was merely urging them to walk as they had him for an example.

8. The purity of the Greek and the excellence of the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews are recognized by all and seem to show that the writer was a Greek-speaking Jew, and not a native of Palestine. Grote<sup>1</sup> reminds us that we are rather inclined to exaggerate the extent to which Asia was Hellenized by Alexander the Great: "When it is said however that Asia became Hellenized under Alexander's successors, the phrase requires explanation. Hellenism properly so called—the aggregate of manners, sentiments, energies, and intelligence—never passed over into Asia; neither the highest qualities of the Greek mind nor even the entire character of ordinary Greeks. All that passed into Asia was a faint and partial resemblance of it, carrying the superficial marks of the original." Even as regards language, though Greek was spoken everywhere, it was often coloured by national peculiarities and sometimes degenerated into such Greek as that of the Apocalypse and Ignatius. Winer<sup>2</sup> indeed puts the case even more strongly: "All the nations which after Alexander's death were subject to the Græco-Macedonian rule, and gradually accustomed themselves to the Greek language of their conquerors even in the ordinary intercourse of life—and especially the Syrians and Hebrews—spoke Greek less purely than native Greeks, imparting to it more or less the impress of their mother tongue." We are not here concerned to defend the accuracy of this statement as regards other countries, but Winer was certainly justified in saying that in Palestine the natives of the country would impart to the Greek they spoke the impress of their mother tongue. For Hebrew

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of Greece*, x. 208.

<sup>2</sup> *N. T. Grammar*, Moulton's translation, p. 29.

and Greek are in some respects the most opposite languages that ever existed, and so much is this the case that a classical training is sometimes considered a hindrance rather than a help to those about to begin the study of Hebrew. Hence the Greek used by a native of Palestine<sup>1</sup> can usually be easily detected. "A Frenchman<sup>2</sup> seldom writes idiomatic English. When he attempts to do so, an Englishman who knows French can generally detect a multitude of French idioms underlying the English words. Much more in days of old, when a Jew undertook to write Greek, was he likely to introduce Semitic idioms into his work."

Of course the difference between the styles of different authors must not be entirely lost sight of. We cannot classify the Apocalypse of St John with his Gospel nor either of these with the writings of St Paul. The Greek of the first was probably that ordinarily spoken in Palestine by those who had neither received any special training nor resided in any town where the dominant influence was Greek. The Gospel of St John was written by that apostle after long years of residence in Ephesus, a Greek-speaking city, and the Greek is grammatically very correct but it is such Greek as only a Jew could have written. Lightfoot as usual puts the case very clearly<sup>3</sup>: "The Greek is not ungrammatical Greek but it is cast in a Hebrew mould. It is what no native Greek would have written. As Grotius puts it, *Sermo Graecus quidem sed plane adumbratus ex Syriaco illius saeculi.*" The writings of St Paul are a little different, for he had received a learned education at the University of Tarsus and had a complete command of the Greek language just as a scholar of the present day would have. But at

<sup>1</sup> Justin Martyr and Tatian are only apparent exceptions.

<sup>2</sup> Wright, *Some N. T. Problems*, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> *Bible Essays*, p. 135.

the same time he is a thorough Jew, and though writing in Greek, he constantly betrays his Jewish origin; and Brückner<sup>1</sup> strikingly says in his account of the narrative given in the Epistle to the Galatians: "The form, in which the powerful thoughts are expressed, scarcely allows us to think of an author, who thought in Greek. It compels us to decide on a Jew." In short it is possible to detect their nationality in all the Palestinian writers of the New Testament, though the style differs in each.

When however we come to the Epistle to the Hebrews all this is changed. The author is a Jew but he writes Greek as a Jew born in England would write and speak English. The epistle shows no trace of any local peculiarity in language or style. It is just such an epistle as would have been written by a man who had been trained and educated in a place where Greek was the only language spoken, and where it was spoken in its purest form. Now Cyprus, the native home of St Barnabas, exactly answers to this description. Although from its geographical position, it was exposed to the influence both of Egypt and Asia, Cyprus was a thoroughly Greek island and had remained such throughout its history. It is true that at one time Phœnician influence threatened to become predominant, but this had been entirely destroyed by the great ruler Evagoras in the 5th century, B.C. In any case it was short-lived, and of all the Ionian islands none were less affected by it than Cyprus. Subsequently the long rule of Egypt must have produced greater effect and have introduced another set of ideas, but the influence of Alexandria would not materially affect the language spoken in the conquered country. It would add to the purity of the Greek spoken in the island that its connection with Athens and Attica had

<sup>1</sup> *Die chron. Reihenfolge der N. T. Briefe*, p. 171.

always been much closer than with any other part of Greece. Large numbers of Athenians were among the original settlers<sup>1</sup>, and the king of Cyprus was often a vassal of the Athenians. It was here that Solon came during his self-imposed exile, and his stay in the island was commemorated in the name of his city Soli<sup>2</sup>, for which he drew up a constitution similar to the one he had already devised for Athens. Later Evagoras made it one great aim of his rule to render the connection between his own country and the mother city as close and intimate as possible<sup>3</sup>. So that a native of Cyprus would probably speak as pure Greek as could be heard anywhere, and if he received a careful education would grow up an Atticist, and be capable of writing such fluent and elegant Greek as that of this epistle.

9. At the present day the Alexandrian colouring of the epistle is generally accepted as an established fact, and it is certainly a fact which has to be accounted for.

The aim of the book is much in accordance with the Alexandrian attempt to explain the connection of the Creator with the creature<sup>4</sup>, and so is the idea that the earthly is a type and copy of the heavenly. The epistle commences with Alexandrian terms, and going on a little farther we find the same tendency in the representation of the Λόγος in iv. 12, 13. In Philo the personality of powers is always doubtful<sup>5</sup>, and there is this reason that "in his doctrine of powers two representations cross, the religion of personal

<sup>1</sup> Meursius, *Cyprus*, I. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II. 16.

<sup>3</sup> There is an interesting account of this in Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, IV. 17—19.

<sup>4</sup> So Soulier, *La doctrine du Logos chez Philon*, p. 165, "The sole aim of Philo was to render possible the union of God with the creature."

<sup>5</sup> See Soulier, 155—165, for the way in which the Λόγος in Philo hovers between personality and impersonality.

and the philosophical conception of impersonal mediators, and he unites both ideas without perceiving their contradiction<sup>1</sup>." But in the Epistle to the Hebrews the personality of the  $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  is equally uncertain, for while Bengel and Biesenthal clearly show that the description is inconsistent with personality, on the other hand, the language employed makes it certain that our author did not regard the  $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  as impersonal. The acquaintance of our author with Alexandrian literature—with the Book of Wisdom, the Second Book of Maccabees, and possibly with the writings of Philo<sup>2</sup>—tells the same tale. Still more convincing is the marked resemblance between our author and other Alexandrian writers. His likeness to Philo does not necessarily prove that he had read the writings of the latter, for there is also a large amount of dissimilarity<sup>3</sup>, and Zeller points out<sup>4</sup> that much in Philo is characteristic of all Alexandrian thought. "What separates this remarkable and influential man from his predecessors is the completeness and consistency with which he has carried out their standpoint to a system. The union of Jewish theology and Greek philosophy had been already accomplished long ago<sup>5</sup>." A comparison with the epistle of Pseudo-Barnabas equally helps to connect our author with Alexandrian Judaism, for the common Alexandrian colouring of the two books has produced a large amount of superficial resemblance<sup>6</sup>, though in reality

<sup>1</sup> Zeller, Part III., Div. 2, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> The argument in favour of this is elaborately stated by Siegfried, *Philo of Alexandria*, pp. 321—330.

<sup>3</sup> See on this Dorner, *Hist. of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, I. 19—41.

<sup>4</sup> On common characteristics of Alexandrian theology, see Zeller, Part III., Div. 2, 246—253 and 265—267. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, page 338.

<sup>6</sup> Westcott brings this out in his note on the Epistle of Barnabas, in the Introduction to the *Ep. to the Hebrews*.

the views of the two writers are widely different. Later still we find another striking resemblance between this epistle and the Alexandrian Gnostic Basilides<sup>1</sup>.

This Alexandrian colouring of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the chief argument in favour of the authorship of Apollos, and is frequently urged against the claims of other writers. It certainly militates strongly against the supposition that the book was written either by St Paul<sup>2</sup> or by St Luke. In the case of St Barnabas, however, it is so far from being an objection, that it becomes an additional argument in his favour. For Cyprus, the native land of Barnabas, was peculiarly exposed to the influence of Egypt<sup>3</sup> throughout the whole of its history. It is thought that it was first brought under the rule of Egypt as early as the reign of Thothmes III., who is supposed to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus<sup>4</sup>. It was certainly conquered and made part of Egyptian territory by Amasis (B.C. 572—528)<sup>5</sup>. From the death of Alexander the Great to the deposition of the last Ptolemy<sup>6</sup>, a period of nearly 300 years, Cyprus formed part of the Egyptian empire. Then the wealth of Cyprus and the poverty of Rome<sup>7</sup> led to its seizure by the latter. But even this did not end the connection of Cyprus with Egypt, for the island was given back to Cleopatra by Julius Caesar, and the grant was continued by Antony<sup>8</sup>. So that the people of Cyprus must have become used to Alexandrian influence

<sup>1</sup> A good account of Basilides for the purpose of comparison is given in Neander, *Ch. Hist.* II. 47—71.

<sup>2</sup> The difference in this respect between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the other books of the New Testament is clearly shown in Siegfried.

<sup>3</sup> Rawlinson, *Hist. of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. II. p. 249.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 493.

<sup>6</sup> Strabo, Article *Cyprus*.

<sup>7</sup> Sextus Rufus quoted in Meursius, *Cyprus*, II. 19.

<sup>8</sup> Meursius, II. 20.

and Alexandrian ideas, for at that time Egypt was simply another name for Alexandria. We have a proof that Egypt possessed the power of permanently influencing those who came under her sway in the history of Israel from the Exodus to the Exile<sup>1</sup>. Only in the case before us there is no need to suppose that the influence of Egypt lasted long after her dominion had ceased. For the interval between the Roman occupation of the island and the birth of St Barnabas was very short, and during that time the connection with Alexandria had been maintained by commerce and trade<sup>2</sup>. It was the trade with Phœnicia which almost made Phœnician ideas predominant in the island in the 5th century B.C.; and Cyprus was as celebrated for its fertility and its mines<sup>3</sup> in the time of Augustus as it had ever been before. There can be no doubt that the influence of Egypt must have been distinctly marked in Cyprus in the time of St Barnabas, and even if that apostle had never been outside his native island the Alexandrian tone of an epistle of his would be sufficiently accounted for.

But there is some reason to suppose that he actually visited Alexandria. Conybeare and Howson<sup>4</sup> point out that as a Cypriote, a Jew, and a Levite, St Barnabas would naturally choose Alexandria out of the three great Universities of the ancient world as the one at which to complete his education. Bigg<sup>5</sup> reminds us that "according to the earliest tradition, that which is preserved in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies, Christianity was first preached

<sup>1</sup> A later example of the way in which a conquered district can adopt the ideas of the kingdom with which it is incorporated has been given by the attitude of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine after the Franco-German war.

<sup>2</sup> Mynster in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1828, p. 330.

<sup>3</sup> *Jos. Ant.* XVI. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. II. p. 607.

<sup>5</sup> *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 36.

in the streets of Alexandria by Barnabas." It is true that the Clementine Homilies are not a very respectable witness, but still there are several reasons which render it probable that we have here an actual historical fact. The Homilies would doubtless base their fiction on fact so far as was possible. Now in this case there would be no inducement to pervert the facts, and the early date makes it probable that we have a genuine tradition. This is rendered still more probable by the fact that the Homilies take Clement right out of his way to meet St Barnabas at Alexandria, and for this there can be but one reason, that they thought Alexandria was the place where Clement was most likely to find him. In any case, the suggestion of the Homilies would be a very likely one. We know from the New Testament that Barnabas and Mark continued their missionary work after they parted from Paul. Their tour of inspection through Cyprus would not take them long, and then they had the choice of three places to visit—the neighbouring coast of Asia, or Greece, or Alexandria. They would not go to Asia, for Paul and Silas were working there; and we know as a matter of fact that they did not evangelize Greece. This leaves Alexandria as the most probable scene of their labours, and the same reasons which led them to select Cyprus in the first place would lead them to turn to Alexandria in the second.

Finally, we have another and quite independent tradition to the same effect. Eusebius<sup>1</sup> asserts that St Mark first preached the gospel in Alexandria, and met with marked success, and he declares that this is an old tradition. At first sight this seems to contradict the tradition which assigns the work to St Barnabas; but in reality it confirms it. At

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* II. 16.

the time of the rupture with Paul, Barnabas and Mark were friends and companions, and where one went the other went also<sup>1</sup>. The work done belonged to both, but Eusebius mentions St Mark because he happened to be giving an account of him, while the Homilies mention St Barnabas because he was after all the leading person of the two. With the exception of this apparent discrepancy, the two accounts have a wonderful resemblance<sup>2</sup>, and mutually confirm and support one another. They seem to be different parts of one tradition connecting St Barnabas with Alexandria.

10. The pleasure we derive in reading the Epistle to the Hebrews comes not only from the grandeur of the thoughts but also from the beauty of the language in which the thoughts are embodied, the clearness with which the ideas are expressed, and the ordered method in which the argument is conducted. In other words, the epistle is the work of a skilled preacher and orator, who knew how to arrange his argument so as to gain over his audience<sup>3</sup>. Von Soden assures us that this epistle is composed in accordance with the recognized rules of the best teachers of oratory or rhetoric, and it will safely bear comparison with the published sermons of St Chrysostom, or of the best preachers either in ancient or in modern times.

Now all this reminds us that its traditional author (St

<sup>1</sup> If we accepted the account of the matter given in the *περίοδοι Βαρνάβα* (quoted by Swete on St Mark, p. xiv), we should be compelled to conclude that St Mark went on to Alexandria alone; for this book represents "the Apostle as suffering martyrdom in Cyprus, and adds that after his death Mark set sail for Egypt."

<sup>2</sup> This is seen clearly if we read them side by side.

<sup>3</sup> Bleek notices Heb. ix. 11—14, x. 19—25, xi. 32—40, xii. 18—24, etc., as showing the great preacher and orator.

Joseph) was also a noted preacher, who by reason of his skill and persuasive eloquence<sup>1</sup> received the honourable surname of Barnabas, a name which ultimately superseded his own, just as St John, the great preacher of Constantinople, is best known by his title of Chrysostom. Doubtless St Barnabas owed his ability in the first place to his own talents, for no amount of education can make a man a good preacher or orator, unless he also possesses some natural aptitude for his vocation. Still, when the ability is there training and culture can do a great deal to improve it. At that time this was so clearly recognized that rhetoric—that is to say, practice in composing and delivering speeches and addresses—formed part of the higher education of all students. Certainly no part of their education could have been more useful than that which accustomed them to clothe their ideas in elegant and fitting words, and to conduct their argument in an orderly and suitable manner. St Barnabas would doubtless have enjoyed all these advantages, and we learn from his surname that he had profited by them to the utmost. It is an additional argument for assigning the Epistle to the Hebrews to St Barnabas, that its author was evidently a skilled orator, and that we can scarcely imagine that it was composed by any one who had no knowledge of the art of rhetoric. This comes out clearly if we compare him with his great friend and rival St Paul. It is quite likely that St Paul, at the celebrated university of Tarsus, had enjoyed the same advantages and the same opportunities; but if so, either his Jewish mind or his bent of genius had prevented him from profiting thereby. Perhaps as a rigid Pharisee, he rather

<sup>1</sup> Philastrius notices this: "Haeresis quorundam de epistola Pauli ad Hebraeos...et in ea quia rhetorice scripsit sermone plausibili inde non putant ejusdem apostoli."

looked down on this branch of education. However that may be, the fact remains that St Paul was no orator. His addresses derived their force from the majesty of the thought or the earnestness of the man, and not at all from the language in which they were delivered. Even at the cultured city of Corinth his preaching was not with "persuasive words of wisdom." Nor is the case different with his epistles. They are grand because of the grandeur of the ideas contained in them, but regarded as literary compositions, their rank is low. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the directness and naturalness of the style of St Paul would not be without corresponding advantages. Skill and care in composing and arranging speeches and writings is of the greatest importance, but it has also its drawbacks in producing an appearance of artificiality and constraint. "When your audience have chosen a subject for you," says Lucian<sup>1</sup>, in his satirical advice to rhetoricians, "go straight at it and say without hesitation whatever words come to your tongue, never minding about the first point coming first and the second second." With rude and uncultured audiences the less elaborate speeches of St Peter or St Paul might easily prove more effective than the polished eloquence of St Barnabas. In our own time, one of the greatest preachers of the day proved an utter failure when he was in charge of a remote, country congregation. In just the same way, we find that in speaking to the uncultured Lystrians<sup>2</sup> St Paul takes the lead, and the celebrated preacher St Barnabas falls into the background<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This is taken from an interesting chapter on the subject of rhetoric in Hatch, *The influence of Greek Ideas upon the Christian Church*.

<sup>2</sup> They spoke Λυκαονιστί.

<sup>3</sup> The other explanation is that the ability of St Barnabas was to be found in his writings rather than in his speeches.

Nor is the case different when we turn from the speeches of the two men to their epistles. It is quite likely that the fervent appeals in the Epistles to the Corinthians or the Galatians would prove more effective with many than even the stately and perfect demonstration of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But with educated audiences the case would be different. They were accustomed to demand that speeches should be delivered to them in fit and suitable language, and were quick to discover and resent any departure from recognized usage. At Jerusalem it was perceived at once that the oratory of St Barnabas belonged to a different class to the speeches of St Peter or St John. Later on the Jews realized the fact that Felix was more likely to lend a favourable ear to their petition if it were stated in fit and proper form, and accordingly they sent a rhetorician<sup>1</sup> of their own to conduct their case. We can quite believe the tradition that the preaching of St Barnabas proved attractive to such an audience as he would get at Alexandria, just as we can understand that St Paul sometimes failed through disregard of mere technicalities. The witty Athenians hailed him with the title of *σπερμολόγος* as soon as they heard his method of speaking, and without waiting to learn what he had to say. The Corinthians readily deserted him for the learned and eloquent Apollos, just as they would have flocked to hear St Barnabas if he had given them the opportunity. - Nor is the case different with their writings. The epistles of St Paul have their own special merits, but they cannot rank with the Epistle to the Hebrews either as oratory or as composition<sup>2</sup>. At no period and in no church

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxiv. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bleek (*Introd. to N. T.*, p. 99) puts this strikingly, "It is hard to understand why, in a letter to such persons, Paul should have taken far more pains with his style and diction than he did when writing to

is there an abundance of such preachers and writers as the author of this epistle. In the apostolic church we know of only two men who were capable of composing such a work as this, St Barnabas of Jerusalem, and Apollos of Alexandria. And the argument in this section, so far as it goes, helps to confine the authorship of the epistle to one of them.

We do not desire to lay any stress on the three following arguments. They will only be accepted by those who ascribe the authorship to St Barnabas on other grounds. But for such readers they present interesting points of resemblance.

11. The author of the epistle lays great stress on kindness and benevolence to members of the Christian Church. We have the duty often enjoined and urged in various forms: *ἡ φιλαδελφία μενέτω* (xiii. 1). *τῆς φιλοξενίας μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε* (xiii. 2). *τῆς δὲ εὐποιίας καὶ κοινωνίας μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε* (xiii. 16). Indeed, the anxiety of the author on this point is one of the marked features of the short hortatory conclusion of the epistle. St Chrysostom notices this point and presses it in favour of the authorship of St Paul, but it would suit St Barnabas as well or even better. There is no character in the New Testament so distinguished by boundless and repeated generosity to the brethren as St Barnabas. His liberality deprived him of his property, and exhausted his resources, and ultimately reduced him to penury.

12. The anxiety of the writer in xii. 12, 13 that an erring brother<sup>1</sup> should have an opportunity of recovery is in exact

Greeks so highly educated as the Corinthians...while it is in them he confesses that he is but an *ιδιώτης τῶ λόγῳ* (2 Cor. xi. 6)."

<sup>1</sup> There is no contradiction between this and the author's stern warnings against total apostasy from Christianity.

accordance with the conduct of St Barnabas in the case of St Mark. Delitzsch has no idea that Barnabas was the author of this epistle, and yet his explanation of this passage might have been intended to describe that apostle. "Individual believers are exhorted to cherish peaceful relations with all members of the community, even with the lame, sickly, and weak. The improvement of such is to be aimed at, not by carnal contention, harsh acts of judgment, or uncharitable avoidance of their society, nor yet by merely setting them a good example in the purity and decision of our own conduct, while coldly waiting for the first advance on their side towards mutual explanation or agreement, but by earnest, active endeavours after a good understanding."

13. The strange phrase *παροξυσμὸς ἀγάπης* seems to recall Acts xv. 39, *ἐγένετο δὲ παροξυσμὸς ὥστε ἀποχωρισθῆναι αὐτοὺς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων*. Both the old friends must afterwards have regretted the temporary estrangement which had caused their permanent separation. The incident would linger in the minds of both, and especially in that of St Barnabas, who always strove to live in peace with all men, and who brings out the same point in this epistle: *εἰρήνην διώκετε μετὰ πάντων* (xii. 14). Here, again, the description given by Neander<sup>1</sup> of the author of this epistle would exactly apply to St Barnabas: "the author of this epistle seems to stand to Paul in the same relation as Melancthon to Luther; the one quiet and gentle, the other ardent and energetic." If St Barnabas had a weakness, it was that he was inclined to yield when he ought to have stood out, and though in this case the result had proved that he was in the right, he would none the less regret that the quarrel had ever occurred.

14. There are several indications in the epistle of some connection between the author and Italy, but they appear

<sup>1</sup> *Planting of Christianity*, Book vi., ch. 2.

too slight and indefinite to found any argument upon. We are told that friends from Italy were present with him when he wrote it. He expects Timothy, who has been set free from prison, to come to him shortly. We are not told in what place this prison was situated, but presumably it was in Rome, and if so our author was at that time in a position to hear the latest news from the capital. It would also seem that he was not far off the route by which Timothy would travel from Rome to Jerusalem.

It cannot be said that these arguments are very certain<sup>1</sup>, and they will not bear the stress which some have laid on them. It is enough to point out that any connection with Italy, if proved, would be as favourable to the claims of St Barnabas as to those of St Paul, or St Peter, or St Luke, for the tradition of the church makes St Barnabas labour as a missionary in Italy and ultimately become Bishop of Milan<sup>2</sup>. The tradition is late but there is nothing in it inconsistent with the earlier account which makes him preach in Alexandria also. If St Paul could preach and found churches in Asia and in Greece, in Rome and in Spain, St Barnabas, who was equally zealous, might labour both in Italy and Alexandria, especially as the communication between these places was for various reasons easy and direct.

<sup>1</sup> They finally amount to the single fact that friends from Italy were present with the author when he wrote the epistle.

<sup>2</sup> Winer, *R. W. B.*, Article *Barnabas*.

## THE AUTHORSHIP. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

The external testimony borne to the epistle has been left to the last because it can be considered altogether apart from all that has gone before and is not at all affected by any question of internal probability. In this section we are merely concerned with hearing the evidence. We cannot reject any witness, unless it can be shown that he is speaking, not of his own knowledge, but from conjecture derived from the critical study of the epistle. We are not entitled to accuse any witness of inaccuracy or inconsistency, or self-contradiction, when his various statements are capable of being easily reconciled with one another. On the other hand, any witness ought to be in a position which would allow him to have a knowledge of the facts, and we shall not go far wrong if we chiefly direct our attention to the first three centuries, and regard later evidence as valuable only for explaining or confirming earlier tradition.

The usual view taken of the external evidence is that it is a case of conflicting traditions<sup>1</sup>—the authorship of the epistle being ascribed to St Barnabas by the church of Africa and to St Paul by the church of Alexandria. Even so, the external evidence would form an additional argument in favour of St Barnabas. But it will be seen in the course of this investigation that the Barnabas tradition was

<sup>1</sup> Robertson Smith in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

not only early but wide-spread and was held by "other churches besides Africa<sup>1</sup>," even if we cannot accept the suggestion of Köstlin<sup>2</sup> that the tradition originated in the Eastern church and thence spread to the West. Nor, while we hesitate to limit the tradition to any particular branch of the church, are we able to discover any strong opposing Pauline tradition during the first three centuries. Such a supposition is altogether inconsistent with the history of the reception of the epistle, which differs from that of any other of the *ἀντιλεγόμενα* in the New Testament. In other cases we find that a disputed book was at first unknown in one part of the church and only gradually gained general recognition. Thus the Epistle of St James was unknown in the West, but recognized in the East, whereas the Epistle of St Jude was recognized in the West, but unknown in the East. The case of the Epistle to the Hebrews is quite different, for there is clear evidence that it was known in every branch of the church from a very early period. In the Roman church it is frequently quoted by Clement before the century is out, while Tertullian speaks of it as current in his time in the church of Africa. In the Eastern church it is referred to by Pinytus and Justin Martyr about the middle of the second century, while in the Alexandrian church the knowledge of it had been handed down from *οἱ ἀρχαῖοι*. But while the epistle was universally known, it was usually regarded as inferior in position to the undisputed epistles of St Paul.

In the West it was almost unanimously rejected and put outside the Canon. In Italy we get no recognition of it as authoritative till the middle of the fourth century<sup>3</sup>, and at

<sup>1</sup> Zahn, *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*, Div. I., p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. Jahrbuch* of Baur and Zeller, 1854, p. 442.

<sup>3</sup> The proof of this and similar statements is given later.

an even later date Jerome says expressly, "Latina consuetudo non recipit." In Africa we have no certain acceptance till we come to St Augustine; and in receiving it into the Canon he throws himself entirely on the attitude of the Eastern church, "Magis me movet auctoritas ecclesiarum orientalium, quae hunc quoque in canonicis habet." Nor is the case different in the early Eastern church, for though most regarded the epistle as canonical, many considered it as inferior to the undisputed epistles of St Paul.

Polycarp, though he quotes the New Testament so freely, never appeals to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Irenæus does quote it, but there is no reason to suppose that he regarded it as authoritative, for it is put in significant connection with an apocryphal book. Nor is it likely that he would have yielded so readily to Western doubts if he had placed this book on a level with the other Pauline epistles.

Zahn<sup>1</sup> is of opinion that the epistle was not included in the earliest edition of the Peshito, and the fact would form a strong argument against the acceptance of its Pauline authorship by the early Syrian church. It is quite possible that he is mistaken in this, but even in that case the fact that in the Peshito, the epistle is placed at the end of all the epistles of St Paul, even after those written to private persons, shows that "it was added as an appendix to the Pauline epistles as by a like-minded man<sup>2</sup>." For, while the order of groups in the New Testament is in many cases accidental, for each group was written on a separate roll, the order in the Pauline epistles is important, for there

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*, Div. I., p. 429.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 966. This conclusion is however disputed by Hofmann (*Die heilige Schrift, N. T.*, v. 45). He thinks that this arrangement was intended to mark the distinction between the epistles sent to Gentiles and the letter addressed to Jewish Christians.

is no trace of these epistles having ever been isolated from one another<sup>1</sup>. It is quite in accordance with this inferior position of the epistle, that Eusebius subsequently hesitated whether it ought to be regarded as canonical and authoritative or merely as unauthoritative and ecclesiastical. He himself adopted the former opinion, and was followed by the Nicenes generally, but the Arians accepted the other alternative and maintained that the book could not be appealed to in disputes about doctrine.

In the Alexandrian church the epistle was highly valued, for both its teaching and also the manner in which this teaching was conveyed suited the great masters of the Catechetical school. But even at Alexandria there are signs that originally the Epistle to the Hebrews was not put on the same level with the other epistles.

Basilides in the second century regarded it as unauthoritative and herein probably followed the opinion of the church. He cannot have rejected the book on doctrinal grounds for it would have suited his teaching better than any book in the Bible. It may be possible to set on one side the evidence of Basilides on the ground that he was a heretic, but we cannot give such an explanation of the position of the epistle in the Alexandrian Canon. In Clement, it is separated altogether from the epistles of St Paul and put next the Apocrypha. Origen, in accordance with his views of its Pauline character, placed it next to the Pauline epistles but still put it at the end of them all. Its position in the Memphitic varies, but it would seem that originally<sup>2</sup> it followed all the Epistles of St Paul. Indeed it is most significant that the three great Versions of the early church—the Old Latin, the Peshito, and the Mem-

<sup>1</sup> Zahn, Div. II., p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> This is discussed later.

phitic—agree in either excluding the epistle from the Canon or regarding it as an appendix to the epistles of St Paul. We have already stated that this general consent as to the position of the epistle indicates a wide-spread belief that only indirectly was it either Pauline or apostolic. It is true that several other explanations have been given but none can be considered satisfactory. We may be quite sure that the rejection was not caused by anything in the epistle itself, for there is no book in the Bible which shows more evident proof of ability and inspiration. Others have suggested that the epistle was regarded less favourably because of the use made of it by heretics, but such a suggestion does not seem in accordance with the facts. The Montanist Tertullian decisively rejects its authority, and the principal doctrine of Montanism<sup>1</sup> derives less support from this epistle than from any other doctrinal treatise in the New Testament. The Novatianists never appealed to it; and the church of Africa, where there was most sympathy with this frame of mind, is the church where the epistle was most decisively rejected. It is true that the Arians appealed to this book in defence of their heresy, but the period during which the book was rejected, or doubted, or relegated to a lower place is the period before Arius had ever been heard of. It is the opinion of Hofmann<sup>2</sup> that the stumbling-block was the Jewish tone of the epistle: “The Epistle to the Hebrews remained in the East whither it had been addressed and was there well-known and honoured. The Western church did not receive it because it was addressed to a Jewish Christendom.” On this it is enough to remark that the explanation does not account for the facts, and that

<sup>1</sup> The government of the church by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Delitzsch, I. 17.

there is no instance of the attitude of the whole church towards an acknowledged book of Holy Scripture being determined by doctrinal tendencies or inclinations.

It was neither the teaching of the epistle nor the use made of it by heretics which affected its position in the Canon but simply the question of its apostolic authorship. In opposition to the heretics, the idea soon sprang up in the church that a book to be canonical must be apostolic as well<sup>1</sup>. We meet with this already in the Muratorian Fragment, and it is fully developed in Tertullian. It explains the history of the Apocalypse in the East and of this epistle in the West.

Where the Epistle to the Hebrews was considered not Pauline at all, it was immediately rejected. Where it was regarded as only indirectly Pauline, it was accepted but put on a lower level than his other epistles. Where it was believed to be the direct work of the apostle—whether in its present form or in an Aramaic original—it was naturally put on a level with his other writings.

The history of the reception of the Apocalypse tells us the same tale. It is one of the undisputed books of the early church. But gradually doubts arose whether the John who wrote it was the apostle or someone else of the same name. So Eusebius distinctly hesitates whether to account it canonical or ecclesiastical, and the later Eastern church generally rejects it. We meet with the same tendency in the anxiety to connect the Gospel of St Mark with the teaching of St Peter, or the Gospel of St Luke with the teaching of St Paul.

In accordance with this, we often find the New Testament spoken of as apostolic writings.

<sup>1</sup> See on all this, Credner-Volkmar, *Gesch. des Kan.*

Thus the Muratorian Fragment: "neque inter prophetas...neque inter apostolos."

Rufinus: "evangelia et apostolos<sup>1</sup>."

Gelasius: "evangelicas et apostolicas scripturas<sup>2</sup>."

It follows from all this that an unapostolic work would stand little chance of acceptance unless sheltered by the authority of an apostle, and that early doubts as to the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews would fully account for its position in the Canon. Tertullian is manifestly anxious to exalt the epistle, but considers that an independent work by St Barnabas can only hold a distinctly inferior position. Clement, Origen, Maier, Bisping, Welch hold the most diverse views as to the authorship of the epistle but agree in trying to shelter it under the name of an apostle. Jerome<sup>3</sup> expressly brings out this point in his apology for the epistle, "Illud nostris dicendum est...nihil interesse cujus sit<sup>4</sup> cum ecclesiastici viri sit." Nor can we even say that this opinion was confined to the early church, for we find in our day Maier distinctly stating that the canonicity of the Epistle to the Hebrews depends upon its apostolic authorship.

The opinion that this epistle was widely regarded in the early church as the work of St Paul is largely based on the supposition that all who speak of it as Παύλου must intend to assert its Pauline authorship. But this is by no means always the case for the phrase is used by those who denied the Pauline authorship<sup>5</sup>, or who were quite uncertain who

<sup>1</sup> Credner-Volkmar, *Ges. des Kan.*, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. ad Dardanum*, 129.

<sup>4</sup> Origen, Dionysius and Jerome are the three great exceptions in the early church to the prevailing opinion. On this point Eusebius deserts his teacher.

<sup>5</sup> We are compelled to use this expression for want of a better. In reality it is most misleading, for it suggests that the question of the

the author was, equally with those who regarded the epistle as the work of the apostle himself. In reality the phrase is as indefinite as our modern phrase "Pauline" and has no bearing at all on the question of authorship. Origen repeatedly and emphatically cites the epistle as Paul's<sup>1</sup>, though he expressly rejected the Pauline authorship.

Thus in his seventh Homily on Joshua: "Novissime autem ille veniens qui dixit: puto autem nos deus novissimos apostolos ostendit, et in quatuordecim epistolarum suarum fulminans tubis" &c.

Nor is he less decided in the Epistle *ad Africanum*, chap. 9: ἀλλ' εἰκός τινα θλιβόμενον... συγχρήσασθαι τῷ βουλήματι τῶν ἀθετοίντων τὴν ἐπιστολήν, ὡς οὐ Παύλῳ γεγραμμένην. πρὸς δὲ ἄλλων λόγων κατ' ἰδίαν χρῆζομεν εἰς ἀπόδειξιν τοῦ εἶναι Παύλου τὴν ἐπιστολήν.

Origen was quite convinced that Hebrews was a Pauline epistle though he was equally certain that St Paul was not its real author.

It is of course easy to maintain our own meaning of the phrase "Pauli," and to accuse Origen and others of inconsistency and self-contradiction if they use it in any other sense. But there are other instances where we are forced to understand "Pauli" to mean Pauline, or else we find ourselves quite unable to understand the author's meaning.

Jerome's celebrated account<sup>2</sup> of the reception of the epistle in the Eastern church may serve as one illustration.

Pauline authorship had already been mooted at a very early period. Tertullian rejected the Pauline authorship, but he had no idea that anyone had ever connected the epistle with St Paul. Irenæus rejected the Pauline authorship, but this may merely mean that he ascribed it to someone else. If we forget this caution we are tempted mentally to antedate the Pauline tradition by a couple of centuries.

<sup>1</sup> Copious references are given in Bleek, 1., pp. 100—105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Dardanum*, 129.

“Illud nostris dicendum est hanc epistolam quae inscribitur ad Hebraeos non solum ab ecclesiis orientis sed ab omnibus retro ecclesiasticis Graeci sermonis scriptoribus quasi Pauli apostoli suscipi, licet plerique eam vel Barnabae vel Clementis arbitrentur.” It is obvious that “Pauli apostoli” must here be taken to mean Pauline, or else Mynster’s<sup>1</sup> criticism would be perfectly just: “Jerome cannot possibly say in one breath that all Greek-writing historians have accepted the epistle as Paul’s and at the same time that most ascribed it to another author.”

Nor was this indefiniteness confined to the early church. Bisping is quite as positive as Origen that the epistle was St Paul’s, but attaches less importance to the phrase than any writer we have yet spoken of. For he considers that Clement composed it quite independently, and that St Paul merely accepted it as satisfactory and added some salutations.

It will be found to be necessary in each case to examine the meaning of the phrase “Pauli” in order to ascertain the exact force we must assign to it. When we do so, we shall find that the phrase did not mean precisely the same in the Eastern church as it did at Alexandria, while in the early Western church it does not occur at all.

In the West it was held that whoever wrote the epistle was also its independent author, and there was for some time no tendency to connect it with St Paul.

In the East it was generally considered that the epistle was in some sense St Paul’s. This is emphatically stated by Jerome. But no one in the first three centuries considered that it was Pauline in the sense of authorship. The meaning attached to the phrase in this branch of the church is

<sup>1</sup> *Studien und Kritiken*, 1829, p. 323.

well and clearly put by Alford<sup>1</sup>: "A general conventional reception of the epistle as St Paul's prevailed among the Greeks. To this their writers (without exception, according to Jerome: but that is a loose assertion, as the preceding pages will show) conformed, still in most cases entertaining their own views as to Barnabas or Clement having written the epistle, and thinking it of little moment, seeing that confessedly it was the work of a 'vir ecclesiasticus,' and was stamped with the authority of public reading in the churches."

At Alexandria the phrase seems to have had a slightly different meaning. There was a strong and unbroken tradition that the epistle was St Paul's because the thoughts contained in it were Pauline. But this did not necessarily mean that they were exclusively so. *ἡ δὲ φράσις<sup>2</sup> καὶ ἡ σύνθεσις ἀπομνημονεύσαντός τινος καὶ ὡσπερὶ σχολιογραφῆσαντός τινος τὰ εἰρημένα ὑπὸ τοῦ διδασκάλου.* The language used is sufficiently indefinite to allow of a large amount of independence in the actual writer of the epistle.

These differing views need occasion no surprise, for they are the natural result of the circumstances under which the epistle was written.

Friends from Italy were present with the author when he wrote it, and so would know that he wrote quite independently, and that St Paul had nothing to do with its authorship or composition.

In the East the case was a little different. The epistle had been written by a friend of St Paul, and quite possibly at the instigation of the apostle, it embodies many of his ideas, and was probably carried by persons who were his acquaintances or friends. The churches which received such a

<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV., p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Origen in Eus. *H. E.*, VI. 25.

letter naturally regarded it as Pauline, though not quite to the same extent as they considered the Gospel of St Luke to be Pauline. Only as they were in a position to know who the writer really was, there was no danger of their confusing him with St Paul.

The position of the church of Alexandria differed from either. It was neither the church to which the epistle was written, nor the church from which it was sent. Consequently they were inclined to emphasize the influence of St Paul over the mind of the writer, and to make that influence a more important thing than the individuality of the actual writer.

These three views require no explanation, for though different, they are not contradictory, but complementary. They are all true and all add materially to our knowledge of the epistle. All modern critics adopt the Western view that the epistle is the independent work of its author. No one any longer supposes him to have been the *interpres* of St Paul. The signs of originality in the book are too numerous, and too evident, to allow any longer of any dispute.

Nor is there any hesitation in adopting the Eastern view that the author was an associate of St Paul. Every candidate hitherto proposed has belonged to the circle of St Paul, and Alford is so sure of this that he tries to discover the author by going over the list of Paul's friends and eliminating all unlikely names.

Finally, if this investigation has shown anything at all, it has shown that the Alexandrian view is correct. In the early church, the kindred views of St Stephen and St Paul would be classed together as Pauline, and we have seen that to these two our author owes not merely many of the thoughts contained in the epistle, but the very idea and

structure of the book itself, so that it may be regarded as Pauline in a much stricter sense than was ever intended by Origen. In any case, there is no objection to our asserting that the epistle is St Paul's in the same restricted sense as Origen did, and yet substituting for his *ignotus quidam* the name of the real author, St Barnabas.

## THE WESTERN CHURCH.

In the Western church we have a strong and uniform tradition that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by St Paul and did not form part of the Canon of Scripture. As an uncanonical book, the Epistle to the Hebrews is quoted less frequently than it would otherwise be, and when referred to, is often cited anonymously. As regards the question of the Pauline authorship, the evidence leaves little to be desired, and is clearly stated by Jerome<sup>1</sup>: “sed et apud Romanos usque hodie quasi Pauli apostoli non habetur.” But it is only occasionally that any writer informs us who was actually considered to be the author of the epistle. Still there is reason to believe that the original tradition of the Western church—both in Italy and in Africa—assigned the authorship to St Barnabas.

Clement of Rome is the first writer to quote the epistle but he gives us no assistance, for though he refers to it repeatedly, he always does so without naming the author.

The succeeding writers<sup>2</sup>, the writer of the Muratorian Fragment, Caius, Hippolytus are all negative witnesses, who either deny the Pauline authorship or exclude the epistle from the Canon, but give us no positive information

<sup>1</sup> *Catalog. Script. Eccles.*, ch. 59.

<sup>2</sup> It is uncertain for what reason Marcion rejected the epistle. Stuart strangely considers that it was the influence of Marcion which decided the position of the Western church.

as to whom the Roman Church at this time considered the author to be.

The evidence of the Old Latin belongs to this period if we may accept it as proved that when the Pauline Epistles were first translated<sup>1</sup>, the collection did not contain the Epistle to the Hebrews. The absence of any statement on this subject in the great work of Irenæus against the Gnostics is a serious loss, for otherwise we might have learnt what was the state of opinion in the Roman church towards the close of the second century.

But if Irenæus ignores the epistle, the other great author of this period amply atones. For in his treatise, *De Pudicitia*<sup>2</sup>, Tertullian has given us the most precise and definite information as to the state of opinion in the African church in his time :

“Nolo autem ex redundantia alicujus etiam comitis apostolorum testimonium superducere, idoneum confirmandi de proximo jure disciplinam magistrorum. Extat enim et Barnabae titulus ad Hebraeos, adeo satis auctoritatis viri, ut quem Paulus juxta se constiterit in abstinentiae tenore.... Et utique receptior apud ecclesias epistola Barnabae illo apocrypho pastore moechorum....Hoc qui ab apostolis didicit et cum apostolis docuit, nunquam moechno et fornicatori secundam poenitentiam promissam ab apostolis norat.”

The first thing that strikes us in reading this statement is that Tertullian is evidently striving to exalt the epistle because it suited his views, and yet does not venture to make it absolutely authoritative or to include it in the Canon of Scripture. Nor is the reason for this hard to find.

<sup>1</sup> The question of the origin of this version is involved in great obscurity. That part of it which concerns our epistle is discussed with great thoroughness by Westcott, *N. T. Canon*, pp. 248—266.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. 20.

It is simply that Barnabas was not regarded as an apostle but merely as *comes apostolorum*, and that consequently his name was not sufficient to entitle his book to rank among the apostolical Scriptures. The meed of praise bestowed upon him is strikingly like that paid to Elisha<sup>1</sup>: "Here is Elisha...who poured water on the hands of Elijah."

The value of this testimony has been called in question for two different reasons:

It has been said<sup>2</sup> that the assertion of Tertullian is merely critical conjecture derived from the study of the epistle itself like the similar statement of Clement of Alexandria. In reality the two cases are quite different. The resemblances between the epistle and the writings of St Luke lie on the surface and are evident to all, whereas we have no other work of St Barnabas with which to compare this, and are compelled to go much farther into the question before we discover the reasons which render his authorship probable. We decide that there was no fixed tradition in the Alexandrian church connecting the epistle with St Luke because no two witnesses tell the same tale; but in the Latin church there is no early testimony connecting the epistle with any name but that of St Barnabas.

Others assert that this cannot be the original tradition of the Western church because Jerome makes it originate with Tertullian himself. If this were so we should have to put aside the evidence of the most important witness for St Barnabas, as others reject the testimony of Pantænus, the most important witness for St Paul. But the assertion is certainly stronger than is warranted by the language of Jerome and is probably altogether mistaken. His words are as follows<sup>3</sup>: "Epistola autem quae fertur ad Hebraeos

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings iii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> By Alford.

<sup>3</sup> *Catalog. Script. Eccles.*, ch. 5.

non ejus creditur propter stili sermonisque distantiam, sed vel Barnabae juxta Tertullianum, vel Lucae evangelistae juxta quosdam, vel Clementis Romanae postea ecclesiae episcopi, quem aiunt sententias Pauli proprio ordinasse et ornasse sermone.”

In any case Jerome merely cites Tertullian as supporting a particular opinion but does not necessarily assert that he originated it. It is more probable that Jerome is merely contrasting the different ways in which the epistle was ascribed to the authors named. “Juxta Tertullianum,” Barnabas was the independent author, whereas “juxta quosdam,” Luke or Clement was a mere translator: “quem aiunt sententias Pauli proprio ordinasse et ornasse sermone.” It was the latter part of the sentence that was running in Jerome’s mind, for it is an evident reminiscence of the words of his great teacher Origen<sup>1</sup>: ὑπό τινων μὲν λεγόντων ὅτι Κλήμης ὁ γενόμενος ἐπίσκοπος Ῥωμαίων ἔγραψε τὴν ἐπιστολήν, ὑπό τινων δὲ ὅτι Λουκᾶς ὁ γράψας τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. The “juxta Tertullianum” was suggested by the contrast to “juxta quosdam,” and the preposition defines the way in which the tradition was held and not the way in which it originated.

The language of Tertullian shows that, in ascribing the epistle to St Barnabas he is not stating his own opinion, but is following the tradition of the church to which he belonged. He mentions the authorship as an accepted fact and assumes that it will be acknowledged by all. He asserts that the epistle was well known in the church (“receptor apud ecclesias epistola Barnabae illo apocrypho pastore moechorum”), and was current<sup>2</sup> under that title: “Extat enim

<sup>1</sup> Eus. *H. E.*, VI. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Lunemann, p. 7, “Instead of Paul he names Barnabas as its author, and that not in the form of a conjecture, but simply and

et Barnabae titulus ad Hebraeos." Nor is there any reason to doubt that the church, in which this was the recognised name for the epistle, was Tertullian's native church of Africa. This fact may serve to refute an objection, which has sometimes been raised, that Tertullian is our only witness in the Western church for the ascription of this epistle to St Barnabas<sup>1</sup>. Put in this form, the objection is difficult to refute, because it is so vague and indefinite, that those who bring it forward may mean two quite different things. When it is expanded, it is at once seen that the argument is either entirely mistaken or is without any force.

Those who employ it may possibly mean that Tertullian alone considered that this epistle was the work of St Barnabas. The objection would be important but for the fact that it is excluded by Tertullian's own words. When he states that the epistle bore the title of Barnabas, he can only mean that in the place or places where it was known by this name, it was believed to be the work of St Barnabas<sup>2</sup> at the time when Tertullian wrote, or else that this opinion had been prevalent at some earlier period. In either case the value of the testimony to the authorship of St Barnabas does not depend on the critical sagacity of Tertullian, but on the position of the churches referred to and on the date when the tradition originated.

Or it is possible that this objection may mean that without qualification, in such wise that he manifestly proceeds upon a supposition universally current in the churches of his native land."

<sup>1</sup> Delitzsch, I. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Hofmann (*Die heilige Schrift, N. T.*, v. 51), "He wrote, extat et Barnabae titulus ad Hebraeos—and therefore must have had the epistle before him with a heading which described it as an epistle of Barnabas; just as, in the list of sacred writings which is found in the Codex Claromontanus, it is named Barnabae epistola. Accordingly in one part of Christendom it must have been known under this name."

Tertullian is the only witness for the opinion which prevailed in his time. Thus stated the objection is quite correct but is singularly feeble. Tertullian could not well have been mistaken about the fact which he relates, and there is no reason for suspecting him of deliberate deception. If we reject the statements of Tertullian as to the state of opinion in his time, and the account given by Jerome of the tradition of the Eastern church, we may well despair of ever reaching any definite conclusion. It is remarkable that in both cases the writers were qualified to know the truth of their own assertions, and that in neither case is there any opposing evidence to render their statements improbable.

It would seem from this to be certain that the tradition of the African church assigned the epistle to St Barnabas, but the source from which it derived the tradition is more doubtful, and the question may be answered in two different ways. Köstlin<sup>1</sup> conjectures that the tradition originated in Asia Minor and Syria, the native home of Montanism, and thence spread to Africa and Rome. The theory is a plausible one, and is adopted by Zahn<sup>2</sup>. If we accepted it, it would immensely strengthen the case for St Barnabas, for it would mean that the tradition in his favour was the original tradition in that part of the world to which the epistle was sent. But it is much more probable that the tradition was the original tradition in the Roman church, and was conveyed together with her other teaching to the daughter church, than that in the Western church, it originated in Africa and thence spread to Rome. In this case, the unanimous and early tradition of the whole Western church would be in favour of St Barnabas. The value of the testimony is not quite so great as if it came from the actual church to which the

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Jahrbuch* of Baur and Zeller, 1854, p. 442.

<sup>2</sup> *Gesch. des Kan.*, Div. I., p. 294.

epistle was sent, but after all the difference is small. For friends from Italy were present with the author when he wrote, and the churches of Italy would assuredly be in a position to know who the writer of this wonderful epistle really was.

The tradition which accounted the epistle unpauline and uncanonical seems to have remained undisputed in the Western church for a century and a half after the time of Tertullian. Cyprian and Victorinus of Pettau exclude the Pauline authorship by stating that Paul only wrote to seven churches. The absence of any reference to the epistle in the controversy respecting the re-admission of the lapsed is scarcely less decisive evidence. Phœbadius, Zeno, and Optatus do not refer to the epistle at all. But in the latter part of the fourth century the practice of ascribing the epistle to St Paul was first introduced into the Western church, and when once introduced gained ground slowly but steadily. Hilary, Lucifer, and Victorinus Afer rarely quote it, but Ambrose, Rufinus, and Gaudentius expressly recognize its Pauline authorship and class it with his other epistles. Such recognition naturally did two things. It established the canonicity of the epistle for all who approved of it, and it led men to compare the old tradition which assigned the epistle to St Barnabas with the new tradition which ascribed it to St Paul. Philastrius<sup>1</sup> expressly contrasts them and himself hesitates to decide between them: "Sunt alii quoque, qui epistolam Pauli ad Hebraeos non asserunt esse ipsius, sed dicunt aut Barnabae esse apostoli aut Clementis de urbe Roma episcopi. Alii autem Lucae evangelistae...."

We have already seen Jerome contrasting the two views with equal clearness and in very similar language.

But though the new opinion was accepted by some of

<sup>1</sup> *Haeresis*, 89.

the most influential teachers of the Western church, the custom and the tradition of that church were still against it, and the Latin church as a whole continued to regard the epistle as outside the sacred Canon.

Philastrius<sup>1</sup> is quite explicit on this point: "Non legitur in ecclesia. Et si legitur a quibusdam, non tamen in ecclesia legitur populo, nisi tredecim epistolae ipsius et ad Hebraeos interdum."

Equally clear is the language of Jerome<sup>2</sup>, "Eam Latinorum consuetudo non accipit inter scripturas canonicas"; and again<sup>3</sup>, "Sed et apud Romanos usque hodie quasi Pauli apostoli non habetur."

It was quite in accordance with the general tendency of Augustine that he should receive the epistle into his Canon, but in doing so he entirely throws himself<sup>4</sup> on the tradition of the Eastern church: "Magis me movet auctoritas ecclesiarum orientalium quae hunc quoque in canonicis habet."

Jerome and Augustine were both of them doubtful about the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but they were nevertheless anxious that it should be regarded as canonical and authoritative, and their influence in the Western church greatly helped to carry the day<sup>5</sup>.

In the Roman church the authoritative lists of Innocent I. and Gelasius I. declare the epistle to be authoritative and Pauline.

In the African church the process was the same. Towards the end of the fourth century, and shortly before the rise of Augustine<sup>6</sup>, the Codex Mommsonianus still recog-

<sup>1</sup> *Haeresis*, 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Dardanum*, 129.

<sup>3</sup> *Catalog. Script. Eccles.*, ch. 59.

<sup>4</sup> *De peccat. merit. et remiss.*, 1. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Credner-Volkmar, *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*

<sup>6</sup> Zahn, *Gesch. des Kan.*, Div. II., pp. 143—156.

nises only thirteen epistles of St Paul, and excludes the Epistle to the Hebrews from the Canon. The Councils of Hippo Regius (393 A.D.) and of Carthage<sup>1</sup>, A.D. 397, still say, "Pauli apostoli epistolae tredecim, ejusdem ad Hebraeos una," and thus mark off this epistle from the rest. But the Council of Carthage, A.D. 419, says, "epistolarum apostoli Pauli quatuordecim," and obliterates all distinction.

In spite of this, the tradition that the epistle was not written by St Paul was deeply rooted in the Western church, and died hard. Bleek has an interesting note<sup>2</sup>, in which he shows how slowly and with what great difficulty the belief in its canonicity and Pauline authorship gained ground. The same fact comes out in the three codices, Claromontanus, Augiensis, and Boernerianus. In Codex Claromontanus Westcott<sup>3</sup> points out that "the archetype of this MS. evidently contained only thirteen epistles of St Paul." In Codex Augiensis the epistle is found in the Latin but not in the Greek, and even in the Latin is without any title. In Codex Boernerianus it is wanting altogether. So late as the sixth century, Cassiodorus says that no Latin writer up to his time had yet commented on the epistle.

Nor does the tradition which assigned it to St Barnabas appear to have died out much sooner. In the African church the stichometry of Codex Claromontanus, which is usually dated about 600 A.D., still quotes the Epistle to the Hebrews as being written by Barnabas. A little later, Isidore of Seville<sup>4</sup> expressly states that many in the Western

<sup>1</sup> The relation of these councils to one another is disputed, but the point is unimportant.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 1., pp. 231, 232.

<sup>3</sup> *Introd.* to the epistle, p. xxxi.

<sup>4</sup> Bleek, Vol. 1., p. 239. Here again some assert that Isidore is

church still assigned it to the same author: "Ad Hebraeos autem epistola plerisque Latinis ejus esse incerta est propter dissonantiam sermonis, eandemque alii Barnabam conscrip-sisse, alii a Clemente scriptam fuisse suspicantur." The statement is in any case sufficiently clear, but at the same time it is impossible to pass over the acute comment of Wieseler, that the active is used of Barnabas as being the author, but the passive of Clement as being merely the translator.

On the whole, we may fairly conclude that the Western church knew<sup>1</sup> that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by St Paul. It appears to us more probable that the tradition ascribing it to St Barnabas was the original tradition of the whole Western church, and spread from Rome to Africa, than that the West received it from the East. The main cause which destroyed the tradition in this branch of the church was the fact that it excluded from the New Testament Canon one of its most beautiful books.

merely expressing his own private opinion, although he distinctly states that this was the view prevalent in the Western church at that time.

<sup>1</sup> This is as usual clearly stated by Ewald (*Das Sendsch. an die Heb.*, p. 24), "In Rome and in the rest of the West...they knew very well from the beginning that it had not come to them as an epistle of Paul."

## THE EASTERN CHURCH.

When we turn to the Eastern church we find universal acceptance of the epistle substituted for general rejection. All regard the epistle as authoritative and as Pauline. But no one in the first three centuries regards St Paul as the author, and what evidence we possess shows that the original tradition of this church held that it was not the work of the apostle. But for the most part the Epistle to the Hebrews, as being only indirectly Pauline, is quoted anonymously, and this prevents us for some time from discovering whom the Eastern church considered the author to be. We have to wait till the fourth century before we are distinctly told what the tradition really was. The evidence shows that here also the tradition ascribing the epistle to St Barnabas was early and strong but does not warrant Köstlin and Zahn in asserting that it was the sole or the original tradition of this branch of the church.

The first two writers—Justin Martyr and Pinytus—give us no assistance, for they quote the epistle anonymously.

But the next writer, Irenæus, is said by Photius to have definitely rejected<sup>1</sup> the Pauline authorship, and there are several reasons for thinking that this statement is correct. (a) He appeals in support of it to Stephen Gobar, a writer

<sup>1</sup> This does not necessarily mean that the question had been raised in the time of Irenæus.

of the sixth century. (*b*) If Irenæus had accepted the Pauline authorship, Eusebius must have mentioned it. (*c*) Hippolytus, the pupil of Irenæus, definitely rejected the Pauline authorship. (*d*) If Irenæus regarded the epistle as only the work of an associate of St Paul, such as Barnabas or Clement, and thus inside the Canon like the Acts of the Apostles, we can understand how he might afterwards adapt himself to the Western view, and place it as the work of a *comes apostolorum* outside the Canon. If he regarded it as a genuine epistle of St Paul, his change of attitude is much more surprising.

The next witness—the Peshito version—continues the same negative tradition that the epistle was not written by St Paul. The fact that in this version the Epistle to the Hebrews is separated from the rest and placed after the letters to private persons shows that “it was added as an appendix<sup>1</sup> to the Pauline epistles as by a like-minded man.” From one point of view the Syriac Bible is an excellent witness because it was translated for use in that part of the world to which this epistle was sent. But from another point of view its testimony is defective because it gives no hint who was believed to be the author of the epistle.

Equally indeterminate is the letter of the Council of Antioch<sup>2</sup>, which condemned Paul of Samosata :

ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα κατὰ τὸν ἀπόστολον· κατὰ δὲ τὸν αὐτόν· ἔπινον γὰρ ἐκ πνευματικῆς πέτρας ἢ δὲ πέτρα ἦν ὁ Χριστός· καὶ πάλιν· μηδὲ ἐκπειράζωμεν τὸν Κύριον καθὼς τινες αὐτὸν ἐξεπείρασαν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ὀφείων ἀπώλλυντο. Καὶ περὶ Μωυσέως· μείζονα πλοῦτον ἡγησάμενος τῶν Αἰγύπτου θησαυρῶν τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

It is significant that in the quotation from the Epistle to

<sup>1</sup> Zahn, *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*, Div. I., p. 966.

<sup>2</sup> Bleek, I. 146.

the Hebrews the *πάλιν* is dropped and that thus there is nothing to connect it with St Paul. Even if we attached no importance to this fact, the phrase *κατὰ τὸν ἀπόστολον* simply means that the epistle was regarded as Pauline in its teaching and tendency. But on the other hand, the decree of the council clearly shows that at this time it was considered in the East to be authoritative and canonical.

“Pamphilus<sup>1</sup>, a man of wide learning and research, reckoned the Epistle to the Hebrews among the writings of St Paul, whether he regarded it as actually penned by the apostle, or like Origen as the expression of his thoughts by another writer.”

“One quotation<sup>2</sup> from an Eastern church has not yet been noticed. In the Acts of a Disputation between Archelaus, bishop of Caschar, and Manes, there are several clear allusions to the Epistle to the Hebrews, though it is not quoted by name.”

When we sum up the evidence of the first three centuries, we find that there is clear and continuous testimony that the Epistle to the Hebrews was regarded in the Eastern church as authoritative and Pauline. On the other hand, there is not the slightest suggestion that anyone considered St Paul to be the author, while there is clear evidence of a tradition assigning the epistle to a companion of St Paul and not to the apostle himself. No one so far has named the actual writer, but there is no difficulty in accepting Jerome's statement that, while the epistle was universally regarded as Pauline, the tradition of the Eastern church ascribed it either to Barnabas or to Clement.

Proceeding with the history of the epistle, our next witness is Methodius, bishop of Tyre, and he simply continues the original tradition that the epistle was authoritative

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *N. T. Canon*, p. 395.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 396 note.

and canonical. There is not the slightest suggestion that he connected the authorship of the epistle in any way with St Paul<sup>1</sup>, though “numerous coincidences of language<sup>2</sup> show that he was acquainted with the Epistle to the Hebrews; and though he does not directly attribute it to St Paul, he uses it with the same familiarity and respect as he exhibits towards the Pauline epistles.”

So far we have had one uniform and constant tradition. But when we come to Eusebius of Cæsarea the case becomes altered, for he takes a somewhat different view of the matter. For he not only asserts that the Epistle to the Hebrews is an epistle of Paul, but adds that it was translated, either by Luke or by Clement, from an Aramaic original.

His language is quite explicit and clear, and ought to occasion no difficulty. On the Pauline authorship he writes<sup>3</sup>: τοῦ δὲ Παύλου πρόδηλοι καὶ σαφεῖς αἱ δεκατέσσαρες.

On the fact of the epistle being a translation<sup>4</sup>: Ἐβραίοις γὰρ διὰ τῆς πατρίου γλώττης ἐγγράφως ὁμιληκός τοῦ Παύλου, οἱ μὲν τὸν εὐαγγελιστὴν Λουκᾶν, οἱ δὲ τὸν Κλήμεντα τοῦτον αὐτὸν ἐρμηνεύσαι λέγουσι τὴν γραφὴν· ὃ καὶ μᾶλλον ἂν εἴη ἀληθές, τῷ τὸν ὅμοιον τῆς φράσεως χαρακτῆρα τὴν τε τοῦ Κλήμεντος ἐπιστολὴν καὶ τὴν πρὸς Ἐβραίους ἀποσώζειν, καὶ τῷ μὴ πόρρω τὰ ἐν ἑκατέροις τοῖς συγγραμμάσι νοήματα καθεστάναι.

Eusebius, like Origen, has been accused of inconsistency and self-contradiction, because in one place he calls the Epistle to the Hebrews an epistle of St Paul, and in another place ascribes it to Clement; and because in one place he classes it with the ἀντιλεγόμενα<sup>5</sup>, and in another with the ὁμολογούμενα<sup>6</sup> of the New Testament.

<sup>1</sup> Bleek, I. pp. 144, 145.

<sup>2</sup> Westcott, *Canon*, p. 387.

<sup>3</sup> *H. E.*, III. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, III. 38.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III. 3, 25.

But this is to look at things from a nineteenth-century point of view, and to forget that there was a tradition in the Eastern church which ascribed the epistle to another author than St Paul. Eusebius considered—and his opinion was the common opinion of the time—that the canonicity of a book depended on its apostolic authorship. If it were the work of an apostle, it became authoritative at once, but if it were the independent production of an unapostolic man, it became unapostolic and ecclesiastical<sup>1</sup>.

The Apocalypse occupied this doubtful position. It was generally accepted as the genuine work of John, but its authorship was open to doubt. If it was written by the apostle, its place was among the *ὁμολογούμενα* side by side with the Gospel. If however it was written by the presbyter, then its place was among the genuine and ecclesiastical books, side by side with the *Shepherd*. Eusebius himself was quite undecided on the point, and expressly gave it a double position<sup>2</sup>. Afterwards the opinion of the Eastern church became settled, and the Apocalypse was put among the unapostolic and ecclesiastical books, and outside the Canon.

Very similar was the position of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the East its authority had always been generally recognized, but its connection with St Paul was more open to dispute. If it were the independent work of Barnabas or of Clement, it had no greater claim to authority than the other epistle of Barnabas or the other epistle of Clement, and its place was with the ecclesiastical books. If it was indirectly the work of St Paul, then its place was with the Gospel of St Mark<sup>3</sup> and the Gospel of St Luke<sup>4</sup>, among

<sup>1</sup> The term for this in the Eastern church in the fourth and fifth century is *νόθος*.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.*, III. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Eus., Dem. Evang.*, III. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Eus., H. E.*, III. 4.

the undisputed and canonical books of the New Testament. As the mind of Eusebius was quite made up on this subject, he did not assign it a double position, but placed it among the ὁμολογούμενα.

Nor is there any contradiction between the other two statements of Eusebius mentioned above. When he spoke of the epistle as St Paul's, he used the term in the sense in which it was generally understood at that time and which was sufficiently general to allow of the supposition that its actual writer was another than the apostle. "He used<sup>1</sup> the Greek text as St Paul's habitually, and reckoned his epistles as fourteen<sup>2</sup>.....and justified his decision by the plea that it was reasonable 'on the ground of its antiquity that it should be reckoned with the other writings of the apostle.' Such a statement would be inconsistent with the idea that he held it to be St Paul's in the same sense as the other epistles<sup>3</sup>. He held it to be canonical Scripture and Pauline, so to speak, for ecclesiastical use."

In this Eusebius has simply been following the tradition of the Eastern church. But his further statement, that the epistle is a translation made either by Luke or by Clement from an Aramaic original, is an additional fact which we have not heard of previously. In itself this assertion is neither inconsistent with what we have previously learnt of the tradition of the Eastern church, nor does it contradict the account given by Jerome. Still Volkmar is probably correct in maintaining that Eusebius derived this explanation of the peculiarities of the epistle from the account of the

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *Introd.* to Ep., p. lxx.

<sup>2</sup> The practice of Origen is exactly the same.

<sup>3</sup> Volkmar is of opinion that in the codex used by Eusebius the Epistle to the Hebrews was separated from the Pauline Epistles and placed next to the Apocrypha.

matter current in the church of Alexandria. (a) Eusebius himself makes no suggestion that he is referring to the opinion of his own church. (b) His method of expression seems based on the similar language of Origen<sup>1</sup>. (c) It appears more probable that this account of the epistle, as a translation from an Aramaic original, was a learned explanation originated by the teachers of Alexandria than that it was the early tradition of the Eastern church.

One reason which seems to have had weight with Eusebius was the necessity of maintaining the Pauline authorship, if the epistle was to be placed among the canonical and not among the ecclesiastical books. His phrase<sup>2</sup> ἐπεὶ καὶ εἰς δεῦρο παρὰ Ῥωμαίων τισὶν οὐ νομίζεται τοῦ ἀποστόλου τυγχάνειν is very mild when compared either with the facts of the case or with the statement of Jerome<sup>3</sup>, "sed et apud Romanos usque hodie quasi Pauli apostoli non habetur."

Another fact which we learn from Eusebius is that even in the Eastern church some followed the Roman opinion and put the Epistle to the Hebrews outside the Canon, evidently on the ground that its want of apostolic authorship deprived it of all claim to authority.

When next we find the question of the authorship of this epistle discussed the various opinions are clearly marked off from one another and fall naturally into three classes.

(a) Amphilochius preserves the old tradition of the Eastern church, by adding the Epistle to the Hebrews to the Pauline group, but placing it after all the other epistles; and Epiphanius tells us that this was still its position with many.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Eus. in *H. E.*, III. 3, οἱ μὲν τὸν εὐαγγελιστὴν Λουκᾶν, οἱ δὲ τὸν Κλήμεντα, with Origen in *H. E.*, VI. 25, ὑπὸ τινων μὲν λεγόντων ὅτι Κλήμης... ὑπὸ τινων δὲ ὅτι Λουκᾶς ὁ γράψας τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* VI. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Catalog. Script. Eccles.*, ch. 59.

(b) During the latter half of the fourth century the influence of Athanasius and the Alexandrian church was very great with the orthodox Nicenes of the East, and many of their greatest teachers accepted the later Alexandrian opinion that the epistle was the direct work of St Paul. This was the view of Basil of Cæsarea, of Gregory of Nyssa, of Gregory of Nazianzus, of Cyril of Jerusalem, and of several others of nearly equal importance.

(c) Thirdly, some adopted the Western opinion that an epistle which was not the work of an apostle could not be canonical at all<sup>1</sup>. We do not know who these impugnors of the epistle were, but it has been pointed out that they could not have been Arians, or Amphilochius, who was a zealous Nicene, would certainly have mentioned the fact.

The testimony of Jerome, which has next to be cited, is important for many reasons. His learning and ability peculiarly fitted him to consider questions of this kind. His long residence in the East and his intimate connection with the most influential teachers make him as good a witness for the Eastern as for the Western church. Finally in his account of the tradition both of the Western and of the Eastern church, he seems to have striven to be strictly accurate and impartial, though in both cases the tradition ran counter to his own wishes and inclinations. His account<sup>2</sup> is as follows :

“ Illud nostris dicendum est, hanc epistolam quae inscribitur ad Hebraeos, non solum ab ecclesiis orientis sed ab omnibus retro Graeci sermonis scriptoribus quasi Pauli apostoli suscipi, licet plerique eam vel Barnabae vel Clementis arbitrentur.”

The attempt to make part of this apply to the Eastern

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Credner-Volkmar, *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Dardanum*, 129.

and part to the Western church is most arbitrary, and shows an entire disregard for the context. The contrast is between the Eastern church, who all accept the epistle, and the Western church, who reject its canonicity on these very grounds: "Quod si eam Latinorum consuetudo non recipit inter scripturas canonicas." The point of the last clause is that Jerome is reminding the Latins ("illud nostris dicendum est") that in the East the denial of the Pauline authorship made no difference to their acceptance of the epistle.

If we make the whole account apply to the Eastern church, it has the merit of accounting for all the facts and of explaining all difficulties. Jerome tells us that in the East the epistle had always been accounted Pauline and canonical, but that this view did not refer to its authorship, for most considered either Barnabas or Clement to be the author of the epistle. We have already seen the truth of Jerome's first statement. The second would explain alike the attitude of Irenæus, the hesitation of Eusebius, and the position of the epistle in the Syrian Bible, where "it was added as an appendix<sup>1</sup> to the Pauline epistles as by a like-minded man." The statement of St Jerome entitles us to say that there was an early tradition in the Eastern church which ascribed the authorship of the epistle to St Barnabas. But it does not justify Köstlin and Zahn in asserting that it was the original tradition of that church. For Jerome places the claims of Barnabas and Clement on an equal footing, and gives no preference to one over the other. It is a mere accident that in his enumeration the name of St Barnabas comes first.

In the latter half of the fourth century we find three distinct classes of opinion in the Eastern church as to the

<sup>1</sup> Zahn, *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*, Div. I., p. 429.

authorship of the epistle, but in the middle of the fifth century Theodoret tells us that the orthodox regarded it as the direct work of St Paul, and that it was only the Arians who accounted it uncanonical. There is an interesting dialogue<sup>1</sup> between an orthodox churchman and an Arian, which is still preserved, and which turns on this very point. But when belief in the Pauline authorship of the epistle came to be associated with orthodoxy as against heresy its victory was assured.

Yet even under such unfavourable conditions the contrary opinion lingered on. Anastasius Sinaita († A.D. 599), bishop of Antioch, puts the Epistle to the Hebrews after all the Pauline epistles and immediately before the Apocrypha<sup>2</sup>, showing that he only regarded it as indirectly Pauline and that the original Eastern tradition was not yet dead.

The history of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Eastern church shows that this church unanimously and continuously regarded it as Pauline and canonical. In the first three centuries there is no evidence connecting its authorship with St Paul, while there is evidence that many assigned it to a different author. A century later St Jerome informs us that the traditional authors were Barnabas and Clement. We have thus an early, though not necessarily the original, tradition of the Eastern church in favour of St Barnabas. The tradition which ascribed the epistle to a companion of St Paul lingered on in the East till the end of the sixth century, and died out there at almost exactly the same time that it disappeared in the West. The cause which destroyed it was that acceptance of it came to be regarded as a sign of heresy, while the contrary belief in the Pauline authorship was considered to be Nicene.

<sup>1</sup> Bleek, I. p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Credner-Volkmar, *Gesch. des Kan.*, p. 241.

## THE ALEXANDRIAN CHURCH.

In the Alexandrian church we meet with an early and consistent tradition that the epistle was St Paul's because the ideas contained in it were St Paul's. Origen's explanation<sup>1</sup> assures us that we are not compelled to press this so closely as to exclude all addition or alteration by the actual writer. But at the same time it must have been considered that these additions in no way altered the general tendency or teaching of the book. We can only understand the unanimous and unhesitating assertion that the epistle was St Paul's by the belief that the ideas were either suggested by St Paul or else are exactly such ideas as we should have got if he had been the actual writer. Many at the present day go even farther and assume that when the epistle is spoken of as Paul's it means that he actually wrote it. It is no small objection to such a view that it brings the tradition of the Alexandrian church into hopeless conflict with that of both the Eastern and the Western church. It is a greater difficulty that it reduces the tradition of the Alexandrian church to inextricable confusion. It is a fatal difficulty that it makes the same writer recklessly and directly contradict himself. Origen praises the tradition which ascribed the epistle to St Paul, he himself constantly refers to it as Paul's, he mentions "the

<sup>1</sup> Eus. *H. E.*, VI. 25, ἡ δὲ φράσις καὶ ἡ σύνθεσις ἀπομνημονεύσαντός τινος τὰ ἀποστολικά καὶ ὡσπερὲν σχολιογραφήσαντός τινος τὰ εἰρημένα.

fourteen epistles of Paul," and declares that it must be stoutly defended as an epistle of Paul against those who impugned its authority. But he carefully states his grounds for denying that it could have been written by St Paul, and after examining the claims of Luke and Clement decides that it is impossible to decide who the author of the epistle really was. *τίς δὲ ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολήν, τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς θεὸς οἶδεν*<sup>1</sup>. It is clear that when Origen spoke of it as *ἐπιστολὴ Παύλου*, he did not mean that it was written by St Paul<sup>2</sup> but was following the old Alexandrian tradition which he himself accepted—*τὰ μὲν νοήματα τοῦ ἀποστόλου ἐστίν*. Nor have we any right to consider the ancient way of looking at the matter less correct than the modern way, for the ideas of a book are at least as important as the words in which they are set down. In the case of the Epistle to the Hebrews the words of Origen<sup>3</sup> show that there was a desire to shelter it under the name of Paul from those who denied its authority. Even in the case of the unapostolic writings of St Mark and St Luke there is the same desire to make them the direct products of the apostles themselves, though the names of the authors were known and the authority of the books was not attacked.

Origen<sup>4</sup> probably calls the third Gospel St Paul's just as he calls this epistle *καὶ τρίτον τὸ κατὰ Λουκᾶν, τὸ ὑπὸ Παύλου ἐπαινούμενον εὐαγγέλιον*.

And the language of Eusebius is clear: *φασὶ δὲ ὡς ἄρα*

<sup>1</sup> Eus., *H. E.*, vi. 25.

<sup>2</sup> So Hofmann (*Die heilige Schrift, N. T.*, v. 47), "With this opinion, for whose linguistic justification he appeals to the judgment of every learned man, he would place himself in flagrant contradiction, if he wished to reckon the tradition with which the epistle was handed down, as an indisputable witness for its Pauline origin."

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. ad Africanum*, ch. 9, quoted above.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to such passages as Rom. ii. 16, xvi. 25; 2 Tim. ii. 8.

τοῦ κατ' αὐτὸν εὐαγγελίου μνημονεύειν ὁ Παῦλος εἶωθεν ὀπηνίκα ὡς περὶ ἰδίου τινὸς εὐαγγελίου γράφων ἔλεγε· κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου. If moreover there was no certain tradition in the Alexandrian church who the writer really was, there would be a growing tendency to call the epistle by the name of the only man with whom it was certainly connected. For while there was an early and uninterrupted tradition that the epistle was St Paul's, there seems to have been no tradition at all who was the actual writer. The evidence points to the original tradition assigning it to another author than St Paul, but this is rendered uncertain by the fact that Pantænus accepts St Paul as the writer. Clement deserts his predecessor to support the claims of St Luke, while others bring forward the name of Clement of Rome. Wieseler<sup>1</sup> is strongly of opinion that many in the early Alexandrian church ascribed the authorship to St Barnabas. The greatest teacher of the Alexandrian church openly acknowledged that there was no means of determining the question. Dionysius gives no hint or suggestion as to whether he had any opinion on the subject at all. The fact that no two witnesses agree seems to suggest that each followed his own individual opinion and that there was no certain tradition in the church about the person who wrote the epistle.

The earliest tradition of the Alexandrian church is given

<sup>1</sup> And the arguments he adduces might be greatly strengthened. At the same time we are unable to accept them. We consider that the position occupied by the spurious epistle in the Alexandrian church was due to the failure to recognize the genuine epistle as the work of St Barnabas. The general recognition of the authorship of the latter in the Western church tended to exclude the inferior epistle. Cf. Harnack, *Gesch. der altchrist. Literatur*, Vol. 1. p. 62, "In der abendländischen Kirche, in welcher der Hebräerbrief geraume Zeit als Schreiben des Barnabas gegolten hat, ist von einem kanonischen Ansehen unseres Briefs nichts bekannt."

by Origen<sup>1</sup>: οὐ γὰρ εἰκῆ οἱ ἀρχαῖοι ἄνδρες ὡς Παύλου αὐτὴν παραδεδώκασι. It is obvious that Origen must have meant by this that they considered the epistle to be Paul's in the same sense that he did, that it embodied the ideas and teaching of that apostle. He could not have praised them for handing down the tradition that Paul wrote the epistle, and then have declared in the next sentence that no one knew anything about the matter at all. If there was any tradition in the Alexandrian church about the authorship of the epistle, Origen regarded it as altogether valueless and vain.

If there were no evidence on the other side, the position of the epistle in the Alexandrian Canon<sup>2</sup> might seem to prove that it was regarded as being only indirectly Pauline. In Clement<sup>3</sup> the Epistle to the Hebrews stands last of all the canonical books and next to the Apocrypha, being separated from the Pauline epistles by the Apocalypse and the Catholic epistles. This position is in such striking contrast

<sup>1</sup> Eus. *H. E.*, VI. 25.

<sup>2</sup> See on this Credner-Volkmar, *Gesch. des Kan.*, 393—411.

<sup>3</sup> Credner-Volkmar, p. 386, "On the other hand for Clement in the Epistle to the Hebrews, no one else speaks but the apostle, but still he preserves the consciousness of a distinction from the other epistles of the apostle. He has been compelled to defend in detail...the Pauline character of the epistle, only on this account that it did not belong to the recognized collection of Pauline epistles....We may add Clement's striking attitude in a section (Strom. IV.), in which he completely maintains the proper order of the books. First of all he appeals to the κύριος (in Ev. Matt.); then to the ἀπόστολος (ad Rom. and Cor.); then to Johannes in Epistola; exactly following the proper order. He now for the first time, after a short reference to the apostle...takes up the apostolus ad Hebraeos, and makes selections exactly in due order. Accordingly we get here the following order: Ev., Act., 13 Ep. Pauli, Ep. Johannis, Ep. ad Hebraeos, which was so named but was anonymous." Cf. also pp. 387, 388, 394.

with the views of Clement himself that it probably represents the opinion of the early Alexandrian church. In spite of the high esteem in which the epistle was held, it was placed next to the Apocrypha because it was only indirectly apostolic. The Acts of the Apostles was sometimes placed in the same position and for the same reason.

Origen himself, consistently with his view that the epistle was Pauline, placed it next to the other Pauline epistles. But nevertheless he placed it after all the rest, as only being indirectly the work of St Paul.

The Memphitic is not only the Bible for Lower Egypt, but is also good evidence for the opinion of the church of Alexandria. Most MSS. of the Memphitic put the epistle in what would be its proper place if it were written by St Paul—that is before the epistles to private persons. But in three MSS.<sup>1</sup> the epistle is put after all the Pauline epistles. In another it occupies an intermediate position, being put after the Epistle to Philemon, though before the Epistles to Timothy. It would seem from all this that the original position of the Epistle to the Hebrews was at the end of all the epistles of St Paul<sup>2</sup>.

The rejection of the epistle by the Alexandrian Gnostic, Basilides, tells the same tale. The teaching of the Epistle

<sup>1</sup> See on this Lightfoot's article in Scrivener's *N. T. Criticism*.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald (*Das Sendschr. an die Heb.*, pp. 25, 26) remarks that this helps to explain the way in which the Ep. to the Heb. came to be recognized as an epistle of St Paul. When the collection of Pauline epistles was made Heb. was added to them, as being kindred to them, without being actually reckoned among them. (The instance he selects is the Peshito version of the N. T. We may compare the position of the Ep. of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas in Cod. Sinait. or that of the Ep. of Clement in Cod. Alex.) It was gradually moved up next to the epistles to churches and before those to private persons. Finally it was regarded in all respects as an epistle of Paul.

to the Hebrews would have suited him better than that of any other book in the Bible, so that his rejection of the epistle cannot be explained on any doctrinal grounds, but only by the fact that he regarded it as an unapostolic, and therefore an unauthoritative writing.

Even in the time of Origen a minority rejected the canonicity and authenticity of the epistle on the ground that it was not written by St Paul<sup>1</sup>, and this may explain his evident anxiety to maintain that it really was an epistle of St Paul.

Against this early and continuous evidence that the Epistle to the Hebrews was regarded as being only indirectly Pauline, we must set the testimony of Pantænus, who is almost certainly "the blessed presbyter" referred to by Clement<sup>2</sup>. Pantænus is an excellent witness both on account of his learning, and also on account of his early date, and he asserts that this epistle was actually written by St Paul.

He is quoted as follows: ἐπεὶ ὁ κύριος, ἀπόστολος ὢν τοῦ παντοκράτορος, ἀπεστάλη πρὸς Ἑβραίους, διὰ μετριότητα ὁ Παῦλος, ὡσὰν εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἀπεσταλμένος, οὐκ ἐγγράφει ἑαυτὸν Ἑβραίων ἀπόστολον, διὰ τε τὴν πρὸς τὸν κύριον τιμὴν, διὰ τε τὸ ἐκ περιουσίας καὶ τοῖς Ἑβραίοις ἐπιστέλλειν, ἐθνῶν κήρυκα ὄντα καὶ ἀπόστολον.

The language of Pantænus<sup>3</sup> makes it clear that he

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. ad Africanum*, ch. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Eus. H. E.*, vi. 14.

<sup>3</sup> We are as anxious to emphasize the value of the evidence given by Pantænus, who is a witness for the Pauline authorship as to lay stress on the full meaning of the support given by Tertullian or by Jerome to the claims of St Barnabas. Personally Pantænus is an earlier and more important witness than Tertullian. But while the latter testifies to the tradition of his church, the former speaks only for himself. We say that there is no tradition in the Alexandrian church because no two witnesses tell the same tale. If in the African church, Tertullian

regarded St Paul as the actual writer of the epistle. But it does not enable us to decide whether this was his private opinion, or whether he had learned it from someone else. Still the opinion of such a man as Pantænus must be allowed its full weight, and may help to balance the adverse testimony on the other side. If Pantænus followed any tradition as to the writer of the epistle, that tradition was unhesitatingly abandoned by his successor Clement<sup>1</sup>, who gives it as his decided opinion that the epistle was written by St Luke: *καὶ τὴν πρὸς Ἑβραίους δὲ ἐπιστολὴν Παύλου μὲν εἶναι φησι, γεγράφθαι δὲ Ἑβραίοις Ἑβραϊκῇ φωνῇ, Λουκᾶν δὲ φιλοτίμως αὐτὴν μεθερμηνεύσαντα ἐκδοῦναι τοῖς Ἑλλησιν, ὅθεν τὸν αὐτὸν χρῶτα εὗρίσκεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν ταύτης τε τῆς ἐπιστολῆς καὶ τῶν πράξεων.* It would seem clear that the only part of this statement which can claim to be traditional is the part which asserts that the Epistle to the Hebrews is *ἐπιστολὴ Παύλου*.

Origen mentions yet another account<sup>2</sup> of the authorship of the epistle as current in the Alexandrian church, and places it on an equality with the account which assigned it to St Luke. According to this theory the epistle was written neither by St Paul, nor by St Luke but by Clement, who afterwards became bishop of Rome.

The opinion of Origen himself was somewhat different from either. He considered<sup>3</sup> that the epistle was written by a disciple and follower of St Paul, who wrote down in his own language the teaching of his master, and commented on it in his own words. *ἐγὼ δὲ ἀποφαινόμενος εἶπομ' ἂν ὅτι τὰ μὲν νοήματα τοῦ ἀποστόλου ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ φράσις καὶ ἡ σύν-*

assigned the epistle to St Barnabas, Cyprian to St Paul, Lactantius to Luke, and Augustine to Clemens Romanus, we should make the same assertion of that church also.

<sup>1</sup> Eus., *H. E.*, VI. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

θεοσις ἀπομνημονεύσαντός τινος τὰ ἀποστολικά καὶ ὡσπερὶ σχολιογραφήσαντός τινος τὰ εἰρημένα ὑπὸ τοῦ διδασκάλου. But Origen professes himself quite unable to ascertain who this disciple really was. τίς δὲ ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς θεὸς οἶδεν.

Lastly Dionysius, who was bishop of Alexandria in the middle of the third century, though he expressly alludes<sup>1</sup> to the epistle as St Paul's, gives no hint as to the precise meaning which he attaches to the term. 'Thus we find in the Alexandrian church a fixed and constant tradition that the epistle was St Paul's, because the ideas contained in it were St Paul's. But there is no more a tradition in the church of Alexandria than in any other church that the epistle was written by St Paul<sup>2</sup>. The evidence seems rather to show that either the name of the writer had never been known, or else had been entirely lost sight of and forgotten.

Origen himself emphatically rejected the theory which made St Paul the writer of the epistle. But, as Robertson Smith points out<sup>3</sup>, "It is not surprising that these limitations of the tradition had less influence than the broad fact that Origen accepted the epistle as Pauline. From the time of Origen, the opinion that Paul wrote the epistle became more and more prevalent," till at last, it became the accepted view of the Alexandrian church.

<sup>1</sup> Eus., *H. E.*, vi. 41.

<sup>2</sup> So Westcott, p. lxvi, "At Alexandria, the Greek epistle was held to be not directly but mediately St Paul's, as either a free translation of his words or a reproduction of his thoughts." Weiss (*Introd. to N. T.*, II. p. 1), "It is clear that the Pauline composition of the Epistle to the Hebrews was not a tradition even in Alexandria, but only an opinion of the schools."

<sup>3</sup> *Encycl. Britann.*, article "Ep. to Heb."

## EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

We may now sum up the external evidence for the authorship of the epistle.

The original tradition of the Western church regarded the epistle as uncanonical and un-Pauline, and assigned its authorship to St Barnabas.

The original tradition of the Eastern church regarded the epistle as canonical and Pauline, because it was written by a like-minded man. The early tradition of this church ascribes the authorship either to St Barnabas or else to Clement of Rome.

The original tradition of the Alexandrian church regarded the epistle as canonical and as Pauline, because the ideas contained in it were Pauline. There was no early tradition as to the writer of the epistle.

It is possible to sum up the evidence in another way as affecting the claims of the various candidates.

There is no early tradition in favour of St Paul.

There is an early and wide-spread tradition in the Eastern and Western churches in favour of St Barnabas.

There is an early tradition in the Eastern church in favour of Clement of Rome.

There is no early tradition in favour of any other author.

If it were not for this tradition in favour of Clement, we should be able to accept the conclusion of Kübel<sup>1</sup> that "Barnabas is the only writer who has any real traditional basis." But for those, who do not acknowledge the correctness of Jerome's statement or who give another explanation of it, this conclusion is unavoidable.

<sup>1</sup> In Strack and Zöckler, IV. 152.

## SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF ST BARNABAS.

1. St Barnabas belonged to the circle of St Paul.
2. He was a man whose ability was universally recognized by his contemporaries.
3. Though a friend of St Paul, he was thoroughly in sympathy with Jewish prejudices, and his appreciation of "Judaism" was recognized by Judaizing Christians themselves.

4. St Barnabas was both by position and by character likely to be influenced by St Stephen and St James, while this epistle reflects the influence of both.

5. His position in regard to Timothy would be one of mingled friendship and authority.

But this argument must be considered doubtful, for it is not certain that this is the meaning of the passage in the epistle.

6. The delight which the author of this epistle takes in ritual and ceremonial is easily explained if that author is the Levite Barnabas.

7. St Barnabas was especially qualified to write such a letter as this to the church of Jerusalem because of his position as an apostle, and his personal popularity, and his knowledge of his subject as a Levite.

8. As a native of Cyprus, he was born and bred where pure Greek was spoken.

9. He must in any case have come under Alexandrian influence, and probably had himself resided in Alexandria.

10. There are only two men mentioned in the New Testament who were capable of writing an epistle in this exact and methodical form.

Of these two, St Barnabas was one.

11. St Barnabas was noted for his kindness and generosity towards his fellow Christians.

12. His conduct towards St Mark shows that he was anxious to give an erring brother the chance of recovery.

13. The epistle seems to recall with regret the estrangement between St Paul and St Barnabas.

14. An argument is sometimes drawn from the possible connection between the author and Italy in favour of the Pauline authorship. Any such argument would apply equally to St Barnabas.

15. There is an early and wide-spread tradition in the Eastern and Western churches which assigns the authorship to St Barnabas.

Perhaps the strength of the evidence in favour of St Barnabas is most clearly seen when we consider the variety and the apparently contradictory character of the evidence which the epistle furnishes as to its author. He must be a member of the circle of St Paul and yet be as Jewish as St James. He must be a Greek-speaking Jew and yet be an old and valued member of the church of Jerusalem. He must be a man of Alexandrian training and yet take the greatest delight in details of ritual. The requirements appear so contradictory that the usual plan followed has been either to deny or else to pass over in silence the existence of some of them, just as Calvinism and Arminianism<sup>1</sup> strive to avoid difficulties by explaining away the meaning of whole sections of Scripture. Those who maintained the Jewish tone of the epistle have sometimes

<sup>1</sup> Using the words in the popular sense.

denied its Pauline character. Many of those who recognized the fact that its author was a Greek-speaking Jew have asserted that it could not possibly be addressed to the church of Jerusalem. Those who insist most strongly on its Alexandrian colouring agree in ignoring the fact that its ritualistic and sacerdotal character distinguish it from every other book of the New Testament. In the case of St Barnabas, each of these facts furnishes additional evidence in favour of his authorship. But in the case of everyone else, we have either to explain away some of them or else to admit that their authorship is impossible. Nor is this true only of the names which have been hitherto mentioned. It would apply equally to any others which could be suggested. Mark, or Aquila, or Titus are quite as impossible as Luke, or Apollos, or Silas.

## OBJECTIONS TO THE ASCRIPTION OF THE EPISTLE TO ST BARNABAS.

I. It has been considered by many a sufficient objection to the authorship of St Barnabas, that we have another epistle current in his name, and that a comparison of the two letters makes it quite clear that they cannot be by the same author. It is true that the two have a large amount of superficial resemblance. Dr Cunningham's outline<sup>1</sup> of the Epistle of Barnabas might be an extract from the contents of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The similarity is still further increased by the Alexandrian colouring of the uncanonical epistle, which agrees alike with the position of its supposed author Barnabas, and with the general character of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But while the author of the one is an ardent admirer of ritual and ceremonial and a warm friend of the Jews, the author of the other is a Gentile who declares himself an open enemy of the Jews, a blasphemer<sup>2</sup> of their ritual and worship, and rather more than indifferent to the whole of the Old Testament. It is clear that the authors of the two epistles must be different men.

<sup>1</sup> Pages xiii, xiv. Cf. also Ewald (*Das Sendschr. an die Heb.*, p. 3), "The so-called Epistle of Barnabas which has very similar contents and aim to our epistle."

<sup>2</sup> Müller, *Barnabas Brief*, p. 17, says that the author speaks of the Law as the work of an evil spirit and goes near the border of anti-Judaic Gnosticism.

It is equally clear that the unauthoritative epistle cannot be the work of the Levite Barnabas<sup>1</sup>, as he is depicted in the New Testament and post-apostolic literature. Indeed its genuineness is now generally abandoned, and only here and there is a voice raised in its defence. An attempt has been made to meet this argument by the supposition that the genuine epistle has been largely interpolated<sup>2</sup> by a Gentile Christian hostile to Judaism. But Lipsius and Hefele point out that "the so-called genuine Barnabas is the same enemy of the Jews who meets us in the acknowledged chapters." But if it is conceded that St Barnabas did not write the epistle current in his name, then this argument against his authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews must be given up.

2. The argument from Acts xiv. 12, where St Paul is represented as the chief speaker, has been already considered. It would seem an incredible argument that a man, who had earned the honourable title of Barnabas, must be considered destitute of the oratorical power necessary to write this epistle, though otherwise his learning and ability would have amply sufficed.

3. It is strongly urged by Lünemann as a decisive reason for rejecting the claims of St Barnabas, that a Levite could not have been so ignorant of the details of the Tabernacle as the author of this epistle shows himself to be. It would be equally difficult to imagine such gross ignorance in the case of Apollos, who was "mighty in the scriptures," or indeed of any devout and well-educated Jew. It has been

<sup>1</sup> The arguments are sufficiently and concisely stated by Hefele, *Apostolic Fathers*, pp. xi—xiv. Prof. Milligan considers that subsequent writers have added nothing to their force.

<sup>2</sup> The attempt has been made by Heydecke, and still more elaborately by Schenkel in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1837, Pt. 2, p. 652.

already pointed out in the course of this essay that our author's so-called blunder is purely imaginary, and indeed his evident familiarity with his subject ought to render such a proof unnecessary.

4. We learn from Heb. ii. 3 that the author was not an immediate follower of our Lord, whereas St Barnabas was one of the Seventy<sup>1</sup>. It might be enough to reply to this that the latter assumption is far too uncertain to base an argument on, but it seems more correct to say that this is merely one of the many instances in the epistle which show how completely the writer identifies himself with his readers.

5. It is urged that St Barnabas, the friend and associate of St Paul, would not have left the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles so entirely out of sight as this writer does. At first sight, the argument appears strong but in reality it is refuted by the facts furnished by the epistle itself. Whoever the writer was, his work shows that he had too great a regard for the feelings of his readers to wound them by introducing an irrelevant and offensive topic. It has been already shown that if the author were St Barnabas, this courteous consideration for Jewish prejudices is quite in accordance with his conduct on another occasion. In this case, the introduction of such a topic could only have been due to thoughtlessness, for the object of the epistle was to comfort and console the Jews, and not to remind them that they had lost their old position and had forfeited their former privileges.

6. It is a very unsafe argument that St Barnabas must have died before the date of this epistle.

The conclusion is drawn from two premises, both of

<sup>1</sup> The case for identifying St Barnabas with Josès Barsabas is well stated by Ullmann, *Studien und Kritiken*, 1828, pp. 377—381.

which are uncertain but both of which are necessary to the argument. The first of these is that Barnabas was dead when the Epistle to the Colossians was written. The second is that the Epistle to the Colossians is earlier in date than the Epistle to the Hebrews. The first statement is mere conjecture which cannot be proved. It is true that in Col. iv. 10 we find Mark, the companion of St Barnabas, with St Paul in Rome. But it is extremely hazardous to conclude from this that St Mark's relative was already dead. Nor again is it absolutely certain that Hebrews is later in date than Colossians, and that therefore St Barnabas could not have written it, if his death is to be placed earlier than Col. iv. 10.

7. Alford lays great stress on the argument<sup>1</sup> that our author fixes on the Tabernacle and not on the Temple, as proving that he could not have been a Jew of Jerusalem, to whom the Temple would have been much the more familiar of the two. It is possible to grant this latter statement and yet to deny Alford's conclusion. For the writer chose the Tabernacle in preference to the Temple, not because it was the more familiar, but because he was compelled to take this course by the plan of his epistle. It was his object and aim to show that the earthly was only a copy and type of the heavenly sanctuary. But, though this was the case with the Tabernacle, it was not so with the Temple, which was constructed by human wisdom and human skill, and in one point at least<sup>2</sup> fell short of the humbler and less pretentious edifice.

<sup>1</sup> We have already noticed this objection so far as it relates to the destination of the epistle, and there is no need to repeat what has been previously stated. We may notice the accuracy of Alford's statement when compared with the sweeping generalities of Von Soden and Brückner.

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Kings viii. 8, R.V.

8. It is asserted that if St Barnabas had written the epistle, he would have prefixed his name, because he was a person of so great reputation and influence in the church of Jerusalem and his name would have carried such weight<sup>1</sup>. It seems probable that this argument was suggested by the somewhat similar argument in Clement of Alexandria<sup>2</sup>. Even as used by him to explain St Paul's sending an epistle without prefixing his name, the suggestion is a very unlikely one. As applied to an epistle supposed to have been written by St Barnabas, the idea is almost absurd. The church of Jerusalem would have known quite well from whom the letter had come, and the addition or omission of the author's name would make no difference to the respect with which it was received. Whoever was the author, we may take it for certain that the omission of his name was due to the form of the book, and not to the futile hope that the mother-church of Christendom would be guided and commanded by a person whose name was unknown to them.

It will probably be acknowledged that the arguments against the claims of St Barnabas are not very weighty, and that the result justifies the assertion of Renan<sup>3</sup> that there is no single detail in the whole of the epistle, which contradicts his authorship.

<sup>1</sup> This argument is pressed by Wordsworth.

<sup>2</sup> Eus., *H. E.*, vi. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Antéchrist*, p. xvii.

## REVIEW OF THE OTHER NAMES PROPOSED FOR THE AUTHORSHIP.

The strength of the case for St Barnabas consists partly in the weight of the arguments in his favour and partly in the absence of any plausible objections to him. The full meaning of this latter argument is perhaps scarcely realized until we compare him with others. In their case we find the position quite altered. The stronger the arguments in their favour, the stronger are the objections to their authorship; the better they satisfy some of the conditions of the problem, the more hopelessly they conflict with others, and, so far as they are concerned, the dictum of Origen remains as true as ever: *τίς δὲ ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς θεὸς οἶδεν.*

### ST PAUL.

The writer in whose favour the strongest arguments can be adduced, if we except only St Barnabas, is probably St Paul. But unfortunately the arguments against him are also so weighty, that the Pauline authorship of the epistle must be decisively rejected.

The language and method of the epistle are altogether unlike St Paul's. This is not so much in vocabulary as in character and style. The rhetorical form in which the book is cast is not met with elsewhere in the New Testament, and even the manner of quotations from the Old

Testament<sup>1</sup> is different from that of St Paul. In addition to this, the Alexandrian colouring of the epistle is much stronger than anything we meet with in St Paul. The thoughts and ideas of the epistle are not entirely Pauline, and the doctrine of the epistle is widely different. Farrar points out that the author differs from St Paul on three of his main doctrines: (*a*) The relation of Judaism to Christianity, (*b*) The doctrine of justification by faith, (*c*) The redemptive work of Christ. Messner<sup>2</sup> is equally clear: "So long as one starts from Paulinism for a full comprehension of the teaching of this epistle, one cannot thoroughly account for its peculiarities." The delight which our author takes in ritual and ceremonial is in direct contrast to the attitude of St Paul, and his view of the Law is quite different from that of his brother apostle.

It is difficult to understand why St Paul should write to Hebrew Christians at all, for such work was outside his allotted province, and the hatred felt for him would have rendered his efforts nugatory. Even if this objection could be met, there is the difficulty of getting the epistle into the series of St Paul's writings<sup>3</sup>.

Finally the external evidence, when carefully weighed, is strongly against the Pauline authorship.

#### THE EPISTLE A TRANSLATION.

The opinion that our epistle in its present form is a translation from a Hebrew original was started as early as Clement of Alexandria, and has lately been defended with

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, pp. 469—495.

<sup>2</sup> *Einleitung in das N. T.*, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> The most probable suggestion is that St Paul wrote it while in prison at Cæsarea.

great learning and ability by Biesenthal<sup>1</sup>. He cannot be said, however, to have done much to remove objections, and at present this solution of the problem is almost universally abandoned.

It leaves untouched all the difficulties which attach themselves to the theory of the Pauline authorship, with the single exception of the difference of style, while it introduces several additional difficulties of its own.

The style of the epistle is thoroughly Greek, and shows no tinge of Hebrew, while the difficulty of rendering it in the latter language seems to make it improbable that in its present form it is only a translation. In addition to this there are several paronomasiae, which appear as decisive for the original language of this epistle as they are for that of the History of Susannah<sup>2</sup>.

Finally, it seems that its author habitually used the LXX., nor would there be any need for him to write to a church in Hebrew, where all understood Greek and an important section understood nothing else.

#### ST LUKE.

The resemblance between this epistle and the writings of St Luke is so great that Bishop Westcott declares<sup>3</sup>: "no one can work independently at the epistle without noticing it."

But the difficulties which led to the rejection of the Pauline authorship become even greater when we consider the claims of St Luke.

The style of the author of this epistle is quite different

<sup>1</sup> *Das Trostschriften des Ap. Paulus an die Heb.*

<sup>2</sup> See Fritzsche in the *Kurzg. exeg. Handb.*, Vol. I. p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> *Introd. to the Ep.* p. lxxvi.

from that of St Luke, though both write excellent Greek. Nor do we find anywhere in the writings of St Luke any trace of an Alexandrian education.

The Epistle to the Hebrews was written by a Jew who was in warm sympathy with Judaism, while it is very doubtful if St Luke was a Jew at all<sup>1</sup>. Even if he were, it was quite as superfluous for him as for St Paul to write to the church of Jerusalem, and the calm tone of authority pervading the epistle would become in this case very surprising.

The doctrinal position of St Luke was identical with that of St Paul, while the author of this epistle occupies a position much nearer in many respects to that of St James.

Finally, the delight which the author takes in ritual and ceremonial would be as surprising in St Luke as in St Paul.

#### CLEMENT OF ROME.

On the ground of external testimony, Clement is the strongest candidate with the exception of St Barnabas. On the other hand most of the arguments brought against the ascription of the epistle to St Luke apply to him also.

There is an even greater objection which applies to Clement only. St Luke was a man of learning and ability, and so far was capable of writing the epistle. But Clement in his genuine epistle shows no signs of the originality and ability which the author of such a work as this epistle must certainly have possessed.

#### APOLLOS.

In the last three candidates we come to names, which were not even mentioned in pre-Reformation times, and which were only suggested by the critical study of the epistle.

<sup>1</sup> The arguments in favour of Luke's Jewish origin are well stated by Tiele in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1858, p. 753. Delitzsch reserves his opinion.

Of the three, Silas is the strongest candidate, though Apollos is the general favourite. The claims of Apollos are based not so much on our knowledge as on our ignorance, and he owes his present popularity not so much to his own merits as to the strength of the objections which can be brought against the others. In the case of Apollos, we are told so little in the New Testament that the disproving his claims becomes correspondingly difficult.

The argument often pressed in favour of Apollos that the author of this epistle was quite ignorant of the details of the Temple at Jerusalem must be decisively rejected. If the assertion were true, it would rather be an objection against the ascription of the epistle to a man who was a Jew and was mighty in the scriptures.

It is unlikely that Apollos would come under the influence either of St Stephen or of St James. For the one was put to death before Apollos was converted to Christianity, while the other rarely if ever left Jerusalem at all.

It is a much greater difficulty to explain why Apollos as an Alexandrian Jew should take such delight in ritual and ceremonial and should regard everything from so exclusively priestly a standpoint.

It is a fatal difficulty that the author of the epistle was an old and valued member of the church of Jerusalem, whereas Apollos is not known to have resided in Jerusalem at all<sup>1</sup>. The tone of authority which would be suitable in a letter of St Barnabas to Jerusalem is as surprising in the case of Apollos as it would be in the case of Clement or of Luke.

Lastly, the fact that no one in the early church has ever suggested the name of either Apollos or Silas becomes a very strong argument when we remember that friends from

<sup>1</sup> Alford acknowledges that the destination of the epistle to Jerusalem is inconsistent with its composition by Apollos.

the West were present with the author when he wrote the epistle, that it was addressed to the principal church of the East, and that it was known and read everywhere from the first. In the case of Apollos, there is the additional difficulty, that Alexandria, which is the church where we should have expected some tradition of his authorship, is just the church where no certain tradition of the writer of the epistle seems to have been preserved.

#### SILAS.

There is more to be said in favour of Silas than there is in favour of Apollos, and his claims have been clearly and ably stated by Böhme. But on the other hand, many of the arguments advanced in his support are doubtful, and most of the arguments brought against Apollos apply to him also.

It is a doubtful assertion that the First Epistle of St Peter is the composition of Silas, who clothed the thoughts of the apostle in his own language. If it is rejected, we have no evidence that Silas was an accurate Greek scholar. If the theory be accepted, the difference in style between the two epistles renders it impossible that they can both have the same author.

Nor does it seem probable that Silas was on terms of equality with St Paul, and occupied the position abandoned by St Barnabas. The impression conveyed by the narrative in the Acts is rather that Silas stood to St Paul in the same subordinate relation as Mark did to St Barnabas. Equally hazardous is the inference from 1 Peter v. 12, that the first of all the apostles regarded Silas as a man who stood on a level with himself.

Finally, the tone of authority adopted in the Epistle to the Hebrews would be as surprising in the case of Silas as in that of Apollos, and Böhme is compelled to change the

destination of the epistle, and to suppose that it was addressed to the Church of Antioch.

### ST PETER.

It is urged by Mr Welch<sup>1</sup> that the marked similarity between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the writings of St Peter is more naturally explained by the supposition that they are all the works of that apostle, than by any other theory.

The theory of St Peter's authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews would also remove a difficulty in the explanation of ch. ii. v. 3 of that epistle. The question is there asked: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which having at the first been spoken (*ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι*) by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard" (*ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαιώθη*). If we considered that these words are written by St Peter, all would become clear, for he would be narrating the circumstances of his own call. The welcome message was given in the first instance to St Andrew, who was *εἰς ἓκ τῶν δύο τῶν ἀκουσάντων*<sup>2</sup>, but he speedily found his own brother Simon and *confirmed* the good news to him. "When we recognize Peter as the author of Hebrews, we feel at once that an inequality, which has hitherto existed in our New Testament has been redressed<sup>3</sup>. The Apostle of the Circumcision seems now to have something like his due share of space assigned to him."

In 2 Pet. iii. 15 we read: "and account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him,

<sup>1</sup> *The authorship of the Ep. to the Heb.*

<sup>2</sup> John i. 40.

<sup>3</sup> A similar argument has been urged in favour of assigning the Ep. of James to the son of Zebedee.

wrote unto *you*; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." Now the passage, which comes nearest to this, is Rom. ii. 4; and, as St Peter tells his readers it was written to them, he also must be writing to the Church of Rome. In this case, when he speaks of his former epistle<sup>1</sup>, he cannot intend to refer to the First Epistle of Peter, which was addressed to the district now known as Asia Minor. The allusion must rather be to the Epistle to the Hebrews (which in the opinion of Mr Welch) was also addressed to the Roman Church.

Finally, this destination of the Epistle to the Hebrews will explain why St Peter did not append his name to it. He felt a certain amount of hesitation in writing to the Romans at all, when he remembered all that St Paul had been to them.

It must be conceded to Mr Welch that the resemblances between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the First Epistle of Peter are more naturally explained, if we assign both writings to St Peter than if we ascribe them to Silvanus or to an unknown author. But the want of external evidence for such an opinion is as serious an objection in the one case as in the other.

Nor is it quite certain that we can use the Second Epistle in this way to establish authorship. Bleek says<sup>2</sup>: "The objections against it are more thoroughly grounded than those against any other book in the New Testament. They are derived partly from the external history of the epistle in the early church; partly from its internal structure, viewed by itself, or compared with 1 Peter; and partly

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Introd. to the N. T.*, p. 172.

from its relation to the Epistle of Jude." Nor is Reuss<sup>1</sup> less emphatic: for he speaks of this epistle as: "The only instance in our opinion of a decided mistake of the church in its ultimate choice." It is true that the objections brought against its genuineness are often greatly exaggerated<sup>2</sup>, and in some cases should rather be urged as arguments in its favour. While Holtzmann<sup>3</sup> speaks of it as "a transparent fiction," Spitta<sup>4</sup> has shown that it more nearly corresponds to what we should *à priori* have expected St Peter to have written than even his First Epistle does.

The view, which is most favourable to the genuineness of the epistle considers that it is the original, which Jude has copied. The arguments in favour of this opinion have been urged by Spitta at great length and with considerable ability. In this case the later epistle becomes valuable evidence to the authenticity of the earlier writing, for there could not have been much doubt about the position of the Second Epistle of Peter when Jude so used it. In addition to this, the external evidence in favour of Jude would become to a great extent evidence for 2 Peter also. But this view leaves all the differences between the First and the Second Epistle still to be accounted for. We cannot remove the difficulty by supposing that chapter ii. or chapters ii. and iii. belong to another epistle. For Keil<sup>5</sup> has elaborately proved the unity of the epistle, and Bleek<sup>6</sup> says that even Ullmann<sup>7</sup> has abandoned his former opinion.

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch. der heiligen Schriften N. T.*, p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> An instance of this is Mayerhoff, p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> *Einleit. zur Apok.*, p. 273.

<sup>4</sup> *Der zweite Brief des Petrus.*

<sup>5</sup> *Commentary on the epistle*, pp. 179—183.

<sup>6</sup> *Introd. to N. T.*, p. 183.

<sup>7</sup> His monograph on the integrity of the epistle is however still valuable.

But the more this view of the independence of the Second Epistle compels us to regard the First Epistle<sup>1</sup>, either as the free translation of an Aramaic original, or else as the work of Silvanus written at St Peter's request, the less evidence does it bear for the Petrine authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the more support does it afford to the claims of Silas.

On the whole, the theory which is most favourable to the Petrine authorship of Hebrews, is that the epistle of Jude is the earlier work which St Peter has incorporated in his own writing<sup>2</sup>. This dependence on St Jude goes far to explain the difference between the First and Second Epistles of St Peter, for Wiesinger<sup>3</sup> points out that chapter i. in the Second Epistle, which is not so influenced by Jude, is certainly Petrine in character. It may be conceded that the extent to which the Second Epistle has been influenced by the Epistle of Jude and the Pastoral Epistles<sup>4</sup>, when taken in connection with other arguments, fairly accounts for its distinctive style. But unfortunately it leaves more serious difficulties unsolved. The use which St Peter makes of Jude is certainly surprising. Ullmann denounces it as slavish and considers that Jude is not so much used as

<sup>1</sup> Weiss (*Introd. to N. T.*, II. 150) endeavours to meet the difficulty by dating the first epistle about A.D. 50: and Grosch (*Echtheit des 2 Pet.* 108—115) shows that on this assumption the differences between the two epistles can be readily accounted for.

<sup>2</sup> The arguments in favour of this view are carefully stated by Mayerhoff, pp. 171—182.

<sup>3</sup> In Olshausen, VI. 17—21. He notices that coincidences with Jude occur even in ch. i. at verses 1, 5, 15. This latter point is also noticed by Ewald, *Sieben Sendschreiben*, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> Of course the influence of these latter must not be exaggerated. The most complete and elaborate vindication of this epistle from the examination of its language and style is that of Schott, pp. 175—188.

misused. Even Hofmann has to acknowledge a certain want of skill<sup>1</sup> (Unbeholfenheit der Wendungen) in Peter, though he values this second chapter highly<sup>2</sup>: "This prophetic and yet poetically arranged section has for beauty of conception and fineness of execution scarcely an equal in the New Testament."

The external evidence for the epistle cannot be regarded as completely satisfactory. Distlein, who has examined the references in early Christian literature with great care, thinks that it is quoted by Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Hermas, Justin, Irenæus, Theophilus. Zahn<sup>3</sup> conjectures that it is referred to in the Muratorian Fragment, and that the accidental omission of a line has lost us the reference.

Fronmüller<sup>4</sup> argues with great force that, if it is not the genuine work of St Peter, it must be a deliberate forgery<sup>5</sup>, and that its internal character shows that it cannot be this.

The other arguments against its authenticity have been carefully stated and examined by B. B. Brückner<sup>6</sup> and Hofmann<sup>7</sup>.

But still Huther<sup>8</sup>, who sums up the argument with the greatest impartiality, considers that neither side has proved its case, and that the authorship of this epistle is quite an open question.

<sup>1</sup> *Die heilige Schrift, N. T.*, IX. 215.      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, VII., Div. 2, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> *Gesch. des N. T. Kan.*, Div. 2, pp. 105—110.

<sup>4</sup> In Lange's *Commentary*.

<sup>5</sup> Rettberg (in Ersch and Gruber's *Allgem. Encyc.*, art. Petrus) shows clearly the impossibility of the theories which assign it to another Symeon.

<sup>6</sup> In De Wette's *Commentary*, pp. 118—125.

<sup>7</sup> *Die heilige Schrift, N. T.*, VII., Div. 2, pp. 130—141.

<sup>8</sup> He gives an admirable account of the controversy down to the date of his writing.

Nor are our difficulties removed, even if we accept the authenticity of both epistles of St Peter and suppose that we have them in the form in which that apostle wrote them.

It is far from being certain that the epistle referred to in 2 Peter iii. 15 is the Epistle to the Romans; and if we reject this supposition Welch's theory breaks down; for there is no other evidence in favour of the address of the Second Epistle of St Peter to the Church of Rome.

In reality, every epistle of St Paul, with the exception of Philippians, Philemon, and Titus, has been selected by different critics.

De Wette, Hilgenfeld, Alford, Plumptre	think the reference is to	1, 2 Thess.
Scott; Wiesinger, Huther, Hofmann, } Keil, Von Soden		Eph.
Bengel		Hebrews
Wordsworth		Gal., Eph., Col.
Fronmüller		Eph., Col., Heb.
Mayerhoff		Cor., Thess.
Oecumenius, Neander, Distlein		Romans
Steinfass (quoted by Huther)		Eph., Col., 1 Tim.
Weiss		Gal., Eph.
Lumby		Eph., Col., or lost epistle
Spitta		a lost epistle

It is possible that the Second Epistle was addressed to the Church of Rome but this is scarcely an argument for the Petrine authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. St Peter was a most suitable person to write a letter of warning to the Church of Jerusalem but he had no close connection with Rome. Mr Welch is driven to maintain that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to the Jewish section of that church, although the internal evidence of the epistle itself shows clearly that it was addressed to an entire church.

Apart from this, although we may accept the statement that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians, it is far from being equally certain that the Second Epistle of Peter had the same destination. Indeed Von Soden<sup>1</sup> goes so far as to assert that at the present time Spitta is the only writer who maintains this opinion.

The Alexandrian colouring of the Epistle to the Hebrews has also to be accounted for. Mayerhoff<sup>2</sup> indeed considers that the author of the Second Epistle is an Alexandrian Jew, and Bleek<sup>3</sup> regards it as the work of an Alexandrian Christian of Gentile origin, but both reject its Petrine authorship. But the assertion, as far as the Second Epistle of Peter is concerned, may safely be disputed; and the only satisfactory answer to this objection is that of Mr Welch<sup>4</sup>, who denies any Alexandrian tendency to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

It is by no means certain that the historical background<sup>5</sup> of the First Epistle is so different from that of the Second that they cannot have been written to the same church about the same time. A comparison with the Pastoral Epistles renders it certain that the absence of any reference to heresy in the First Epistle does not necessarily mean that no tendency to heresy existed. Nor are points of contact wanting between the errors attacked by St Paul and those denounced by St Peter. We see from the Revelation of St John, a work which was probably written between A.D. 60 and A.D. 70, that the errors denounced in the Second Epistle of Peter really existed in the Churches of Asia

<sup>1</sup> p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Die petrin. Schrift*, pp. 192, 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Introd. to N. T.*, p. 184.

<sup>4</sup> p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> This important point has been carefully examined by B. B. Brückner, pp. 115—117; Schott, pp. 159—167.

Minor at that time<sup>1</sup>. If there are no allusions to persecution in the Second Epistle, this may merely mean that persecution had ceased for a while in the particular district to which the epistle was sent; at any rate the Pastoral Epistles<sup>2</sup> make no mention of any persecution of the Christians of Asia Minor. There seems then to be no valid reason why 2 Peter iii. 1 should not allude to the First Epistle, but even if we reject this reference, this is not necessarily an argument in favour of supposing that the reference is to the Epistle to the Hebrews. The conjecture of Spitta that the reference is to a lost epistle is simple and obvious. In any case, the supposition that the Second Epistle of Peter refers to the Epistle to the Hebrews as being addressed to the same readers would introduce great difficulties, for the positions of those addressed in the two epistles are totally different.

Finally the style of the epistles renders it impossible to assign them all to the same author. We remember an ingenious theory that the same writer, John Mark, composed both the Second and the Fourth Gospels. One being addressed to Gentiles became known under his Gentile name of Mark; the other being for Jews was circulated under the name of John. This theory would account for many things: coincidences between the two gospels: the signs of an eyewitness in the earlier gospel: the fact that St John in his later book is careful not to repeat what he had said already. But it breaks down before the difference of style. We consider that the difficulty of believing that the same author about the same time wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, the First, and the Second Epistle of Peter is even greater.

<sup>1</sup> We owe this reference to Weiss, *Introd. to N. T.*, II. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Weiss, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

## CONCLUSION.

This chapter seems a convenient place for a brief statement of the results which have been reached in the course of this essay. The period which immediately followed the death of St James was one of danger and calamity for the Christian community at Jerusalem. A persecution broke out which severely tried their faith and patience and drove them to the verge of apostasy. The Temple, and its services, and its ritual exercised so powerful an influence over their minds that there appeared to be a danger of their abandoning Christianity altogether. Their new leaders failed at first to gain any firm hold over them and some—though possibly only a minority—altogether neglected their own distinctive assemblies.

When St Barnabas was informed of the critical state of affairs in his beloved church, he at once perceived that immediate action was necessary and that delay might be attended with the most serious consequences. He was prevented from visiting the Church of Jerusalem at that particular time and accordingly sent this epistle to them instead. In it he spoke to them with all the authority of a Jewish Levite and a Christian apostle; he treated the subject with all the technical knowledge gained in his original profession; he developed his argument with all the skill acquired through his academical training. The argument employed in his epistle was singularly simple and easy.

St Barnabas pointed out to his readers the superiority of the system which they were abandoning over that to which they were returning. He warned them of the irreparableness of the sin of apostasy if once they proceeded to that fatal extremity. He urged them to courage and perseverance by the example of those who had gone before them. The argument was sufficiently simple but it was stated with such fulness and ability that it left no room for contradiction or opposition. The rebuke was stern enough, but its author showed such power of sympathizing with the feelings of his readers and of understanding their difficulties that it must have produced sorrow and repentance rather than antagonism and ill-will.

It might have been expected that such a letter from so influential a man would produce great effect. But its success must have surpassed the writer's most sanguine expectations. It is possible that some in the church refused to listen, but their number was so small that they have left no trace in history. In the great war of independence the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem entirely separated their fortunes from those of their unbelieving fellow-countrymen, and consequently escaped the miseries which they would otherwise have been called upon to undergo.

Among the many benefits which the Church of Jerusalem received from her illustrious apostle and evangelist St Barnabas, not the least important was her deliverance by means of this noble and eloquent epistle from the ruin which would inevitably have come upon her, if she had been allowed to continue unchecked in her mistaken course.

## APPENDIX.

The suggestion in this note has been relegated to the appendix, because it has no bearing on the authorship, date, or destination of the epistle; for in this section it is assumed that St Barnabas wrote the epistle to the Church of Jerusalem, and the theory proposed merely relates to the circumstances under which he wrote it.

It has been seen that, while the tradition of the Western and Eastern Churches (and possibly of the Alexandrian Church also) held that the epistle was written by a companion of St Paul and not by the apostle himself, the Eastern and Alexandrian Churches always maintained that the epistle was St Paul's, and that at Alexandria this latter assertion was defined to mean that the thoughts contained in the epistle were St Paul's. Now these two views are not contradictory and in fact both were held by the same people, and in the same church, and at the same time. But they seem to suggest the theory that the original idea of the epistle was given to St Barnabas by St Paul, and the theory has much to recommend it on grounds of internal probability.

News of the critical position of the Church of Jerusalem would reach Rome sooner than any other distant city of the empire, and would cause St Paul the greatest distress. For he had never lost his love for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, and in one passage<sup>1</sup> has expressed his affection in language of startling vigour. But at the same time he knew that a letter from him would only do harm, for at Jerusalem, most Hebrew Christians cordially detested him. Οὐ γὰρ<sup>2</sup> οἱ

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ix. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Chrysostom.

*ἄπιστοι μόνον Ἰουδαῖοι ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ πιστεύσαντες αὐτοὶ ἐμίσουν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπεστρέφοντο.* Nor was this all. The reason for their dislike was his supposed aversion to "Judaism," and such an epistle as he must have written would have had a tendency to confirm them in their suspicions and to harden them in their errors.

In this difficulty, it was natural for St Paul to think of some friend who could expostulate with the Christians of Jerusalem with better hopes of success. But if such an idea occurred to him, there was no one more suitable than St Barnabas to undertake such a task. For he was an old and valued member of the Church of Jerusalem and a letter from him would have great weight<sup>1</sup>. It is probable also that the two apostles possessed at this time the means of communicating with one another, for Mark the friend of St Barnabas was at Rome with St Paul, Timothy the companion of St Paul was expected shortly to join St Barnabas, while friends from Italy were present with the author when he wrote the epistle. St Barnabas was an old and intimate friend<sup>2</sup>, whom he could readily ask, and in addition he was a man like-minded with himself, to whom he could safely trust so delicate and important a duty.

If this supposition were true, it would illustrate and explain the varying traditions of the three early churches.

A deputation from the Roman Church brought St Barnabas his friend's request that he would write the epistle and was present with him when he wrote it. Accordingly the Roman Church knew quite well that it was his independent work, and from Rome the tradition was afterwards taken to the daughter church of Africa.

In the Eastern Church, the case was a little different. They would not know the exact relation in which St Paul stood to the epistle quite so accurately as the Roman Church, for the deputation merely sent their salutations by letter, and did not carry the epistle to Jerusalem themselves. The Eastern Church

<sup>1</sup> Even the supporters of the Pauline authorship acknowledge this.

<sup>2</sup> The old disagreement had long ago been made up.

would know that the epistle was St Paul's, both because he suggested it, and also because it was written by his friend and companion. But at the same time they knew quite well that it was not written by St Paul, and that the writer was not with that apostle when he wrote it. Accordingly they distinguished it from the other epistles of St Paul and assigned it to a different author.

The position of the Church of Alexandria was different from that of either the Eastern or the Western Church. It was neither the church from which the epistle was sent, nor the church to which it was addressed. What they knew for certain was that it owed its existence and its ideas, its object and its aim to the suggestion of St Paul. With them the contrast was between the man who suggested the epistle and inspired the ideas, and the man who actually wrote it. Naturally the latter had a tendency to fall into the background, and become a mere scribe. His very name was either unknown or was quickly forgotten. The epistle was more and more associated with the name of its only known author St Paul, until all trace of the old distinction between it and his other epistles was lost sight of and forgotten.

Nor is the theory that the epistle was suggested by St Paul only useful for explaining the external evidence, it also serves to illustrate the phenomena presented by the epistle itself.

If the friends from Italy were sent to St Barnabas to inform him of St Paul's request, they were probably the persons from whom he learned the news of Timothy's release. In that case, it is also probable that they took back to St Paul his friend's desire that Timothy might be spared to accompany him to Jerusalem. It was a natural request, if St Paul had himself suggested the journey. But as it was doubtful whether St Paul could spare him in time, St Barnabas represents his coming as doubtful. *ἐὰν τάχιον ἔρχηται*. The request which had just come from his old colleague would almost of necessity remind St Barnabas of the time when they used to work together, and of the *παροξυσμός*<sup>1</sup> which had separated them for so long.

<sup>1</sup> The point is discussed on p. 104.

Lastly the supposition would fully explain the resemblances between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the writings of St Paul and St Luke.

The resemblance to the epistles of St Paul is in language and vocabulary rather than in form and style, and too much stress must not be laid on it when we remember how large a part of the New Testament is occupied by the writings of St Paul. But if we suppose that he wrote to St Barnabas describing the state of affairs in the Church of Jerusalem, we can quite understand that the latter, when he wrote to the same church on the same subject would unconsciously reproduce many of the words and expressions used in the epistle which he had just read.

The case of St Luke would merely be the case of St Barnabas repeated once more. The deputies of St Paul, when they returned to Rome with the news that their mission had been successful, would naturally take a copy of the Epistle to the Hebrews with them. We can imagine with what eagerness the two friends, St Paul and St Luke, would read it. It has been thought by many that St Luke was at that time employing his leisure in writing his books. If this were so, they would be likely to show some traces of a work which had so greatly impressed the mind of their author.

The theory that the idea of writing the epistle was suggested to St Barnabas by St Paul is only offered as probable, but it is so simple and yet so fully accounts for the facts that it appears worthy of consideration.







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